

Inclusion

When looking back at the history of special education, one notices the many changes that have taken place. One leading legal authority says the entire history of special education in the United States is a story of movement from exclusion to increasing inclusion. Many years ago, people with severe disabilities were deemed “un-teachable” and unworthy of an education. They were placed in institutions where they had little or no contact with other people without disabilities. They were finally moved into public schools but had to attend classes in another building or in a separate classroom, once again with little or no contact with other students without disabilities.

In the late 1700s the idea of educating people with disabilities was introduced but no such program was established until 1817 when the American Asylum for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb was opened in Connecticut. This led to the development of other programs for people with disabilities, such as the New England Asylum for the Education of the Blind and the Experiential School for Teaching and Training Idiotic Children.

When compulsory school attendance laws were passed in the early 1900s, many students with disabilities were “exempted” because it was believed that their special needs would interfere with their education and the education of others. The students who were allowed to attend schools were put into special classrooms because they were not wanted in regular classrooms. Some believed the mere presence of children with disabilities were actually a threat to “normal children.” Most schoolteachers felt that they were not trained in educating students who had these types of needs. They believed that “special” teachers who had “special training” were needed to teach these “special” students in “special classrooms.” Because of this belief, the students with disabilities who were in regular schools were not an accepted part of it.

Special classrooms remained the norm for students with disabilities in regular schools, but institutions were also the norm for students who had more severe disabilities throughout the 1950s and 1960s. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled that children could not be segregated because of their race. This ruling caused parents of children with disabilities to think about the segregation of their children in schools. Parents who had placed their children in an institution knew that one reason they had been forced to that decision was that their children were not allowed into the public schools. They began to form advocacy groups to improve the opportunities for their children. Many court cases were fought in order improve institutions and to assure that students with disabilities could receive a free public education just like any other child..

In the 1970s, a series of laws were passed to address the needs of people with disabilities. One of these laws called the “Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975” (now called the “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” or IDEA) states that no child with a disability can be denied an free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. By the late 1970s and the early 1980s, many students who had milder disabilities were attending regular education classes for at least part of their school day. This was often referred to as “mainstreaming.”

This caused people to question why students with more severe disabilities remained segregated even though they were in the public school building. They began to explore ways in which all students could spend at least some time with their peers without disabilities in regular classrooms. This is often referred as the movement to “integrate” students with severe disabilities into the mainstream.

By the late 1980s many schools were becoming uncomfortable with the way students with disabilities were still seen primarily as “special education students” and not just “students at our school.” In addition, the years of experience were showing that collaboration between regular education and special education teachers within the regular classroom could effectively address the needs of all students, provide for a richer learning experience for all students, and prevent artificial barriers between students. Many believe that this movement to provide specialized services to students within the regular class and minimize any separation of students based on different learning needs to be most consistent with the law that has been on the books since 1975. This is usually described as “inclusion” or “inclusive education.”

Today many schools include all students with disabilities in regular education classrooms. Special education teachers and regular education teachers work together to provide the best possible education for students with all types of needs. By modifying or changing the curriculum to meet the needs of each learner, students with disabilities can be successful in regular education classrooms. While this evolution toward greater inclusion continues, it is still by no means universal. As you explore some of the links on this website, you will see that there is still some debate today about what constitutes the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities.

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Now that you know a little about the history of special education, look at the following sites and read how inclusion has been defined by others.

- Read “What is Inclusion?” by Shafik Asante and compare and contrast the story of Rosa Parks with the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular classrooms.

<http://www.inclusion.com/N-What.is.Inclusion.html>

- Read “What Is Inclusion” written by Colleen F. Tomko and describe the goal of inclusion.

<http://www.kidstogether.org/inc-what.htm>

- Review this site and choose 10 benefits of inclusion that you feel are the most important. Explain your choices.

Now that you have begun to think about this idea of inclusion, look at your own school. Where does it stand on this road from segregation to inclusion?

On the links associated with this unit, you will explore some of central issues of inclusion. These include

- [LRE vs. Inclusion](#);
- [Curricular Connections](#);
- [Collaboration](#); and
- [Modifications](#).

Are LRE and Inclusion the same?

