ABSTRACT

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This analysis explores the current literature about the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular physical education. With increasing numbers of students with disabilities being educated in the mainstream, it is crucial that educators understand the concept of inclusion and what it takes for inclusion to succeed. Physical educators need to be aware of the existence of negative attitudes toward inclusion and the impact they have on successful integration. Although the components of inclusion are clearly documented, the method in which the model is incorporated varies widely from classroom to classroom. Agreement exists that there is a spectrum of placement options available for the child with disabilities and the vehicle for providing service is as unique as the child. Inclusion has many benefits, but in order to be successful, there are some key components that must exist in order to decrease resistance and increase the acceptance of students with disabilities in the regular physical education environment. Collaboration, communication, and cooperation are crucial among all school staff members working with children with disabilities. Without these components, frustration may occur which can lead to negative attitudes. The experience the teacher has working with students with disabilities is linked to the success of inclusion. Universities and school districts need to address the training received by educators. Teachers should be better prepared to deal with a variety of disability types. Additional training, coursework, and in-service offerings are suggestions to improve the educator's experience in working with students with disabilities. The need to improve the attitude of the educator appears to be the starting point to the success or failure of inclusion. More research is needed into the formation of attitudes and how to go about changing attitudes.

HOW ATTITUDES MAY AFFECT THE SUCCESS OF INCLUSION

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS PROJECT

PRESENTED TO

THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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FINAL APPROVAL FORM

Candidate: Kristine Sofie Luebke

We recommend acceptance of this Critical Analysis Project in partial fulfillment of the candidate's requirements for the degree:

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The candidate has successfully completed the Critical Analysis Project final presentation.

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SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion, although appearing to be a recent trend in education, has really been a concept since the 1960s (Block & Krebs, 1992; DePaepe, 1984). According to Block (1994), one of the leading advocates of inclusion, the concept of inclusion is that students with disabilities should be educated in the regular education class alongside their nondisabled peers to the greatest extent possible. Any needed support or assistance is brought to the child in the regular educational setting instead of pulling the student out of class. This practice affords the child with disabilities a free and appropriate education with the least amount of social isolation.

Despite the existence of legislation to protect the rights of the child with disabilities, inclusion has not always been a common practice. Historically, students with disabilities were educated outside of the district in which they lived or in special classrooms. These methods of segregation caused isolation and stigmas for persons with disabilities (Block, 1994).

This movement toward inclusion means more children with disabilities are attending classes in the schools they would attend if they had no disabilities. This push to adhere to the legislation surrounding educating persons with disabilities appears to be coming from a variety of sources. Among the factors responsible

for making this happen are the parents, educators, technological advances, and legal forces. Block (1994) and Schleien, McAvoy, Lais, and Rynders (1993) believed that including students with disabilities in regular physical education settings could benefit everyone involved. Inclusion helps all students learn to respect the limitations, differences in movement, and the unique abilities of others (Block, 1994). If inclusion is a philosophy in which the positives outweigh the negatives, then the issue that needs to be addressed by educators is why is there resistance to integrating a student with disabilities into the regular physical education setting?

Need for this Project

Because of the trends in education, it is beneficial for all educators to understand the concept of inclusion in order to advocate for the best interests of the child. Physical Education specialists need to understand what creates negative attitudes toward inclusion so as to be able to better work with and around these attitudes and avoid shortchanging the education of the child with disabilities.

Including students with disabilities can be beneficial to everyone involved in the model (Schleien et al, 1993). Those who stand to benefit the most would be the children with disabilities, their classmates, and the teacher. Inclusion helps to foster positive, age-appropriate role models for the child with disabilities (Block, 1994). Students with disabilities can imitate the motor patterns of their nondisabled peers. Through imitation, the child with disabilities can make

developmental gains that they may not have otherwise made in a segregated setting (Zittel & McCubbin, 1996). Inclusion can also decrease social isolation and promote friendships (Wisconsin Education Association Council, 1996). Participation in regular physical education increases interactions between the child with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. These interactions with age-appropriate peers can lead to a decrease in inappropriate social behaviors (Schleien, Ray, & Green, 1997). By including people with disabilities in activities alongside their nondisabled peers, the concept of inclusion teaches that all people are valuable to society regardless of their differences (Stainback, Stainback, & Stefanich, 1996). Inclusion allows for the celebration of diversity and an opportunity to learn from one another (Havens, 1992).

