

## Stars in Alignment

Wayne S. Sailor<sup>1</sup> and Amy B. McCart<sup>1</sup>

Research and Practice for Persons  
with Severe Disabilities  
2014, Vol. 39(1) 55–64  
© The Author(s) 2014  
Reprints and permissions:  
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav  
DOI: 10.1177/1540796914534622  
rps.sagepub.com



### Abstract

After decades of effort to create inclusive education, the authors assert that the time for full inclusion to manifest at scale may finally be at hand. This article first briefly considers the background and history of the inclusive education movement. The authors then reframe the discourse by defining inclusion through structures and interventions, not student characteristics. They review several emerging best practices that, when deployed within this new framework, increase the likelihood of system change or improvement to advance inclusive education.

### Keywords

inclusion, school reform, multi-tiered system of support, universal design for learning

At the heart of this agenda is the notion that special education might better be viewed as experimental or innovative education than as a separate bureaucracy that serves a few children who are deemed eligible for its services and who are all too often disenfranchised from full membership because of their very eligibility.

Kleinhammer-Tramill, Burrello, and Sailor (2013, p. 16)

A number of organizations, family members, and advocates identified with special education and disability have collectively pushed the envelope of inclusion for more than 35 years. Progress on this agenda, however, has in general been disappointing. Federal data sources indicate increased percentages of students served under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 80% or more time in the general education classroom, but most of the variance is associated with students who require fewer support needs while remaining dismal for those with more needs (McLeskey, Landers, Williamson, & Hoppey, 2012). The reasons for this are complex but important to understand and consider in the context of setting out best practices in inclusive education.

After decades of effort to create inclusive education, the time for it to manifest at scale may finally be at hand. At a recent Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C., with more than 1,200 special education administrators, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's keynote focused on the theme of inclusion noting that "all means all." His remarks are consistent with a number of messages at the federal level in support of inclusive school reform. Secretary Duncan was followed by Michael Yudin, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS), who highlighted the new OSEP-funded National Center on Schoolwide Inclusive School Reform, called SWIFT (Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation) awarded to the authors at the University of Kansas. This 24.5 million dollar investment in the SWIFT Center reflects a major policy thrust at the top of the U.S. Department of Education to finally realize inclusive education for all students.

<sup>1</sup>University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA

### Corresponding Author:

Wayne Sailor, National Center on Schoolwide Inclusive School Reform: The SWIFT Center, Beach Center on Disability, University of Kansas, 1315 Wakarusa, Lawrence, KS 66049, USA.  
Email: wsailor@ku.edu

Melody Musgrove, Director of the OSEP, closed the session by stating, "The stars are coming into alignment." For these reasons, a focus on best practices in inclusive education is needed now more than at any time in the past.

In this article, we first briefly consider the background and history of the inclusive education movement; second, we consider the problem of defining inclusion; third, we discuss a new conception for advancing inclusion; and fourth, we briefly review some of the emerging best practices in inclusive education.

## Background and History of Inclusion

Although the term *inclusion* was to emerge in the literature much later, the issues encompassed by the term that pertain to education of students considered to have disabilities originated in the form of debates before Congressional Committees leading up to the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Amendments (PL 94-142) in 1975. Two camps emerged in these debates: One firmly committed to the idea that all students should be educated in regular public schools with the greatest possible contact with typical students and the other camp equally committed to the idea that students with disabilities should be educated in more sheltered, protective environments wherein specialized services could be concentrated to meet their needs (Sontag, Burke, & York, 1973). These highly polarized camps drew their arguments, in part, from a still earlier debate concerning the role and function of public education (Goldberg & Cruickshank, 1958; Whelan, 1977). Goldberg argued that all students deserved to be taught in accordance with a general education curriculum, regardless of limitations posed by various disabilities (then called handicaps), while Cruickshank argued that a distinction was needed between education and training, and that the latter should not be the purview of public schools. Students called "severely handicapped" required training rather than real education in Cruickshank's view.

While perhaps somewhat oversimplified, the Congressional debates leading up to passage of PL 94-142 could be roughly characterized by favoring delivery of special education supports and services in segregated schools and classrooms versus integrated settings (general education classrooms). The result of the debates became the *least restrictive environment* (LRE) language of the statute. Under this language, states and districts must establish procedures "to assure that to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions, are educated with children who are not handicapped" (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1412 [5][B]). This, in turn, led to the concept of a "continuum of services" ranging from segregated special education schools to placement in grade-level general education classrooms.

