

ATLANTIC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

COURSE WORK:

DIVERSITY IN SPECIAL EDUCATION (DSP 227)

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INTRODUCTION

Students in classrooms today across the world are more diverse than ever. They represent different races, ethnicities, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds, and they speak many different languages. Further, these students often exhibit a wide range of academic, physical, and social abilities or skills.

Regarding individuals with disabilities and special education, inclusion secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in general education classrooms. Honestly establishing a successful inclusive classroom varies in complexity, based upon the challenges created by the disability at hand. However, a knowledgeable approach and positive attitudes on the parts of parents and teachers proves vital to triumphing over any obstacles which may emerge.

A knowledgeable approach and positive attitude toward inclusion begins by understanding the concept and the theory behind it. Why integrate children with special needs into a general education classroom? Who benefits? What results? Special education professional Gretchen Walsh M.S. Ed., who runs the Academic Support Center at Notre Dame College, gives a concise synopsis when she says “Inclusion is important because through our diversity we certainly add to our creativity. If you don’t have a diverse classroom or a diverse world, you don’t have the same creative levels and I think our strength lies in our diversity.”

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students with special needs have the right to receive necessary curricular adaptations. Adaptations include accommodations and modifications. Students who receive accommodations are held to the same

academic expectations as their general ed classmates; on the other hand, modifications entail making changes that lower these expectations. Curricular adaptations vary based upon each learner's individual needs.

Giving the above, I endeavor to discuss the challenges schools and teachers face in dealing with students' diversity especially as it relates to dispensing education in the context of special education vis-a-vis this dispensation.

LESSON 1: THE DIVERSITY OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.

This lesson describes the tremendous diversity that characterizes students with disabilities. Most of these students are eligible to receive special education services provided by public schools. Yet, as can be seen, one cannot really speak of them as a group in a meaningful way, except perhaps with respect to the rights that all are accorded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by virtue of their having a disability.

Some students with disabilities are never taken out of general education classrooms; others never enter a regular school building. Some have very mild disabilities observed only in school settings; others have multiple severe disabilities that affect many aspects of their lives. Some spend only minutes each week with a specially trained teacher, others the whole day. Some graduate from high school with a full academic course load and go on to highly competitive colleges; others drop out of high school entirely; and still others receive special diplomas or certificates of attendance. Some have parents who are deeply involved in advocating and

planning their individualized programs; others have parents who have never attended an IEP meeting.

Meaningful discussion of standards, curriculum, assessment, and outcomes cannot occur without some attention to the varied characteristics of these large numbers of children. This Lesson examines how their extraordinary diversity complicates efforts to identify and categorize children with disabilities and to design effective educational policies for them. It also analyzes how disability variously affects the school experiences of these students, the roles their parents play in that schooling, and the possible implications for standards-based reform.

LESSON 2: DETERMINATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

REFERRAL AND REVIEW: The Initial Stage

If you suspect your child between the ages three – five-years old needs special education services, your first step will be to contact your school district and request an evaluation. When you that your child be evaluated for special education this is called referral.

It is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that public school districts to identify, locate, and evaluate every child who may have a disability requiring special education services. This is called “Child Find” and tell them you are interested in a special education evaluation for your questions and tell you which school to make your referral to.

The school will review the information you give them about your child and respond in one of three ways:

- Decline to do an evaluation
- Recommend that your child be screened to see if they should do a full evaluation
- Proceed to a Full and Individual Initial Evaluation (FIIE)

LESSON 3: HOW DO YOU MANAGE DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM?

There are so many ways teachers and administrators, such as Principals, and Coaches, can make sure that both the classroom and the environment and the curriculum are the same to the increasing cultural diversity of the society. So, these strategies will encourage all the students, cultural awareness, improving each student's sense of who they are, and foster inclusion in the classroom community.

1. Make Sure You Get to Know Your Students

Ensure that cultural awareness is promoted in the classroom which starts with the teacher understanding each student. Take time to learn about each students' cultural background, diversions, learning styles, and what make them exceptional. Supporting a sincere interest in learning about each student and their culture will surely help them establish or being able to have trust and allow you to form a bond with them so as make feel values.

