

Handbook for Inclusive Education



**Dr. Gloria Johnston, Ph.D., Superintendent
Steve Collins, SELPA Director**

**West Contra Costa Unified School District
Special Education Department
January 2004**

Handbook for Inclusive Education

Winter 2004

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I. INTRODUCTION

HANDBOOK FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is provided as a resource for teachers, administrators, and support staff involved in the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Inclusive education will be defined and the benefits listed. The handbook includes guidelines, procedures, strategies, and resources for implementing and promoting inclusive education.

The philosophy of “inclusive education “ is simple: Whenever possible, children belong with their age appropriate peers in general education classrooms at their home schools. The implementation of this philosophy occurs in different ways for each student.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What is inclusion or inclusive education?**

Inclusion represents an opportunity for students with disabilities who traditionally are educated in “special” separate programs, to attend their home schools and participate in general education classrooms and curricula with their age-group peers. Inclusion is an evolutionary process through which the needs of the individual students are addressed by general and special education staff who help provide the necessary support to meet the students’ needs. The inclusion process teaches staff and students the value of diversity. It provides a learning environment intended to better prepare everyone involved for cooperative living in a diverse community.

- **What is the difference between inclusion and mainstreaming?**

Inclusion means students are assigned to, and fully participate in, the same general education classrooms as their age-group peers. All included students are considered primary members of the general classrooms.

Mainstreaming most often means that students from a self-contained special day class participate in some specific activities within the general education program. Mainstreamed students are considered primary members of the special education classroom.

- **Who benefits from inclusive education?**

Inclusive education provides both social and academic advantages for the special education and general education students involved.

QUESTIONS OFTEN ASKED BY GENERAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

(These questions will be addressed in more detail later in the handbook.)

- **Why is this student in my classroom?**

It's the natural environment for a student to grow and develop with other children their age. In this environment, a student's needs and goals can be met in meaningful ways.

- **What will these students be learning?**

They will be working towards the goals and benchmarks outlined in their IEP. They will learn to the best of their ability just like everybody else.

- **What will I do and how will I do it?**

As the general education teacher we are asking that you make the student a part of your class, and assist with teaching toward the students IEP goals.

- **How is this different from what the resource specialist does at my school?**

The resource specialist supports a caseload of up to twenty-eight students who require less special education assistance to meet their goals. Inclusive students have more intensive needs and the ratio of special education assistance is similar to a special day class. Students in either program may also receive speech, adaptive physical education (APE), and other support services.

HISTORY

West Contra Costa Unified School District's Inclusive Education program began with a pilot program at Castro and Highland Elementary Schools. Since that time, two different models have evolved in several schools in the district: one using an itinerant special day class teacher support model, the other utilizing support from a special day class program on the site where the student is included. All included students are attending their neighborhood school or other site selected by the parent following district procedures.

While maintaining the resource specialist and special day class services currently provided, West Contra Costa Unified School District has expanded its programs and added inclusive education as one more way of fulfilling its mission to all students. (See Appendix)

Students and staff in inclusive schools benefit from

- Decreased prejudice and fear.
- An appreciation of the value of diversity.
- Preparation for cooperative living in a diverse community.
- Acceptance of every person as a contributing member of the community.

Students with disabilities benefit from

- Exposure to natural role models.
- Consistent access to and participation in the core curriculum and other course options.
- Opportunities to form friendships with peers within their community and to develop appreciation of all people.

General Education students benefit from

- An understanding of the cultures and abilities of other members of their community.
- Opportunities to participate in a cooperative learning environment which includes representation from all student populations, thereby developing problem-solving, decision-making, and other analytical skills.
- Exposure to a variety of instructional personnel, teaching styles, and techniques.
- Opportunities to develop leadership skills.
- Opportunities to develop friendships with individuals who experience disabilities.

All entities benefit from

- New opportunities to collaborate with special education personnel through co-teaching, team teaching, small group instruction, etc.
- Fuller appreciation and understanding of the individual learning styles, knowledge of different curricula, preferences, and modalities of all students and enhance their ability to teach according to those needs and strengths.

II. PROCEDURES

PROCEDURES

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

An IEP outlines the type and amount of services and measurable goals and benchmarks. The IEP is developed by the IEP team, which includes: the parent, special and general education teachers, support staff, administrators and whenever appropriate the student.