Rostetter, Kowalski, and Hunter (1984) argued that there is an "integration imperative" embedded in the language of PL 94-142. The imperative suggests that needed services and supports for any students could, with few exceptions, be considered "portable" and then could be provided in general education schools. The Rostetter group, as well as Sarason (1996), called attention to the essential importance of *ideology*, which lies at the heart of all arguments about LRE and its application in placement decisions concerning students in special education.

More than a decade after Congress enacted PL 94-142, Danielson and Bellamy (1989) reported that 10 years of state-originated data demonstrated consistent use of separate facilities for students with disabilities. These data provoked an examination of the means by which the LRE principle and IDEA provisions could be implemented successfully (Furney, Hasazi, Clark-Keefe, & Hartnett, 2003). But the data did not by any means end the debate. It continues today, albeit in more muted tones (i.e., Kauffman, 2004; Kauffman & Hallahan, 2005). The debate can best be characterized as one in which those who assert a need for some measure of separateness for the education of students with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities, and those who acknowledge the importance of teaching students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers (cf. Kavale & Forness, 2000; Ryndak & Alper, 2003; Ryndak, Ward, Alper, Montgomery, & Storch, 2010; Ryndak, Ward, Alper, Storch, & Montgomery, 2010; Sailor, 2010; Sailor & Paul, 2004). At its core, the difference between the two positions concerns placement, specifically the location where services are provided to students. In particular, the question asks "What constitutes an appropriate education in the LRE for students who have extensive needs (i.e., cognitive learning and/or behavioral or emotional)?" That question, and the challenge to provide an answer consistent with the IDEA's LRE provisions, has caused

extensive debate from 1975 until today, the core of which revolves around separation or inclusion (Certo et al., 2008; Hunt, Haring, Farron-Davis, & Staub, 1993; Kauffman, 2004; Sailor, 1991; Sailor, Doolittle, Bradley, & Danielson, 2009).

The separation perspective regards students with severe disabilities as needing wholly separate educational settings. The argument was (and still is) that it is unrealistic to expect general education personnel to learn the instructional procedures required to succeed (Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove, & Nelson, 1988). Accordingly, when students with significant needs are identified, the LRE was presumed to be (and often has been) a separate, segregated setting (Grosenick, George, George, & Lewis, 1991). Embedded in this argument were concerns about the amount of time necessary for the educator to spend with these students, especially as it might take time away from other students—a concern that arguably ignored how services and supports might facilitate less restrictive, more typical placements. The gist of that argument is that there is a high likelihood that these students' teachers would not be qualified to deliver intensive academic and behavioral supports (Wong, Kauffman, & Lloyd, 1991) and thus would be unable to deliver the individualized appropriate education to which the students have a right.

The counter-perspective acknowledged the matter of systems-capacity building. Indeed, Haring, Nietupski, and Hamre-Nietupski (1976) long ago anticipated the lack-of-capacity argument and asserted that classification—defining a targeted beneficiary population and then choosing where to deliver services—should be based on “the level of resources necessary to provide acceptable educational progress, on accepted curricula, toward independent functioning, which greatly exceeds the level of resources provided in regular education” (also quoted in Sontag, Smith, & Sailor, 1977, p. 4). They were not without allies: Unless, the argument went, general education takes the lead responsibility for educating all students, including those with disabilities, a marginalized class of students and their families would likely result (Burrello, Tracy, & Schultz, 1973). That concern echoed across some members of the special education community: “The potential for the severely and profoundly handicapped to acquire more normal behavior, and greater public acceptance, through an association with more competent students, outweighs any disadvantages” (Larsen, 1977, p. 24). Marginalization in turn would lead to severely compromised post-school outcomes and to the creation of an outcast group of individuals in need of public support for the rest of their lives.

In an effort to stem marginalization, Sontag et al. (1977) argued that classifying students with extensive needs on the basis of personal characteristics was unproductive for the students; instead, their identification should be grounded in teacher competencies necessary to provide them with an effective education and curricular adaptations with which to engage them. More than a half-decade later, the same argument continued but in different terms:

It is clearly time that most or all handicapped children coexist with age peers in a regular education setting, and that the State (as represented by individual school districts) bear the burden of proof when making placements or when applying treatments that involve partial or complete removal of handicapped children from regular school. (Sailor & Guess, 1983, p. 43)

One present day argument, which applies to all students identified for services under IDEA but particularly those with the most significant disabilities, is that educators should support a reauthorization that redirects the focus of policy away from *placements* of individual children and instead toward the *structural elements* of a system necessary to ensure that effective instruction and high-quality interventions are readily available for all students, regardless of learning style, disability, or risk factors. Focusing policy on structural elements will make it possible to position the evidence-based techniques that IDEA values within the LRE principle and thus present those elements as a way of fully implementing the intent and promise of LRE (cf. Hyatt & Filler, 2011). The desired result of these systemic changes would be improved services for all students with disabilities, including those students who typically need a greater level of support.