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) is the federal law governing the education of children with disabilities. The IDEA and its regulations define LRE (least restrictive environment) but it does not use the term "inclusion." Nonetheless, the law's intent is very clear. In its report to the full Congress, the committee that wrote IDEA stated that the following:

The Law and this bill contains the presumption that children with disabilities are most appropriately educated with their nondisabled peers and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

This committee recognizes that every decision made for a child with a disability must be made on the basis of what that individual child needs... Nonetheless, when the decision is made to educate the child separately, an explanation of that decision will need...to be stated as part of the child's IEP.

This focus on assuring that students with disabilities are not automatically placed into separate schools or separate classrooms is a response to the history that you already reviewed. Before 1975, separation was the way most schools dealt with students with disabilities. At the time the law was passed, research was presented which demonstrated that this separate model of special education was highly ineffective. Since 1975, the section of the law that addresses the LRE has consistently said the same thing:

That to the maximum extent appropriate children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and

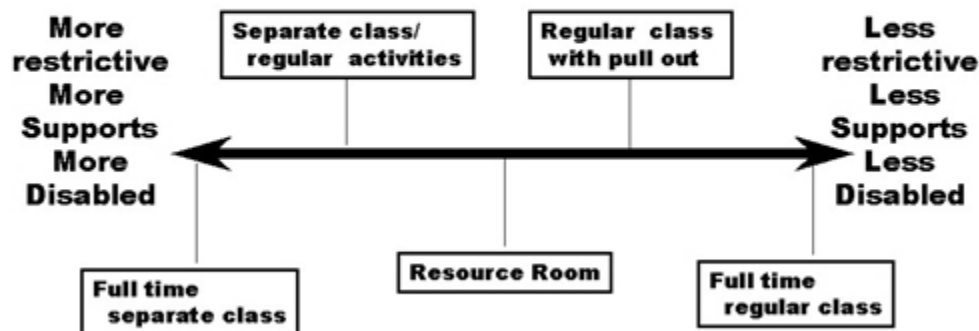
That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

In implementing the law a school is supposed to consider the regular classroom in the school the student would attend if not disabled. This is the first option for each student with a disability before a more restrictive placement is considered. If a student with a disability can be educated satisfactorily with appropriate aids and supports in the regular classroom in the school the student would attend if not disabled, that placement is the LRE placement for that student. However, if the placement team determines that a student cannot be educated satisfactorily in that classroom, even with the provision of appropriate aids and supports, than it may consider "more restrictive" (that is "more segregated") arrangements for that student. However, even then, the law clearly states that any alternative placement selected for the student outside of the regular educational environment must maximize opportunities for the student to interact with non-disabled peers, to the extent appropriate to the needs of the student.

IDEA does not require that every student with a disability be placed in the regular classroom regardless of individual abilities and needs. This recognition that regular class placement may not be appropriate for every student is reflected in the requirement that school districts make available a

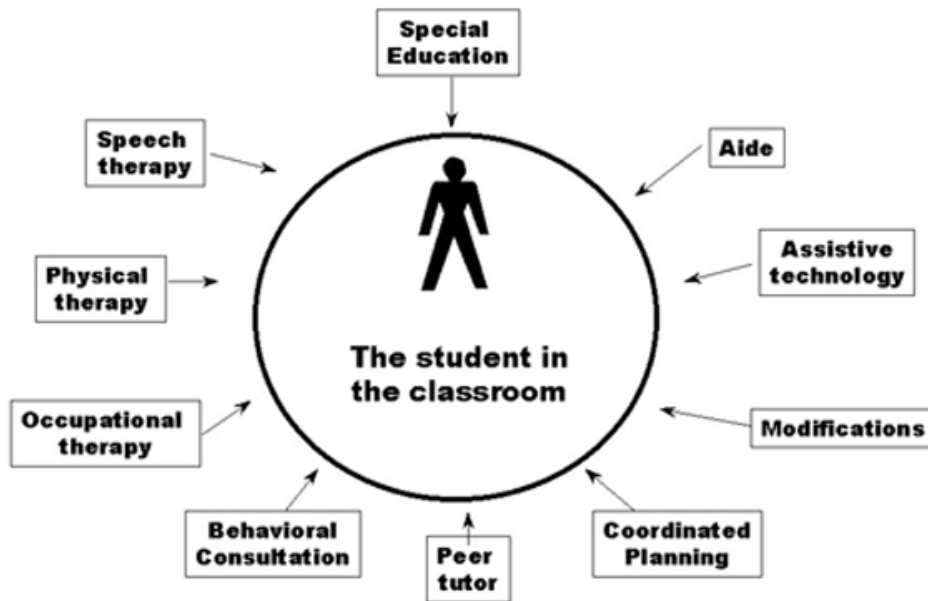
range of placement options, known as a continuum of alternative placements, to meet the unique educational needs of students with disabilities. The options on this continuum must include the alternative placements listed in the law (instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions). The following illustration outlines the least restrictive alternative continuum.