An IEP team meeting, or review, can be called by any team member at any time during the year, but must be held at least annually. The included student curriculum is determined by the benchmarks written in the IEP.

The included student will be given the opportunity to meet these benchmarks through classroom instruction and with support from any necessary adaptations by special education staff.

PLACEMENT PROCESS

1. Recommendation made by the IEP team for inclusive placement.
2. Discussion with principal by districts Special Education Administrator.
Recommendation of possible general education teacher(s).
3. Discussion/meeting with general education teacher(s), principal, administrator, special education teacher, and support staff.
4. Develop/modify IEP; include current and, if possible, receiving teacher(s).
5. Placement in inclusive general education classroom.
6. Team monitors progress and makes adjustments, as necessary.

As placements are being considered in a general education classroom, staff will be given the opportunity for relevant staff development, including observation of other inclusive sites and observations of the student in their current placement.

TEACHER SELECTION

Teacher selection for inclusion is made by considering many factors. Teachers that volunteer for this program will be considered first. What is critical is a good match between the learning style and needs of each student and the classroom teacher. Factors for teachers considering inclusion are a positive outlook toward or interest in the program and a willingness to work with colleagues collaboratively.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Fully included students must participate in the standardized testing program as specified on their IEP. Students would either take the CAT 6 or CAPA (California Alternate Performance Assessment.)

REPORT CARDS

Report cards should be done jointly by the full inclusion teacher and general education teacher. Only certain portions of the report card may be appropriate to complete. Attach a copy of the IEP goals and benchmarks and give progress toward meeting the goals.

PHOTO PERMISSION

You will need to complete a photo release for you student each school year. (See Page 19 for sample form.)

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences should take place in the same manner as for any other student. Both full inclusion and general education classroom teachers should attend.

IF PROBLEMS ARISE

If problems arise in the general education classroom, for whatever reason (curriculum, behavior, etc.), talk to the special education teacher, principal, and/or special education administrator immediately. Staff will assist with problems.

An IEP meeting will need to be scheduled if major modifications to the program are needed or to change the placement.

III. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION GUIDELINES

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION GUIDELINES

The following characteristics are indicators of fully inclusive programs for students with disabilities. They are meant as guidelines in planning for inclusion and also as a means of maintaining the integrity of the term, Inclusive or Supported Education.

1. Students are members of chronologically age-appropriate general education classrooms in their neighborhood schools of attendance, or in magnet schools/public schools of choice when these options exist for students without disabilities.
2. Students move with peers to subsequent grades in school.
3. No special class exists for included students except as a place for enrichment activities for all students.
4. Disability type or severity of disability does not preclude involvement in inclusive programs.
5. The special education and general education teachers collaborate to ensure:
 - a. the student's natural participation as a regular member of the class;
 - b. the systematic instruction of the student's IEP objectives;
 - c. the adaptation of core curriculum and/or material to facilitate student participation and learning.
6. Effective instructional strategies (e.g., cooperative learning, activity-based instruction, whole language) are supported and encouraged in the general education classroom. Classrooms promote student responsibility for learning through strategies such as student led conferences, student involvement in IEP's, planning meeting, etc.
7. The staff to student ratio for an itinerant special education teacher and instructional assistant is equivalent to the special day class ratio and funding support is at least the level it would be for a special day class.
8. Supplemental instructional services (e.g., communication, mobility, adapted P.E.) are provided to students in classroom and community settings through a transdisciplinary team approach.

9. Regularly scheduled collaborative planning meetings are held with general education staff, special education staff, parents, and related-service staff in attendance as indicated, in order to support initial and ongoing program development and monitoring.
10. There is always a certificated employee (special education teacher, resource specialist, or other) assigned to supervise and assist any classified staff (e.g., paraprofessional) working with specific students in general education classrooms.
11. Special education students who are fully included are considered a part of the total class count for class size purposes. In other words, even when a student is not counted for general education average daily attendance (ADA), s/he is not an “extra” student above the contractual class size.
12. General ability awareness is provided to staff, students, and parents at the school site through formal or informal means, or on an individualized basis. This is most effective when ability awareness is incorporated within general education curriculum.
13. Plans exist for transition of students to next classes and schools of attendance in inclusive situations.
14. Districts and SELPAs obtain any necessary waivers of the State Education Code to implement supported education.
15. Supported education efforts are coordinated with school restructuring at the district and site level and a clear commitment to an inclusive option is demonstrated by the Board of Education and Superintendent.
16. There is adequate training/staff development provided for all involved.

