Key Lessons Learned
About Inclusion

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It was late October, and the air was cool. An unexpected change in the daily schedule meant a shortened recess for that day. Noting the time limitation, the classroom assistant suggested that she stay inside with Mark, a student with multiple disabilities. The recess time allotted for the day would be consumed by the tasks of getting him out of his wheelchair, putting his coat on, and positioning him back into his wheelchair. This seemed like a logical suggestion to the teacher until Mark's classmate Amy said, "Why don't we just leave Mark in his wheelchair, put his cost on backwards, and tuck it in around the sides. That should keep him warm enough: it's not that cold out! Then he can be with us." Overbearing the conversation, another classmate, Bryan, raised a good point, "What will the kids in the other classes say? Won't it make Mark look weird if be goes to recess with his coat on backwards?" Amy replied, "It won't look weird if everyone does it."'

That recess Ms. Lopez's fourth-grade class all went to recess with their coats on backwards.

THIS STORY RECOUNTS one of the numerous examples occurring with increasing frequency in classrooms where students with a wide range of characteristics are welcomed and included. When we hear such stories, we tend to focus on the new opportunities such situations present for students like Mark, who typically have been provided with edu-

cational services in settings apart from their peers without disabilities. But this story also gives us a glimpse of new opportunities available to teachers and students without disabilities. Students have real opportunities to experience and celebrate human diversity, use their creative powers to solve real challenges, and exert a positive influence on the community known as their classroom community. Similarly, teachers have new opportunities to teach a wide range of important social, affective, and problem-solving skills; model constructive ways to cope with change and new situations; and demonstrate that they are learners too!

In class after class, school after school, observations of successful inclusion reveal teachers and students creating ways of making it work (Baumgart, 1992; Giangreco, Dennis, Cloninger, Edelman, & Schattman, 1993; Helmstetter, Peck, & Giangreco (1994)**;** Meyer. Ferguson. & Baumgart, 1992; Salisbury, Palombaro, & Hollowood, 1993; Schattman & Benay, 1992; Stainback & Stainback, 1992; Thousand, Villa, & Nevin, 1994; Villa, Thousand, Stainback, & Stainbeck, 1992). These many positive examples of inclusion in classrooms of the 1990s have been made possible by two decades of advocacy, policy making and curricular/instructional efforts of people working to achieve a common goal – that the lives of children in our public schools will be better as a result of our schooling practices. These efforts have also been advanced through litigation that continues to affirm that the basic civil rights and tenets of our society must be extended to all people, including those with the most severe disabilities.

This chapter discusses two key legal cases and their legal precedents in the movement toward greater inclusion of students with the most severe disabilities. Following this, the chapter introduces the "socio-relations" perspective and its relation to policies and practices to guide educators in the Inclusion movement. The chapter concludes with the presentation of seven key lessons learned as we explore the move toward inclusion-oriented education and related school reform. Each of these three areas serves as a reminder that previous assumptions have changed and that much remains to be learned as the school improvement process continues and expands.

LEGAL PRECEDENTS FOR
INCLUSION AND THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Although numerous legal cases have addressed the rights of students with disabilities, we have selected two for discussion here. The first case, *Timothy W. v. Rochester, New Hampshire, School District*, (1989), reaffirmed the rights of students with the most severe disabilities to a

free and appropriate education. The second case, *Oberti v. Board of Education of the Borough of Clementon School District* (1993), set legal precedents for inclusion of students with severe disabilities and addressed numerous arguments that were previously viewed as barriers to inclusion for students with severe disabilities. The discussion is based, in part, on the work of Laski, Gran, and Boyd (1993) on *Timothy W.* and that of Martin (1993) on the *Oberti* case.

The case of *Timothy W.* arose when, in 1980, a school district in Now Hampshire refused to provide educational services to Timothy W. based on its assessment that his disabilities would prevent him from receiving any benefit from educational services. Timothy, a 13-year-old with multiple disabilities; including what was labeled as profound mental retardation, was refused educational services and other services by the Rochester school district. The district concluded that Timothy was not capable of benefiting from an education because he was too severely disabled to learn. Eventually, the district placed him in a 3-hour-per-day "diagnostic/prescriptive" program, but continued to deny Timothy any "educational" placement.