However, if any students feel appreciated and comfortable with the teacher, they have better chance or it allows them to feel at peace talking with and respecting their peers in the classroom, and then, communication becomes the core to a culturally aware and involvement within the classroom. And then, communication becomes the core to a culturally aware and involvement within the classroom.

2. Maintain Consistent Communication

In addition to know your students best, the teachers should also continue to maintain the ongoing communication through the school year which I think will help the students. Therefore, finding the time to meet with them 1-on-1 and checking in “so often will also allow you to regularly improve on how accessible the classroom is to everyone. The students can talk about whether they felt included in the classroom culture. This will help them recognize issues or find ways to improve the overall experience. It’s also an opportunity to discuss their progress in the class and offer guidance on how they can improve, depending on their personal needs as a student.

3. Acknowledge and Respect Every Student

It is very important for students to celebrate and respect their own diverse backgrounds, and as well as each other. So when appropriate, the teachers should encourage students to do some research and learn about their own ethnic group or culture backgrounds. This also allows the students to get better and well understand their own culture and the differences and nuances with their peers. As a free grade, this can be a great ice breaker assignment, that will allow the students to give presentations about their family traditions and culture that will help expose individuals and the entire class to concepts outside of their familiar comfort area. Recognizing the differences and creating safe space for discussion that helps promote understanding within the classroom and also beyond.

As you begin to encourage students to learn about their different backgrounds, remember to also take time to highlight what is also offensive and distinction within cultural celebration and

appreciation. Moreover, learning how to talk about other people cultures in a very respectful, mature way is very essential for a success life outside the classroom

4. Practice Cultural Sensitivity

Keeping an open dialogue between students is very important, notwithstanding, it is equally important to make sure that you are being sensitive to everyone's culture as well, beliefs, and the language they speak and use these insights to prepare your lesson plans.

For example, in the case, provide an English language learner with appropriate and good resources that will help them improve their English and comprehension skills. Then to teach with a traditional lecture style and create learning experiences that every student will feel included, is given the space to learn in their own way and is also given a chance to succeed

5. Incorporate Diversity in the Lesson Plan

The class environment is very important for fostering cultural awareness. But you should also guarantee awareness, diversity represented in your actual plan. For example, extending history lesson that they will incorporate the world beyond US history, and culture. Otherwise, use references and analogies other cultures in your lesson plan and assignments to be able to help students with diverse backgrounds personally connect, another great way is bringing in diverse or different speakers to add few points of view and real-life to different subjects. There are so many ways you can instill cultural awareness into classroom lesson plan, and it will diverge depending on the cultures represented into your classroom that you are teaching. No matter what the subject, you should always try to present and be able to connect the lessons to practical issues. It is much easier to promote cultural awareness within you lessons whenever there is a real example to use for the students to tell or narrate.

6. Give Students Freedom and Flexibility

Teachers some time feel like they need to take a stringent, authoritative approach when it comes managing their classroom. The mean valuable lessons are often learned through a student's own experiences, in this case, giving them some freedom in the course help more relationship to the program. Allowing students to read and present their own resources that relate to the underlying lesson so they can approach the topic from their own perspective.

As teachers, you can also act as a facilitator and encourage conversation and healthy debate between diverse opinions. Group assignments are also a food way to sure the students to diverse perspectives, allowing them to also work in group or pair to explore and solve problem. However, this will help prepare them for a diverse workforce that they will need to be partner with a good sum of people that will complete their skills goals.

The classroom atmosphere is very important for fostering cultural mindfulness, but you should also ensure diversity is represented in your main lesson plan. However, broaden history lessons so that they incorporate the world outside the United States history and culture. References could also be used and similarities to other cultures in your lesson and assignments to help students with diverse backgrounds personally connect. To add additional plan is bringing in different speakers to add changing point of view and real-life background to different subjects.

