

# TEACHING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN INCLUSIVE SETTINGS



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# *Teaching Students with Special Needs in Inclusive Settings*

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*Teaching Students  
with Special Needs  
in Inclusive Settings*

*For Bonnie, Jake, and Alex  
Carolyn and Lyndsay  
Joy and Kimi  
Jim, Cameron, and Meredith*

# *Preface*

Services for students with disabilities have evolved significantly over the past two decades. Before the passage of federal legislation in the mid-1970s, few students with disabilities were provided services in public schools. For those students who were in public special education programs, services were most often provided in segregated classrooms with limited or no opportunities for interaction with nondisabled students. With the mandate to provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all school-age students with disabilities came a significant improvement in services for these students. The result was the rapid growth in special education programs and the resource room as the service model of choice. This educational model allowed most students with disabilities opportunities to interact with their nondisabled peers, at least on a limited basis.

The normalization movement continued to press for more integrated services for students with disabilities in public school programs. As a result, many consumers of special education services, as well as many professionals, began to believe that the dichotomous educational system, one for nondisabled students and one for those with disabilities, was not the best way of meeting the needs of students. Rather than pulling students with disabilities out of general education classrooms and providing specialized instruction in resource rooms, advocates of inclusion proposed that all students with disabilities, including those with severe problems, should be educated in general educational programs.

The authors of this textbook agree with many of the tenets of the inclusion movement. The fact that many students with disabilities can achieve successfully in general education classroom settings has been shown through many research projects. Despite these findings, we strongly believe that in order for the inclusion movement to be as successful as possible, general education faculty and staff must be trained in meeting the diverse needs of students with disabilities. Special education teachers must also be trained in the inclusion model in order to provide appropriate services to students in general education classrooms. In addition to the inclusion movement having a positive impact on many students with disabilities, another critical reason for our



supporting this movement is the belief that all students who need special interventions will more likely receive them in inclusive schools. Students will no longer have to meet the restrictive criteria for eligibility for special education services in order to receive special attention. In the current system, many of these students who fail to meet eligibility criteria for special education services are denied appropriate educational programs.

It is our strong opinion that students with disabilities and other special needs must be provided with appropriate education programs, not on the basis of clinical classification or overriding philosophy, but on the basis of their individual educational needs. By providing programs based on the individual strengths and weaknesses of students, as well as their long-term goals and objectives, our educational system will better serve its students. Thus, while we support the inclusion movement, we still believe that individual student needs should drive educational programs.

The textbook is organized into fifteen chapters, with each of the major categorical disability groups addressed in individual chapters. Although we do not think that categorical classification is necessary to provide appropriate services, the reality is that many schools and educators will continue to use a categorical model to identify which students are in need of special education. Therefore, the categorical orientation is included in this book to help prepare teachers, both general and special education, to meet the needs of all students in their schools.

In addition to chapters on separate disability categories, chapters on students who are gifted and those who are at risk are also included to provide information that will be needed in order to meet the needs of all students in inclusive settings. Separate chapters on behavior management, elementary curricula, secondary curricula, and working with families are also included to provide teachers with a sound background of practical applications that can be used effectively in inclusive classrooms.

A special feature of the text is the series of boxes that are found in each chapter. These boxes present practical, easy-to-use suggestions for providing services to students with disabilities. Each chapter has a box on inclusion, which provides suggestions for promoting the inclusion of students, a box on technology, and a box on multicultural issues, which presents information useful in meeting the multicultural needs of students in our schools. In addition to these three types of boxes, a fourth box presents information unique to the content of the particular chapter. The thematic boxes are designated with particular icons.

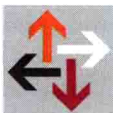
Terms that are set in **boldface** in the text can be found in the Glossary section at the end of the book.



represents inclusion boxes,



designates technology boxes, and



is used for multicultural boxes,



depicts boxes unique to each chapter.

# *Acknowledgments*

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TECS, EAP, JRP, CAD



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