Despite the many benefits of inclusion for all involved, resistance to this movement still exists. The barriers presented by the attitudes educators have toward inclusion can shortchange the education of students with disabilities. Through professional experiences, the writer has personally witnessed students with special needs being shunned by fellow educators due to their own personal feelings toward people with disabilities. Educators need to be aware of the attitudes that they hold toward the disabled. An increased awareness can help improve understanding of personal feelings. The combination of awareness, understanding, and effort can help transform negative attitudes into positive experiences in working with students with disabilities. According to Horne (1985), it has been suggested that teachers have the power to influence the attitudes of

their students. If a teacher demonstrates a favorable attitude toward students with disabilities, then the peers of that child will do the same. If this is the case, then it should apply to colleagues as well.

There are many theories as to why teachers may resist inclusion (Bullough, 1995; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). Educating students with disabilities often means modifications to the curriculum are needed. It takes time, creativity, and patience for a teacher to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all of their students. Some educators may be unwilling to make these necessary adaptations. While others may not feel they have the training or expertise to accommodate students with disabilities (Block, Oberweiser, & Bain, 1995). Another possible reason teachers resist inclusion is the lack of knowledge or training in working with students with disabilities. This lack of exposure or experience in working with these students can create an uncertainty for the teacher, thus leading to feelings of discomfort or inadequacy. Resistance to inclusion could be a sign of fear. Teachers may fear change, loss of control, or failure, which could lead them to resist inclusion (Forest & Pearpoint, 1995).

As more children with disabilities are attending classes at their neighborhood school, it is important that inclusion be a positive experience for everyone involved. Students will experience frustration in inclusionary settings due to many variables (lack of training by the professional, inflexibility, unrealistic expectations, etc.) when the attitudes of the teacher get in the way of the best interests of the child. Educators need to understand the concept of inclusion,

what it takes for inclusion to be successful, and how their attitudes can hinder the successful education of students with disabilities in an inclusionary setting.

Purpose of this Project

The purpose of this project was twofold. The researcher investigated the effect attitudes had on the successful implementation of inclusion. Upon determining that negative attitudes do affect the success of inclusion, solutions were offered to prevent the failure of inclusion.

SECTION II

LITERATURE REVIEW

From the legal standpoint, the time has come in which a child with disabilities may not be excluded from the regular physical education setting if that is deemed to be the appropriate placement for that child. Prior to the 1960s, fewer than half of the children with disabilities were offered placement in a public school and often were not given the chance to participate in physical education class (DePaepe, 1984).

In the 1950s and 1960s, students with disabilities were placed in adapted physical education classes within a special segregated school for those with disabilities (Dunn & Craft, 1985). Due to the passage of Public Law 94-142 (The Education For All Handicapped Children Act [EHA]) and the authorization of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, segregation of students with disabilities was abolished and guidelines were provided for their education within the mainstream. These guidelines were meant to protect the right to a free and appropriate education for children with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21.

In 1983, amendments were made to EHA (Public Law 98-189) to increase funding and provide incentives for the development and implementation of early intervention services for children from birth to age 5. These incentives became

requirements that states provide services to eligible children ages 3-5 when the EHA was amended in 1986 (Block, 1994).

During the course of evolution, the EHA was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which changed the terminology references of handicap to disability (National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY), 1997). Other changes included the reemphasis of the least restrictive environment and the addition of transition services (Block, 1994). The most recent changes to the laws surrounding the education of persons with disabilities occurred with the reauthorization of IDEA (PL 101-476) in June of 1997 (IDEA, 1997). This change impacted individualized education programs (IEPs), discipline, and mediation (NICHCY, 1997).

