

Examining the Research Base and Legal Considerations in Special Education, CCSS Connections, and the Reasons for Inclusion

DISABILITY LEGISLATION ■

Legislation has changed the way society thinks about disabilities and has also driven research to find better ways for schools to deliver appropriate services to children in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Basically, students have the right to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) that addresses their diverse needs. Teachers must understand what legislation and research say about students with differing abilities in regard to the curriculum, instruction, Common Core State Standards (CCSS), assessment, and transitional skills. In addition, since the CCSS have been adopted by a majority of states and are applicable to students with and without disability classifications, there is a huge emphasis on improving both the academic and functional outcomes of students with disabilities through research-based interventions. This chapter offers the legislative underpinnings that compel educators to connect evidence-based practice to learning. Disability laws, standards-based reforms, and strategic research about disabilities are detailed in this chapter, beginning with the reasons that we need to do inclusion.

■ INTRODUCTION: WHY DO INCLUSION?

AFFECTIVE COMPARISON

Directions: Think of a time when you were excluded from an academic or social activity as a child or an adult. List the emotions you experienced as a result of this exclusion. Contrast this experience with a time when you were included or allowed to participate with others, and list those emotions under the appropriate heading as well.

Inclusion Versus Exclusion	
Inclusion	Exclusion



Available for download at www.corwin.com/inclusionstrategies

Now think of teaching a student who has similar exclusionary emotions and compare them to the ones you listed under the "Exclusion" column and how he or she would feel about school. How could you learn if you were experiencing these exclusionary emotions? Is there a moral here?

The primary reason for inclusion is the list of positive inclusive emotions. The Latin root of inclusion is *includo*, meaning to embrace, while the Latin root of exclusion is *excludo*, meaning to separate or shut out. Unfortunately, in their haste to include students, administrators in some school districts created the impression that inclusion is just a way to save money, with the unintended outcome that it burdens teachers. Educational players now realize that inclusion will not succeed without the proper scaffolding. Most teachers are skeptical because there is no script or template to follow for inclusion. Even though inclusion has been at the forefront for a while, it is still in its infancy and will continually evolve. Opposing dialogues and anti-inclusionary attitudes exist. Some school staff and community members question student placements in general education classrooms, wondering if this is another educational tide and if the general education classroom is always the best placement for increasing student academic achievement (Crowson & Brandes, 2010; Dawkins, 2010). Overall, inclusion is a way of life and a preparation for adulthood. It supports the civil rights of all learners. Inclusion may not be the most appropriate placement for

meeting all students' needs, yet it should be considered the first viable option. At times, inclusion involves a combination of push-in and pull-out services with an array of staff that includes general and special education teachers, teaching assistants, and related staff such as occupational therapists (OTs), physical therapists (PTs), speech-language pathologists, mobility trainers, teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, behavioral interventionists, and other consultative experts. The determination of a student's least restrictive environment placement is based foremost on each student's individual levels.

ESTABLISHING LEGISLATIVE KNOWLEDGE ■

Courting Issues

Laws were designed to protect people with disabilities by giving them access to the same societal opportunities as those accessible to people without disabilities. To segue to a more detailed examination of the special education (SE) laws and research, you are invited to answer the following true-or-false questions.

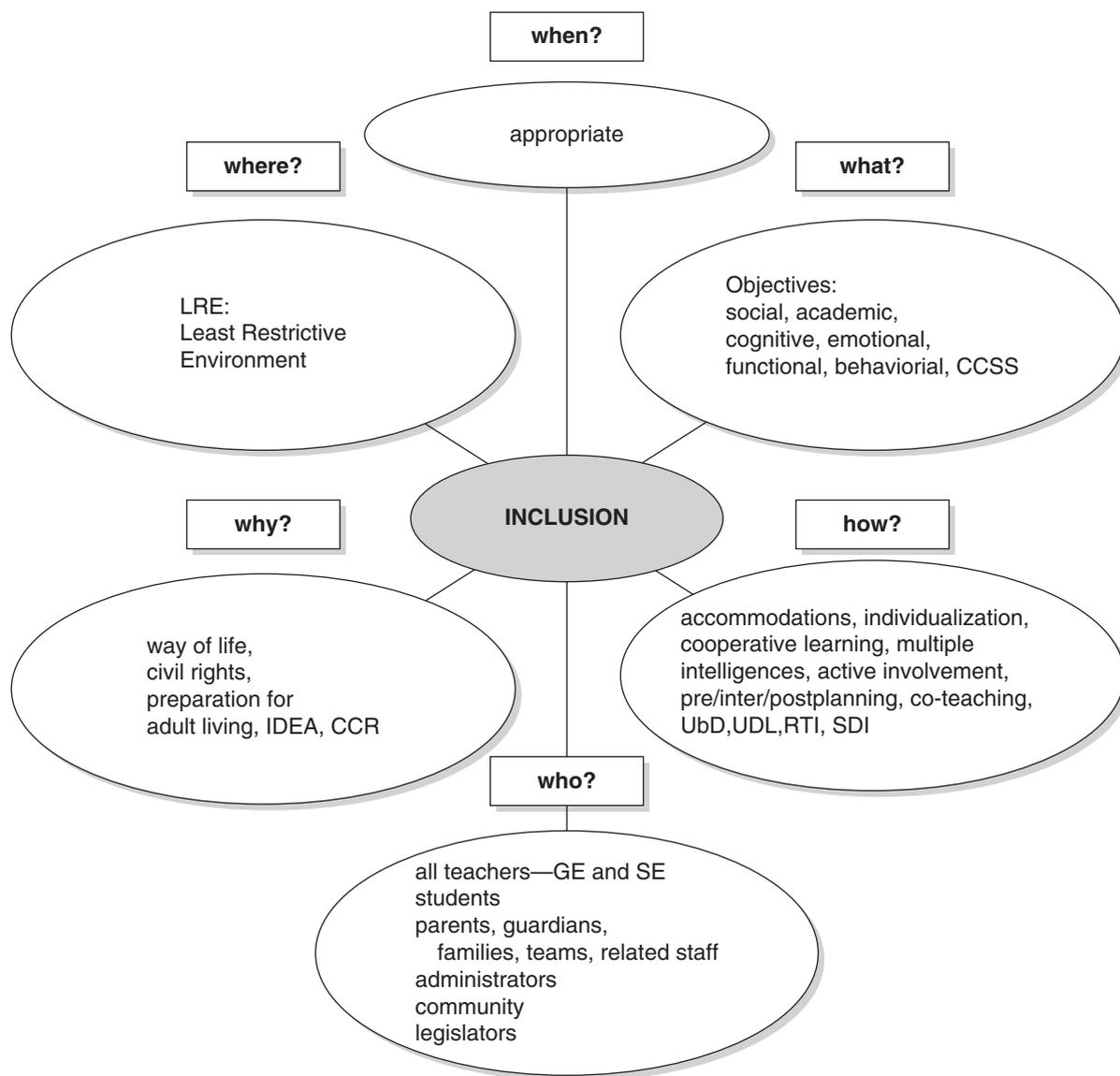
LEGISLATIVE KNOWLEDGE: TRUE OR FALSE?

- ___ 1. Eighteen percent of the school-age population has a disability.
 - ___ 2. Cooperative learning is a competitive teaching strategy.
 - ___ 3. Right angles of learning refer to measuring the classroom.
 - ___ 4. About 5 to 6 percent of the school-age population has a learning disability (LD).
 - ___ 5. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act has been in effect since 1983.
 - ___ 6. FAPE stands for Federally Approved Programs for Education.
 - ___ 7. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is an educational program that protects children ages five to twenty-one.
 - ___ 8. Teachers can call for a new individualized education program (IEP) meeting anytime they need additional support.
 - ___ 9. A student who is not classified can be considered for Section 504 protection.
 - ___ 10. There are thirteen specific disability categories under IDEA for students from ages three to twenty-one.
 - ___ 11. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects individuals with physical or mental impairments that may limit a major life activity.
 - ___ 12. People with an intellectual disability are more likely to have children who also have cognitive impairment.
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Inclusion Web

Special education laws demand that the general education classroom be looked at as the first placement option and the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities. The web below outlines more particulars about inclusion.



The true-or-false activity might have been frustrating if you did not have background knowledge about special education or related laws. Compare it to the spelling pretest given to students who have no prior knowledge of the words. Teachers sometimes begin a content area assuming children have prior knowledge.

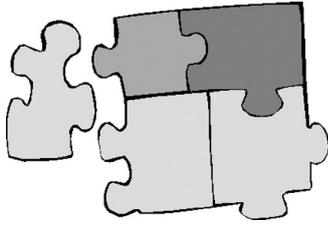
Moral: All students do not have the same background knowledge or experience. Learning should be at an optimum level while frustrations should be kept to a minimum since they only interfere with and thwart the learning process. Ascertaining what students know before the lesson proceeds then helps to guide instruction. (See page 7 for answers to the true-or-false statements.)

Research about cooperative learning affirms its social and academic advantages (Jenkins, Antil, Wayne, & Vadasy, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1975; Kagan, 1994; Slavin, 1990; Ferguson-Patrick, 2012). Positive social interactions increase as students work collaboratively toward a common goal. Academically, students are willing to spend more time learning from each other rather than from the teacher, resulting in better educational outcomes with often challenging curricula.

The CCSS offer rigorous standards for students to achieve college- and career-ready skills. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills advocates collaboration, communication, critical thinking skills, and creativity. When students with special needs are placed in inclusive environments, they are afforded the opportunity to achieve these standards side by side with their age-level peers who will hopefully one day be their coworkers. Cooperative communication bridges students to adulthood since it is a prerequisite for future employment relationships. Getting along with others is a skill that schools can foster through cooperative learning. Team skills, increased self-esteem, improved peer interaction, and higher task completion with learning assignments are some of the benefits that are yielded when structured, heterogeneous cooperative groups work together in classrooms. Overall, cooperation is a functional skill for educators and peers in inclusive classrooms to repeatedly foster and model.