LESSON 4: WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF DIVERSITY IN THE CLASSROOM

- The loss of **Cultural Identity**. To learn the history of a particular country is generally a part of the set of instructions, where students assemble from various countries. It might not go well with students of various cultures. There is also a religious diversity in the classroom. Therefore, the students may not want to accept the lectures on a particular religion. They might lose focus and interest as they do not relate well enough. In this case, they may start losing their culture identity. The children get confused.

- **Separation**: One of the greatest problems that is faced by a diverse classroom is segregation. Students from the same culture decided to get closer and do not interact more with others. As a result, new groups form hampering the process of collaborative learning is lost between new groups and among learners. Students become group-oriented and less tolerant toward each other. This distressing to melodious study environment.

- **The Teaching Quality**: It becomes difficult for a teacher to give instructions to the students of various cultures and religions one subject based on one heritage. To top it, all the children are not gifted with the same intelligence and the same academic interest. At times teachers face challenges in converting lesson to new students mainly if they are abstract or in linguistics or (phonology). Also the students speaking different dialects cannot easily understand a foreign language in a dynamic way.

So since every child is so precious therefore individual support and policy is checked out to educate them. It is a waste of time and requires a lot of family time sacrifice.

Sometimes learning may even create prejudices over a period. It can spoil the learning process that is leading to poor results in the classroom. The teachers might get based and even support those who might be of his or her own culture.

LESSON 5: COLLABORATION IS IMPORTANT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Usually when you hear about collaboration in school, normally you might think of general education teachers collaborating in the development of their lesson planning. However, it is equally important for Special Education teachers to collaborate with general education teachers when it comes to planning for the year and helping students succeed in school. It is also important to collaborate with parents as well.

TEACHERS WORKING WITH TEACHERS

As a special education teacher, you are responsible for every student on your caseload. This includes the responsibility to implement accommodations for students as well as the responsibility to ensure the achievement of the students' goals. This goal is made easier through special education collaboration. Even though you keep up with the paperwork for the student, you and your general education collaborator are both responsible for the student in the classroom. Working as a team, developing a plan for the student and keeping communication open are ways to collaborate and help the student succeed. A master's degree in special education could give you different ideas and strategies that you can implement with a general education teacher to help these students succeed in class.

Sometimes you might be an inclusion teacher with a general education teacher, which involves going into his or her classroom and helping with the special education students. This is the perfect time to work as a team and help the whole class be more successful. For example, you might teach a small group of students while the general education teacher concentrates on the rest of the class. This technique might depend on the general education teacher's comfort level with your collaboration, but if you communicate and work together, this approach can result in two teachers bringing the whole class together instead of isolating the special education students.

TEACHERS WITH STUDENTS

Each school year, new students will arrive at your school, and new students will join your caseload. Some schools let special education teachers keep the same students each year until the students leave the school because the special education teacher develops a close relationship with the special education students and their parents. However, some schools might assign a different caseload each year. It is important to get to know not only your students' needs but also their personalities as well. Special education students in higher grades will be part of their education decisions in individualized education program (IEP) meetings and have a say in discussions about accommodations and future planning. This special education collaboration with these older students is important because it can give them a chance to have some responsibility for their education and as well as their goals and actions.

Collaborating and understanding special education students is also important when it comes to behavior. If you are working with a particularly difficult student, then learning their triggers and developing a plan to help keep their behavior in check is important. This often takes time and

requires talking with the student to develop a plan so the student can remain in the classroom and stay focused.

TEACHERS WORKING WITH PARENTS

Even if everything seems to be going well at school, a special education student's parents can sometimes be a challenge. These parents can be intimidating, but it is important from the beginning to assure the parents that you are here to help their student succeed. This requires collaboration and constant communication. The parents must agree to the IEP for their student, but this shouldn't be the only time in the year you talk about the student's progress in school. Collaborating with parents is also a way to get ideas about what could help the student in the classroom, and you can share strategies for success that they can use in the student's broader life.

Special education collaboration may not make a visible difference overnight, and many general education teachers enjoy the autonomy of making their own decisions in their classroom. However, if all parties, including the students and parents, are on board to share ideas and strategies, then the student could be on the road to a successful education.