Family and experts continued to assert Timothy's ability to learn and his right to benefit from an educational program under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (PL 94-142), the corresponding New Hampshire state law, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112). In May 1984 a complaint, was filed, and in 1989 a court ruled that Timothy had been wrongly denied his right to appropriate public educational services, thus reaffirming the "zero student rejection" concept. School districts cannot determine eligibility criteria for services based on the severity of the disability or assumptions about the child's ability to benefit. Indeed, the court concluded that education for those with severe or profound disabilities is broadly defined, not limited to academic services, and may include basic functional life skills. The court further asserted that the school district has a responsibility to avail itself of new educational approaches in providing an education program geared to each child's individual needs (*Timothy W v. Rochester, 1989*).

More than a decade after Timothy's initial exclusion, the focus of legal arguments has shifted to issues of where and how education is provided. In New Jersey, 5-year-old Raphael Oberti, a student with Down syndrome, was initially placed within a school exclusively for students with disabilities, but the school was located 45 minutes from his home. His family refused this placement, and an alternative was agreed upon. Raphael was placed in a kindergarten in his neighborhood school in the morning and a special education class for the afternoon. His special needs were addressed in the afternoon class, but

few individualized education program (IEP) goals, curricular modifications, or supplemental supports were provided in the kindergarten program.

Raphael had difficulty in the kindergarten class and was considered disruptive. At the end of the school year, school district personnel proposed placement in a special education class for students with mental retardation – a placement that would require Raphael to be bused beyond the boundaries of his local school district. His parents requested a placement within a regular classroom in their neighborhood school.

In May 1993, the U.S Court of Appeals for the Third District unanimously affirmed a federal district court ruling that Raphael be provided with special education services in a regular class in his local school. The court noted that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA) (PL 101-476) has a presumption in favor of inclusion and outlined two reasons why. First, the court found that the benefits and opportunities for social and communication development and enhancement cannot be achieved in a setting where typical peers are not present. The second issue addresses the rights of students without disabilities to the reciprocal benefits of inclusion, including learning to work and communicate with their peers with disabilities. In addition, the court responded to other issues raised during the proceedings and outlined some obligations of the district, Including making curricular modifications for Raphael.

The court maintained that IDEA requires schools, whenever possible, to provide supplementary aids and services to enable a student with disabilities to be educated in the regular classroom with peers who do not have disabilities. Conditions prior to placement in the classroom, such as the existing curriculum and/or instructional strategies not meeting the needs of a student with disabilities, are not legitimate reasons for exclusion.

The *Oberti* case reaffirms the right of students with disabilities to be educated with peers who do not have disabilities as a first placement option and requires schools to make necessary accommodations. The court reiterated the obligation of the district to provide support to teachers so that they can accommodate each child and the requirement to provide preparation to regular educators to facilitate the education of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. The court also confirmed that dumping children into the mainstream without such required special educational services as curricular modifications and supplemental aids and services is not likely to work and is not the intent of the law.

SOCIO-RELATIONS PERSPECTIVE

In these legal cases, the focus was on the rights of students with disabilities to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. In both cases the logic that excluded students from educational and/or regular class settings was the notion that these students were "inherently different" and therefore were not covered by equal protection under the law. The courts have exposed this logic as faulty. The rationale that included students was based on students with disabilities having the same rights as other children. Although the logic of "same rights" has supported innovative changes Minnow (1990) notes that this logic eventually focuses on differences (i.e. the same rights do not mean the same interventions are appropriate) Minnow notes that reliance on a "same" or "different" perspective can have undesired outcomes and stigmas. This section of the chapter reviews a discussion of inclusion in which teachers focusing on "same rights/ different needs" experienced problems in the placement of a student named Adam. The discussion of the teachers and their resolution is provided in the following paragraphs to highlight what Minnow describes as the "dilemma of differences" and the need for an alternative perspective to resolve the dilemma.

Perspectives on Difference
The issue of differences and their place within the discussion of disability has a long legacy. Numerous authors have described the integral role that attitudes and values play in defining disability (Blatt, Bogdan, Biklen, & Taylor, 1977; Cuban, 1989; Eisner, 1991; Gould, 1981; National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, 1992; Sarason, 1982; Sarason & Doris, 1979).