Special education services are provided without cost to the students and families under all three laws: IDEA, ADA, and Section 504. Under IDEA, the least restrictive environment is first the general education classroom unless the severity of the disability prohibits that placement. The intention of this next legislative review is to increase your knowledge of SE laws and to walk the cooperative talk.

JIGSAWING READING



To review the basic terminology and legislation in the field of special education, cooperative groups should equitably divide the legislative readings on the following pages to collectively share knowledge and then answer six out of ten listed questions under the heading “Cooperative Legislative Review.” This jigsaw technique is a cooperative learning strategy where teachers direct students to learn and share content with each other. Having a choice of which questions to answer empowers the

student under the teacher’s auspices. Teachers monitor learners and drift to different groups, clarifying questions and concerns while addressing individual and group thought processes. The following readings summarize pertinent facts about legislation, along with past, present, and future concerns about special education and the rights of people with disabilities.

Cooperative Division

1. Everyone reads the IDEA/ADA/504 comparison.
Then, equitably divide the following:
2. Details about the least restrictive environment
3. Description of thirteen disability categories under IDEA
4. History of the ADA
5. Civil rights for people with disabilities
6. Past, present, and future concerns



ANSWERS TO TRUE/FALSE

1. F—Approximately 13 percent of all children and youth ages three to twenty-one
2. F—Noncompetitive
3. F—It's a hierarchy of learning objectives.
4. T—Students falling under the LD category vary from state to state (e.g., Kentucky has a low of 2.9 percent while Massachusetts has a high of 7.35 percent).
5. F—1973
6. F—Free, appropriate public education
7. F—Ages three to twenty-one (Under IDEA Part C, from birth to age three those eligible for services include students with developmental delays, e.g., physical development, cognitive development, communication, social or emotional development, or adaptive [behavioral] development.)
8. T
9. T—Examples include a child with asthma (staff trained to administer EpiPen), diabetes (glucose monitoring with trained personnel, access to water and bathroom), food allergies (safe snacks available), juvenile arthritis (word processor, scribe), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (modified schedule, homework decreased, reduced or minimized distractions). Review this site for more 504 ideas: www.ncld.org/students-disabilities/iep-504-plan/developing-successful-504-plan-k-12-students
10. T
11. T—Life activities include walking, speaking, working, learning, caring for oneself, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, and communicating.
12. F—Children can be affected by the limitations, but their mothers' illnesses during pregnancy and use of drugs or alcohol are major contributors.

SOURCE: Holler and Zirkel (2008), Mauro (n.d.), Pierangelo and Giuliani (2010), and the National Center for Education Statistics (2013).

IDEA of 1990 & Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA)	ADA of 1990 & Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/ Impact of ADAAA
<p>Children ages three to twenty-one with disabilities listed below are eligible for a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. IDEA is a statute that funds special education programs under the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism • Deafness • Deafness–blindness • Hearing impairments • Intellectual disabilities • Multiple disabilities • Orthopedic impairments • Other health impairments • Emotional disturbance • Specific learning disabilities • Speech or language impairments • Traumatic brain injury • Visual impairments <p>Under IDEA Part C, states may choose to add a 14th category of developmental delay for students ages three to nine who exhibit significant physical, cognitive, behavioral, emotional, or social differences in development in comparison with children of the same age and for students from birth to age three.</p> <p>The IDEA defines an IEP, which provides written statements about current academic and functional levels. Long-term and short-term objectives are required for students who take alternate assessments. Accommodations, modifications, and evaluation criteria are listed for each child.</p>	<p>Civil rights law that protects people with disabilities from discrimination in public services if reasonable accommodations can be provided by state and local governments.</p> <p>Physical or mental impairment has to substantially limit one or more life activities (walking, breathing, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, working, caring for oneself, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking, or communicating).</p> <p>A word such as <i>concentrating</i> qualifies a student with attention issues, such as a child who may have a diagnosis of ADHD.</p> <p>Disability determinations are made without regard to mitigating measures (e.g., medication, appliances, medical supplies, low-vision devices [not eyeglasses or contacts], prosthetics, hearing aids, and mobility devices).</p> <p>Person must have a record and be regarded as having such impairment. This does not include transitory or minor disabilities that have a duration of six months or less.</p> <p>Prevents employment discrimination against individuals with disabilities who meet other job qualifications.</p> <p>Helps to ensure public access to transportation and communication.</p>	<p>Civil rights law that stops discrimination against people with disabilities in public and private programs or activities that receive public financial assistance.</p> <p>Services under 504 protection include special education and general education with appropriate related services, accommodations, and aids.</p> <p>ADAAA extended more eligibility for K–12 students under Section 504. Before ADAAA, students with 504 plans accounted for about 1.2 percent of national school-age children. 504 plans include but are not limited to students with ADHD, diabetes, food allergies, and other learners who qualify for eligible services (Holler & Zirkel, 2008).</p> <p>Similar to IDEA but can include students and staff of all ages who may not be covered under IDEA classifications.</p> <p>Disability has to limit student’s ability to learn or perform other major life activities.</p> <p>Students who use illegal drugs are not eligible for 504 plans.</p> <p>Lists mitigating measures (e.g., low vision [except contact lenses or eyeglasses], hearing aids, cochlear implants, and assistive technology).</p> <p>Includes reasonable accommodations and modifications.</p>

IDEA of 1990 & Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA)	ADA of 1990 & Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/ Impact of ADAAA
<p>Present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP) are written in students' IEPs as snapshots of each child's current status and progress. The word <i>functional</i> refers to routines of everyday living that are nonacademic and better prepare students with disabilities for postschool adjustments.</p> <p>Implementation of early intervening services by local education agencies (LEAs) to include professional development for educators and for related staff to deliver scientifically based academic and behavioral interventions (e.g., literacy, services, and supports).</p> <p>Limitation of related services for devices that are surgically implanted (e.g., cochlear implants).</p> <p>Supplementary aids and services are provided in general education classes as well as extracurricular and nonacademic settings.</p> <p>IEPs are based on each child's unique, individual needs.</p>	<p>Can include special education students who are employed in community jobs or those people with disabilities visiting schools.</p> <p>Can refer to private, nonsectarian schools.</p> <p>The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Title II of the ADA, which extends the prohibition against discrimination to public schools, whether or not they receive public funding.</p> <p>Expanded definition of <i>substantially limited</i> rather than mandating a severe or significant restriction.</p> <p>The definition of major life activities says that the impairment needs to limit only one major activity in order to be considered as an ADA disability, although it may limit more as well.</p> <p>Amendments of ADA affect 504 plans in forms and procedures, increasing the number eligible of students in Grades K–12 protected under Section 504.</p>	<p>Limited amount of money a school district can spend if the services are too costly since, unlike IDEA, there are no provisions that districts be reimbursed.</p> <p>State and local jurisdictions are responsible.</p> <p>Requires a plan with a group that is knowledgeable about the unique needs of the student.</p> <p>Specifies educational benefits, aids, services, class, and assessment modifications (e.g., reading test questions aloud, behavior intervention plans, and preferential seating).</p> <p>Periodic reevaluations.</p> <p>Like IDEA, local education agencies must provide impartial hearings for parents who disagree with the identification, placement, or evaluation.</p> <p>Do not need both an IEP and a Section 504 plan if student qualifies for services under both since one way to meet 504 requirements is to comply with IDEA.</p> <p>General education teachers must implement provisions of Section 504; their refusal would mean district could be found noncompliant.</p>



Least Restrictive Environments

According to IDEA, FAPE must be provided in the LRE, which is first the general education classroom setting because of the academic and nonacademic benefits along with the effects of that placement on other children. Special education services are linked to both academic and functional goals in what is then deemed the LRE. The assumption under the law is that every child with a disability is educated in the general education classroom; if this is not the case, then the school district must provide documentation for why this should not occur. A continuum of some alternative placements is determined on an individual basis with planning, interventions, and documentation of effectiveness merited in all environments. The goal is to go down the continuum to more restrictive environments only as necessary based on student levels and to move up the continuum to full inclusion as appropriate.

Least Restrictive Environment Options

- *General education classroom* with moderate support—for example, consultation periods; in-class support by a special education teacher or other trained personnel for part of the day; or perhaps two teachers, general education (GE) and special education, co-teaching and co-planning lessons for all children in the classroom. The two teachers (GE and SE) and related staff may work together in an inclusion setting to help students with responses to the curricula through strategic planning, specified interventions, and data that monitor ongoing benchmark assessments.
- *Pull-out programs* to support or replace some subjects that may be taught in a resource room. Academic subjects such as reading, language, science, social studies, or mathematics may be taught or supported in another setting within the school. The student fully participates in all other classroom content areas and activities with peers and follows the rest of the class schedule, with maximum social integration. This combination of services allows for periods of direct skill instruction along with social and academic inclusion with peers.
- *Special education classroom* in a neighborhood school with the possibility of mainstreaming for certain subjects, academic and social goals delineated, and adequate supports provided in the general education classroom and all other settings. Special class placement can also be self-contained.
- *Special school* if education cannot be provided in the neighborhood school.
- *Home instruction* if the student's needs cannot be met in the school due to social, academic, physical, or medical issues.
- *Residential placement* that is provided in a setting other than the neighborhood school or home, which can include instruction in hospitals or residential institutions. Even though a placement such as a hospital is considered one of the most restricted environments, it may actually be the least restrictive setting for someone with a mental illness if it is deemed the most appropriate one to serve that individual's needs.

IDEA has four parts, with these inclusive elements:

Part A: General Provisions. This part includes the purpose of special education law, definitions of terms, and congressional findings.

