

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Hey everyone. My name is Stephanie. I am the founder and your host here at the intentional IEP for all of these guest speaker chats in many trainings. And today I am here with Roanne and we're gonna be talking all about special education in the Philippines. I have so many questions for her, so excited for this training, but please Roanne. Before we get started, will you share about your teaching experience and your role at the IEP table?

Speaker 2 ([00:27](#)):

Hi, there I'm Rhoane, I, I am really an occupational therapist right now. Oh,

([00:35](#)):

Yes. I've been practicing OT for seven years now. And, um, I got interested in special education because I see that I saw, I noticed that my clients were all growing up and they needed someone that, um, that could teach them the quality education that they need. And in our, uh, in our place here in the Philippines, there is a limited number of special education. And that's why I, I enrolled in teaching profession in 2019. I also got my license to teach that here and enrolled in master's degree in special education. And right now I am practicing both OT and special education here in our Humboldt school, small school, and I'm in my terminal study of my master's degree.

Speaker 1 ([01:34](#)):

That's awesome. Oh my goodness. Well, all of our questions are about teaching special ed, but I may have OT question for you as we go through this, but let's get started. I'm so excited to learn more. So what do special education services look like in the Philippines

Speaker 2 ([01:56](#)):

Right now? I think it's a growing practice. Um, it is not really, uh, the people here in the Philippines are not, are really open when it comes to mainstreaming, but in self contained classes, they are well, uh, they are well prepared on what, what, what they are doing, especially the special education teachers and the parents also, but when it comes to mainstreaming and inclusive education, um, I think we need more practice and social, social acceptance regarding that concern. And just this March, our, our a 1 16 50 lodge is passed about the inclusive education act of 2022 for <affirmative> the children with special needs. So you can see it's, it's just this year that this law passed just like the idea of the United States. So I think it's been growing concerning here in the Philippines.

Speaker 1 ([03:01](#)):

That's awesome that there was a law passed to make practices more inclusive.

Speaker 2 ([03:07](#)):

Mm-hmm

Speaker 1 ([03:08](#)):

<affirmative> wow. Oh my gosh. That's exciting. Well, what does the referral process look like for special education in the Philippines?

Speaker 2 ([03:20](#)):

Uh, the referral process starts with, I think here and in my colleagues in public, uh, schools, we usually get students through parents who, who has friend that we, we saw red flags with the children and also with the teachers in the mainstream or in the general education class that, that saw difficulties with other, with other, with other students. And, um, I also, we also do, or we also do, um, we also, uh, get students from, um, the, the government, just like the, uh, local government unit here. They have centers already have early childhood centers where they see that some children are, do have difficulties.

Speaker 1 ([04:28](#)):

Interesting. Can teachers refer students for services in the Philippines or is you just mostly see parents doing it?

Speaker 2 ([04:38](#)):

There are some teachers.

Speaker 1 ([04:40](#)):

Okay. Who refer

Speaker 2 ([04:41](#)):

To other, especially when they handle the students for the past school year.

Speaker 1 ([04:47](#)):

Gotcha. And do they have to go get like an evaluation similar to the United States as well? They have to be like tested for eligibility.

Speaker 2 ([04:58](#)):

Yes. Um, actually here in the Philippines, we use each checklist and that is really, yes. That is really untested from typically developing Filipino kids.

Speaker 1 ([05:11](#)):

Yes. Each

Speaker 2 ([05:12](#)):

Three years old do five point 11 before they enter kindergarten.

Speaker 1 ([05:18](#)):

Gotcha. Yes. Interesting. Well, how often once student has an IEP, do they call it an IEP in the Philippines?

Speaker 2 ([05:26](#)):

Yes.

Speaker 1 ([05:27](#)):

IEP. So how often are you required to write a new IEP in the Philippines for students? Is it every year as the same as the United States?

Speaker 2 ([05:37](#)):

Um, here in my, here in my, in here in the school where, where I work, we usually, we do it annually every, every start of this school year.

Speaker 1 ([05:48](#)):

Okay.

Speaker 2 ([05:49](#)):

But I'm not, I'm not really sure with the public schools, how often they do it. Yes. But here it's annual before the start of the school year, we do assessment and we do, um, parent meeting three times a year.

Speaker 1 ([06:07](#)):

Oh

Speaker 2 ([06:08](#)):

Yes.

Speaker 1 ([06:09](#)):

Why three times a year. I'm curious.

Speaker 2 ([06:12](#)):

Yes. Uh it's during the, during the discuss there's health of the B assessment and during the school year here starts around July, July, August, and we do it there. And after you got in the middle, the December before the Christmas break, and lastly at, during April, April, may at the end of the school year or the summer break,

Speaker 1 ([06:39](#)):

I like that actually. Yes, that's. Is it kind of like parent teacher conferences? Is that similar to what they are or,

Speaker 2 ([06:49](#)):

Um, here, after, after attending your, your workshop in the intentional I peer I, um, here, we usually really did. It was we, we talked casually to other members of the IEP team, like the speech pathologies, the occupational therapist, the general education teacher. Then after that, after we discussed the kid, we talked to the parent. So it's not, it's not that they are in the same table as we were talking with other members of the team. But after I, I attended to your seminar, I think we should do that this coming school year. So the, I think the, the one problem that we might face with that, with that set up is the financial, the financial capability of the parent to afford different professionals in one table. So I think that's just the constraint about that, but I think our administrator will a administrator can, can adjust what we, we, we can do with that.

Speaker 1 ([08:05](#)):

Well, you will have to let me know how that goes. That's exciting.

Speaker 2 ([08:10](#)):

Yes, yes, yes. I know.