The intent of IDEA is to ensure students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). LRE does not mean inclusion for all students nor does it require school districts to place all students with disabilities in their neighborhood schools (Osborne & Dimattia, 1994). The terms least restrictive environment and mainstreaming can be a source of confusion when used interchangeably (Lavay & DePaepe, 1987; Osborne & Dimattia, 1994). Mainstreaming, or inclusion, is the integration of students with disabilities in regular physical education (WEAC, 1996). The LRE is the placement of the student in the educational environment that best meets their needs (Aufsesser, 1991; Dunn & Craft, 1985). For many students the least restrictive environment is in the regular education setting, however, Lavay and DePaepe (1987) felt that if

the progress of the child with disabilities or the progress of the class is adversely affected, then the school needs to explore alternative placement options. Block and Zeman (1996) concurred that it is important to look out for the best interests of all students. They felt that if the presence of the child with disabilities is too disruptive to the learning environment, then either more support is needed for that child or an alternative placement needs consideration. Aufsesser (1991) suggested a continuum of placement options ranging from full time regular physical education to adapted physical education in a special school, with the appropriate one being determined on an individual basis.

Prior to servicing the child with special needs, an assessment of the current motor and fitness skills of that child must take place. This assessment will help determine the services needed for the child. It will also guide the direction of the program, the goals, and the objectives for the individual child. Upon completion of the assessment, the multidisciplinary team (M-team) collaborates to decide the most appropriate placement for the child (DePaepe, 1984; Lavay & DePaepe, 1987). Typical goals for the child with disabilities include motor skill development or refinement, fitness development, and socialization. Goals are regularly evaluated to determine if the child is progressing in the regular physical education environment (Block, 1994). Block (1995) stated that nobody should be expected to earn their way into regular physical education but that all students should start out there. However, it is important to realize that not all children with disabilities will succeed in an inclusive setting, as the least restrictive environment

is different for each individual (Block & Krebs, 1992). Unfortunately, students are often placed in regular physical education without support or prior collaboration among professionals (Block & Krebs, 1992; Bullough, 1995; Grosse, 1991; Lavay & DePaepe, 1987). Collaboration and cooperation among professionals are important to the success of inclusion (Aufsesser, 1991; Havens, 1992). This means that the physical educator is provided an instructional aide, specialized equipment, appropriate class sizes and proportions, and the IEPs goals and objectives are clearly communicated for each individual student prior to the arrival of that student to the class (LaMaster, Gall, Kinchin, & Siedentop, 1998). Teachers need to be given time to discuss strategies, obtain or utilize resources, and prepare for the inclusion of students with disabilities (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Without these ingredients, inclusion can become overwhelming (Stainback, Stainback, & Stefanich, 1996). When inclusion is pushed upon the teacher without consultation, it should come as no surprise that there may be resistance to the idea (Horne, 1985).

It has been suggested that many variables will tie into the success of inclusion. One factor would be the academic preparation or educational background of the teacher (Kowalski & Rizzo, 1996; LaMaster et al, 1998; Rizzo & Kirkendall, 1995; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). It has been noted that many universities require their physical education majors to take one class related to adapted physical education prior to graduation (Kowalski & Rizzo, 1996; LaMaster et al, 1998; Rizzo & Kirkendall, 1995). This lack of comprehensive training in working

with students with special needs can create feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, inadequacy, or frustration for the teacher upon learning that a student with disabilities is going to be placed in their classroom (Blenk, 1995; Block, 1996; Block & Zeman, 1996; Lavay & DePaepe, 1987).

In studies done by Rizzo, Bishop, and Tobar (1997), Rizzo and Vispoel (1992), and Rizzo and Vispoel (1991) it was suggested that academic preparation on the part of the teacher and experience working with students with disabilities were directly linked to "perceived competence". In essence, if a teacher has had comprehensive preparation and is confident in their ability to apply their skills within their profession, then the end result may be a more favorable attitude toward teaching students with disabilities. However, the opposite may occur as well. Bennett, DeLuca, and Bruns (1997) reported that teachers who are repeatedly exposed to unsuccessful experiences with inclusion would develop negative attitudes. Their theory suggests that positive attitudes are the result of positive experiences. Conversely then negative attitudes can result from negative experiences.