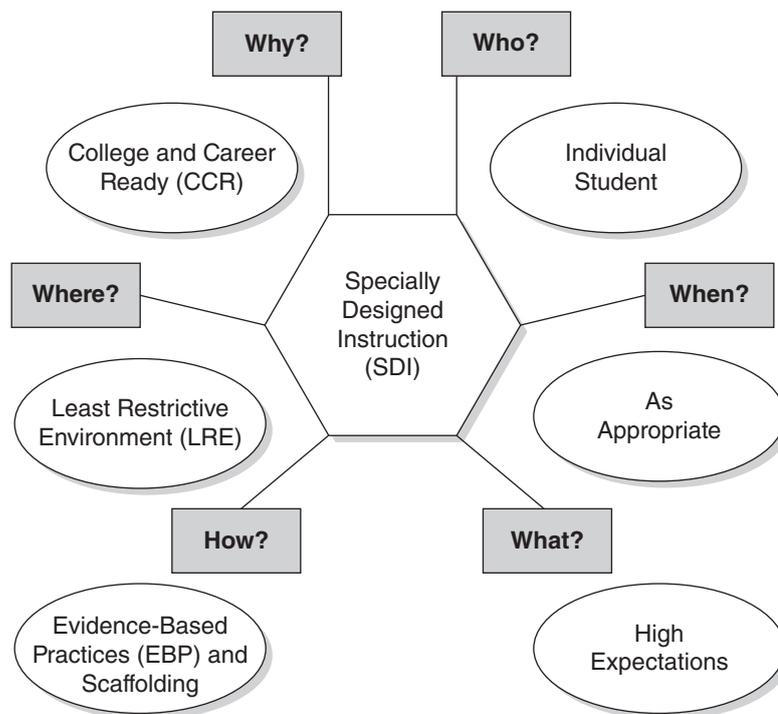
Part B: Assistance for Education of All Children with Disabilities. This part includes the state formula grant program, eligibility, evaluations, IEPs, funding, procedural safeguards, and preschool grants.

Part C: Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities. This part delineates early intervention programs for infants and toddlers with disabilities along with findings and policies.

Part D: National Activities to Improve Education of Children with Disabilities. Included here are discretionary programs, state improvement grants, supporting and applying research, personnel preparation, parent training and information centers, technical assistance, technology development, and disseminating information.

When IDEA was reauthorized in 2004 as IDEIA, major reauthorization points focused on linking goals with academic and functional outcomes that are connected to research-based responses to intervention (RTIs). There was also an allowance to remove benchmarks and short-term objectives from a student's IEP unless that student is participating in an alternate assessment aligned to alternate achievements (This exemption usually applies to a student with a very significant cognitive impairment who responds markedly differently to stimuli or has overall difficulties in communicating or providing a response). States may include benchmarks, but it is not federally mandated. Some states include benchmarks for subjects for which students are receiving replacement instruction rather than the subjects where students have full inclusion since the standards and objectives in the general education curriculum are then looked at as those students' goals. Students with disabilities are offered more rigorous academic content through grade-level CCSS. The standards are connected to IEPs and 504 plans, with specially designed instruction (SDI) outlined in a student's IEP. Even though at times students with disabilities share classifications, each disability involves heterogeneous characteristics, with each student possessing unique needs. Since each student has individual characteristics, the level of support and services as well as the instructional strategies are unique to each student. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) released criteria for college- and career-readiness (CCR) standards that are intended for *all* students, including students who have IEPs. The standards are accessible at www.corestandards.org.

IEP-CCSS Organizer



SOURCE: Karten (2014c). Please refer to Resource C for an explanation of acronyms.

Overall, as with IDEA, parents, guardians, families, school personnel, and students are integral collaborative players in this process who must always consider and focus on matching all students’ strengths to meet the CCSS with appropriate IEP services.

Some examples of appropriate IEP services can include the following:

- Braille for a student with blindness or visual impairment
- Behavioral intervention plan for a student with significant behavioral issues
- Communication and language supports for a student with deafness or hearing impairment; a student who is nonverbal; or a student who may have articulation, receptive, or expressive language needs
- Appropriate assistive technology services and devices needed by the student, though not always required by the district (e.g., a portable word processor or an instructional assistant serving as a scribe for a student with dysgraphia, although beneficial, may not be part of every school district’s standard procedure)
- Occupational or physical therapy for students (e.g., assistance with routines, structure, gait, balance, and/or handwriting)

As always, the present level of performance reflects how a child’s disability impacts both his or her participation and progress in the general education

curriculum. To qualify for services, a child's educational performance must be adversely affected as a result of the disability. The levels of academic achievement and functional performance are the crucial foundations for the development of the IEP since they drive the appropriate services needed to address, improve, and remediate the impact of a disability on a student's performance. Families are notified of student progress through periodic reports (e.g., quarterly intervals). Most important, IDEA directs IEP teams to implement instructional programs that have proven track records based on peer-reviewed research that gives merit to a program's effectiveness in both academic and behavioral domains. That means that schools are not arbitrarily using a program, but rather there is a research-based reason for that choice.

Appropriate accommodations for standardized assessments should not modify or alter test results, but should provide valid assessments that truly yield information on what the test is intended to measure. The frequency, location, and duration of all services are stated in the IEP. The consortia for the CCSS—the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC)—offer manuals with accessibility features and accommodations that are available for standardized testing at www.parcconline.org. Some of these adaptations are available to all students, such as the line reader, zoom magnification, and pop-up glossary in PARCC, while other accommodations are identified in advance and specific to individual students' needs, such as changing the foreground or background color, answer masking, and extended time. Smarter Balanced offers a conceptual framework that outlines universal tools that are available to all students, such as breaks, digital notepads, glossaries, math tools, and more. Student-specific accommodations include but are not limited to bilingual dictionaries, scribes, American Sign Language (ASL), separate settings, paper copies, read-alouds, and more. Teams determine the accommodations a student with an IEP or a 504 plan needs, which are then delineated in a personal needs profile. The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) and Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) developed alternate assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that, like PARCC and SBAC, are state adopted. These assessments are linked to grade-level expectations for students to achieve a high academic outcome through prescriptive testing that offers diagnostic information to guide instruction during the school year. The goal is to prepare students with significant cognitive disabilities for viable postsecondary outcomes. If a student takes one of these assessments, it indicates that the grade-level curriculum is not appropriate (e.g., if the student has a significant intellectual disability, which affects less than one percent of all students).

Accessibility takes many forms. It may mean supporting high-quality, intensive professional development for personnel who work with children with disabilities, including training-related services personnel, teacher assistants, and paraprofessionals. Accessibility could also mean using technology for children with disabilities, whether print, digital, graphic, audio, or video formats. The National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials (aim.cast.org) provides accessible instructional materials, such as digital textbooks.

Accessibility can also mean providing Braille or text-to-speech formats for those students who require such services. To facilitate movement from school to postsecondary activities, transition services within a results-oriented process should be used to the maximum extent possible and include further recommendations for continuing education, independent living, and community participation. Transitional plans are federally required for students of age sixteen and offered earlier if warranted.

The overall philosophy is to help students with disabilities meet challenging state academic achievement standards and at the same time yield high functional achievements. Services for the homeless, foster children, children with disabilities in the military, and English learners (ELs) are also addressed. Reducing misidentification of children with disabilities by encouraging direct skill instruction is something that IDEA strongly advocates.

Highlights of IDEA include the following:

- Attorney fees are awarded to local education agencies if a parent's case is determined frivolous or improper based on legal precedents. The law is written so as to put most of the liability on the parent's attorney for pursuing a frivolous suit. There is also a two-year time limit to file, starting from the date the local educational agency knew of the issue in question. Information is kept confidential.

- With reference to learning disabilities, IDEA says a discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability is not the sole indicator for LD classification. It allows for a process that determines if the child is responding to interventions. This targets students who are functioning below classroom standards to receive help, even though no discernible discrepancy may be revealed between tested intelligence and school performance. It focuses on early identification with assistance through early intervention services before the specific determination of a learning disability. RTIs (that is, responses to intervention) include monitoring and assessing students to determine levels, modifying classroom programs, and intervening with the appropriate evidence-based programs, strategies and resources, instead of referring students for automatic LD identification. RTIs merit the provision of appropriate early intervention services in natural environments to meet the needs of individual children. RTIs are implemented differently in many states, with a problem-solving approach that includes three overall tiers of interventions:

1. Core (whole class) receives instruction and monitoring to determine needs and effectiveness of instruction
2. Targeted (small groups) for students who need more strategic interventions identified
3. Intensive (small groups, 1:1) for students with more chronic needs who require frequent monitoring of rigorous interventions

- IEP team members can be excused from attending meetings if all agree attendance is deemed unnecessary beforehand. The IEP team will obtain that member's input prior to the meeting (e.g., parent or guardian signs off with

LEA agreement that the member's area of the curriculum or related services are not being modified or discussed in the meeting).

- Schools should try to consolidate meetings, such as combining reevaluations with IEP team meetings.

- There is a federal timeline of sixty days allowed for evaluation, unless states have enacted other timelines, a parent or guardian enrolls the student in another school district, or a parent or guardian does not produce the student for evaluation.

- Changes to a child's IEP do not require another meeting if the LEA and parent or guardian of the child agree.

- An IEP can be amended or modified without redrafting the entire IEP.

- Alternative means of meeting participation and communication are allowed, such as video conferences, conference calls, and email (e.g., parent(s) and guardian(s) must give informed consent prior to an initial evaluation in which case e-mail could be an acceptable mode).

- Families have the right to obtain one free independent evaluation for each school evaluation (or reevaluation) if they believe that the evaluation conducted by qualified school personnel was inappropriate. If a school district does not agree to pay for an independent evaluation, then a hearing officer is obtained to determine whether or not another evaluation is warranted. If a private evaluation is conducted, the school district considers the findings but does not necessarily have to agree with or implement the recommendations.

