Inclusive Education – what does it mean?

**PHYSICAL**
- Dedication to providing education for all children within their community schools.
- Dedication to providing for all children common and safe learning environments where experience and learning is integrated and valuable.

**ACADEMIC**
- Dedication to personalized learning goals and subsequent supports for all students.
- Dedication to thorough and responsive collaborative supports and planning to provide such services.
- Dedication to providing appropriate instruction within the common learning environment (regular classroom).

**SOCIAL**
- Students with disabilities are not conditional members of their classes.
- There is a sense of belonging and being a part of the school community in which everyone is accepted and is supported by all members of the community.

**THE BACKGROUND OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NEW BRUNSWICK:**
- New Brunswick Education Act
- New Brunswick Human Rights Act
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

---

**Research Tells Us**
- The role of the school principal is pivotal in creating and promoting inclusive school cultures.
- The environment and culture of the school setting can have a direct impact on acceptance of students with exceptionalities.
- Including students with exceptionalities in the regular classroom does not have a negative impact on the academic achievement of other students.
- Social benefits accrue to both regular and exceptional students in inclusive settings, among them an increase in advocacy and more tolerant attitudes.

- Dr. Sheila Bennett, Brock University
The task of the principal is to then make it happen...

A critical stage for accomplishing inclusive schools is establishing collaborative teams within your school that act as decision making bodies that reference the philosophy and standard of inclusion. These collaborative teams will be vital in assisting a school leader in embedding the practices in the school culture and operations. They will ensure sustainability and collective accountability. Teams ensure that critical decisions that involve complex factors are never made alone.
Create Your Own Collaborative Team for Success

Identify Champions of inclusion and invest in their training and growth

Who are your key Champions?
- A teacher or teachers?
- A Resource & Methods Teacher?
- An Educational Assistant or other professional?
- A parent or group of parents?
- Someone from your community, the district or another school?

Establish integrated leadership teams to assist with mandate

Leadership Teams:
- Administrative Team
- School Improvement Team
- Student Services Team
Together—align inclusive school philosophy and practice with current structures and policies

Establish an Effective Student Services Team model

Student Services Team:
- Administrator(s); Resource & Methods Teacher(s); Guidance Counsellor(s); Other professionals; district staff; other staff as appropriate.
- Involve community partners when needed
- Involve parents when needed
- Designate meeting times as a priority
- Focus on issues related to teachers, students and the school as a whole
- Focus on improving student success through more effective strategies of support

Clarification of Supporting Roles

SCHOOL-BASED STUDENT SERVICES TEAM
The school-based team will establish a positive, supportive and welcoming climate for all students. They will:
- establish effective partnerships with parents;
- support professional development opportunities for teachers;
- establish mutual support among teachers by creating a climate and work routines that favour teamwork and collaboration; and
- ensure effective use of resources, focus the attention of teachers on effective instructional strategies and ensure that classrooms are effectively organized for quality instruction.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT
Supports the teacher in the classroom and provides direct support to students based on their needs.

RESOURCE AND METHODS TEACHER
The R&M Teacher will act as a partner, coach, co-teacher and collaborator with the classroom teacher to support inclusive strategies. Facilitating sharing among teachers and helping solve dilemmas and problems is the focus.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM
Develop school-wide initiatives to improve instructional outcomes for ALL students and link school improvement and inclusion.

OTHER SCHOOL AND DISTRICT SUPPORT STAFF
Contribute specific know-how for meeting diverse student needs based on professional skill sets.
Levels of Support

**WHOM DO I SUPPORT?**
- Classroom teachers in REGULAR classrooms are the focus of support.
- Assist other members of the school team to help the teacher get his/her job done.
- Focus on developing knowledge and skills that help in many situations – such as differentiation/universal design/cooperative learning/co-teaching methods.

**IDENTIFY: WHAT DO I SUPPORT?**
- **Skills**
  - Collaboration
  - Differentiated Learning
  - Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
  - Behavior Support
- **Attitudes**
  - Diversity
  - Inclusion

**IDENTIFY: WHAT STRUCTURES DO I BUILD?**
- Protocols for actions
- Approaches to solving problems

**IDENTIFY: WHOM DO I COMMUNICATE WITH?**
Intentional communication with:
- Community
- School and district staff
- Parents – as individuals
- Students

**Assess what your school needs:**
Ensure your decisions are based on accurate data and not assumptions – possible instruments to use:
- Provincial perception data
- School review instrument
- NBACL self reflection tool – data provides a neutral yet valid point of discussion for staff.

1. Understanding the value of inclusive schools
2. Reminding about alignment/purpose in our practice and decision making
3. Informing about personalized goal setting and programming
4. Teaching about value of inclusive communities

**INCLUSIVE SCHOOL INDICATORS: "Things to look for"**

Many of the things you will observe in an Inclusive School include:
- Teacher Teaming
- Effective Problem Solving
- Collective commitment to inclusion – well communicated
- Integrated leadership models
- School-based Student Services Team
- Sense of belonging – by students & staff
- Sense of collective responsibility towards all students
- Focus on RTI (Response to Intervention) or POI (Pyramid of Intervention)
- PBIS – Personal Behaviour Intervention Plan
- Common Learning Environments
- Safe Learning Environments
- Differentiated Instruction
- Personalized Learning and Planning
- Comprehensive Transition Planning
- Evidence of Achievement
- Resource teacher as coach, co-teacher
- Flexible and fluid groupings of students
- Paraprofessionals as Teacher Supports
- Common Planning Time
- Involvement & Support from Community Agencies
The New Brunswick Human Rights Commission published a "Guideline on Accommodating Students with a Disability" in October 2007. The "Guideline" provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the "duty to accommodate" and the principle of inclusion as a critical factor in providing supports for students with disabilities. The flowchart at right is used in the "Guideline" to illustrate "what supports and strategies are necessary to allow the students to be included in the regular classroom." These supports are directed to the school, the teacher and the student. As the "Guideline" states: Every effort short of undue hardship must be made to provide support so that the students may be included.

The "Guideline" states that if one-on-one or small group instruction is needed after all reasonable efforts at accommodation have been made, that these interventions occur in the child's neighbourhood or natural school and that "... this should occur for a limited time period and with a goal oriented plan focused on returning the child to his/her regular class".

For the full text of the "Guideline" and the Flow Chart (page 18) see the link below.
http://www.gnb.ca/hrc-cdp/e/g/Guideline-Accommodating-Students-Disability-New-Brunswick.pdf

Links to more information on "Inclusive Education":
Inclusive Education Canada website: www.inclusiveeducation.ca. See the "Principal Perspectives" page on this site.
Canadian Research Centre on Inclusive Education: http://www.edu.uwo.ca/inclusive_education/index.asp
NBACL: http://www.nbacl.nb.ca/english/changinglives/education.html

50
YEARS
ANNIVERSARY

New Brunswick
Association for
Community Living
Association du
Nouveau-Brunswick
pour l'intégration
communautaire

420 Wilsey Road, Suite 201
Fredericton, N.B. E3B 6E9
Canada
Telephone: (506) 453-4400
Fax: (506) 453-4422

Principals on front panel, from the top are:
Gary Gallant, Principal, Devon Middle School
Angela Pleshka, Principal K-5, Petitcodiac Regional School
Celinda Van Horne, Principal, Hampton High School
Kevin Williams, Vice Principal, Edith Cavell School, Moncton
Tina Estabrooks, Principal, Centennial Elementary School, Saint John

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program. The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Government of Canada.