The Least Restrictive Environment Continuum



One of the major controversies in special education today revolves around the continuum, least restrictive environment, and inclusion. Some authorities say that the successful implementation of inclusion for all students in many schools around the country demonstrates that this should be the least restrictive setting for all students. Supporters of this position say the need is not to define a continuum of places but to configure the unique array of special supports needed for the student to be successful and the classroom to run smoothly. One of the arguments raised by defenders of this position is that the continuum was a useful concept in the days when most people with disabilities were segregated, but now it has become a problem because it offers justification for segregation of some students. Further, they argue inclusion prepares students with disabilities to use the skills they are learning in the real world where there are few “protective” special settings. They offer evidence that in effectively managed collaborative settings, all teachers become more effective instructors using a wider array of teaching strategies that enhance learning for all. Finally, they feel inclusion prepares all students to better participate in our diverse world where we must continually interact with people with different abilities, ways of acting, appearances, and beliefs. The following picture illustrates the idea of an array of supports as an alternative to the continuum.

Alternative to the Continuum: Individually Tailored Array of Supports



Others say that while many--if not most students--can be successful in the regular class with adequate supports, there is still a need for a continuum of placement options. They say it is unrealistic to demand the regular classroom accommodate students with some of the most difficult needs, that the special needs of these students do still require some sort of special setting. Some of the most articulate spokespeople for this opinion content that highly effective specialized instructional techniques cannot be used in large group settings. Defenders of this position feel that specialized settings are needed to practice and master skills that the student can (when mastered) take out and apply in the world beyond the special ed room. They would say that the security of a supportive environment prepares the student with confidence the student will need to manage effectively in the larger world.

While there is an honest dispute here, it is important to note that no one in this dialogue is advocating a return to the exclusionary practices of the past. There is essentially universal agreement "that children with disabilities are most appropriately educated with their nondisabled peers." However, there is substantial controversy on how this can be achieved.

Many court cases have been fought over what is considered an appropriate educational placement for students with disabilities. One such case, *Sacramento City Unified School District v. Rachel H.*, lead to the development of the Rachel H. Four Factor Test. The court used four factors to determine if the educational placement for this student in a regular education class was appropriate.

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- **To learn about the specifics of the court case, look at the following website and answer the question below.**

<http://www.kidstogether.org/ct-rachl.htm>

What are the four factors the court used to determine appropriate placement?

- **Review the following site to find answers to the following questions:**

http://www.lrecoalition.org/01_whatIsLRE/index.htm

1. How does inclusion relate to the LRE?
2. What is the difference between mainstreaming and inclusion?
3. What are some of the benefits of LRE?

- **View the following site to answer the following questions:**

<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/inclusion.disab.k12.3.1.html>

1. What is the inclusion debate? How do you feel about it?
2. What are the components of appropriate inclusion?

Now that you have had an opportunity to read and think about the Least Restrictive Environment, the continuum of placements, and inclusion, what do you think? Which argument do you find the most persuasive and why? Look back on your own school experience; how have your schools been at meeting the letter and the of the LRE mandate? What do you feel are the implications of this discussion for what is currently going on in your high school?