- The act reduces paperwork burdens on teachers by conducting reviews of processes and forms and expanding the use of technology in the IEP process.

- It reduces the number of times a copy of procedural safeguards is given to parents or guardians. Copies are now required only once a year unless parents request them again.

- The use of positive discipline and other behavioral assessments and classroom approaches is required to prevent emotional and behavioral violations from recurring.

- The discipline code has been changed to a case-by-case basis to ensure the safety and appropriate educational atmosphere in the schools under the jurisdiction of the local educational agency. The act allows schools to expel students without first determining whether the behavior was linked to the child's disability. The behavior might involve drugs, bringing weapons to school, or causing bodily harm. Students can be removed for up to forty-five school days with instruction in another setting (e.g., interim alternative educational setting, or IAES).

- The incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions must be recorded and a determination must be made whether misbehaviors resulted from a failure of the IEP.

- The act sets up procedures that require the state educational agency (SEA) to develop a model form to assist parents in filing a complaint and a due process complaint notice.
- Due process hearings are delayed while all parties attempt to meet to resolve problems. Parties are not allowed to raise issues at due process hearings that were not raised in the original complaint.
- The LEA must conduct a Child Find to ensure and provide equitable services to children with disabilities who attend private schools within the LEA, without regard to where the children may reside (Office of Special Education Programs, 2005). Part C of IDEA refers to children from birth to age three.
- The act strengthens the role and responsibility of parents and ensures that families have meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children at school and at home.

Resources for Further Updates

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/factsheet/idea.html

Council for Exceptional Children: www.cec.sped.org

Dynamic Learning Maps: dynamiclearningmaps.org

Elementary and Secondary Education Act: www.ed.gov/esea

National Center and State Collaborative: www.ncscpartners.org

Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights (PACER) Center: www.pacer.org

Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers: www.parcconline.org

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium: www.smarterbalanced.org

Response to Intervention and Literacy Collaborative: www.lcosu.org/documents/PDFs/RtI_in_Literacy_Collaborative_Schools.pdf

U.S. Department of Education, Building the Legacy: IDEA 2004: idea.ed.gov

Wrightslaw: www.wrightslaw.com

■ DISABILITY CATEGORIES UNDER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA)

In order to receive funds under Part B of IDEA, states must ensure that a free and appropriate public education is provided to children within thirteen disability categories at no cost to the parents, guardians, and families, in conformity with the individualized education program.

Exact classification language of each state is decided after it looks at federal regulations and does its alignment. As the U.S. Department of Education points out, the federal role in education is limited as per the 10th Amendment. Education policy is determined at state and local levels. School districts across the United States have many interpretations of and ways to implement federal disability laws. Sometimes states use different terms, but it is not the label that is important; it is matching the criteria under that disability category. Labels are just for eligibility. There is an enormous disadvantage for students when certain words and a condition title are needed to describe and convey a disability, rather than a person. Again, some states use different terms, as words develop negative connotations, but criteria remain the same and are aligned with federal regulations, with varying state interpretations and school applications.

IDEA Categories

Autism

This is a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects educational performance. It was added to IDEA in 1990.

Deafness

This is a hearing impairment so severe that a child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, resulting in adverse effects on educational performance.

Deaf-Blindness

These are simultaneous hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational problems that a child cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or blindness.

Hearing Impairment

This is an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but is not included under the definition of deafness.

Intellectual Disability

This requires significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning that exists concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior, manifests during the developmental period, and adversely affects a child's educational performance. The former term *mental retardation* is no longer a category under the federal law due to its negative connotation. This change resulted from a legislative statute, Rosa's Law (2010), brought on by Rosa Marcellino, a nine-year-old girl with Down syndrome.

Multiple Disabilities

These are simultaneous impairments (such as intellectual disability/blindness or intellectual disability/orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational problems that the child cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include children with deaf-blindness.

Orthopedic Impairment

This is an orthopedic impairment so severe that it adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, such as clubfoot or the absence of a limb. Impairments caused by disease include poliomyelitis or bone tuberculosis and impairments from other causes such as cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that might cause contractures (loss of joint motion).

Other Health Impairment

These impairments include having limited strength, vitality, or alertness due to chronic or acute health problems, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, a heart condition, tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, nephritis, asthma, sickle cell anemia, hemophilia, epilepsy, lead poisoning, leukemia, diabetes, and Tourette syndrome (listed as a chronic or acute health problem under IDEA 2004), that adversely affect a child's educational performance.

Emotional Disturbance

This is a condition that adversely affects educational performance and exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree:

- An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors
- An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances
- A general or pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems

The term includes children who have schizophrenia. The term does not include children who are socially maladjusted unless it is determined that they have a serious emotional disturbance.

Specific Learning Disability

This is a disorder of one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell,

or do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities; intellectual disability; emotional disturbance; or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

Speech or Language Impairment

This is a communication disorder such as stuttering (childhood onset fluency disorder), impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Traumatic Brain Injury

An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force resulting in total or partial functional disability, psychosocial impairment, or both that adversely affects educational performance. The term does not include brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative or brain injuries induced by birth trauma. Added to IDEA as a category in 1990.

Visual Impairment, Including Blindness

A visual impairment includes both partial sight and total blindness that even with correction adversely affects a child's educational performance.

SOURCE: Center for Parent Information and Resources (2012).

The following is a mnemonic to help remember all thirteen IDEA disabilities:

All very determined students deserve infinitely more opportunities than school has ever offered.

All (autism)

very (visual impairment)

determined (deafness)

students (speech and language impairment)

deserve (deaf-blindness)

infinitely (intellectual disability)

more (multiple disabilities)

opportunities (orthopedic impairment)

than (traumatic brain injury)

school (specific learning disability)

has (hearing impairment)

ever (emotional disturbance)

offered (other health impairments).

■ HISTORY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Americans with Disabilities Act (1990) was designed to prohibit discrimination against people with disabilities by state and local governments and provide equal opportunities in the following areas:

- Public accommodations
- Employment
- Transportation
- Telecommunications
- State and local governments

ADA's intent was to afford people with disabilities the same opportunities as everyone else to lead full and productive lives. Its goal was to break down barriers for people with disabilities, which stop them from achieving emotional and social independence. As a civil rights act, its enforcement enables our society to benefit from the skills and talents that people with disabilities have always possessed but have been thwarted from demonstrating. The overall goal in schools is to offer reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities to achieve the same results and be given the same benefits as students without disabilities.

The ADA Amendments Act (2008) defines disability as an impairment that substantially limits major life activities such as breathing, seeing, hearing, speaking, learning, caring for oneself, working, eating, sleeping, bending, lifting, communicating, thinking, reading, and concentrating. Included here are examples of major bodily dysfunctions that directly impact major life activities related to the circulatory, respiratory, digestive, and reproductive systems, along with the functions of the neurological system, brain, cell growth, immune system, bowel, and bladder. If the impairment is temporary, such as a nonchronic condition of a short duration, that person is not covered under ADA. For example, someone with a broken leg would not qualify. Disabilities that are six months or less in duration do not qualify. In addition, ADA states that a person must have a record of impairment, thereby including someone recovering from a chronic or long-term impairment such as mental illness or cancer. The definition expands further by including someone who is regarded as having such impairment. This involves determining how others regard or look at someone with a disability. ADA would protect someone who might have a facial disfigurement such as cleft palate from being denied employment because of workers' reactions. It would also allow an individual who has motor impairments due to cerebral palsy to perform a job that someone might incorrectly assume he or she cannot cognitively perform due to the person's discriminatory perception of that individual. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Supreme Court had made many decisions that were reversed by the ADAAA's definition of "substantially limits," with ADAAA being less rigorous.

In addition, the conditions are looked at without regard to the ameliorative effects of medication, medical supplies or equipment, prosthetics, assistive technology, reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids, or behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications. This means that the underlying impairment is looked at without considering the effects of the extra devices; just the disability itself is addressed.

An individual is deemed qualified for a job position if he or she possesses the skills, education, or other job requirements of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation. This basically prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the private sector. Courts are currently interpreting this law on an individual basis.

Examples of reasonable accommodations include the following:

- Modifying a work schedule
- Providing menus in Braille or having a waiter reading the menu to a customer who is blind (the former allows for more independence)
- Installing numbers in Braille in office or hotel elevators and outside rooms
- Allowing seeing-eye dogs in public facilities
- Providing a sign interpreter at theater performances if the theater is given sufficient notice by someone with a hearing impairment
- Providing assistive listening devices and effective means of communication to families, friends, or associates of individuals seeking access to a service, program, or activity of a public entity, such as Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) communication for people who are deaf through webcams or videophones
- Training personnel to administer insulin to people with diabetes
- Removing existing barriers if it is readily achievable and can be done without much difficulty or expense (For instance, if a ramp or elevator could not be built because the business is not profitable enough, curbside service could be provided to people with disabilities. However, not every building or each part of every building needs to be accessible.)
- Accommodations could be as simple as lowering a paper towel dispenser, widening a doorway, or providing special parking spots

Courts levy penalties against a business if it shows bad faith in complying with ADA. Acts of bad faith might include deliberately ignoring a person's request, hostile acts, or refusing voluntary compliance. The Justice Department considers the size and resources of individual businesses before civil penalties are issued. Complaints must be valid. For example, refusing employment to someone because he or she suffers from depression, has HIV/AIDS, or has a history of alcoholism would be discrimination based upon societal stereotypes, not the person's ability to perform a job. However, someone with myopia or hypertension is not covered by ADA because the condition is correctable (e.g., with eyeglasses and medication). If a person needs to use a seeing-eye dog, the owner of a restaurant cannot arbitrarily deny admittance to the dog

and the patron who is blind. Similarly, if the venue is given ample notice, sign language interpreters must be provided at theaters and other public gatherings for people who cannot hear.