These issues on the nature of disability, differences, and values were discussed during a recent professional development course as teachers talked about the general subject of inclusion and about a student with severe disabilities, Adam, returning to his neighborhood school. General education teachers, special educators, and related service providers from a variety of schools were attending a district-sponsored professional development class on inclusion of students with disabilities. Typically, the class facilitator (assistant director of special education) introduced a topic, and then class members discussed readings and issues that had arisen during the week. A spirited discussion on "same rights/ different needs" occurred.

The discussion centered around teachers' concerns with placing students with severe disabilities in classes that matched the students'

chronological age fearing teachers would "Just be writing an IEP that fit the classroom rather than the student." The perspectives of the special education teachers are summarized as follows:

> I can see how inclusion can work for my students in one class at Grade 3 and one class at Grade 4, but the other classrooms... I don't know. It seems like [I will] make the *kid* fit the classroom and [fit] into those other classes. Is this what inclusion really is going to end up being? What if the kid doesn't fit? What do they do when the students [without disabilities] are just working on worksheet after worksheet? It seems like she would learn more if I pulled her out and really fit the curriculum to her needs.

The group struggled with the need to write IEPs based on a student's individual needs and with the difficulties they encountered in doing so within general class settings. The needs of a particular student, Adam, were mentioned as an example of the seemingly impossible task of writing an appropriate IEP and placing Adam in fourth grade. In Adam's school there was one fourth grade and one fourth grade teacher. The special education teacher working with Adam expressed her concern about Adams not fitting in well in this classroom. She explained that his social and communication needs would not be met there, and placement in this classroom would detract from his present abilities. She predicted that Adam would become a "behavior problem."

Adam's teacher described this fourth grade: The students spend considerable time at their desks listening to the teacher and/or working on worksheets. This classroom is described in more detail under Traditional Approaches in Table 1.

After 30 more minutes of discussing Adam's needs, one elementary teacher asked, "Is this the only student who needs something different from what is offered and available in this classroom?" The answer from the group was a resounding "No!" They went on to discuss how many students, not just Adam, were *really* not learning in this and similar classes, and why. The facilitator used the example of Adam to refocus inclusion on the connection of Adam and other fourth graders as students. These associated needs of Adam's and the other students' catapulted the discussion In a new direction. For the first time, the discussion of inclusion went beyond the special needs of students with severe disabilities and focused on the learning needs of the student.

The scenario of Adam and "the problem with fourth grade as a placement" was helpful for a number of reasons. In this scenario, the age-appropriate placement was the only option since another less traditional or more flexible fourth grade teacher was not available. Initially, there appeared to be two choices. Adam could be placed into

Table 1. Approaches to educating students with diverse characteristics

Traditional Approaches	Inclusion-oriented alternatives
1. The teacher is the Instructional leader.	1. Collaborative teams share leadership.
2. Students learn from teachers, and teachers solve the problem.	2. Students and teachers learn from each other and solve problems together.
3. Students are purposely grouped by similar ability.	3. Students are purposely grouped by differing abilities.
4. Instruction is geared toward middle achieving students.	4. Instruction is geared to match students at all levels of achievement.
5. Grade-level placement is considered synonymous with curricular content	5. Grade-level placement and individual curricular content are independent of each other.
6. Instruction is often passive, competitive, didactic, and/or teacher-directed.	6. Instruction is active, creative, and collaborative among members of the classroom community.
7. People who provide instructional supports are located outside of, or. come *primarily* from sources external to, the classroom.	7. People who provide instructional supports me located in, or come *primarily* from sources internal to, the classroom.
8. Some students do not "fit" in general education classes.	8. All students "fit" in general education classes.
9. Students who do not "fit in" are excluded from general classes and/or activities.	9. All students are included in general education classes.
10. Students are evaluated by common standards.	10. Students are evaluated by individually appropriate standards, including outcome performance measures.
11. Students' success is achieved by meeting common standards	11. The system of education is considered successful when it arrives to meet each student's needs.

the existing fourth grade, a learning environment in which his disability would "stand out" and his learning and social interactions would likely decrease. An alternative was placement in a separate "self-contained" classroom for academics and related services, using recess and school lunch (and maybe art and music as well) for social integration opportunities. A third option – revising the curriculum and instruction to meet the needs of Adam and many other fourth grade students – was "discovered" as teachers realized that the fourth grade classroom was not meeting the needs of other students.