Curricular Connections

Have you ever thought about what you are learning in your classes? Have you ever wondered how teachers decide what to teach you? The word curriculum is a term from Latin that might best translate as “road map.” The curriculum is the road map for teaching and learning. The state of Kentucky has developed a road map of skills that all students should learn in each grade level. *Transformations* is a framework for assuring that all students are provided common content and the opportunity to learn. The document helps school districts plan their curriculum. Read more about [Transformations](#)

Read the Preface, Volume I, and Kentucky’s Learning Goals and Academic Expectations.

In the past, students receiving special education services often were taught a special curriculum that was different from the “regular” curriculum. This often meant that there was no clear road map by which to chart the progress of students receiving special education services. In its statements about what constitutes special education, IDEA is very clear that special education is about extra help to succeed in the same curriculum as other students. It provides a clear statement of curricular inclusion:

Specially-designed instruction means adapting, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible child under this part, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction—

- (i) To address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and
- (ii) To ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(25))

This statement puzzles many people, because they know that some students with severe disabilities cannot do everything that everyone else must do to graduate from high school. So, does that mean that these words in IDEA are just a nice ideal that has no contact with reality? No, it calls attention to the fact that the basic road map is the same for everyone but the actual accomplishments may look very different for some students because of their disabilities. In Kentucky, this means that *Academic Expectations* outline the curriculum for all students but the IEP for each student with moderate or severe disabilities will describe the way these expectations will be achieved for a particular student.

Another document is useful to teachers who are trying to make this jump from the Program of Studies to teaching the various abilities levels in their classes. This document is referred to as TASKS (Teaching All Students in Kentucky Schools). *TASKS* describes how students with diverse learning needs can participate in a meaningful way in the regular curriculum. It gives very specific activities that are helpful to regular education teachers and special education teachers when planning how students with diverse needs will participate in regular classes.

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Read the following sections: “Introduction and Relationship between the IEP and Curriculum”

<http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/ksc-tasks/pdf%20folder/Introduction.pdf>

What are the four ways that students with diverse learning needs can participate in regular curricular activities?

Look at the following site to see how students with disabilities can take part in the social studies curriculum while working on their specific objectives.

<http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/ksc-tasks/>

Click on the Social Studies button and then click on the 2.14. Find out the varieties of ways that students with disabilities can participate in the general curriculum across grade levels.

We have looked at the curriculum that all students in Kentucky are expected to know. You might be wondering how students with significant needs will demonstrate those skills when some of them cannot read or write or even speak. We will look at how students can work on their IEP objectives

while also participating in the regular curriculum. We will use what is called an Activity/IEP Matrix. A matrix can be used to plan activities for the students while keeping in mind what they are expected to learn. In the example below, the first column list the student’s IEP objectives and the next two columns describe the classes and how that student will work on his or her IEP goals while also demonstrating the regular curriculum. This can be a useful tool for teachers when planning the instruction for students with diverse learning needs.

Example of a curriculum matrix:

IEP Objectives	SUBJECT:	
	English	Social Studies
Student will speak using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to communication picture cards to answer questions about story read in class Use communication device to tell class about their writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to communication picture cards to answer questions about topics discussed in class Use communication device to tell class about the civil rights movement
Student will write using appropriate forms, conventions, and styles to communicate ideas and information to different audiences for different purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use adaptive keyboard and computer to write answers to questions about story read in class Use adaptive keyboard and computer to write a story about one of their personal experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use adaptive keyboard and computer to write answers for test Use adaptive keyboard and computer to create a poster about the civil rights movement.

Now that you have been exposed to some of the documents that guide your teacher in planning what you are learning you may want to think about how one of the students with whom you are working in peer tutor can have better access to and progress in the general curriculum. As a project, you can look at your class schedule, and based on your experience, develop a curriculum matrix that outlines how the student with disabilities will be able to being involved in each class. Talk with your teacher about a project idea like this. Even if you do not write it up, engage in this mental assignment: for a week think about how a particular student with a disability could participate in every class you attend. You might even ask your teachers about the Academic Expectations they are addressing and now that you know about *TASKS*, you could look at it for suggestions to help stimulate you thinking.