LESSON 6: HOW DO CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES BECOME SUCCESSFUL ADULTS?

Children with learning disabilities grow up to be adults with learning disabilities. That is, many of the difficulties experienced in childhood continue into and through adulthood. Nevertheless, some individuals with learning disabilities follow a life path that leads them to success, becoming productive members of societies and living satisfying and rewarding lives. Others find little more than continued: failure,” and are barely able to: keep their heads above water” emotionally, socially, or financially. Why, despite similar backgrounds and learning problems, does one individual end up with a rewarding career, long-term friendships, and financial stability, yet another, a life of loneliness, isolation, and financial stress? Learning disabilities research has provided some answers to this question.

Our research at the Frostig Center, as well as several major studies by others, has focused on identifying which factors contribute to success for individuals with learning disabilities. Results from these projects point to the importance of a set of personal characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors that can help lead persons with learning disabilities to successful life outcomes. By tracing the lives of individual to either positive or negative adult outcomes.

WHAT ARE THE SUCCESS ATTRIBUTES?

Over 20-year study, in particular, highlighted the importance of six success attributes for individuals with learning disabilities. These success attributes included: self-awareness, proactivity, perseverance, goal-setting, the presence and use of effective support systems, and emotional coping strategies. It is important to emphasize that not every successful individual possesses each of these attributes, and some attributes may be present to a greater or lesser

degree. Similarly, persons who might be considered “unsuccessful” may nevertheless possess some of the success attributes, again, to a lesser or greater degree. What it does mean is that successful persons with learning disabilities are much more likely to have these characteristics than unsuccessful individuals. It is our hope that, by helping parents understand these success attributes, they will be better prepared to work with and guide their children toward satisfying and rewarding lives. It is also important to keep in mind that having these attributes does not guarantee success. Rather, it increases the chances of achieving a fulfilling and successful life. It is interesting to note that our research indicates that these characteristics may have a greater influence on success than even such factors as academic achievement, gender, socio-economics status, ethnicity, and even intelligence quotient(IQ)

CONCLUSION

Students in classrooms today across the world are more diverse than ever. There are students from different races, ethnicities, cultures, and socioeconomic backgrounds, and they speak many different languages. Further, these students often exhibit a wide range of academic, physical, and social abilities or skills. Honestly establishing a successful inclusive classroom varies in complexity, based upon the challenges created by the disability at hand.

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It is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that public school districts to identify, locate, and evaluate every child who may have a disability requiring special education services. This is called “Child Find” and tell them you are interested in a special education evaluation for your questions and tell you which school to make your referral to.

There are so many ways teachers and administrators, such as Principals, and Coaches, can make sure that both the classroom and the environment and the curriculum are the same to the increasing cultural diversity of the society. These ways are: Make sure that you know your students; Maintain Consistent Communication; Acknowledge and Respect Every Student; Practice Cultural Sensitivity; Incorporate Diversity in the Lesson Plan; and Give Students Freedom and Flexibility.

There are negative effects that come along with students’ diversity:

The loss of **Cultural Identity** where students may not be interested in learning other cultures thereby making teachers' work difficult; **Separation**, Students from the same culture decided to get closer and do not interact more with others; and **The Teaching Quality**: It becomes difficult for a teacher to give instructions to the students of various cultures and religions one subject based on one heritage.

As a special education teacher, you are responsible for every student on your caseload. This includes the responsibility to implement accommodations for students as well as the responsibility to ensure the achievement of the students' goals. This goal is made easier through special education collaboration other regular teachers, students and parents.

Children with learning disabilities grow up to be adults with learning disabilities. That is, many of the difficulties experienced in childhood continue into and through adulthood. Nevertheless, some individuals with learning disabilities follow a life path that leads them to success, becoming productive members of societies and living satisfying and rewarding lives

<https://www.specialeducationguide.com/pre-k-12/inclusion/>

<https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/div/cresource/q1/p02/#content>

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