Despite any significant movement in LRE percentages for students with more extensive needs, evidence supports inclusive education (Fisher & Meyer, 2002; Foreman, Arthur-Kelly, Pascoe, & King, 2004; Logan & Keefe, 1997; Peetsma, Vergeer, Roeleveld, & Karsten, 2001; Wehmeyer, Lattin, Lapp-Rincker, & Agran, 2003) and indicates improved academic and social outcomes. There is additional evidence indicating a

direct benefit to general education students when exposed to practices supporting students with more extensive needs (Lenz, Deshler, & Kissam, 2004; Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, & Feinberg, 2005; Manset & Semmel, 1997). Nonetheless, the U.S. Department of Education (2008) reported that children with multiple disabilities have minimal exposure to the general education classroom with nearly 70% of those spending less than 39% of their time in general education classroom, 25% of whom are in completely segregated settings.

These data persist even though adaptations of curriculum and instruction (McSheehan, Sonnenmeier, Jorgensen, & Turner, 2006) make instruction in general education classrooms feasible and desirable (A. P. Turnbull, Turnbull, & Wehmeyer, 2009). A concern existed in the past that the cost of education would rise significantly; however, McGregor and Vogelsberg (1998) found integrated forms of service delivery, although they might initially increase in costs, would decrease over time and cost less than segregated forms of service delivery (Halvorsen, Neary, Hunt, & Piuma, 1996; McLaughlin & Warren, 1994).

### **Reframing the Discourse: Defining Inclusion Through Structures and Interventions, Not Student Characteristics**

In light of the available evidence, the question is not whether integrated education should occur but how it can occur more often and more effectively for all students, especially those with extensive needs for supports and services provided under IDEA. How to do that?

Rather than limiting the discourse to what works, given a fixed or unchanged service-delivery system for students identified as having significant disabilities, Sailor and Roger (2005) argued for an alternative to typical inclusion models. They did not focus primarily on the students and their placement. Instead, they considered how to allocate resources and deploy personnel and services. Rather than being limited to a deficit model, they addressed the service-delivery system and converted the issue to one of school administration and capacity-building grounded in research. That change in focus is significant: One model replaces another and the discourse changes. Models of how one thinks about disability and the education of those with disabilities have the power to lock us into old and relatively useless frameworks or to liberate us from them and thereby compel us to consider different approaches (H. R. Turnbull & Stowe, 2001).

This kind of alternative model consists of evidence-based practices for serving all students, including those with significant learning or behavioral challenges. The model matches support systems to the needs of each student and does so through a schoolwide application of response to intervention (RTI) called multi-tiered system of support (MTSS). This schoolwide framework extends the application of the evidence base beyond eligibility determination for special education due to a specific learning disability, to all students including those at risk for school failure due to circumstances other than, or in addition to disabilities. The implementation of schoolwide positive behavior interventions and support (SWPBIS), as the behavioral instruction side of MTSS, provides an example of early application related to social/behavioral outcomes for students (Sugai & Horner, 2009).

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (Holdheide & Reschly, 2008) reviewed much of the placement debate literature as it bears on the implications for personnel preparation and concluded that,

in short, inclusive services are essential to meeting several of the OSEP outcome indicators . . . The obvious answer to the overwhelming majority of students with disabilities is to be involved directly in the general education classroom where the general education curriculum is delivered to all students. (p. 3)

If the stars are to align, the debate regarding whether or not separate educational systems are effective should be put aside in favor of allocation of all resources available for the benefit of all students. Through a MTSS framework each student is given, based on their measured educational need, what they instructionally need to succeed when they need it, rendering irrelevant the physical location of supports and services (i.e., special education is a service, not a place).