Collaboration

You should be getting the idea that inclusion can be a very complicated undertaking. The requirement of IDEA, *Transformations*, Academic Expectations, the curriculum, IEP objectives, the demands of teaching a group of students, the unique support needs of students with disabilities,

individual modifications, and numerous other factors are on your teacher's daily agenda. Yet, we all know not everyone can be an expert in everything. There is a reason some teachers teach science, some social studies, some English, and some focus on different teaching strategies for students who learn differently. No one person is an expert in all these areas. So how can inclusion work? The right answer is it is not just one person's job. Inclusion is a team sport!

In order for students with disabilities to be successful in regular education classes, it is important that regular education teachers, special education teachers, and para-professionals must work together as a team. Other professionals who might be part of this team include speech therapists, occupational therapists, or physical therapists. Collaboration occurs when these people work together to plan instruction, create modifications, and to problem-solve.

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To find out more about what a collaborative is, look at the following website:

<http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/ddc/inclusion/schoolcaring/sb1.htm>

There are various models of collaboration used by special education teachers and regular education teachers. Sometimes the special education teacher may co-teach with the regular education teacher and monitor the learning of all students. The special education teacher might also observe the special education student or the class as a whole, looking for a targeted behavior. He or she could work one-on-one with the student with special needs on targeted skills. The teachers must be able to work together and share ideas and strategies in order for the student to be successful.

- What are some of the characteristics commonly found in successful inclusion programs? Look at the following website to find out.
- Describe some of the ways that the teachers described in the scenario collaborated.

<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content2/Including.Students.html>

How do teachers and others in your school collaborate? How could they do an even better job at it? What problems do you run into when you have to do a collaborative project? Do you think teachers run into the same difficulties? What are some ideas about how to work through the problems of collaboration and build an effective team?

Modifications

The 1997 Amendments to IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) require that a student with a disability be provided with "supplementary aids and services" as needed to enable him or her to succeed in the least restrictive environment. These supplementary aids and services can be provided in general education classes to enable children with disabilities to be educated with children without disabilities. Many times, the learning goals, activities, and materials can be modified so that students with disabilities can actively participate in the general education curriculum in a meaningful way. It is important to remember that the curriculum should be modified so that students can have access to the general education curriculum while working on their specific IEP objectives. You may hear the words "adaptations" or "accommodations" used instead of modifications, but for our purposes they are used interchangeably.

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View the following website to learn more about the guidelines for adapting the general education curriculum. What are the three guidelines listed? Give an example of a possible modification for each guideline.

<http://www.circleofinclusion.org/english/pim/five/adaptations.html>

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There are several ways that the curriculum can be modified. Look at the following website to learn more.

http://www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/strategies/types_adaptation.html

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View the following sites to find out about adapting the curriculum for students with disabilities. Be sure to look at the links on each page. Choose one student with a disability that you have class with and list at least five possible adaptations that could be used in his or her regular classes. Describe why each adaptation is needed. (For example, Jeremy needs picture cues about Martin Luther King during history class because he isn't able to read written words.)

<http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/ddc/inclusion/schoolcaring/sc7.htm>

<http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/ddc/inclusion/schoolcaring/sc2.htm>

<http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/ddc/inclusion/schoolcaring/sc3.htm>

<http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/ddc/inclusion/schoolcaring/c7.htm>

Assistive technology can also be used in order for students with disabilities to participate in regular classes. Students who have difficulty writing can use a computer to write a sentence or a report. They can also listen to the computer read their work out loud to them.

Read about how Emily (<http://www.pluk.org/AT1.html#10>) and Byron (<http://www.pluk.org/AT1.html#11>) use assistive technology to participate in school.

There's a poster that says; "If you thought the wheel was one of the most important inventions in human history...you'll love the ramp!" The illustration shows a person in a wheelchair sailing to victory in a race as they speed down a ramp while the non-wheelchair users run to keep up. Modifications, collaboration, assistive technology, adaptations, and accommodations all build a ramp to full access, participation, and inclusion in our schools and in life after graduation.

Now that you have completed all of the activities in this unit on inclusion, you may have figured out that this is just a beginning. Pretty much everything on this web site relates to the basic right of people with disabilities to full access and equal treatment in our society. What is your role in this effort...as a peer tutor...a friend...a future parent...a citizen? You may be ready to take the quiz on this unit, but once you can answer this last question you are ready to move on to bigger things—you will be ready for the challenges of life in our very complex world.