(Neary, T., & Halvorsen, A. (1994). Rev. ed. Inclusive Education Guidelines. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education, PEERS OUTREACH Project.)

IV. CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

Curricular adaptations are the technical strategies that support our beliefs that included students can and will learn what they need to master without being separated from their peer group, their neighborhood schools, and their community. Adaptations should make the difference between mere presence and meaningful participation.

Initially teachers and staff may just want to concentrate on involving the student in the rhythm and routines of the class and school. Charts, visual aids, and peers are just a few examples of ways to introduce an inclusion student to his or her new environment.

There are different ways of making curricular and environmental changes to teach new concepts and address individual goals and needs. In examining practices across a number of inclusive schools, adaptations were developed in two ways:

1. Those that were done “on the spot”.
2. Those that were planned and designed in anticipation of student’s needs using pre-planned teacher lesson plans or discussion on upcoming activities or assignments.

While it would seem ideal to pre-plan and discuss each adaptation, this is not always possible. Classroom content and routines may vary from day to day, which makes planning more difficult.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

- allow student more time to complete lesson
- give student a small amount to do at one time
- provide for more practice to insure over learning
- if student can't copy from the board, give him/her the master copy you used when you put the work on the board.
- allow the student to use a tape recorder (taping lectures, test responses, stories, assignments, etc.)
- provide the student graph paper for writing math problems/answers.
- vary the learning approach (visual, auditory, tactile-kinesthetic)
- present material orally and allow oral answers from the student
- use visual aids
- give student more choices
- use more concrete materials, especially when introducing a new concept
- utilize high interest/low vocabulary material, try brief and specific directions; if necessary, use written instructions or a list; have student repeat verbal instructions
- use peer or cross-age tutors and/or parent volunteers to provide individualized instruction
- reward student for having materials
- give the student credit for what he/she has done right instead of concentrating on what is wrong; a great deal of encouragement and praise should be given whenever it is earned; avoid demoralizing remarks

- make rewards attainable
- where appropriate, utilize an alternative grading system (i.e., pass/fail)
- give quick results of the task when possible
- allow students to take tests orally and have a longer time allotment; avoid surprise quizzes or timed assignments if they appear to induce stress
- change seating or grouping
- make rules clear; post them in the classroom
- model desired behavior
- use color cues, (e.g., color code vowels or beginning/ending sounds; use a green dot where the student starts to write, and a red dot where the student should stop writing)
- start only when everyone is attending
- avoid multi-step directions

In addition, five categories for examining specific curricular participation are presented here. Examples of each form specific to either primary or intermediate grades are also included.

CURRICULAR ADAPTATION CATEGORIES

These curricular adaptation categories are not mutually exclusive; more than one may be utilized at the same time:

As is: Students are involved in the same lesson as other students with the same objectives and using the same materials.

Providing physical assistance: Assisting a student to complete activities by the actual manipulation of materials, equipment, or his/her body.

Adapting materials: Utilizing materials that allow for participation in age appropriate activities without having pre-requisite basic motor, communicative or cognitive skills.

Multi-level curriculum: Students are working in the same subject area, but working at different levels of curriculum.

Curriculum overlapping: Students are involved in the same activity with other students but may have a goal for different curriculum area.

Substitute Curriculum: Students are involved in alternative activities that meet primary instructional needs when the team feels that the general education curriculum is not appropriate. These activities may occur within the classroom, school or community, and can include general education peers.

EXAMPLES OF CURRICULUM ADAPTATIONS

AS IS

At both the primary and intermediate level, students are working in the same lesson as other students.

PROVIDING PHYSICAL ASSISTANCE

Primary

- A friend turns pages of a book for Diane.
- Peers provide assistance to lunch, recess, assemblies, or other events.
- Another student assists Bonnie by turning her paper as she cuts it.
- A friend helps Jane with tying her sneakers at PE time.
- Bill helps Adam staple the edges of his paper fish for the mobile the class made during an oceans unit.

Intermediate

- Nancy has a designated in-class note taker or assignment reader.
- Peers provide assistance transitioning through activities or center.
- Roger has a friend push his wheelchair around the bases after hitting a ball.
- Jim assists Gene with sanding the wood on the mission replica they built.