## A Different Approach to Inclusion

Unless all students have equal membership in schools they will suffer incalculable harm. Under the guise of "specialness" tied to the construct of disability, a construct that locates educational problems solely within the individual, we have created an unjust and unfair parallel system of programs and services that results in less efficacious outcomes than those realized by students in the general education system. (Sailor & Burrello, 2013, p. 24)

Most models of inclusion have been driven almost entirely by special education with little or no design involvement from general education (Sailor et al., 2009). Students with more extensive support needs have typically been placed in general education classrooms but often stationed with one-on-one paraprofessionals conducting lessons wholly disconnected from the general curriculum (Giangreco, Smith, & Pinckney, 2006). We argue here that it is time for a different approach: a *schoolwide* approach to inclusive education, driven by MTSS, guided by design teams of both general and special educators, utilizing universal design for learning (UDL) principles, and implemented in a manner resulting in demonstrable gains for *all students*. In other words, come at inclusion through comprehensive school reform with outcomes geared to both general and special education students.

## Likelihood of System Change or Improvement: Emerging Best Practices

MTSS provides screening and progress monitoring at all three levels of intervention intensity for both behavior and academics offering purposeful, timed interventions for each student based on their individual needs (McCook, 2006; National Center on Response to Intervention, 2010; Sailor, 2009; Schumaker & Deshler, 2010; Shores & Chester, 2009).

UDL provides a conceptual alternative to educational program fragmentation (Center for Applied Science Technologies, 2011; Curry, 2003). UDL is an approach to educational systems change and curriculum development that is intended to ensure that students with a wide spectrum of learning abilities can gain access to, and derive benefit from the general curriculum. UDL provides a rubric for differentiated instruction focused on three elements: (a) multiple means of teaching (e.g., multi-modal), (b) multiple means of expression (e.g., oral and written tests), and (c) multiple means of student engagement (i.e., maximizing student motivation to tackle difficult material).

There is clear evidence that inclusive educational practices for students with significant disabilities are associated with increased developmental, social and academic outcomes (Copeland & Cosbey, 2008; Fisher & Meyer, 2002; Wehmeyer et al., 2003). There is additional evidence that educational supports introduced into general education classrooms to accommodate students with a variety and range of disabilities directly benefit general education students (Lenz et al., 2004; Luiselli et al., 2005; Manset & Semmel, 1997; Sailor, McCart, & Choi, 2012). Yet schools consistently fail to adequately implement and sustain educational practices to impact academic outcomes for students with disabilities. Moreover, students with significant disabilities are often left out of innovative initiatives such as MTSS/RTI and UDL.

Schools have an established pattern of categorical and specialized programs and supports, often operating in relative isolation with respect to one another and to the general curriculum. This "targeted population" approach to supplementary supports has given rise to the well-documented problem of program fragmentation (Miles & Darling-Hammond, 1998; O'Day, 2002). While virtually all students in high-need schools require additional support to achieve academically, only targeted "eligible" groups of students derive benefits from any one program. O'Day (2002) referred to education "silos" to describe this problem. Most students served under IDEA must be included in the annual state grade-level achievement assessments while schools are struggling with the question of how to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) in math and literacy. The problem in traditionally organized schools is that special education is often, for the most part, disconnected from the general curriculum (Lombardi, 1999; Sailor et al., 2009). This problem is exacerbated when a majority of special education students are served in separate classes and schools, under teachers who have minimal contact with general education curriculum and college and career ready standards (Furney et al., 2003). Furthermore, the greater the level of organizational dysfunction in a school, the lower the academic output (Elmore, 2007). Students with disabilities are at greater risk of experiencing academic

failure in schools that are low performing and this likelihood is even greater in schools with poor organizational structures. Clearly, as noted before, there is a need for a whole-school approach to inclusive education, driven by MTSS with embedded UDL, guided by general and special educators in collaboration with each other, and implemented in a manner that results in demonstrable gains for *all students*.

In our view, there are six critical issues facing America's public schools, especially chronically low-performing schools, that must be addressed to bring about sustainable, inclusive school reform. These are

- Fragmented supports ("silos") and lack of family partnerships with schools;
- The achievement gap that exists between subgroups of students based on social, language, and/or disability characteristics;
- Student engagement and behavior that impedes learning;
- Lack of implementation of both systems-level and student-level, evidence-based interventions with fidelity;
- Lack of knowledge sharing and resource availability; and
- Lack of sustainability and replication of successful schoolwide models of inclusive education.

As you will note, a schoolwide reform approach to inclusive education is vastly more complex than simply placing students with disabilities or increasing their percentages of time in general education classrooms. The issues above require *structural* interventions involving not only whole-school stakeholders but families and community members as well. Furthermore, the school cannot be the sole unit of analysis in effecting change of this scope and magnitude. The district must be involved at each step of the process. The proper unit of analysis thus becomes the local education agency (LEA) *together* with the school. The goal, of course, is to sustain successful models and *scale up* inclusive practices within the LEA over time.