The question about the unmet needs of other children in that classroom was the beginning of the realization that inclusion must go beyond disability issues if it is to work. It was Adams disability label,

a focus on differences and his right to have the same placement as his fourth grade peers, that made his placement seem problematic. The perplexity was confounded by the assumption that this fourth grade class should remain the same and that only Adam had unmet needs in this traditional classroom

The group came to an understanding that inclusion was not, as earlier envisioned, "fitting Adam into this classroom" or teaching him elsewhere. As educators began to restructure the fourth grade classroom, they began to see how Adam's needs for active participation with objects and functional learning were needs he had in common with other students.

A New Perspective on Differences

The socio-relations perspective designs policies and programs by focusing on the needs people have in common as members of the same social category rather than differences between people. In the case of Adam, it was used to design a placement, curriculum, and instruction based on the associated needs of fourth graders. It is remarkably distinct from the differences /same rights perspective as a way of designing policies and services. Scholars in the area of policy reform (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987; Minnow, 1990; Sarason, 1982, 1990; Skrtic, 1991) discuss the conflicts and stigmas that result when programs, services, policies, and laws are designed around differences and existing social arrangements/structures. Minnow labels these conflicts the "dilemma of difference." The dilemma is either the struggle to treat people differently (by noting their inherent differences) without stigmatizing them or the struggle to treat them the same (noting their rights to have the same treatment) without denying them assistance.

Each side of the "dilemma of difference" struggle raises serious questions regarding "same" and "different" services, and both perspectives imply that a norm (often unstated or disguised as neutral) exists. One is "different" or "same" only in comparison to someone else or to some other group. In the case of Adam, the fourth grade classroom was the norm, and his inclusion was seen as a need to fit him into this existing place.

An example from another discipline may help to clarify the socio-relations perspective and highlight how its assumptions are evident and applicable to educational issues. Following is an example of gender discrimination in employment and the resolution using the socio-relations perspective (Minnow, 1988) to indicate the assumptions that the perspective challenges.

In 1987 the Supreme Court ruled on an issue of maternity leave for women employees in *California Federal* Savings and *Loan Asso-*

ciation v. Guerra (1987). At issue in the case was whether the federal ban against discrimination on the basis of gender allows treating pregnant women like other workers or whether it allows special treatment. Granting maternity leave on the basis of gender differences would result in a special privilege and possible stigmas (women may be considered "too different" for the job). Denying maternity leave and maintaining the same policies for all employees could result In equating workers and satisfactory performance with norms established historically by males (women must work under the same rules as men).

The court granted the leave, but not on the basis of gender difference or as a special privilege. Instead, the court associated men and women as members of the category of employees and within this category considered their associated needs to work, maintain, and care for their family. These associated needs were used to grant not "maternity" but "parental leave," based on the associated parental needs of men and women employees. Women's experiences were used as the benchmark and guarded against discrimination and stigma by improving the lot of women *and* men. A focus away from inherent differences (gender) and the attending social consequences assisted in the resolution of this case. The focus became the associated needs of women and men to work and maintain families, and resisted reaffirming social arrangements that make gender *difference* an issue.

The connection of the Guerra case to Adam's situation is enlightening. The dilemma of differences arose in discussing Adam and inclusion by focusing on his disability (difference) and his right to the same placement, while accepting the existing classroom and social arrangements as a standard to be maintained. Initially, the teachers mentioned only Adam's differences and what was needed, outside of this fourth grade class, to meet his needs and to write an appropriate IER What was not expressed, until one teacher questioned the appropriateness of the classroom for many students, were the associated needs of Adam and other fourth graders.

In the discussion of *associated needs* of these fourth grade students, the teachers eventually described the "inclusion-oriented" classroom depicted in Table 1. The curriculum, instructional strategies, climate, staffing, and physical structure were reconceptualized. The group realized that Adam's need for hands-on, activity-based, individualized curricula and learning; heterogenous and cooperative grouping strategies; physical movement; and integration of special education/ related services into the classroom could actually become a benchmark to enhance not only his social relationships and learning needs, but also those of other fourth graders. Adam, and at least 15 other fourth graders with different labels (e.g., Chapter 1, gifted and talented,

mildly educationally disabled, at risk, homeless, unmotivated), did not have to leave the room and get "different stuff" to learn and connect with school and classmates Adam still has disabilities, but their social significance in terms of "different" was diminished when the associated needs of all students were considered.