ADAPTING MATERIALS

Primary

- Susie uses a name stamp instead of writing her name.
- Krista uses a larger pencil and crayons.
- Pam uses manipulatives to compute addition/subtraction problems instead of relying on pencil and paper.
- Vowels, consonants, or words are given a visual cue or are color coded.
- Arlene uses adapted scissors that are mounted on a wooden block for stability.
- Kim uses a pencil to write over letters or words written by a friend or teacher with a highlighter pen.
- Jim's coin and change making worksheets are adapted to reflect the lower amounts that he is learning.
- Diana uses a head pointer to point to the correct words on a sheet during a spelling test.

Intermediate

- Kathy uses a calculator to compute math operations.
- Cereal boxes are used as an alternative to writing book reports. For example, use the box as advertisement for the book: the front is the title cover with an illustration, sides are the cost and rating of the book, and the real book is put inside the box.
- Amanda participates in making a mobile, showing scenes from a core literature book being discussed, rather than writing descriptions.
- Charlene uses a portable typewriter or computer to write instead of using paper and pencil.
- Sue demonstrates understanding of the location of Western States during a geography activity by writing the first letter of that state on the appropriate place on a Nystrom map rather than verbally identifying its location in relation to other states to the teacher.

- Pat uses a switch-operated tape recorder when the character she is playing speaks her lines during play practice.

MULTI-LEVEL CURRICULUM

Primary

- Lori completes ABAB pattern during a math center instead of an ABCDDABCDD pattern.
- Ann identifies and cuts out pictures from magazines to correlate with her story, rather than drawing pictures.
- Richard identifies numbers on a clock during a time telling activity rather than telling the time and Kevin reads the time from a digital clock when it is his turn.
- Cindy copies from a sheet on which a friend has written sentences rather than writing without a cue.
- Wendy stands in front of class with two other students as support during a class song.

Intermediate

- Spelling words are taken from a basic sight vocabulary list rather than from a class list.
- Bonnie has five instead of twenty spelling words.
- Nancy completes a half page mission report instead of a five-page report.
- During multiplication facts Bingo, Mat identifies the numbers rather than the products on his card.
- During math, Mark adds two digits together rather than multiplying.
- Tom points to a picture of lunch choices rather than verbally choosing.
- Lynell answers yes/no questions rather than give a descriptive answer during an Ancient Civilization discussion.

- Shirley demonstrates comprehension of a chapter in Island of the Blue Dolphins by writing a five sentence paragraph using opening, supporting and closing sentences with correct punctuation and capitalization instead of the required one page essay.
- Connie selects and cuts out pictures, pasting them to paper to show about one Indian group's culture rather than writing a report.

CURRICULUM OVERLAPPING

Primary

- Diane works on ambulation and transition skills moving through learning center.
- Roger cuts out and puts a story in sequential order by looking at numbers written by a teacher on each segment rather than by following the story sequence and then tells the story in sequence in simple phrases/sentence.
- Nancy works range of motion by turning pages of a picture book she selected during silent reading.
- During a math board game, Adam addresses a social skills objective by practicing turn taking. Additionally, he works on motor skills by picking up, shaking, and tossing the dice on the board.
- During journal writing, Bonnie practices writing an alphabet letter, cutting a picture beginning with that letter from a magazine and pasting it next to the letter in her journal to work on her vocabulary dictionary.

Intermediate

- Charlene practices writing her name and telephone number during a reading comprehension activity.
- During a FOSS science lesson, Mary's job as the "getter" is to follow instructions as independently as possible, and work on counting skills by passing out the appropriate number of materials to her group members.
- Linda's goal is to demonstrate responsibility and follow class directions by turning in her work. She is graded not on content, but rather participation.

- Julie works on listening skills, staying in her seat, and looking at the teacher during a lesson on the Yokut Indians.
- When working on a writing assignment on the Boston Tea Party, Barb practices correct and independent usage of her portable typewriter plus works on simple typing skills by typing a sentence from the text chosen for her by a peer.

SUBSTITUTE CURRICULUM

Primary

- Shirley goes to small group speech instruction to practice articulation skills for twenty minutes during weekly social studies discussion.
- Krista works on a picture vocabulary book to turn in as her journal during CTBS testing.
- Bonnie practices using her augmentative communication device with a paraprofessional during a geography quiz.
- Susie and a friend quietly look through a book in the class library during a literature discussion.

