

Leading Inclusive Schools *TODAY*: Setting Your GPS



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A Space for Jotting



Inclusive Education

In Principle, inclusive education means:

...the valuing of diversity within the human community. When inclusive education is fully embraced, we abandon the idea that children have to become “normal” in order to contribute to the world...We begin to look beyond typical ways of becoming valued members of the community, and in doing so, begin to realize the achievable goal of providing all children with an authentic sense of belonging (pp. 38-39). *

In Practice, inclusive education means:

A Classroom Model in which students with and without disabilities are based in a regular structure and benefit from the shared ownership of general and special educators.

A Student-centered Approach Beginning with Profiles that help educators appreciate the strengths and challenges of learners with and without disabilities and the individualized accomplishments that can be attained.

A Schedule that accounts for the full range of needs in the class—where no student engages in “pull out” or alternative activities to the extent that disruptions in the daily schedule and in peer relationships do not occur.

A Curriculum that is rich and accommodating for all students—and when further individualized to meet the needs of a particular learner.

A Teaming Process in which support staff work in flexible, coordinated ways to strengthen the collaborative relationships among special and regular educators, parents and educators, and educators and the community.

A Classroom Climate that embraces diversity, fosters a sense of social responsibility, and supports positive peer relationships.



*Kunc, N. (1992). The need to belong. Rediscovering Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.

Kasa-Hendrickson, C. & Buswell, W. 2007

Strategies for Presuming Competence

- **Examine your attitude**—practice saying, “How can this work?”, “How can this child be successful?”
- **Question your stereotypes**—how someone looks, walks, or talks does not tell you about how they think and feel.
- **Use age appropriate talk**—examine your tone of voice and topic.
- **Support communication.**
- **Listen openly**—work to shed judgments.
- **Teach peers and others** how to interpret potentially confusing behavior.
- **Do not speak in front of someone** as if they were not there.
- In conversation, refer to the person in a way that **includes them in the conversation.**
- **Ask permission** to share information with others.
- **Be humble.**
- If possible, always let the person explain for himself or herself and **do not speak for them.**
- Assume that **every student will benefit** from learning age appropriate academic curriculum.
- Look for **evidence of understanding.**
- Support students to **show understanding using their strengths.**
- Design adaptations and accommodations to **support access to academics.**
- Be sure to **acknowledge the presence of a person with a disability in the same way** you would acknowledge others.



**“If you want to see competence,
it helps if you look for it.”**

—Douglas Biklen

DISTRICT/SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSIVE STUDENT PLACEMENT



The following guidelines are for administrators to use when making student placement decisions and policies. While not exhaustive, they represent a range of key decisions that can foster inclusion, belonging and learning.

These guidelines can be used to avoid common administrative pitfalls that set up structures impeding achievement and creating seclusion. They are not meant to be a recipe, but are intended to help put structures and policies in place to create truly inclusive schools.

Home District: All students are educated within their school district.

No students (including students with significant disabilities, students with challenging behaviors, students with autism, etc.) are sent to other districts or cooperative programs outside of the home school district.

Home School: All students attend the schools and classrooms they would attend regardless of ability/disability or native language.

There are no schools within the district set aside for students with disabilities.

General Education Member: All students are placed in chronologically age-appropriate *general education classrooms*.

This is a legal entitlement, not based on staff preference or comfort level. Each classroom represents a heterogeneous group of students. Special education is a service, not a place. No programs, schools-within-a-school or classrooms are set aside for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are not slotted into predetermined programs, schools, or classrooms. Particular classrooms are not designated, as inclusive classrooms while others are not.

Density Check: Strive for classroom sections that represent *natural proportions* of the school building.

Natural proportions refer to the percentage of students with disabilities as compared to the entire student body. If you have 10 students with disabilities and 100 students in the school, that natural proportion is 10 percent. The national average of students with disabilities is 12 percent.

Special Education Teacher's Caseloads: Assignment of students with disabilities balances the intensity of student need and case-management responsibility.

This moves away from certain special educators being the “inclusive,” “resource,” “self-contained” or “emotionally disturbed” to all special educators having similar roles and case loads. Students with disabilities with similar labels are not clustered together.

Team Arrangements: All teachers (general education, special education, ELL, reading, etc.) are assigned to instructional teams on the basis of shared students.