Court cases continually wrestle with the meaning of the word *disability*. In 1998, a golfer with a birth defect in his right leg, Casey Martin, was allowed to ride a golf cart instead of walking the course in tournament play. At the time, the Professional Golfers' Association thought that Mr. Martin would have an unfair advantage over other golfers, but the Supreme Court determined that a golf cart was a reasonable accommodation, since Casey Martin suffered from fatigue and walking the course would have been an additional burden for him. In May 2004, the Supreme Court allowed George Lane, a man in a wheelchair who was a defendant ordered to testify, and Beverly Jones, a court reporter with a mobility impairment, to sue the state of Tennessee for monetary damages since they needed to appear in a second-floor courtroom in a building without elevators. In this ruling, it was determined that there was a failure to provide people with disabilities access to the courts. Other cases concern seniority issues being honored (e.g., a person with a disability cannot take the job of a worker without a disability who has higher seniority), whether someone's health might be impacted by a certain job (e.g., working with chemicals if one has a preexisting medical condition), being granted testing accommodations at the graduate level, claiming too much noise interfered with passing a nursing exam for someone with a mental impairment, and whether someone who has chronic fatigue syndrome can adequately perform a job. Topics also include the possibility of granting indefinite periods of leave or open-ended schedules. Reasonable accommodations mean that with the accommodation in place the person is able to perform all of the job requirements. Safety is sometimes a mitigating factor; for example, someone who is blind cannot successfully claim discrimination because he or she is not hired as an airline pilot.

ADA enters school settings by guaranteeing that staff, parents, families, and students with disabilities have access to school plays, conferences, graduation ceremonies, and more. It translates to guaranteeing the same access to students with disabilities as peers without disabilities (e.g., a librarian assisting a student in a wheelchair so he or she has access to books on higher shelves or allowing a student who has cerebral palsy to be a cheerleader). There are no special education rules in ADA; however, it does have an impact on education. Overall, as a civil rights act, ADA protects persons with disabilities in the private sector and school settings by guaranteeing reasonable accommodations, services, aids, and policies as it works in alignment with other state and federal laws.

■ CIVIL RIGHTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 generally refers to adjustments in the general education classroom but can include other educational services as well. It states

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (Quoted in Duncan & Ali, 2010, para. 2)

Public school districts, institutions of higher education, and other state and local education agencies are required to provide the protections found in Section 504. Both ADA and Section 504 are enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), while IDEA is enforced by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS). Both are divisions of the U.S. Department of Education. ADA does not limit the rights or remedies available under Section 504. Students with IEPs may also have 504 plans, while students with 504 plans do not necessarily have IEPs.

For a person to be classified as having a disability, he or she must have a record of a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities and be regarded as having such an impairment. A life activity includes functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working, along with the additions in ADAAA (2008), which include eating, standing, sleeping, lifting, bending, reading, communicating, thinking, and concentrating. In addition, other life activities not included in 504 can also be protected. Trained personnel who have particular knowledge of the strengths, abilities, and unique needs of the students conduct the evaluation of students with disabilities to determine placements. The information is not solely based on one assessment and must assess the student's need, not the impairment. For example, a student with blindness cannot be asked to count the number of hands raised but would need to be given an alternate kinesthetic accommodation to test his or her ability to actually count, not his or her ability to see the hands. Placement decisions come from varying sources, including teacher recommendations along with aptitude and achievement tests, and they must take into account cultural, social, physical, and adaptive needs.

Like IDEA, Section 504 states that every effort must be made to educate students with their nondisabled peers if the academic and social needs can be met there. Appropriate education for a student with a disability might include placement in a general or special education class with or without supplementary services or related services. Specific recommendations must include strategies and delineate accommodations. Disability documentation needs to be provided, and necessary accommodations must be requested. Individuals who qualify for Section 504 protection can fall under any of the thirteen IDEA classifications or other classifications such as the following examples (this is not an exhaustive list):

ADHD	Asthma
AIDS	Cancer
Arthritis	Cerebral palsy

Diabetes	Hearing impairment/deafness
Emotional/psychiatric disability	Learning disability
Epilepsy	Visual impairment/blindness

Strategies, names of implementers, monitoring dates, and general comments are examples of elements included in 504 plans. If a student qualifies for services under IDEA, that student does not need both an IEP and a Section 504 plan. The reason is that one way to meet 504 requirements is to comply with IDEA. General education teachers must implement provisions of Section 504, or that district may be found to be noncompliant with the federal law. Again, the general education teacher needs to review the 504 plans of students to effectively implement appropriate educational services. School districts must properly identify and evaluate students with disabilities who need services, supplying an educational plan under Section 504, which is then protected by procedural safeguards. In this scenario, teachers also need proper instruction and preparation to meet an individual child's needs if that child has a 504 plan. Parents and guardians, building administrators, teachers, support staff, and the Section 504 coordinator are involved in developing the plan. The coordinator may be a principal, guidance counselor, special education director, supervisor, or another appointed qualified staff member. A 504 plan can simply include strategies like breaking down long-term projects into smaller sequential steps, sending home a duplicate set of texts, or maybe sitting a child nearer to the center of instruction (e.g., chalkboards or interactive whiteboards). It may also include training staff how to use an EpiPen (to inject emergency allergy medication) or allowing a child with diabetes more frequent breaks or access to unlimited water. Overall, health and learning plans are determined and outlined in 504 plans.

Section 504 laws apply to elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools. Trained personnel who assess the needs, not the impairments, must conduct evaluations in order to determine placement. Placement decisions consider the maximum extent to which the student can be educated with his or her peers without disabilities. This may be accomplished with and without supplementary and related services but must be subject to periodic reevaluations. Parents and guardians are informed about all placement and evaluation actions and may examine their child's records. Students may not be denied access to any nonacademic activities, such as clubs, transportation, athletics, and counseling, based on their disability.

■ PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE CONCERNS

Special education was not always accepted in the larger school community. Before the passage of Public Law 94-142 (Education of the Handicapped Act) in 1975, students with disabilities did not receive the most appropriate services. After the act was passed, students were entitled to receive a free and

appropriate public education designed to meet their unique needs. The result of this law was the development of specialized programs and services. However, nowhere does the law explain what “appropriate” means or use the word *inclusion*. Approximately 20 years later, it was discovered that these separate programs were actually excluding students with disabilities from exposure to the general education curriculum and not preparing them for successful community integration. IDEA (1997) advocated people-first language—looking at the student first and then the disability. After all, students should not be defined by what they cannot do; rather, their strengths should be highlighted. IDEIA (2004) includes responses to intervention as a part of the evaluation for identifying a student with a specific learning disability. RTI is not mandated but offered as an option, instead of solely using the discrepancy model, which involves revealing a discernible discrepancy between tested intelligence and school performance. Therefore, more accountability is now placed on the types of instruction, programs, and interventions offered. Yes, students have differences, but now classrooms must proactively offer appropriate interventions before automatically labeling a student. Sometimes it’s the instruction, not the disability, that’s the culprit in cases of lower performance.

Today’s thrust is toward inclusion and improving student outcomes with appropriate interventions, but concerns exist. Debates between teachers and administrators occur on topics such as time for planning and collaboration, types of supports and assessments given, honoring the CCSS and IEPs, how to divide instructional time to provide equally for all groups of learners, behavioral concerns, assessment, and accountability issues. Often teachers are so overwhelmed by their busy days that they are unable to preplan, evaluate, and assess lessons with cooperating teachers. In the ideal world, common planning time should be allotted in both general and special education teachers’ schedules, giving them the time to design and evaluate lessons. Consistent constructive review of both successful and unsuccessful teaching methodology is an integral inclusionary factor. Response to interventions has entered classrooms, but just who determines what constitutes an effective intervention and assessment is still an issue. The reliability and validity of programs require further determination.

Teachers are seldom unwilling to include students, but some lack the training or experience regarding what strategies, programs, or academic or behavioral scaffolding need to be provided so that they do not sacrifice any one group of learners. Specially designed instruction is imperative for students who have IEPs. Accountability for student performance raises the following question among teachers, students, parents, administrators, and learners:



“Does fair mean equal?” If students or families declare, “It is not fair,” please share the following definition. A fair is a place where you go on rides and buy cotton candy—any questions?

Several studies (Mostert & Crockett, 2000; Norris & Schumacker, 1998; Skiba et al., 2008) revealed that, in the past, schools have disappointed former special education students with ineffective interventions. Research highlights that aligning the content standards with assessments and appropriate instruction results in higher learning outcomes for all students, with and without disabilities (Browder, 2006; Thurlow, 2003; Wiener, 2005).

Inclusion is a fabulous concept, but the pragmatics involved do not always result in its proper implementation. Inclusion has sometimes actually resulted in exclusion. Students with disabilities who are included in a general classroom are at times overwhelmed by the pace, complexity, and amount of work they are expected to do, and prior knowledge they are assumed to have. Special educators should be integral members of the larger school community, but this is often not the case. All students and educators possess the ability to make integral, productive contributions to the classroom. As delineated in Chapter 6 on collaboration, special education and general education teachers and related staff work as partners to instruct all students, with ability levels ranging from nonverbal students to those who are gifted, to ensure the individualization of programs and services in shared inclusive classrooms.

