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# Engaging Students with Disabilities in Virtual Learning

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**PLM Title:** Engaging Special Needs Students In Virtual Learning

**PLM Link: (Recommended to open this in Google Chrome)**
https://sites.google.com/view/plm-engaging-swd-virtually

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*Jessie Kong*: Jessie is a doctoral candidate at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina. Her research interests include best practices for language immersion and bilingualism. Jessie holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Linguistics  from The University of Melbourne, Australia with Sociolinguistics work done at The University of California, Berkeley, USA,  a Graduate Diploma in Interpreting and Translating from Deakin University, Australia,  a Master Degree of Arts in Biblical Counseling from Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She has taught at institutes of education, high school and middle school English, elementary school and kindergarten Chinese in Australia, Hong Kong, China, and the US. She has been a translator, language teacher and family counselor in both the private and public sectors for over 20 years. She is currently a Lead Teacher in a language immersion school in Charlotte, North Carolina. She has future career aspirations to both teach at college or administration, as well as working as a curriculum developer.

*Mike Lefko*:  Mike is a doctoral candidate at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina. His research interests include special education self-efficacy and ways to transform teaching and learning for students. Mike holds a Bachelor of Science in Special Education from The State University of New York at Geneseo,  and a Master of School Administration as a N.C. Principal Fellow from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.  He has taught special education and served in various different leadership and administrative roles in public, private and charter schools over the past 30 years. He currently teaches middle school students with Autism in the

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*Rachelle Peterson*: Rachelle is a doctoral candidate at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina. Her research interests include disproportionate discipline for minority students, school to prison pipeline, and culturally responsive and trauma-informed teaching practices. Rachelle holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a Master of Arts in Teaching-Special Education, both from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina. Rachelle earned her advanced certification in K-12 Administration from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Wilmington, North Carolina. Rachelle has taught middle school math and language arts as a special education and general education teacher. Rachelle has served in various leadership roles throughout her 17 years in public education. Rachelle currently serves in the role of Dean of Students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Charlotte, North Carolina. Rachelle's future career aspirations include teaching both aspiring teachers at the undergraduate and graduate level, as well as working for the district as a Curriculum Specialist or Student Accountability Specialist.

**Description Section:** This site provides an overview of engaging students with disabilities (SWD) in online/virtual learning philosophies and practices in order to make educators aware of methods and resources for helping SWD and their families engage with virtual learning. This module also provides research, classroom practice resources, and thought-provoking videos meant to assist educators in using methods and resources to improve their practices and positively impact all students.

**Subjects Section:** Students with Disabilities (SWD), Online/Virtual Learning, Emotional Engagement, Behavioral Engagement, Cognitive Engagement, Parent Engagment

**Terms of Use:** The learning cycle featured in this project is based on the STAR Legacy Cycle developed by the IRIS Center (2013; http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu), and based on the work of Dr. John Branford and colleagues (National Research Council, 2000).

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