Special education teachers are assigned to collaborate with 2-3 classroom sections or teachers to promote collaboration, communication and co-planning. Creating effective teams of adults who work with the same students is essential; consider grouping compatible adult team members as well as building capacity in all staff members to work with all students. Professional development is needed for adults to embrace these new roles, collaborate well and effectively use meeting time.

Related Services: Related services are portable services that come to the student.

Therefore, related service teachers consult with classroom teams, demonstrate skills and techniques and provide instruction/support within the context of general education. Related service providers need to be a part of the placement of students into general education classrooms process and the daily general education planning and program.

Daily Schedule: Use the schedule to support instructional blocks, time for collaborative planning and problem solving and daily direction and training for paraprofessionals.

The master schedule is used as a tool to leverage the vision of collaborative inclusion. Creating sacred planning time for teams of general educators and special educators is essential.

Service Delivery Teams: District and school-level teams meet regularly to reconfigure resources and to revise service delivery on an annual basis.

Schools engage in an ongoing process to plan for the specific needs of their students. This involves re-examining the current way staff are used, how teams are created, the class placement process and the master schedule.

George Theoharis and Julie Causton-Theoharis, 2009
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Determining Roles & Responsibilities Among Team Members



Directions: Read through the following common roles and responsibilities. Determine which team member should take on each of the roles and responsibilities:

P=Primary responsibility

S=Secondary responsibility

Sh=Shared responsibility

I=Input in the decision making

Major Role or Responsibility	Classroom Teacher	Special Education Teacher	Para-professional	Other
Developing Student Objectives				
Designing Differentiated Curriculum				
Creating Student Specific Modifications & Adaptations				
Creating Classroom Materials				
Co-Teaching Curriculum				
Providing 1:1 Instruction				
Teaching the whole class of students				
Leading small groups				
Monitoring Student Progress				
Examining Student Work to Determine Next Steps				
Assessing and Assigning Grades				
Communicating with Parents				
Consulting with related service personnel				
Participating in IEP Meetings				
Disciplining students				
Writing in Communication Notebooks				
Providing Community Based Programming				

Major Role or Responsibility	Classroom Teacher	Special Education Teacher	Para-Professional	Other
Developing Peer Supports				
Scheduling Common Planning Time				
Participating in Regularly Scheduled Team Planning Meetings				
Facilitating Meetings				
Communicating Information from Meetings to Other Team Members				
Other?				

When you have finished determining roles & responsibilities for each of the team members, ask yourselves the following questions:



1. Could any of these roles and responsibilities be shared or changed?
2. Does anyone feel uncomfortable with any of the roles as outlined?
3. Does anyone feel they need more information/training to perform the above responsibilities?
4. What messages are sent to students, parents, etc. about the way adults work together as a team in this classroom through the division of responsibilities?
5. What changes need to be made?

Adapted From: Causton-Theoharis (2003) Increasing Interactions Between Students with Disabilities and their Peers via Paraprofessional Training: University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dugan, 1995. Source Unknown



Co-Teaching Approaches

1. One Teach, One Observe. One of the advantages in co-teaching is that more detailed observation of students engaged in the learning process can occur. With this approach, for example, co-teachers can decide in advance what types of specific observational information to gather during instruction and can agree on a system for gathering the data. Afterward, the teachers should analyze the information together.

2. Station Teaching. In this co-teaching approach, teachers divide content and students. Each teacher then teaches the content to one group and subsequently repeats the instruction for the other group. If appropriate, a third station could give students an opportunity to work independently.

3. Parallel Teaching. On occasion, student learning would be greatly facilitated if they just had more supervision by the teacher or more opportunity to respond. In parallel teaching, the teachers are both covering the same information, but they divide the class into two groups and teach simultaneously.

4. Alternative Teaching: In most class groups, occasions arise in which several students need specialized attention. In alternative teaching, one teacher takes responsibility for the large group while the other works with a smaller group.

5. Team Teaching: In team teaching, both teachers are delivering the same instruction at the same time. Some teachers refer to this as having one brain in two bodies. Others call it tag team teaching. Most co-teachers consider this approach the most complex but satisfying way to co-teach, but the approach that is most dependent on teachers' styles.

6. One Teach, One Assist. In a second approach to co-teaching, one person would keep primary responsibility for teaching while the other professional circulated through the room providing unobtrusive assistance to students as needed.