### Evidence-Based Practices in Inclusive Education

In our view, the reason inclusion has been such a hard sell, particularly for students with extensive support needs, is that general educators and sometimes parents have not seen the value of it, given the required departure from traditional teaching practices. The value of a schoolwide reform approach is that it enables evidence-based practices developed within special education to be extended to the general education population, thus helping general educators to solve some of their more pressing problems, particularly with high-risk and difficult to teach populations. In our view, MTSS, the most important and far-reaching of these special education innovations affords the essential driver to bring about comprehensive, *unified* school reform. Through verification of all school services and supports such that *all* students potentially benefit from any one or combination of supports, inclusive education becomes not only realizable but also highly valued by all educational stakeholders. Such an approach requires re-thinking use of space at the school (possibly including community environments), deployment of all school personnel in the teaching-learning process, and creative, responsive scheduling (Burrello, Sailor, & Kleinhammer-Tramill, 2013).

Through our work at the SWIFT Center, we have identified five domains that are evidence-based or for which an emerging body of research exists suggesting efficacy in inclusive school reform:

1. Deeply engaged administrative leadership committed to transformative inclusive education from traditional educational practices (Burrello, Hoffinan, & Murray, 2005; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005);
2. MTSS where all academic and behavioral instruction is delivered through a schoolwide data-driven system utilizing UDL (Aladjem & Borman, 2006; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Luiselli et al., 2005; Sailor, 2009);
3. Integrated educational framework where "silos" located within schools are dissolved and collaborative teaching structures emerge at all grade levels (Hang & Rabren, 2009). All resources are offered to all students based on their learning need rather than an eligibility label and a community of practice emerges where all school personnel (i.e., security guards, paraprofessionals, psychologists, secretaries, etc.) are directly involved in the teaching-learning process (Wenger, 2000);

4. Family and community partnerships, where families are actively engaged in both the organizational makeup of the school as well as their child's education. While the value of family-school partnerships is well-documented, community organizations and businesses also have meaningful ways to support student learning and social outcomes (Chadwick, 2004); and
5. District-level support and integrated policy structure that is fully aligned and removes barriers and misconceptions surrounding effective implementation (Fixsen, Blase, Metz, & Van Dyke, 2010; Jerald, 2005; Kozleski & Smith, 2009). A supportive relationship between individual schools and their district central offices through which school resource decisions can become a matter of trust and mutual respect is critical for transformation to an effective, inclusive school (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Easton, & Luppescu, 2010).

These domains are nested within a schoolwide system focused on data-based decision making where universal student screening and regular progress monitoring using benchmark assessments, curriculum-based measures, and grade-level annual assessments guide academic and behavioral instruction (e.g., Bender & Shores, 2007; Lane, Oakes, & Menzies, 2010; McCook, 2006; Shores & Chester, 2009).

The authors presently guide the work of the National Center on Schoolwide Inclusive School Reform, called the Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation (SWIFT) Center ([www.swiftschools.org](http://www.swiftschools.org)). Our approach to inclusive schoolwide reform engages general educators in the task of identifying special education practices that offer benefits to non-identified students as well as those identified for special education (IDEA: 20 U.S.C. § 1413 [a] [4] [A]). General educators value special educators for what they offer the total school and special educators value the curricular support offered by the general educators. If the "placement/least restrictive environment" issue is reframed to position it in the ongoing discourse on inclusive school reform (i.e., U.S. Department of Education, 2002), then schoolwide applicability comes into focus, laying a foundation for the kind of comprehensive change that eliminates silos and weaves together evidence-based critical features. President Obama in his statement to the Joint Sessions of Congress in February of 2009 stated "by 2020 America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world." This simply cannot be done without students with disabilities. Is college- and career-readiness appropriate for all students, including those with the most extensive needs? Absolutely! As "inclusion" makes way for inclusive school reform for all students, the stars do, in fact, appear to be aligning.

#### Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

#### Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This article was produced under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs Grant H326Y120005, University of Kansas, Beach Center on Disability. Grace Zamora Durán and Tina Diamond served as the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) project officers. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education of any product, commodity, service, or enterprise mentioned in this publication is intended or should be inferred.

#### References

- Aladjem, D. K., & Borman, K. M. (2006). *Examining comprehensive school reform*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.
- Bender, W. N., & Shores, C. (2007). *Response to intervention: A practical guide for every teacher*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Braaten, S. R., Kauffman, J. M., Braaten, B., Polsgrove, L., & Nelson, C. M. (1988). The regular education initiative: Patent medicine for behavioral disorders. *Exceptional Children*, 55, 21-27.
- Bryk, A. S., Sebring, P. B., Allensworth, E., Easton, J. Q., & Luppescu, S. (2010). *Organizing schools for improvement: Lessons from Chicago*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.