Social arrangements, traditional approaches, and accompanying assumptions and norms often emphasize differences and make these differences matter. Reconceptualizing beyond the "one size fits all" approach can reduce the social significance of differences. These teachers learned that two questions – "What does Adam need?" and "Is this a need for any other student?" – refocused the problem toward the need for classroom change, school reform, and collaboration.

Those who work in schools, prepare teachers, and/or engage in school reform realize that reconceptualizing and collaborating can be challenging. What this section has tried to make more salient is that meeting the challenge requires an understanding of inclusion as more than a special education or disability issue. The work of school reform remains demanding, but options are unnecessarily limited when efforts and directions are set within old paradigms and assumptions (Brandt, 1993; Cuban, 1989; Goodlad, 1984; Harding, 1987; Schlechty, 1990; Skrtic, 1991).

Some directions to guide inclusive classroom reform efforts are offered in the next section. Each is based on lessons learned when traditional approaches to schooling are challenged and replaced with more inclusion-oriented practices.

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Within schools across the United States, educators are rethinking basic assumptions of what, why, and how to teach. The process of questioning and trying "new" things has opened up possibilities for teachers, students, and their families. Here are some of the things we have learned from school stakeholders-teachers, students, families, administrators, and other school personnel:

> **Lesson 1: In order to provide quality inclusive education for students, we must have an ever-developing vision of how students' lives will improve because the students attend our schools.**

Selection of curricular content and other school experiences should be related to individually determined and valued life out-comes, reflecting a healthy balance between the academic/ functional and social/ personal aspects of schooling (Giangreco, Cloninger, & Iverson, 1993). In special education, this means involving families and

students in the selection of goals and their outcomes. Current elementary and secondary education reforms refer to essentially these same parameters as "authentic learning," "performance-based outcomes," and "school-parent partnerships." Numerous school changes in which partnerships and an enlarged curricular basis have enhanced learning and preparedness for the future are discussed in the literature and documented for students, including those with severe or profound disabilities, within the federal and district reform agendas (Lightfoot, 1978; Smith, Hunter, & Schrag, 1991). Reconceptualizing what, how, and why we teach is a large part of improving schools and the process of implementing inclusive classrooms.

Lesson 2: Although inclusive education may be promoted by the needs of student with disabilities, inclusive education Is not a "disability" issue.

Although school inclusion is promoted and works well for many students with severe disabilities, school inclusion is not a disability issue. Inclusive education is a part of school improvement that seeks to provide meaningful education to the range of students In the classroom community. Students formerly enrolled in separate programs have enlarged the curriculum. Some elementary classrooms now have foreign language as a curricular component because former separate bilingual/ bicultural programs were restructured to focus on the needs of all children to learn a foreign language (Baumgart, 1992). Some high school students have an engineering design project, a health practicum, and/or a challenging experience in drama class (Ferguson, Meyer, Jeanchild, Juniper, & Zingo, 1992) because their needs and those of their classmates with severe disabilities or complex health and medical needs are viewed as associated. Diversity, when viewed as a strength and joined to the socio-relations perspective, has been a creative and empowering force in schools. People who work with children in schools must be advocates for all children, not just those with specific labels (e.g., disabled, gifted, bilingual). It is critical that we empower school reform efforts by advocating more than "just" inclusion for students with disability labels (Giangreco, 1989).

Lesson 3: Educational equity is unlikely to occur if Individuals are the gatekeepers to inclusive classrooms.

Inclusive education, as a part of school reform, must involve administrative support. Support must include articulated policies and procedures that ensure equal access for all students. We cannot have groups of teachers in the same or different buildings who "do inclusion" or "do not do inclusion" based on individual biases or fears of

situations to which they are unaccustomed. Giving individual teachers the choice to exclude a student from the public classroom based on any range of personal characteristics (race, ethnicity, gender, religious affiliation) would not be tolerated – yet, unfortunately, it remains the norm when the personal characteristic is identified by a disability label. Eligibility criteria that initially led to exclusion, as in the *Oberti* and *Timothy W.* cases, prompted legal action and will likely continue to do so. Eligibility criteria for school inclusion have no place in current reform efforts and are indicators that all students are not considered in the reform agenda and that diversity is still not seen as a strength.