General education teachers want all students to succeed, but they need more direction and training on how to differentiate instruction without sacrificing any one group of students. Inclusion has sometimes dangerously erased direct skill instruction that was formerly given in separate classrooms. Public Law 94-142, the grandmother of IDEA, originally called the Education of All Handicapped Children Act and passed by Congress back in 1975, was designed to provide services to students whose academic needs were not being met in the general education classroom. Today, unless the dynamics of the general education classroom are changed, these academic, social, cognitive, and emotional needs will still not be met. RTI can and should be used to monitor progress and adjust interventions accordingly, yielding benefits for all learners who are struggling with the curricula, not just those learners who receive special education (Chambers, 2008). Interventions are offered in general education classrooms first, before students are assumed to require special education services. The thinking here is that perhaps it is the instruction that is the issue, rather than the student's disability. Many families, administrators, educators, related staff, and students have concerns and sometimes diverse desires, interpretations, and ways to think about both general and special education deliveries, services, and interventions.

Upcoming legislation will address the full funding of IDEA, since current funding is only 16 of the 40 percent promised in the IDEA Full Funding Act. This will assist with the recruitment and the retention of quality staff, according to Senator Harkin. The IDEA Fairness Act proposes for parents to receive reimbursement for expert witnesses and for tests or evaluations if parents prevail during due process hearings. Read more about both acts at www.help.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/?id=49395c2f-ea55-4133-8556-827b2e521a62&groups=Chair. Other legislation on the horizon involves additional training for educators to recognize dyslexia, the need for more research, greater understanding of learning disabilities, and considering RTI under ESEA, instead of IDEA.

Somewhere in *edutopia*, a happy balance needs to be achieved with interventions to determine what kind, to what extent, how, where, and who will deliver the interventions. *Special education is headed in the right direction.* With more fine-tuning, this transitional stage will effectively ride the now turbulent waves. Education never worked well with a one-size-fits-all philosophy. Inclusion is a great idea if it is properly implemented but should not be considered the only option if the child's academic and social needs are not being met by placement in the general classroom. Accountability along with appropriate identifications, interventions, and funding is essential. Special education is an *evolutionary*, not a *revolutionary*, process. Significantly reducing the bureaucracy, paperwork, and litigiousness that too often spring from disagreements over implementation of the law; settling school discipline issues; figuring out how to continually and appropriately fund IDEA; and determining just which academic and behavioral interventions are appropriate ones are not simple issues.

At times, an abundance of paperwork has scared many teachers away from continuing in the field, since quite often the time required in order to comply with writing IEPs and data reports, attend meetings, and keep on top of changes in legislation is deducted from much-needed student instruction. In the attempt to "get it right," administrators, families, general and special education teachers, and all students can be frustrated by the sometimes confusing system, which makes it harder to focus on helping students with disabilities achieve academic and social success. Some of the revisions in IDEA (2004) address that (e.g., reducing the number of meetings, allowing revision consent by email, and combining meetings). Education is a complex issue for parents, guardians, teachers, administrators, all staff members, and children of all abilities. Further IDEA reauthorizations will hopefully continue to advocate ways to incorporate appropriate services for students with disabilities, honoring individual student levels and grade-level CCSS.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS ■

Special education teachers in many states face further challenges as they try to balance and align the standards with students' IEPs and the Common Core State Standards. Educators feverishly think of ways that students with disabilities can achieve mastery or progress toward those standards. The curriculum is not diluted for any group of students but taught in subskills that reflect the standards in smaller, more palatable bites. Individual strategies, materials, and accommodations are geared toward achieving higher outcomes for all students.

Both GE and SE teachers require a greater knowledge of the CCSS and the strengths of students with disabilities who are now expected to achieve standards and outcomes. Ignoring improvements toward achievements is simply not an option for any group of students. However, bridging the gap between current levels and desired outcomes is imperative. Inclusion is marching onward, with everyone honoring abilities and ways to increase academic, behavioral, social, emotional, and functional levels in all domains.

The CCSS are implemented across the grade levels and disciplines for all students, including those students with special learning needs who often present a different set of skills and knowledge. The goal of the CCSS English language arts (ELA) standards is to prepare learners for reading, writing, and communication skills beyond their school years, to be college- and career-ready. There are anchor and grade-specific standards for reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language. The CCSS for reading include, but are not limited to, honing students' skills and knowledge to infer and reason, cite textual evidence, interpret words and phrases, and compare points of view in a range of literature, informational text, and diverse formats. The vast choices include short stories, novels, news articles, poems, myths, essays, plays, technical texts, historical documents, and digital sources from Grades K–12 for literature and informational text, including both the understanding and the evaluation of fiction and nonfiction genres. Beginning in Grade 6 and continuing to Grade 12, the reading and writing standards are divided into two sections: one for English classes and one that relates the literacy skills to history, social studies, science, and technical subjects. Specific standards are denoted for the content teachers of students in Grades 6–8, 9–10, and 11–12. Grades 6–12 literacy standards are integral parts of other content areas, beyond the exclusive focus of English classes. Therefore, reading and writing is a cross-disciplinary responsibility. As the CCSS site states, the reading standards in history, social studies, science, and technical subjects are intended to complement the specific content demands of the disciplines, not to replace them. This includes but is not limited to citing text to support reading and writing; analyzing primary and secondary documents; determining the meaning of symbols, phrases, diagrams, and data; and interpreting historical, scientific, and technical academic and domain-specific vocabulary. The writing standards invite students to compose pieces that include supportive evidence from texts to organize thoughts, revise writing, and reflect on writing across the disciplines.

In Grades K–8, domains organize the math standards, while Grades 9–12 are organized by conceptual categories. Each grade level builds on the standards in the earlier grades and expands prior student knowledge and skills with increasing proficiency. There are eight mathematical practices that represent the expertise that teachers must help their students develop, beginning in kindergarten and onward to 12th grade. These are practices and proficiencies that connect to specific grade-level content to help students solve math problems.

The following charts denote CCSS ELA and math codes, categories, and domains.

Codes	English Language Arts (CCSS.ELA)	
RF	<i>Reading foundational skills</i>	Print concepts and phonological awareness (K & Grade 1) Phonics and word recognition (Grades K–5) Fluency (Grades K–5)

Codes	English Language Arts (CCSS.ELA)	
RL	<i>Reading literature</i>	Key ideas and details (K–12) Craft and structure (K–12) Integration of knowledge and ideas (K–12) Range of reading and level of complexity (K–12)
RI	<i>Reading informational text</i>	Key ideas and details (K–12) Craft and structure (K–12) Integration of knowledge and ideas (K–12) Range of reading and level of complexity (K–12) <i>Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects</i> in Grades K–5 are integrated in the reading while Grades 6–8, 9–10, and 11–12 are subject specific
W	<i>Writing</i>	Text types and purposes (K–12) Production and distribution of writing (K–12) Research to build and present knowledge (K–12) Range of writing (K–12) Integrated in specific subject areas in Grades 6–12
SL	<i>Speaking and listening</i>	Comprehension and collaboration (K–12) Presentation of knowledge and ideas (K–12)
L	<i>Language</i>	Conventions of standard English (K–12) Knowledge of language (begins in Grade 2) Vocabulary acquisition and use (K–12)

CCSS Mathematics		Grades
CC	Counting and cardinality	K
OA	Operations and algebraic thinking	K–5
NBT	Number and operations in base ten	K–5
NF	Number and operations in fractions	3–5
MD	Measurement and data	K–5
G	Geometry	K–12
RP	Ratios and proportional relationships	6–7
NS	Number systems	6–8
EE	Expressions and equations	6–8
F	Functions	8–12
SP	Statistics and probability	6–12

Math (Grades 9–12) high school standards include these categories and additional skills under each one.

Number and Quantity	Algebra	Functions	Modeling (connected to all categories)	Geometry	Statistics and Probability
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NOTE: For a complete review with the exact language of the ELA and Math Common Core State Standards, consult www.corestandards.org. Review the appendices for a wealth of information.

Challenges arise when students with and without exceptionalities enter inclusive classrooms with different background knowledge, skills, motivation, and instructional experiences or successes. In addition, when the students progress to upper grades and the focus shifts from learning to read to reading to learn, problems may arise in finding the main ideas, supporting details, predictions, inferences, and summaries (Jitendra, Burgess, & Gajria, 2011).

The following vignettes offer CCSS scenarios across the grade levels for students with IDEA classifications.

ELA Decoding Goal

Using his knowledge of phonics and syllabication, Angel, a student with dyslexia, will decode two-syllable words that contain short and long vowel sounds and consonant blends, achieving eighty percent accuracy on running grades and quizzes each week, for twelve consecutive weeks. Angel will practice these skills at home (*partners IEP and CCSS goals with the family to strengthen and value reading skills in both environments*).

Math Problem Solving Goal

By the end of the school year, Brittany, a student with a learning disability, will solve one-digit multiplication problems and identify the correlating division facts with eighty-five-percent accuracy on curriculum-based quizzes and tests. Brittany will record her progress (*establishes student metacognition*) and be offered positive, realistic, and consistent feedback.

Reading—Literature and Informational Standards

Isabella, a girl with an intellectual disability, will make predictions and inferences by identifying details and text examples to achieve eighty percent accuracy on oral and written questions related to nonfiction text at her instructional level at the end of sixteen weeks of direct explicit instruction within a small-group setting. Isabella will require a trained peer to work with her three times a week to reread the text to highlight and color-code the appropriate details and to connect those details to specific narration (*modeling of skills, cooperative learning, repetition, reinforcement, peer mentoring, increased*

social and communication skills). Isabella will also be offered high-interest, low-level text and text-to-speech options.

Dylan, a student with autism, will make predictions and inferences by identifying details and text examples with eighty-five percent accuracy at the end of twelve weeks of explicit reading, comprehension instruction. Dylan will also require weekly consultation or collaboration with behavioral, occupational, and speech-language therapists, a visual schedule, increased verbal prompts, and social stories to ensure task completion.

ELA Writing Goal

Jacob, a student with emotional disturbance, will produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. Jacob will receive two forty-minute counseling sessions with the school psychologist each week. Jacob will use organizational writing frames as planners (*offers a writing road map to structure and sequence his thoughts*). Positive reinforcement for efforts as well as achievements will be offered (*increases student motivation*). Weekly personal writing conferences will be scheduled with the teacher (*proactive ongoing communication*).