Attitudes toward people with disabilities are not always related to teacher preparation and experience. Rizzo and Kirkendall (1995) felt that attitudes could vary based upon the nature of the disability. Their study concluded that students with mild disabilities are viewed more favorably than students who have more severe disabilities. They also suggest that students with disabilities are viewed more favorably when they are in the lower elementary grades than as they

proceed through their secondary school years. The educator may also link the nature of the disability of the child to favorable attitudes toward working with them (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992). For example, teaching a child diagnosed with a learning disability is viewed differently than teaching the child who has multiple disabilities (Rizzo & Kirkendall, 1995). One reason for this may be the fact that the child with learning disabilities has greater movement potential than the child with multiple disabilities who is a wheelchair user. Therefore, the child with learning disabilities is easier to include in class activities. Students with disabilities require more attention and create additional work for the teacher (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). More severe disabilities provide a greater challenge to the teacher when it comes to including them in activities. Thus, the type of disability can affect the success of inclusion (Kowalski & Rizzo, 1996; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991).

Studies done by Kowalski and Rizzo (1996), Rizzo and Kirkendall (1995), Rizzo and Vispoel (1992), and Rizzo and Vispoel (1991) suggested that the age and the gender of the teacher might affect the success of inclusion. These researchers found that the younger teachers responded more positively toward working with students with disabilities than their older counterparts. This could be because of the training they received as undergraduates. The younger teachers are required to take a course in adapted physical education that often requires some clinical experience be completed. Older teachers were not required to complete any such course during their undergraduate years. They also discovered that female teachers were more willing to work with students with

disabilities than were male teachers. The significance reported was not that great on the issue of gender. Block (1996) found that overall teachers are inadequately prepared to deal with the challenges of creating a successful inclusive environment.

With much of the research indicating that the attitudes of the professionals involved are linked to successful inclusion, it appears crucial to explore what makes for a successful, inclusive environment. Block and Garcia (1995) suggested that the top priority is having a physical educator with a positive attitude; one who is willing to put forth the effort to accommodate all students. Second on their list is the educator taking the time to learn as much as they can about the child with disabilities. This means taking the time to learn about the nature of the disability and what methods other educators have tried and found to be successful with the child with disabilities. The physical educator should also be aware of the components of the IEP and add physical education objectives when appropriate. The teacher should utilize other students to assist the child with disabilities. Flexibility and modifications to the curriculum are also necessary to meet the needs of the student (Block & Garcia, 1995; Block & Horton, 1996; Stainback & Stainback, 1990). If the student requires additional support within the classroom, then the physical educator must advocate for the child (Block & Garcia, 1995).

Aufsesser (1991) felt that the teacher must be open to having individuals with disabilities in class. This means that the educator believes the extra effort to

integrate leads to rewards for the child with disabilities and the rewards outweigh the time and energy expended (Smith, Austin, & Kennedy, 1996). Horne (1985) suggested that attitudes develop as a means for understanding the world around us. Smith et al. (1996) revealed that attitudes are based upon our beliefs or thoughts surrounding those with disabilities. Thus, attitudes may be a reflection of a person's feelings toward someone with a disability. Teachers must serve as role models for students without disabilities in order to teach them how to interact with students who have disabilities (Block & Horton, 1996). By viewing students with disabilities as having skills that can be useful and allow for participation in class, a teacher will display a more positive attitude toward these students (Horne, 1985).

Rizzo and Vispoel (1992) felt that changing attitudes requires several elements. Their first suggestion is to learn as much as possible about the disability of the student you will be integrating. Secondly, they felt that the only way to combat discomfort is to spend time in direct contact with people who have disabilities. The third suggestion they offered into changing attitudes is to create a positive experience for all involved in inclusion. They stated that based upon their experiences, when these three elements existed within a program, meaningful attitude changes resulted. This means collaboration among professionals, providing support staff to the physical educator if needed, and inservice training. Rizzo and Vispoel (1992) believed these elements are crucial

to breaking down those barriers that lead to the successful inclusion of students with disabilities.

SECTION III

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Based upon the review of the current literature, it appears that the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular physical education setting is here to stay. As special schools for students with disabilities close their doors, more of their students will be returning to the mainstream. From the legal standpoint, school districts must address the needs of students with disabilities. Therefore, inclusion is an issue we no longer can ignore.

Topping the list of benefits among the researchers is socialization. Interactions with peers can lead to acceptance of the individual with disabilities. This peer acceptance can boost self-esteem. As their confidence increases, the child with disabilities will be more willing to take risks and try new activities. The fear of rejection and embarrassment diminishes. In this sense, inclusion allows for the social, developmental, and emotional growth of the child with disabilities. One wonders, however, if the social interactions extend beyond the school atmosphere and into the community.