Co-Teaching in the Classroom



If one of you is doing this:	The other can be doing this:
Lecturing	Modeling notetaking on the board or overhead, ensuring “brain breaks” so that students can process lecture information
Taking attendance	Collecting and reviewing last night’s homework; introducing a social or study skill
Passing out papers	Reviewing directions; modeling the first problem on the assignment
Giving instructions orally	Writing down instructions on the board; repeating or clarifying any difficult content
Checking for understanding with large heterogeneous group of students	Checking for understanding with small heterogeneous group of students
Circulating, providing one-on-one support as needed	Providing direct instruction to whole class
Prepping half the class for one side of a debate	Prepping the other side of the class for the opposing side of the debate
Facilitating a silent activity	Circulating, checking for comprehension
Providing large group instruction	Circulating, using proximity control for behavior management
Running last minute copies or errands in the building	Reviewing homework, previewing a study skill or test-taking strategy
Re-teaching or pre-teaching with a small group	Monitoring the large group as they work independently
Facilitating sustained silent reading	Reading aloud quietly with a small group; previewing upcoming information
Reading a test aloud to a group of students	Proctoring a test silently with a group of students
Creating basic lesson plans for standards, objectives, and content curriculum	Providing suggestions for modifications, accommodations, and activities for diverse learners
Facilitating stations or groups	Also facilitating stations or groups
Explaining a new concept	Conducting roleplay or modeling the

	concept, asking clarifying questions
Considering modification needs	Considering enrichment opportunities
If one of you is doing this:	The other can be doing this:

Communication Ideas: How to Carve out Time... When There Simply is No Time



Creating Meeting Time

- **Video or Independent Work Time** - Create a weekly meeting time where students are expected to either watch a video or work independently for 15 minutes.
- **Utilize a Parent Volunteer** - As a parent volunteer reads a book to the students or leads a review game, meet together for 15 minutes.
- **Utilize Another Teacher Team** - Put two classrooms together for a half-an-hour each week for a certain portion of the curriculum or community building activities. One teaching team covers while the other team meets. The teams then switch.
- **Meet During Specials Time** - As specials teachers if there are 15 minutes that could be left unsupported by a SEA. Use that time to meet together.
- **Before/After School Time** - Utilize 15 minutes before/after school starts to have a “sacred” meeting time for SEAs and special educators to meet.

Alternatives to Face-to-Face Meetings

- **Communication Notebook** - Establish a communication notebook that all members of the team read and respond to each day. This could be a place where people could write down questions or changes in schedules or child specific information.
- **Email** - Email could be substituted for the communication notebook so team members can contact each other with questions, comments or scheduling changes.
- **Mailbox** - Utilize a mailbox in the classroom for each staff members (including SEAs) where any notes or information (including the newsletter that generally goes home to students) is placed.
- **Proofread** - Have each of the team members proof read any notes that go home to students. This way, not only are the notes proofread, but everyone gets all of the necessary information.
- **Lesson Plans** - Keep lesson plans out and accessible to all members of the team. Within the plans write in specifically what role each person will play

Program Planning Matrix

Student _____ Class _____ Date _____

Class

Schedule

IEP Goals									

Key: x=instruction provided; O=Classroom Participation Plans with General Adaptations required; ●=General Adaptations Plan and Weekly Plan for Specific Adaptations required)

Modifying Schoolwork (2nd ed.) by Janney & Snell. Copyright © 2004 Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Set your destination & goals



What do we want to do? What do we expect? What is our dream? These are just some of the questions you will want to explore with your co-teaching partner.

While teachers will undoubtedly come to the partnership with different levels of commitment to and understanding of inclusion, individuals should share some core values about learners, teaching, and the school community if they are to have success reaching all students. To communicate these values, co-teaching teams should ideally craft a vision that can clearly communicate their intentions and can serve as a tool for making decisions and inspiring daily classroom practices.

To some, visioning work seems silly or unnecessary. It may even be seen as a waste of precious planning time. We could not disagree more and see the creation of a classroom vision as a potential game changer for both professionals and their students. Visioning can:

- Create a shared sense of purpose
- Provide a crystal clear focus for future planning
- Provide opportunities to clarify shared values
- Signal a move into collaborative planning and thinking
- Help teams feel inspired and think bigger

So, now that you are sold on the idea of visioning, get ready to brainstorm. As you sit down to do this work, ask, "What future do we see for ourselves, our students and our classroom?" Be sure to:

- Draw on the beliefs, mission, and environment of the organization (tie into the school or district's current mission).
- Be BOLD and audacious in your thinking
- Describe in great detail what you want to see in the future (use images as well as words)
- Be open to upending current realities; in visioning you can make radical changes in teaching materials, use of personnel, and school structures. Think, "Why couldn't we do it differently?"