Intermediate

- Ann collects attendance and lunch counts for her wing during a daily math quiz.
- Nancy works on word identification skills on the computer during CTBS testing.
- Pam works on street crossing and purchasing skills related to IEP goals with a rotating peer during a weekly writing activity.
- Cindy helps the librarian shelve books during fraction work.

Neary, T., Halversen, A., Kronberg, R., & Kelly D. (1992)

V. SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

SUPPORT FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The development of an inclusive environment is the responsibility of all school staff. There are ways that the special education staff, both teaching and administration, can assist the general education classroom teachers with successful inclusion.

SITE LEVEL SUPPORT AND PREPARATION

- “Ability Awareness” activities
- Structured “Circle of Friends” for special education students as needed.
- Work with parent group, site council, etc., on inclusion philosophy and practices.

TEACHER SUPPORT

It is imperative for the successful inclusion of students with severe disabilities that the special education and general education staff work closely on scheduling and needed curriculum adaptations. The special education teacher should be a reference and advisor to the general education teacher in the areas of IEP procedures, responsibilities and resources, and support services available through the district Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA). Other special education supports can include:

- Regular scheduling of inclusive classroom meetings to discuss successes, problems, and strategies.
- The facilitation of communication between school and parents of included students.
- Instructional assistant time offered within the general education classroom to be utilized and directed by the classroom teacher.
- Special education staff to be on-call for emergency situations and crisis intervention within the inclusive classroom.
- Co-teaching within the general education classroom with special education teachers developing and implementing lessons in specific areas, running groups, etc.

PARENT SUPPORT

A crucial aspect of the successful inclusive classroom is the support of the parents of the general education students involved. Without their understanding of the objectives of inclusive education and endorsement of the benefits inherent within the mutually supportive inclusive environment, peer involvement may be difficult or negative attitudes occur. Techniques for eliciting parent support can include:

- Special Education staff, inclusive general teacher, principal or other inclusive education advocate can speak at various school functions (i.e. Kindergarten Orientation, Parent/Teacher Association meetings, Back-to-School Night, Sixth Grade Completion ceremonies, etc.)
- Encouragement of special education parents to become involved with school parent groups, School Site Council, etc.

APPENDIX

WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mission Statement

We provide the highest quality education to enable all students to make positive life choices, strengthen our community, and successfully participate in a diverse and global society.

We provide excellent learning and teaching experiences; safe, student-centered learning environments; and support for all students and employees. We develop and maintain productive community partnerships and individual and collective accountability.

GOALS 2003-2004

I. ACHIEVEMENT

Improve student language arts and mathematics skills. Establish short and long-term goals that reflect content standards and are measured by classroom, school, district, state, and national measures.

II. SAFETY

Strengthen the safety of learning environments. Establish long and short term goals that reflect physical, social, and cultural conditions of safety that are measured by student, staff, community surveys, observations, and other appropriate measures.

III. ATTENDANCE

Increase student and staff attendance. Establish long and short term goals that reflect actual attendance patterns as measured by monthly attendance reports and other reports.

IV. BEHAVIOR

Improve student behavior. Establish long and short-term goals that reflect caring and support, high expectations, and opportunities for participation and involvement that promote resilience and success as measured by multiple indicators.

Adopted by the West Contra Unified School District Board of Trustees on August 18, 1999

**West Contra Costa Unified School District
Special Education Department**

**CONSENT AND RELEASE FORM
for
PHOTOGRAPHS, MOTION PICTURES AND VIDEOTAPES
SPECIAL DAY CLASS STUDENTS**

In the course of the school year, some of the programs may be videotaped or photographs taken of students in their class work for local news medial or for use in sharing events with parents or staff regarding the activities offered in the classroom.

Any of the photographs or video tapes would be available upon request, for viewing by the parent of that student.

We are aware that some parents/guardians, for reasons of there own, would prefer their child not participate in these activities. To insure that you have opportunity to approve or disapprove of your child having a photograph taken for news release purposes or to be videotaped while in the classroom, please sign this form on the appropriate line below and return the form to your child's teacher.

This does not, in any way, affect your child's participation or status of enrollment in the program.

Thank you for your attention to this request.

Child's Name

School

Signature/Date

I consent to having my child participate in photographs or videotapes taken of program activities.

Signature/Date

I consent to annual class/school pictures only.

Signature/Date

I do not consent to any photographs or videotapes of my child while participating in school activities.