Inclusion has benefits for the nondisabled as well. Teachers, by taking the time to adapt games and activities, demonstrate to their students without disabilities that individual differences are acceptable. Tolerance and patience for these differences are lessons about life for the children without disabilities. Also, when teachers take the time to individualize instruction, they demonstrate a

willingness to help all students succeed. Pearpoint and Forest (1995) suggested that the benefits to one student would lead to benefits for all students in terms of inclusion.

The existing literature points to the responsibility of the entire school community when it comes to the success or failure of inclusion (Block, 1994; WEAC, 1996). In a successful inclusion model, the administration provides the resources necessary for inclusion to thrive. Examples of these resources include, but are not limited to, collaboration time, support staff, specialized equipment, and release time for training. The faculty collaborates prior to the arrival of the student and the IEP goals and objectives are clear to all involved. The teacher needs to be open minded and flexible in terms of adapting the curriculum for the individual student. The peers of the student with disabilities need to be supportive and assist each other within the classroom.

According to the literature, if even one element is missing, then negative attitudes may develop (Bennet et al., 1997; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). For example, if collaboration among professionals fails to take place, then not everyone is on the same page. The result is frustration among staff members due to this failure to communicate. When these negative experiences occur, then inclusion becomes a negative event. Once an individual has a bad experience, it becomes challenging to change their opinion. There are some things that school districts can do to improve collaboration among professionals. A common planning time could be built into the teachers' schedules. This time is a regularly scheduled

block of 30 minutes, which can take place outside of the regular school day, but within the realm of the teachers' contracted school day. Common planning time facilitates the communication among professionals. Another method for improving collaboration is the placing of IEP goals and objectives on the computer network (with controls placed on the technology making access available only to teachers so as to protect confidentiality), so the teacher can monitor progress on a regular basis. A good follow up to this would be monthly meetings of the members of the inclusion team to report progress, concerns, and other issues.

The reality of public education is that money is tight. Budget cuts and caps on taxpayer dollars have affected schools immensely. It is not uncommon for 35-40 students to be on the roster for one physical education class, utilizing one-half of the gym. Students with disabilities become included as a cost cutting measure. They are placed in regular physical education classes with no added support to the teacher because that time is the lunch break for the aide or the special education teacher. Inclusion in these instances is being used as a way to redistribute resources (LaMaster et al, 1998). Out of a class of 35-40, often at least 5 of these students have special needs. This becomes a real challenge for the secondary physical educator when changing into uniforms and opening combination locks are standard procedures. If the district provides an extra staff member to assist with the students with disabilities, that can ease the load for the educator. If financial costs are an issue, then the district should consider the use

of peer tutors or senior citizen volunteers from the community to assist the teacher and the child with disabilities within the classroom. It is also important that administrators look at the proportion of students with disabilities to the students without disabilities within each class. Classroom teachers are experiencing smaller proportions of students with disabilities in their classrooms. When the small number of students they work with converge for physical education with five other homerooms, the proportions become drastically different. The nature of the disabilities will be a factor as well. There is a big difference between a child with learning disabilities and a child with severe cognitive disabilities. With physical education being a primarily movement oriented class, the diversity of the grouping of students with disabilities can become an area of concern.

Another consistency in the literature is the link of resistance to inclusion to the insufficient training of preservice educators (Kowalski & Rizzo, 1996; Rizzo & Kirkendall, 1995; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). Undergraduates traditionally take one course in which they learn about disabilities. In the case of the physical education major, this is an adapted physical education class that may or may not have a clinical element. Even with a clinical element attached, the undergraduate student receives less than 25 hours of exposure to teaching children with disabilities. The coursework is often lecture based and provides very little to no hands-on training. It is human nature to be uncertain about the unknown. Uncertainty can lead to feelings of apprehension.

Universities should consider changing the criteria for undergraduates aiming to be educators. It would appear that an increase in the amount of hands-on training received by undergraduates is a must. This time should be spent working with students who have disabilities in a variety of settings (i.e., schools, day care centers, physical and occupational therapy, summer camps, etc.) under the direct supervision of a trained professional. Learning the skills of the profession in this manner can only be beneficial. However, this type of hands-on training should last for more than one semester. Eighteen weeks is not enough time to achieve competency. Possibly a set number of hours spent per month in clinical training throughout the duration of undergraduate study would be most effective. By increasing the requirements, universities may graduate teachers with more comprehensive preparation for the field of education.