As you work on your vision, be sure to be aware of potential pitfalls and behaviors that will sabotage your efforts. These behaviors include thinking too rigidly or failing to

dream beyond “what is”; accepting current structures, policies, and practices or seeing them as intractable; half-hearted participation; seeing the work as superfluous; trying to nail down a plan before or at the same time as you are visioning.

Now it is time to create your vision. We suggest using the following scenario:

It is the end of the school year and you have created the most remarkable classroom, supported students to succeed beyond your wildest expectations, and developed a fantastic co-teaching partnership.

With your co-teaching partner, envision, describe, draw, and otherwise illustrate this vision. You can use the work space provided in Figure 2.1, lay out your ideas on chart paper, or create an electronic version of your vision using a tech tool such as Prezi, PowerPoint, or even Animoto.com. No matter what you use, try to answer at least the following questions:

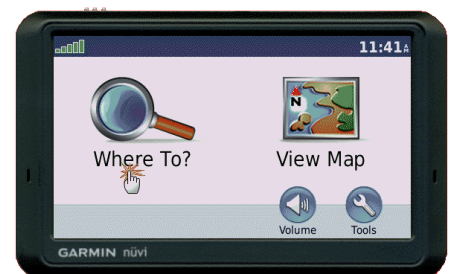
- What do you see in your classroom?
- What are students doing? What are teachers doing?
- What can you hear?
- How do you feel?

What is your vision/destination?

It is the end of the school year and you have created the most remarkable school, classrooms, supported students to succeed beyond your wildest expectations, and developed fantastic partnerships with your educational team members.

Imagine this scenario and visualize every detail. For instance:

- What do you see in your school, classrooms?
- What are students doing? What are teachers, therapists, etc., doing?
- What can you hear?
- How do you feel?



Now that your vision is set, you will want to turn your attention to setting specific goals. Of course, some goals are already set for us as educators. We are expected to support students in meeting certain benchmarks, in succeeding on formal and informal assessment tools, and in reaching their individualized education plan (IEP) goals.

The goals we are talking about are not dictated by administrators or set by school boards, we are talking about the goals that you personally want to set for your teaching and for your co-teaching partnership.

Review the following ideas for goals:

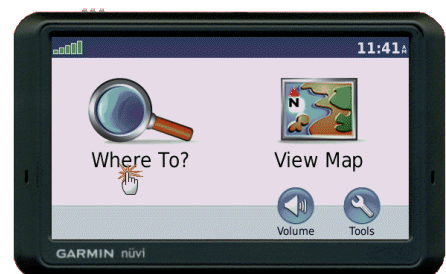
Goals for teaching:

- We will raise our standardized test scores by 10% this year.
- We will graduate every 8th grade student.
- We will use at least 18 different collaborative exercises/games in our co-taught classroom.
- We will attend a seminar on autism to better support our students on the spectrum.
- We will call every parent at least twice during the school year to share good news.

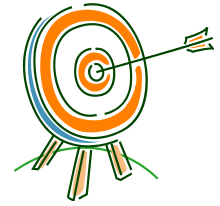
Goals for co-teachers

- We will try at eight different co-teaching structures this year.
- We will start and end of time for our co-planning meetings.
- We will design co-taught lessons with our speech pathologist, occupational therapist, and social worker at least twice during the quarter of the school year.
- We will co-teach and co-plan with every one of our 30 students this year.
- We will each read three co-selected books on co-teaching this year, meeting after we finish each one to discuss our favorite ideas.
- We will engage in one long-range planning session four times per year (August 30, October 1, January 15 & March 5).

Now, set some of your own...



What are your goals?



Write 3 goals for your work as inclusive educators. These can cover anything from what you want students to achieve to what you want to try instructionally to what you want to learn. For example: "All of our students will read (using assistive technology when needed) 30 books this year"







Now, write 3 goals specifically for your co-teaching relationship or co-teaching in the next our first month".







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