- Burrello, L. C., Hoffman, L. P., & Murray, L. E. (2005). *School leaders building capacity from within: Resolving competing agendas creatively*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Burrello, L. C., Sailor, W., & Kleinhammer-Tramill, J. (2013). *Unifying educational systems*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Burrello, L. C., Tracy, M. L., & Schultz, E. W. (1973). Special education as experimental education: A new conceptualization. *Exceptional Children, 40*(1), 29-45.
- Center for Applied Science Technologies. (2011). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.0*. Wakefield, MA: Author.
- Certo, N. J., Luecking, R. G., Murphy, S., Brown, L., Courey, S., & Belanger, D. (2008). Seamless transition and long-term support for individuals with severe intellectual disabilities. *Research and Practice for Persons With Severe Disabilities, 33*(3), 85-95.
- Chadwick, K. G. (2004). *Improving schools through community engagement: A practical guide for educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Copeland, S. R., & Cosbey, J. (2008). Making progress in the general curriculum: Rethinking effective instructional practices. *Research and Practice for Persons With Severe Disabilities, 33*, 214-227.
- Curry, C. (2003). Universal design accessibility for all learners. *Educational Leadership, 61*(2), 55-60.
- Danielson, L. C., & Bellamy, G. T. (1989). State variation in placement of children with handicaps in segregated environments. *Exceptional Children, 55*, 448-455.
- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child Development, 82*, 405-432.
- Education of All Handicapped Children Act, (P.L. 94-142), U.S.C. § 20 Sec. 1400(d) (1975).
- Elmore, R. F. (2007). *School reform from the inside out: Policy, practice, and performance*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.
- Fisher, M., & Meyer, L. H. (2002). Development and social competence after two years for students enrolled in inclusive and self-contained educational programs. *Research and Practice for Persons With Severe Disabilities, 27*, 165-174.
- Fixsen, D. L., Blase, K., Metz, A., & Van Dyke, M. (2010). *Implementation teams: The active interface between interventions and effective human services*. Chapel Hill, NC: FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina.
- Foreman, P., Arthur-Kelly, M., Pascoe, S., & King, B. S. (2004). Evaluating the educational experiences of students with profound and multiple disabilities in inclusive and segregated classroom settings: An Australian perspective. *Research and Practice for Persons With Severe Disabilities, 29*, 183-193.
- Furney, K. S., Hasazi, S. B., Clark-Keefe, K., & Hartnett, J. (2003). A longitudinal analysis of shifting policy landscapes in special and general education reform. *Exceptional Children, 70*(1), 81-94.
- Giangreco, M. F., Smith, C. S., & Pinckney, E. (2006). Addressing the paraprofessional dilemma in an inclusive school: A program description. *Research and Practice for Persons With Severe Disabilities, 31*, 215-229.
- Goldberg, I., & Cruickshank, W. M. (1958). The trainable but non-educable: Whose responsibility? *National Education Association Journal, 47*, 622-623.
- Grosenick, J. K., George, N. L., George, M. P., & Lewis, T. J. (1991). Public school services for behaviorally disordered students: Program practices in the 1980s. *Behavioral Disorders, 16*, 87-96.
- Halvorsen, A., Neary, T., Hunt, P., & Piuma, C. (1996). *A model for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of inclusive and special classes*. Manuscript submitted for publication, PEERS Project, California State University, Hayward.
- Hang, Q., & Rabren, K. (2009). An examination of co-teaching perspectives and efficacy indicators. *Remedial and Special Education, 30*, 259-268.
- Haring, N. G., Nietupski, J., & Hamre-Nietupski, S. (1976). *Guidelines for effective intervention with the severely handicapped: Toward independent functioning*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Washington, Seattle.
- Holdheide, L. R., & Reschly, D. J. (2008). *Teacher preparation to deliver inclusive services to students with disabilities*. Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.
- Hunt, P., Haring, K., Farron-Davis, F., & Staub, D. (1993). Factors associated with the integrated educational placement of students with severe disabilities. *Journal of the Association for Persons With Severe Handicaps, 18*(1), 6-15.
- Hyatt, K. J., & Filler, J. (2011). LRE re-examined: Misinterpretations and unintended consequences. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 15*, 1031-1045.
- Jerald, C. (2005). *The implementation trap: Helping schools overcome barriers to change*. Washington, DC: The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement.
- Kauffman, J. M. (2004). The president's commission and the devaluation of special education. *Education & Treatment of Children, 27*, 307-324.



