

**Small Group Discussion Question:**

**Rock et al., describes three salient challenges within special education: special educator workload, role ambiguity, and evaluation. What challenges do general educators face with respect to these issues? Which is/are most salient to general educators? Why?**

*Consider these modern dilemmas in special education as you discuss the salient challenges of both special and general educators:*

Dilemma	Examples & Explanations
<p><b>Special Education Teacher Workload</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the "knowledge, skills, and dispositions" to efficaciously <b>teach core academic subjects that are culturally and linguistically appropriate for their students;</b></li> <li>• Have knowledge of <b>federal, state, and local policy;</b></li> <li>• Have knowledge of <b>implementation</b> of these policies;</li> <li>• Employ <b>evidenced-based practices (EBPs);</b></li> <li>• Know how to <b>effectively assess</b> in order to assist in determining <b>student eligibility</b> for special education services;</li> <li>• Write <b>individualized education plans (IEPs)</b> that include <b>goals and objectives</b> that are specific to individual students;</li> <li>• <b>Conduct and support progress monitoring</b> of students throughout the academic year;</li> <li>• <b>Consult and collaborate</b> with related service providers, general educators, administrators, families, local and state agencies;</li> <li>• <b>Stay up to date on evidenced-based practices,</b> differentiation and assistive technology;</li> <li>• Understand how <b>various disabilities are manifested</b> in the school environment;</li> <li>• Facilitate <b>transition services</b> for students that are exiting secondary school into work and/or collegiate environments.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Special Education Teacher Role Ambiguity</b></p>	<p>Special educators teach in a variety of settings that <b>range from special schools</b> (that cater to only students with specific disabilities) to general education classrooms (which are considered the least restrictive environment). They also collaborate with general educators in a variety of models, such as, <b>co-teaching, team teaching, and facilitation.</b> Special educators also <b>supervise paraeducators and provide direct instruction to students across a range of disabilities and grade levels in both academic and non-academic subjects.</b></p>
<p><b>Special Education Teacher Evaluation</b></p>	<p>In some states, <b>standardized testing is weighted as much as 50% of teachers' yearly evaluations.</b> These evaluations do not take into consideration that <b>students with disabilities require specialized instruction as a result of lower academic performance in relation to their peers.</b> Special educators often work with students that are homeless, have attendance problems, and experience challenges at home. Special educators are <b>provoked to leave the profession because of the pressure to raise standardized test scores to the detriment of other important goals,</b> which also prevents talented professionals from pursuing this field.</p>