Teacher training programs may want to consider using the Physical Educators' Attitude Toward Teaching Individuals with Disabilities-III (PEATID-III) assessment tool, as suggested by Kowalski and Rizzo (1996), to determine the perceived competence of future teachers in working with students who have disabilities. This highly valid tool has been found to assess and predict behavior and attitudes. Use of this tool can help programs determine which areas are in need of improvement among their undergraduates. Universities can then infuse the needed information throughout their undergraduate course content (Kowalski & Rizzo, 1996).

Since it may not be feasible for some practicing educators to attend a university to acquire the skills in which they are lacking, the responsibility may rest on the school district to solve the problem. By offering in-service training districts can customize their learning to meet the specific needs of the staff. However, the duration of one in-service is not enough to effect a drastic change. In-service meetings typically are informational in format with very little hands-on skill building. Staff development in terms of inclusion needs to include hands-on training. The duration may range from one school year to several school years, depending upon the knowledge base and experience of the staff. The amount of time spent will vary depending upon the experiences of the individual. Training at this level also needs to be within a practical setting. For example, job shadowing a fellow professional from another district that has experience teaching physical education in an inclusionary setting. Job shadowing would have to be more than just sitting back and observing interactions, but rather, becoming an active part of the teaching team. In order to release their teachers for this special training, administrators would need to be willing to hire substitute teachers.

More exposure to working with people who have disabilities should increase the comfort level of the teacher. It is ideal if this occurs prior to setting up the inclusion model in the classroom. Inclusion is a model that needs to be planned for by school districts. Teachers need to be prepared in order for inclusion to be successful. Administrators need to hop off the bandwagon momentarily to look at inclusion the way it is meant to be rather than rushing to

dump kids into classrooms haphazardly. The literature suggests that the attitude of the educator is the source of the trouble inclusion is experiencing (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1992; Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). In reality, it is the attitude of the school district that may be the cause. The administration needs to communicate to the staff what the district policy regarding inclusion will be. They cannot rush into inclusion and expect teachers who have been doing things one way their entire career to suddenly change methods overnight. When looking at the whole picture, the attitudes of the physical educator are not unlike those of the classroom teacher. Many seem to be experiencing the same difficulties, which suggests that the problems lie within the system. Therefore, there needs to be a change in the process by which things are done in order to create a change in attitudes.

It is apparent that the attitude the educator holds toward teaching students with disabilities is important to the success of inclusion. If the educator possesses an open mind and a positive attitude, inclusion can be successful for those involved. On the other hand, if the educator resists inclusion and has a less than positive attitude toward working with students with disabilities, then inclusion may be doomed from the start. Attitudes sometimes form as the result of the experiences of others. For example, one educator has a bad experience with inclusion in their classroom and they relay that experience to a fellow professional in conversation. An opinion may be formed based upon the negative experience of another individual causing them to go into inclusion with a closed

mind or resist it completely. Changing attitudes can be difficult because our opinions are often based upon the values and beliefs by which we were raised. If educators can be convinced of the benefits of inclusion, they can be instrumental in eliminating the roadblocks that have been placed on the path to success.

Future researchers may wish to consider a deeper exploration into the attitudes of educators and the process to go about adjusting attitudes. More research into successful inclusion models may provide some answers to this problem. The main thing to remember is that attitudes are not formed overnight. They can be the result of years of experiences. It is not possible to change the negative attitudes people have in a short amount of time. One bad experience can turn into a negative attitude. There is a fine line here. All of the laws in the universe cannot force people to have a positive attitude toward inclusion.

School districts need to respond to the needs of their students with disabilities, while providing adequate preparation for their staff members so that inclusion can be the positive experience for everyone the way it was meant to be. Problems do exist with inclusion that current models are not solving. New approaches are needed. Some suggestions have been made in this paper to help improve the state of inclusion as it is being implemented. Pearpoint (1995) stated it the best when he said that all of us have contributions to make in society and we are all capable of learning in our own unique capacity. It is our responsibility as educators to allow everyone to make their contribution.

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