Problem Solving in an Inclusive Classroom

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What is Inclusion?

“Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down”
President George Bush

- Inclusion is flexibility and acceptance in a positive learning environment
- Students with special needs will go to school along side their friends
- Students will receive specialized instruction based on their needs
- Students will gain knowledge in order to meet individual standards
- Students will learn in an environment that will encourage tolerance

*Adopted from The Promise of Inclusive Schooling
National Institute for Urban Schools
The Include Strategy

I dentify classroom, environmental, curricular, and instructional demands
N ote student learning strengths and needs
C heck for potential areas of student success
L ook for potential problem areas
U se information gathered to brainstorm instructional adaptations
D ecide which adaptations to implement
E valuate student progress

*Adopted from Including Students with Special Needs
Marilyn Friend and William D. Bursuck
Obstacles

• Though teachers are willing to learn the principles of inclusion, they feel inadequately trained to meet the needs of all students.

• The rates of students who require special services are increasing, thus creating greater obstacles in the classroom. For example:
  – Behavioral Issues
  – Curriculum Adaptations

*Adopted form Improving Education: Supporting Teaching and Learning
Making Inclusion Work Through Teacher Training

• Professional development for all those involved in the education of our youth (Teachers, Administrators, Parents and Students)

• Common planning time with core teachers and special education teachers

• Take advantage of equipment, learning materials

• Take a tour of your own school, sit in on other teachers’ classes and look for resources or supplies that are not being used

• Look into areas of funding

*Adapted from Teacher Competencies: Teacher Competencies Needed: Renaissance Group
Classroom Behavior

At one point or another every classroom faces management issues and/or behavioral challenges

• When behavior problems arise one must evaluate the physical, instructional, and social aspects of the classroom. For example:
  – Is the work too hard or too easy?
  – Is the pace too fast or too slow?

*Adopted from Teaching Strategies: Content Behavior/Strategies
Renaissance Group
Classroom Behavior Cont.

• Praise good behavior
• Catch the student doing something good
• Wait for a neutral time - discuss what went wrong and encourage acceptable alternative behaviors
• Be consistent
• State expectations clearly
• Develop a behavioral plan and let students know what the plan is

*Adopted from Inclusion Yours, Mine, Ours: Strategies for Challenging Behavior by Rush Services
Curriculum Adaptations

- Determine a student’s skills and abilities: develop a teaching plan based on the student’s strengths and weaknesses.
- Check prerequisite skills needed for learning.
- Present material in a variety of ways: consider all learning styles.
- Offer students concrete materials (visuals or items that represent the concept).

*Adapted from *Curriculum Adaptations: The Exceptional Child* by M. Odem and D. Clark.*
Curriculum Adaptations Cont.

- Limit directions and details on worksheets: focus on smaller chunks of information
- Use brief explanations when presenting a new concept: focus on “one command” directions
- Writing adaptations: Assess spelling, grammar and punctuation separately from content
- Give students frequent and prompt feedback
- Keep the students busy and engaged: This helps to curb behavior and prevent boredom

*Adapted from Curriculum Adaptations: The Exceptional Child: M. Odem and D. Clark
Curriculum Adaptations Cont.

- Connect examples to “real life” experiences
- Provide students the opportunity to assess their own learning or develop personalized standards for an assignment or project
- Students who work at a slower pace should be provided with praise for even the slightest gain
- Meet with others to discuss strategies, curriculum and student progress
- Break material into smaller pieces for better understanding

*Adapted from Curriculum Adaptations: The Exceptional Child: M. Odem and D. Clark*
Curriculum Adaptations Cont.

• Important Questions: What exactly is important to know about a particular unit? How can the content connect with real life? What can the student gain that will benefit them in the future?
• Provide different assessment options: oral tests instead of a written exam
• Provide opportunities for students to practice what they have learned
• Allow students to use learning devices (tape recorder)

*Adapted From www.quasar.ualberta.ca/ddc/incl/sc7.htm
Inclusion Quotes

• “Every person shall have the right: (a) to basic education and to equal access to educational institutions.” (1984:16) - Interim Constitution

• “Inclusion is a right, not a privilege for a select few.” - Judge in Oberti vs. Board of Education

• “Inclusive education is about embracing all, making a commitment to do what ever it takes to provide each student in a community- and each citizen in a democracy- and inalienable right to belong, not to be excluded. Inclusion assumes that living and learning together is a better way that benefits everyone, not just children who are labeled as having a difference.” - Falvy, Givner, and Kimm 1995

• “Children that learn together, learn to live together.” - www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion/standards/competencies.html

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