Lesson 4: Teamwork is essential to quality education. A key feature of teams is the pursuit of the same goals rather than agreement to pursue different goals.

Typically, no single individual possesses the range of knowledge and skills necessary to meet the diverse and complex needs of students with disabilities. Thus, people who possess a range of skills must organize themselves to take full advantage of each person's strengths, both professional and personal. A key factor that distinguishes a "team" from a mere "group" is that a team pursues a set of common or shared goals. The roles/ functions that they engage in and the manner in which they make decisions are tied to these common goals. Membership on the team is established by asking a simple question: Who will be affected by decisions that the team makes? This question means that, although the team may have core members, membership is likely to change as situations and needs change.

Group consensus decision making and the needs of students have received attention in the literature as critical elements for implementing the array of services required to meet student needs (Baumgart & Ferguson, 1991; Giangreco, 1990; Giangreco, York, & Rainforth, 1989). Yet many professionals are still inexperienced in working within a collaborative team structure. Many are inexperienced in working with families and students as equal partners. Most received preservice preparation within a program that was discipline specific and based on autocratic decision making or "majority rules," rather than focused on cross-discipline collaboration and consensus decision making. The notion of educators as the "experts" must be replaced with an understanding that abilities and perspectives are combined within teams to enable consensus and to meet identified outcomes. This idea is distinctly different from roles and functions being delegated and based primarily on professional disciplines and students' disability labels.

Lesson 5: Teacher ownership of the education of all students placed in the classroom, including those with disabilities, in crucial to success.

Language is a powerful indicator of the ownership that general education teachers and administrators have of the education of various students (Giangreco, Dennis, et al. 1993). Implementing inclusion requires an increased understanding that past assignments of expertise related to abilities and deficits of students (e.g., different teachers for gifted students or for those with severe disabilities) was in part an attitude, in part a lack of exposure and experience, and in part practices and assumptions resulting from resource allocation and school structuring at the turn of the century (Ferguson, 1991; Schlechtly, 1990; Skrtic, 1991). When students were assigned labels and corresponding specialists, we often inadvertently encouraged classroom teachers to think of these students as someone else's responsibility (Baumgart, 1992). Within inclusive classrooms, ownership and the responsibility to teach students become a barrier to success if students remain "yours" or "mine" and do not eventually become "ours." It is advisable to establish an expectation of shared ownership and responsibility from the outset. Teachers with the expertise required to meet student needs must continue to be available to students within schools, but role changes and revised understandings of ownership and teaching responsibilities must also be expected.

A common mistake made when initiating the placement of a child with severe disabilities in a general education classroom is to establish the expectation that the teacher is merely a "host" that the responsibility for educating the child is not the teacher's but lies with support personnel, such as the special educator, the speech and language teacher, the physical therapist, or a paraprofessional. Sometimes this situation occurs in an effort to avoid subjecting teachers to situations to which they are unaccustomed. Our efforts to be sensitive to the change this represents for teachers has frequently backfired when special education staff later attempt to encourage greater responsibility on the part of the classroom teacher.

Lesson 6: Inclusive education thrives in settings where instruction is active and participatory.

Instruction that is active, participatory, and child directed produces innumerable learning opportunities for both teachers and students. Much of the literature on active, participatory, child-directed learning focuses on elementary and secondary classrooms in which students' questions and responses are used to extend and broaden curriculum and focus instruction on understanding in addition to factual recitation (Duckworth, 1987; Fosnot, 1989; Henderson, 1992). One parallel of child-directed learning within the disability literature, typically described as "behavior as communication," has also had a positive impact on instruction of students with severe or profound

disabilities. Teachers using child-directed learning with students who have disabilities are seeking to understand the communicative intent behind "behaviors" (Baurngart Johnson & Helmstetter, 1990; Durand & Crimmins, 1988) and/or using behavioral state indicators (Ferguson, 1991; Siegel-Causey & Guess, 1990) to identify student intentions that alter previous perceptions of students' abilities. Communication signals have been discovered where previously it was assumed there were none. Using a child-directed approach and looking at "behavior as communication," teachers realized that a whine or cry may be a signal of loneliness or protest, hitting may indicate that a task is too difficult or boring, and humming and rapid eye movements may signal excitement/recognition (Evans & Meyer, 1985; Mallette et al., 1992).