SOURCE: Adapted from Karten (2014a, 2014b, 2014c).

The Dynamic Learning Maps Essential Elements offers statements of knowledge and skills linked to the grade-level academic expectations identified in the Common Core State Standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. These essential elements can be accessed at dynamiclearningmaps.org/content/essential-elements.

The educational goals of students with disabilities are just as valid as those of other students. High expectations of the CCSS need to be developed for all students in the classroom, but without proper supports, children and teachers can become lost and frustrated by the system. Sometimes, wonderfully conducted research offering promising techniques seems difficult or impossible to pragmatically translate into classrooms composed of students with mixed abilities. However, keep in mind that the ultimate goal is successful outcomes for all.

COOPERATIVE LEGISLATIVE REVIEW ■

Directions: As a review of these readings, choose either Option 1 or Option 2.

Option 1: Cooperatively answer six of the following ten questions on a separate piece of paper. Circle the question numbers you will be answering. Each person should write down the answers (true cooperative learning).

Option 2: If your group has access to online sites, cooperatively divide and answer all five questions by visiting the legislative sites listed below. Then, share your responses.

Rationale for collaborative options: Choosing questions or assignments to answer or complete empowers learners. Questions are teacher-guided, but students gain some control and responsibility as self-regulated learners. Within your classrooms, these types of choices can be offered from early grades onward to continually develop and foster independent learning and increased student responsibility. In addition, completing assignments collaboratively fosters interpersonal and team skills.

Option 1

1. Describe three laws that protect persons with disabilities.
2. Relate a Common Core State Standard to a student who has one of the thirteen IDEA categories.
3. Who can benefit from a 504 plan?
4. Think of a disability scenario that falls under the protections of the ADA.
5. Compare and contrast the benefits and pitfalls of inclusion.
6. If you could amend any of the laws, what changes would you make?
7. Where do you see special education going in the next 10 years?
8. Explain how children with disabilities can benefit from inclusion.
9. How can general education teachers influence a child's classroom success?
10. Do you think special education is going in the right direction? Support your response with current research.

Option 2: Legislative Web Quest

1. Identify and briefly describe three major disability laws that affect students in school settings.
2. Share how you plan to connect IEP elements to the CCSS.
3. Briefly describe two court cases and their implications for inclusive environments. Twenty choices are listed below.
4. Identify the elements listed in a student's transitional plan.
5. What rights do families have in formulating IEP documents?

Use these websites for your responses: www.wrightslaw.com, www.cec.sped.org, IDEA.ed.gov, www.ada.gov, and hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/resources/factsheets/504.pdf.

Court Cases	Main Concepts
1. <i>Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania</i> , 1972	Students with disabilities are not excluded from appropriate educational opportunities
2. <i>Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia</i> , 1972	Need to provide whatever specialized instruction will benefit the child, with due process and periodic review (precursor of IDEA)
3. <i>Board of Education of the Hendrick Hudson Central School District v. Rowley</i> , 1982	FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education)
4. <i>Brookhart v. Illinois State Board of Education</i> , 1983	Passing state tests to receive high school diplomas
5. <i>School Board of Nassau County, Florida v. Arline</i> , 1987	Defenses under 504—reasonable accommodations
6. <i>Honig v. Doe</i> , 1988	Suspension and expulsion
7. <i>Timothy W. v. Rochester, New Hampshire School District</i> , 1989	Proof of benefit not required; there is zero reject
8. <i>Sacramento City Unified School District, Board of Education v. Rachel H.</i> , 1994	LRE—educational and nonacademic benefits weigh in as well (e.g., social, communication)
9. <i>Gadsby v. Grasmick</i> , 1997	States to ensure compliance with IDEA
10. <i>Sutton v. United Airlines, Inc.</i> , 1999	Disability defined with corrective devices
11. <i>Cedar Rapids v. Garret F.</i> , 1999	Related services
12. <i>Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc. v. Williams</i> , 2002	Substantial limitation in major life activity under ADA
13. <i>AW ex rel. Wilson v. Fairfax County School Board</i> , 2004	Manifestation determination—Did the disability impact the student’s ability to control the behavior?
14. <i>Schaffer ex rel. Schaffer v. Weast</i> , 2005	Burden of proof in a due process hearing on party seeking relief
15. <i>Arlington Central School District Board of Education v. Murphy</i> , 2006	Entitles parents to recover fees paid to expert witnesses if they prevail
16. <i>Winkelman v. Parma City School District</i> , 2007	A parent acting as his or her child’s lawyer in IDEA actions but is not a licensed attorney
17. <i>Board of Education of City of New York v. Tom F.</i> , 2007	Reimbursement for private education if student was not enrolled in public school
18. <i>Forest Grove School District v. T. A.</i> , 2009	Reimbursement for private special education services when a public school fails to provide FAPE
19. <i>Doug C. v. Hawaii</i> , 2013	Validated the procedural requirement of parental attendance at an IEP meeting
20. <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> , 1954	Separate education facilities are inherently unequal; ended legal segregation in public schools.

■ IMPLICATIONS OF THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT

Let me begin this section with a few questions before we delve into the meaty implications of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). When George W. Bush reauthorized ESEA as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) at the turn of the millennium, panic permeated throughout school districts, with teachers asking questions such as

If my students do not perform well on the standardized tests, will I be fired?

Decades later, teachers ask questions such as

How will my students with disabilities achieve the grade-level standards?

In the future, teachers may ask,

Whatever happened to the good old days when we had time for things other than tests, such as fun learning activities?

Now let's review the history of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. In the years 2001 to 2002, ESEA was updated as NCLB and signed into law by President George W. Bush, with the intention that it would provide a better education for all children. Schools would be held more accountable for results. In addition, methods of teaching and teacher qualifications would be more heavily scrutinized. Focus was on improving the academic achievement of all students, allowing everyone access to future progress and lifelong achievements, including those from the highest- to the lowest-income schools. The expanded definition includes the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to educational activities and programs (in the amended Section 9101-37 of ESEA). This includes rigorous data analysis with multiple measurements, observations, controls, and designs. Peer-reviewed academic journals are valued over educator magazines or practitioner journals. Children with disabilities are included in district testing, allowing for a small percentage of students with more significant cognitive impairments to receive alternative assessments.

As this book is going to press, the ESEA and IDEA are due for reauthorization. The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) offers the following recommendations for the reauthorization of the ESEA:

1. All students are considered general education students, with an integration of ESEA, IDEA, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education. *Note:* Educational decisions will be affected if RTI is under IDEA or ESEA domains.
2. Students are prepared to leave high school either college or career ready.
3. Both general and special education teachers are highly qualified to identify student needs and appropriately deploy evidence-based practices to

teach and assess grade-level content and diverse learners. This includes but is not limited to academic, social, emotional, and behavioral factors, with universal design for learning (UDL) honored for instruction and assessments.

4. Learners who struggle are identified and serviced with appropriate instruction and interventions.
5. If a growth model is utilized, students of all levels are included, with expectations held high for all students.
6. Individual education programs are agreements that list the specific skills, services, and supports that students receive while the ESEA assessments provide academic accountability.
7. Meaningful family engagement empowers families to be advocates for their child with the appropriate tools, training, and technical assistance provided to allow them to make informed and appropriate contributions.
8. Both IDEA and ESEA require funding that provides public schools with the necessary resources to meet the needs of all students.

SOURCE: Consortium for Citizens With Disabilities (2010).

The Time for Innovation Matters in Education Act (TIME) advocates grants to promote school reforms with rigorous learning in core subjects, enrichment, and increased time for teacher planning. Proponents want increased learning time (ILT) for disadvantaged students in low-performing, high-poverty schools that may be receiving supplemental educational services (SES) from outside and private agencies to create high-quality extended learning time (ELT) within the same school district. There is a strong intention to increase positive school experiences of students within their communities. This increase of nontraditional school hours is intended to benefit disadvantaged students who need more support.

Hopefully, all students with disabilities will continually be offered a free appropriate public education in their least restrictive environment with the correct level of scaffolding to increase performance levels. The bar needs to be continually raised for students of all ability levels.

Investigate further by visiting www.timeandlearning.org/time-innovation-matters-education-act, www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml, and www.copaa.org/?page=ESEA.

Now, back to those original questions and some answers:

If my students do not perform well on the standardized tests, will I be fired?

No, but the types of programs, instructional strategies, and accommodations and the frequency, duration, and location of interventions, assessments, and evaluations will be reviewed and revised to determine just why the learning gaps exist. The focus needs to be on how to better deliver targeted curriculum standards—not pointing fingers but promoting remediation.

How will my students with disabilities achieve the grade-level standards?

It's about increasing the outcomes for students with disabilities. Value what benchmark tests reveal in terms of instruction and curricular focus. Increase formative assessments to guide instruction rather than valuing only summative evaluations. Benchmark tests reveal the effectiveness of strategies and interventions, with students' responses telling administration and staff what standards need to be addressed, along with the resources and deliveries that require fine-tuning.

Whatever happened to the good old days when we had time for things other than tests, such as fun learning activities?

With creativity, perseverance, and diligence regarding the curriculum standards, teachers will realize that assessments do not replace fun but accompany tangible learning results. The distribution of time to concentrate on learning does not translate to the deletion of other activities but must correlate with the standards and all subjects. Then the message is transmitted to students that learning is fun and not just about the test! Accountability is crucial but can be accomplished only if it accompanies higher student motivation.