- Kauffman, J. M., & Hallahan, D. P. (2005). *Special education: What it is and why we need it*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Kavale, K. A., & Forness, S. R. (2000). History, rhetoric, and reality: Analysis of the inclusion debate. *Remedial and Special Education, 21*, 279-296.
- Kleinhammer-Tramill, J., Burrello, L. C., & Sailor, W. (2013). Special education: A critical perspective on reframing public policy for students with disabilities. In L. C. Burrello, W. Sailor, & J. Kleinhammer-Tramill (Eds.), *Unifying educational systems: Leadership and policy perspectives* (pp. 1-20). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kozleski, E. B., & Smith, A. (2009). The complexities of systems change in creating equity for students with disabilities in urban schools. *Urban Education, 44*, 427-451.
- Lane, K. L., Oakes, W., & Menzies, H. (2010). Systematic screenings to prevent the development of learning and behavior problems: Considerations for practitioners, researchers, and policy makers. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies, 21*, 160-172.
- Larsen, L. A. (1977). Community service necessary to program effectivity for severely/profoundly handicapped. In E. Sontag, J. Smith, & N. Certo (Eds.), *Educational programming for the severely and profoundly handicapped* (pp. 17-30). Reston, VA: Council for Exceptional Children.
- Lenz, B. K., Deshler, D. D., & Kissam, B. R. (2004). *Teaching content to all: Evidence-based inclusive practices in middle and secondary schools*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Logan, K. R., & Keefe, E. B. (1997). A comparison of instructional context, teacher behavior, and engaged behavior for students with severe disabilities in general education and self-contained elementary classrooms. *Journal of the Association for Persons With Severe Handicaps, 22*(1), 16-27.
- Lombardi, T. P. (Ed.). (1999). *Inclusion policy and practice*. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.
- Luiselli, J. K., Putnam, R. F., Handler, M. W., & Feinberg, A. B. (2005). Whole-school positive behaviour support: Effects on student discipline problems and academic performance. *Educational Psychology, 25*, 183-198.
- Manset, G., & Semmel, M. I. (1997). Are inclusive programs for students with mild disabilities effective? A comparative review of model programs. *The Journal of Special Education, 31*, 155-180.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- McCook, J. E. (2006). *The RTI guide: Developing and implementing a model in your schools*. Horsham, PA: LRP Publications.
- McGregor, G., & Vogelsberg, R. T. (1998). *Inclusive schooling practices—Pedagogical and research foundations: A synthesis that informs best practices about inclusive schooling*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.
- McLaughlin, M. J., & Warren, S. H. (1994). Restructuring special education programs in local school districts: The tensions and the challenges. *The Special Education Leadership Review, 2*(1), 2-21.
- McLeskey, J., Landers, E., Williamson, P., & Hoppey, D. (2012). Are we moving toward educating students with disabilities in less restrictive settings? *The Journal of Special Education, 46*, 131-140.
- McSheehan, M., Sonnenmeier, R. M., Jorgensen, C. M., & Turner, K. (2006). Beyond communication access: Promoting learning of the general education curriculum by students with significant disabilities. *Topics in Language Disorders, 26*, 266-290.
- Miles, K. H., & Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Rethinking the allocation of teaching resources: Some lessons from high-performing schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 20*, 9-29.
- National Center on Response to Intervention. (2010). *Essential components of RTI: A closer look at response to intervention*. Washington, DC: Office of Special Education Programs, National Center on Response to Intervention, U.S. Department of Special Education.
- O'Day, J. A. (2002). Complexity, accountability, and school improvement. *Harvard Educational Review, 72*, 293-329.
- Peetsma, T., Vergeer, M., Roeleveld, J., & Karsten, S. (2001). Inclusion in education: Comparing pupils' development in special and regular education. *Educational Review, 53*, 125-135.
- Rostetter, D., Kowalski, R., & Hunter, D. (1984). Implementing the integration principle of PL 94-142. In N. Certo, N. Haring, & R. York (Eds.), *Public school integration of severely handicapped students* (pp. 293-320). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.
- Ryndak, D. L., & Alper, S. K. (2003). *Curriculum and instruction for students with significant disabilities in inclusive settings*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Ryndak, D. L., Ward, T., Alper, S., Montgomery, J., & Storch, J. F. (2010). Long-term outcomes of services for two persons with significant disabilities with differing educational experiences: A qualitative consideration of the impact of educational experiences. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 45*, 323-338.
- Ryndak, D. L., Ward, T., Alper, S., Storch, J. F., & Montgomery, J. (2010). Long-term outcomes of services in inclusive and self-contained settings for siblings with comparable significant disabilities. *Education and Training in Developmental Disabilities, 45*(1), 38-53.