Speaker 1 ([08:12](#)):

Well, that is perfect. Leading into the next question. So how are your families involved in the IEP process in the Philip PS, aside from the three meetings a year.

Speaker 2 ([08:25](#)):

So, um, actually before, just like what you, you are doing there, uh, we provide checklist, we provide, um, um, questions before the assessment so that we, we may know exactly what they want for are the kids. And sure. Our classes here are commonly self-contained classes. So we rarely, we rarely, uh, do, uh, group classes so weekly, we provide feedback to them and then we let them know how, uh, how is, how is the child doing in the class and how about at home? What, what do they do regarding the, the lessons? So there, there is a weekly feedback. So what we do,

Speaker 1 ([09:15](#)):

I like that do parents, are parents responsive? Do they usually, do they enjoy that from what you've experienced?

Speaker 2 ([09:26](#)):

Yes, actually they want it more frequent. <laugh> like Every, every day they, uh, we give the kids to after class, Hey teacher, how's the day, how how's my kid. So yeah. We just do small chats with them. And then we provide the formal feedback during Fridays.

Speaker 1 ([09:49](#)):

I like that.

Speaker 2 ([09:51](#)):

Yes.

Speaker 1 ([09:52](#)):

Love and I love that the families enjoy it. That is huge. That's awesome. Yes. Well, what does your caseload look like? How many students do you manage or how many kids are in your classroom and how does that differ from like an OT caseload? So like special ed caseload versus OT caseload.

Speaker 2 ([10:13](#)):

So a pre pandemic, we usually, um, have seven kids in a, in a class with three teachers. So these teachers are not yet special education teachers. They are general education teachers that I supervise. And then, um, this pandemic, when we were allowed to do face to face teaching, we have this one on one session with the kids. So the case load will be in one hour, there is one student and there is one teacher. So it is kind of, um, not, not, not really hard for them because they only need one. They only teach one, one student at a time. And, um, the IEP also is for a teacher. We need to write a maximum of eight IEPs only for a year because they are only handling eight kids. Okay. In the whole day. Yes. But when, when we started, when, when we don't have a special education teacher here, I usually do the assessment and

the IEP um, which is if we have 17 enrollee for the year, I wrote all of those. I, so I think it's a kind of hard work for me, but then when we hired special education teachers, so we divided work

Speaker 1 ([11:39](#)):

And you teach in a self-contained classroom.

Speaker 2 ([11:42](#)):

Yes. Especially in tutorial and the enrichment classes.

Speaker 1 ([11:47](#)):

That's a, that's eight kids is a lot for a self-contained classroom.

Speaker 2 ([11:53](#)):

Yeah. Because it's one hour per day.

Speaker 1 ([11:57](#)):

Wow. Well, what is your best piece of advice for teaching special education outside of the United States?

Speaker 2 ([12:06](#)):

Um, yeah, I think, um, what, um, whenever we are right now, right. And IEP takes a lot of time from us, a lot of effort, a lot of knowledge, but, um, just, just, um, think of it that this is our plan to give the best to the student. So don't take, take the IAPs, another caseload or another burden, because, you know, um, it's our way to give only the best to the kids. And this is our plan to organize and prepare what the kid really needs. And you know, what special education teach being a special education teacher is a very humble profession, as well as a very, um, very humbling service because it's not about us, but it's because of the kid and his, or her family that we are putting our service to. So just don't, um, me, for me, it's a lot of, it's a lot of, um, sacrifice because you know what, it's already night time and I, I got this leave, but I will write IEP. But then at the end of the day, if you see that the child is adapting very well out of the program that you, that you wrote and the families are, are so thankful. Um, and then all the, all the sacrifices, all, all, all the hard work are paid off. So just, uh, take a look, just look at the IEPs, um, as a surveys that the child really needs and you know, what, they only get this from us, the special education teachers.

Speaker 1 ([14:05](#)):

I think that is great advice, even for teachers in the United States. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. And I always say, when I'm asking other teachers, how do you work with the families that you service? Because it, we are providing a service. So I love that you thought about it, and you just, your, your best piece of advice was just thinking about it. Like they get that service from us. They can't get it from anyone else. And I love that because it's so true.

Speaker 2 ([14:39](#)):

<laugh>

Speaker 1 ([14:40](#)):

Yes. So true. Well, thank you so much Roan for being here today, sharing about special education services in the Philippines. I am fascinated with how it works there. I'm so excited that y'all had that, um, law pass for inclusion. I'm excited to connect again in a couple of months to see how including the parents at the IEP meeting goes, that's please reach out to me and let me know how that goes.

Speaker 2 ([15:10](#)):

Course I was, I, I was planning to, to do that as my master's thesis. So I'll let you know. Yes. Well, especially now that we are transitioning from face to face classes, so we will see if we, that the law is really implementing in, in, in the classroom.

Speaker 1 ([15:31](#)):

Well, if I can help, please let me know. I will be happy to help. Sure.

Speaker 2 ([15:35](#)):

Thank you very much.

Speaker 1 ([15:36](#)):

Yeah. Well, thank you so much. Where can viewers find you, whether it's a website or social media, or just an email for contact, and I'll put all of her links below here, so you can just click and go.

Speaker 2 ([15:50](#)):

So you can reach me, me through my email address. So it's Australia CP. PNU so awesome. I don't have more social media account.

Speaker 1 ([16:03](#)):

<laugh> that is all right. I will press her email below here, and you'll be able to just click and send her an email if you have more questions. Um, thank, thank you again so much for being here. I have truly enjoyed our chat and learning from you. I'm so excited for just your future as a special education teacher and changing what special education looks like for you and the families you service. Um, so thank you so much for being here. Thank you all so much for being here and learning more well will see you in the next.