Accountability Questions to Ponder

- How is increased accountability for students with disabilities a step in the right direction?
- What is the impact of the reauthorization of ESEA on individual students who come from different ability groups?
- How will a revised ESEA affect IDEA's current provisions?
- What impact will sanctions have on schools that serve students with disabilities?
- Will teachers teach to the test, or can all subjects be equally balanced?
- What will the educational picture look like in the next few decades?

(Answers can and will vary.)

■ **TRANSLATING RESEARCH INTO LEARNING STRATEGIES THAT WORK**

Research and Professional Literature Says the Following:

- Structured, well-delivered, research-based interventions positively influence student performance within inclusive environments, honoring high expectations and best practices for all students (Beattie, Jordan, & Algozzine, 2006; Damasio, 2003; Karten, 2007d; LeDoux, 2002; McNary, Glasgow, & Hicks, 2005; Sousa, 2007).
- Successful quality inclusion programs involve team approaches with collaborative efforts from schools and families, allowing for flexibility to perceive

when something works well and adaptation to change it when it does not work (Willis, 2009; Karten, 2014c).

- Inclusion generally uses five methods to help students succeed in a general education classroom. These five methods include

1. collaborative consultation,
2. cooperative teaching and other team arrangements,
3. curricula and instructional strategies,
4. accommodations and adaptations, and
5. training general education teachers to accommodate diversity (Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2012).

- Social skills do not come naturally to students with autism and must be directly taught if they are going to be mastered (e.g., what to explicitly do and say in each situation) (Baker, 2005).

- The stages of backward design—or *understanding by design* (UbD)—involve identifying the desired results first, determining acceptable evidence, and then planning experiences and instruction accordingly. This includes the acquisition of important information and skills, making meaning of the content, and then effectively transferring that learning beyond the school (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

- Teachers must understand the role of culture in human development and schooling in order to make good decisions about classroom management and organization (Rothstein-Fisch & Trumbull, 2008).

- “A teacher can be ten times more effective by incorporating visual information into a classroom discussion. . . . Our brains have more receptors to process the images coming in than the words we hear” (Burmark, quoted in Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 2002).

- Teachers need to present new information in smaller chunks and offer strategic stopping points for demonstration, descriptions, summarization, discussion, and predictions. Teachers also need to take steps to establish and communicate learning goals and track student progress as they interact with that new knowledge (Marzano, 2007).

- “Students need to know that they’re accepted. I had one student with a learning disability; everyone told him what was wrong with him, but no one tried to help him realize what was good in him” (Tomlinson, quoted in ASCD, 2002).

- “Students need multiple opportunities to meet standards, and those opportunities should include differentiated instruction, accommodations and modifications, and opportunities for advanced learners” (Harris, quoted in ASCD, 2002).

- Teacher efficacy (thinking that you will influence students’ successes), collaborative relationships, mentoring/advocacy, and community building are essential components of inclusive classrooms (Cramer, 2006).

- The people who work in the school building (e.g., principal, assistant principals, educators, instructional assistants, and all staff) along with the students' families are the actual inclusive experts who know the students the best (Hammeken, 2007).
- Schools that do not have forward-thinking programs for students with special needs are usually the ones with families who are not advocates for their children (Tramer, 2007).
- The absence of interventions in the early school years has a negative impact on the academic, emotional, social, and behavioral growth of students with reading and behavior disorders (Levy & Chard, 2001; Raver, 2003; Trout, Epstein, Nelson, Synhorst, & Hurley, 2006).
- Universal design of curriculum and instruction offers learning alternatives to students with and without disabilities and provides a framework for both creating and implementing lessons that value flexible goals, methods, and assessments (Pisha & Stahl, 2005). (For more information, visit the Center for Applied Special Technology website at www.cast.org.)
- Discussion, communication, connection, and learning in context helps learners in inclusive classrooms develop better literacy and numeracy competencies along with higher cognitive skills (Chorzempa & Lapidua, 2009; Graham & Harris, 2005; Hyde, 2007; Karten, 2009; Steen, 2007).
- "The public wants schools to hold kids accountable, but they also want schools to recognize that kids are kids" (Johnson, 2003, p. 37).
- Co-teachers who work together in inclusive classrooms collaboratively improve student outcomes with the mastery of the curriculum standards and emotional growth (Friend & Cook, 2003; Karten, 2007d; Nevin, Cramer, Voigt, & Salazar, 2008).
- In many schools, there is a lack of communication after the writing of the IEP and little if any communication or support from the special education teacher for the regular education teacher (Costley, 2013)
- Learning that is associated with students' interests and experiences is more likely to be retrieved from students' prior knowledge (Allsopp et al., 2008a; Karten, 2007d, 2008a, 2009).
- "Having opportunities to make choices in academic tasks can provide the environmental predictability needed to minimize inappropriate behaviors of students, while strengthening appropriate responses and increased levels of engagement. . . . For students with EBD [emotional behavioral disability], predictability and control may be critical concepts and skills that are necessary for appropriately coping with the environment" (Jolivette, Stichter, & McCormick, 2002, p. 24).
- Research-based instruction yields information on how children learn and how teachers need to teach with continual screening of essential skills, early interventions, progress monitoring, and data-driven decisions (Russo, Tiegerman, & Radziewicz, 2008).

- Students with special needs require academic and social support with effective accommodations, modifications, and guidance to achieve educational and emotional gains in inclusive settings—for example, differentiation of instruction that honors individual student strengths, needs, and potentials (Beattie et al., 2006; Karten, 2014c; Littky, 2004; McKinley & Stormont, 2008; Salend, 2005; Tomlinson, 2008).

MY PRAGMATIC RESEARCH INVESTIGATION

My research says . . .

Source:



Available for download at www.corwin.com/inclusionstrategies

INCLUSION AND THE STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES ■

When *inclusion* replaced the word *mainstreaming*, many teachers and professionals embraced the idea while others thought if they resisted it enough, it might go away. Mainstreaming had students included in classrooms for subjects they were more prepared for. Inclusion says, Let's include the students and provide the supports that will make it work. There are no guidelines, but listed on the next page are several ways students, teachers, and peers can fit in. As the book progresses, all of these will be delineated further, with specific curriculum classroom applications.

ACTIVITY: EIGHTEEN INCLUSIVE PRINCIPLES

Each person puts his or her name on an index card or Popsicle stick that is then randomly pulled from a hat, can, or jar to reveal the numbered inclusion ideas listed below. Each number on the list can also be clapped to focus attention, thereby adding a musical/rhythmic component. This procedure establishes equity in the classroom and stops the “ooh-ooh” child from volunteering to read everything or answering all of the questions. It also wakes up sleepers. In the classroom, sensitivity and variation can be used to help students with reading difficulties. For example, have students with and without reading difficulties select the Popsicle sticks to be part of the activity. Instead of determining who reads, intermittently ask some students to paraphrase statements, so they are not embarrassed by reading words that are too difficult in front of the class. Always mix it up by asking the best readers in the class to do nonreading activities as well.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Eighteen Inclusive Principles

1. Ask for help.
2. Differentiate content (what you are teaching) from process (how you teach—delivery and strategies).
3. Work with specialists as a team to modify and adapt the curriculum to meet the special needs of students while allowing for flexibility in scheduling.
4. Teach students how to learn by offering lessons in study skills along with the curriculum.
5. Get the whole class involved so that everyone is working together to help each other by establishing a team mentality.
6. Use cooperative learning and let peers work together to develop friendships.
7. Know when to change course.
8. Increase your own *disability* awareness.
9. Be aware of the physical classroom setup.
10. Provide directions in written form for children with auditory problems and in verbal form for those with visual difficulties.
11. Teach to strengths while avoiding weaknesses to minimize frustrations (e.g., honor students' favored intelligences after informal inventories).
12. Help students by giving them methods for organizing their written work.
13. Collect files containing additional higher-level materials and activities for students who require more challenges.
14. Allow students to work on various assigned tasks.
15. Be aware of multiple intelligences.
16. Value opinions of families and community.
17. Model appropriate behavior.
18. *Believe in yourself and your students!*



INCLUSION IS . . . ACROSTIC

Directions for Inclusion Acrostic Activity: Write a word that describes inclusion next to each letter below. You can use whatever words you desire, but a suggestion for one of the Ns is the word *naturally*. Hopefully, including others can become something automatic and natural—a way of life.

Acrostic writing is sometimes used to focus thoughts and enhance creativity.

I

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N . . . NATURALLY



Success Stories

Whatever happened to that kid? Remember the one who wouldn't sit still in class and kept jumping around from activity to activity without completing the specified requirements? Well, that child grew up and became a dancer who loves to express herself through body movements. Or that child might be a CEO who supervises others, multitasking and delegating the details to subordinates. Whatever happened to that child who doodled all day in class? Well, that child may now be a renowned architect or engineer who just designed an incredible building or new prototype for an ingenious car. Maybe the fidgety child who could never sit still learned to work with his hands, create sculpture, be a chef, or even work as a sign language interpreter. Maybe the child who had trouble making friends is now a guidance counselor or child psychologist. Maybe the child who has Down syndrome is now gainfully employed and has learned to live independently. Maybe the child who couldn't stop talking is now a lawyer or a journalist. What about the child who could barely read at grade level? Well, that child may now love e-books and has figured out how to decipher the written word by using different learning strategies. That child also may have gone on to college. Sure, the child might have needed a remedial reading and writing course, but with strong perseverance and support from friends, educators, and family, that child may never give up on her goals. That child may have graduated with a college diploma and is now gainfully employed. Maybe that child never went to college but is now taking adult education courses to learn more. Maybe that child learned a trade and is now a whiz with computers. Or maybe that child is an electrician or a plumber. Maybe that child learned to focus on her strengths and abilities. Maybe that child was helped by a teacher who successfully found a way to include her in the classroom. Maybe that child was included in society, not because it was the law but because it was the right thing to do. Legislation and research support inclusion, but educators are the ones who must support the child by turning the rhetoric into successful classroom practice.