In spite of these parallel developments across education, a common concern arises regarding school inclusion for students with severe or profound disabilities. The difficulty arises when classroom instruction Is mainly passive and/or teacher directed (e.g., primarily lecture, worksheets, teacher recitation to the whole class). In these classes, behaviors like humming, loud teeth grinding, sleeping, or wheelchair banging are often viewed as inappropriate and as indicators that the student is not "ready for" inclusion. We propose that the first response to this concern should be to enhance the curriculum and instruction, based on the associated needs of all students. Active, participatory, cooperative, and "authentic" instruction, coordinated with didactic teaching and skill development, typically optimizes learning and minimizes "disruptive" responses for many students, including those with severe disabilities as well as those without disability labels. Including students in less than adequate general education experiences is not the goal of inclusive education. A second response should be to enhance the communicative interaction. This typically involves reflecting on "behavior as communication," identifying and listening to the intent of the behaviors, enlarging the audience of listeners, and teaching communication partners new ways to communicate. A third response should be to formulate appropriate learning goals for students within the shared activities. Multilevel instruction and curriculum overlapping are keys to successful learning within shared activities (Collicott, 1991; Giangreco & Putnam, 1991).

Multilevel instruction – targeting different learning goals within the same curricular area (e.g.: individualized goals within math or communication) – can readily encompass the learning needs of a diverse group of students. It is not uncommon for teachers to address a wide range of learning goals within active, participatory, instructional activities. For example, curriculum overlapping-selecting individually appropriate objectives from different curricular areas during a

shared activity – is another option for appropriately meeting the needs of students during certain activities. Teachers can address a fine motor or communication skill during shared activities (e.g., reaching for and grasping an object during a science activity, facilitating eye contact with peers as materials are shared in a math activity). For many teachers, curriculum overlapping and the principle of partial participation (Ferguson & Baumgart, 1991) are necessary components to enhancing students' participation in the richness of shared activities while ensuring each student's appropriate education.

Lesson 7: Teachers who are willing to learn from their students and crew ate classroom communities that encourage student participation In the design of their educational experience, report success.

Again and again, teachers who allow diversity in their classrooms to fuel creative problem solving report. success with inclusion. For many adults in schools, the range of diversity possible in their current classrooms exceeds their experience both as former students and as educators. At first, responding to the diversity in students' abilities and needs may occasion an overwhelming desire to "know" all the answers and solutions to what may arise. Teachers who join with their students in creative problem solving (Giangreco, 1993; Thousand et al., 1994), resisting the urge to "know all the answers" beforehand, find new vistas of understanding both for themselves and for the students they support within this process.

SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed two important legal cases, described and proposed using the socio-relations perspective to guide Inclusion and school reform efforts in the future, and offered key lessons learned from those who have implemented inclusion of students with severe or profound disabilities in their schools. Because of the scope of this chapter, many issues have not been addressed, including the details of curriculum, staffing, and evaluation and the importance of personnel preparation and related higher education reform. We acknowledge the importance of these issues and concur with many that future efforts must address these areas in depth.

Reflection on the socio-relations prospective (rather than differences or same rights perspectives) can guide us in our inclusion and school reform efforts and policies. It is hoped that a visible indicator of future changes at many levels will include collaborative efforts to enhance education based on the elatedness of students' learning characteristics rather than the differences between students, resulting both,

in teachers with differing expertise working together as a team and in an absence of placements based only on a continuum of differences. It also is hoped that future references to students with disabilities will not consist of labels viewed as deficits and categories rooted in differences. We envision descriptors for students being required, given the range of diversity that exists among learners, but the descriptors must focus on students' strengths and related needs for services.

Finally, this chapter described inclusion within the context of school reform. As evidenced by the plethora of published material on school reform, schools have engaged in this process repeatedly. It is hoped that future efforts of school reform end systems change will be embraced as being the continuing work of schools and the creative people who work In them. Thus, change and reform will not be viewed as movement toward a desired end but rather will be embraced within the concept that "one good idea will always lead to another." Although current reform needs to be both broad and deep, change is also a result of an ever-developing vision of how the lives of students will be better because they attend our schools.

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