- Sailor, W. (1991). Special education in the restructured school. *Remedial and Special Education, 12*(6), 8-22.
- Sailor, W. (2009). *Making RTI work: How smart schools are reforming education through schoolwide response-to-intervention*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Sailor, W. (2010). Access to the general curriculum: Systems change or tinker some more? *Research and Practice for Persons With Severe Disabilities, 33*, 249-257.
- Sailor, W., & Burrello, L. C. (2013). Shifting perspective to frame disability policy. In L. C. Burrello, W. Sailor, & J. Kleinhammer-Tramill (Eds.), *Unifying educational systems: Leadership and policy perspectives* (pp. 21-40). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Sailor, W., Doolittle, J., Bradley, R., & Danielson, L. C. (2009). Response to intervention and positive behavior support. In W. Sailor, G. Dunlap, G. Sugai, & R. Horner (Eds.), *Handbook of positive behavior support* (pp. 729-753). New York, NY: Springer.
- Sailor, W., & Guess, D. (1983). *Severely handicapped students: An instructional design*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Sailor, W., McCart, A., & Choi, H. (2012). *A comparison of academic outcomes and implementation of the schoolwide applications model in Washington DC*. Lawrence: University of Kansas.
- Sailor, W., & Paul, J. L. (2004). Framing positive behavior support in the ongoing discourse concerning the politics of knowledge. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 6*, 37-49.
- Sailor, W., & Roger, B. (2005). Rethinking inclusion: Schoolwide applications. *Phi Delta Kappan, 86*, 503-509.
- Sarason, S. B. (1996). *Revisiting the culture of the school and the problem of change*. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
- Schumaker, J. B., & Deshler, D. D. (2010). Using a tiered intervention model in secondary schools to improve academic outcomes in subject-area courses. In M. R. Shinn & H. M. Walker (Eds.), *Interventions for achievement and behavior problems in a three-tier model including RTI* (pp. 609-632). Bethesda, MD: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Shores, C., & Chester, K. (2009). *Using RTI for school improvement: Raising every student's achievement scores*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Sontag, E., Burke, P., & York, R. (1973). Considerations for serving the severely handicapped in the public schools. *Education and Training of the Mentally Retarded, 8*(2), 20-26.
- Sontag, E., Smith, J., & Sailor, W. (1977). The severely/profoundly handicapped: Who are they? Where are we? *The Journal of Special Education, 11*, 5-11.
- Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (2009). Responsiveness-to-intervention and school-wide positive behavior supports: Integration of multi-tiered system approaches. *Exceptionality, 17*, 223-237.
- Turnbull, A. P., Turnbull, R., & Wehmeyer, M. L. (2009). *Exceptional lives. Special education in today's schools* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.
- Turnbull, H. R., & Stowe, M. J. (2001). Classification, social contracts, obligations, civil rights, and the Supreme Court. *Remedial and Special Education, 22*, 374-382.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2002). *The condition of education 2002* (NCES2002-025). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2008). *OSEP's 30th annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Wehmeyer, M. L., Lattin, D. L., Lapp-Rincker, G., & Agran, M. (2003). Access to the general curriculum of middle school students with mental retardation: An observational study. *Remedial and Special Education, 24*, 262-272.
- Wenger, E. (2000). Communities of practice and social learning systems. *Organization, 7*, 225-246.
- Wong, K. H., Kauffman, J. M., & Lloyd, J. W. (1991). Choices for integration: Selecting teachers for mainstreamed students with emotional or behavioral disorders. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 27*, 108-115.

### Author Biographies

**Wayne Sailor**, PhD is a professor in the Department of Special Education, School of Education, University of Kansas; a senior scientist with the Institute for Life Span Studies; Associate Director of the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas. He established and directs the National Center on Schoolwide Inclusive School Reform: The SWIFT Center, funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

**Amy McCart**, PhD is an associate research professor with Special Graduate Faculty Status at the University of Kansas. Dr. McCart is the director of technical assistance for the SWIFT Center. Additionally, she has been principal investigator for multiple federal projects through the U.S. Department of Education to support urban schools implementing school-wide positive behavior support.