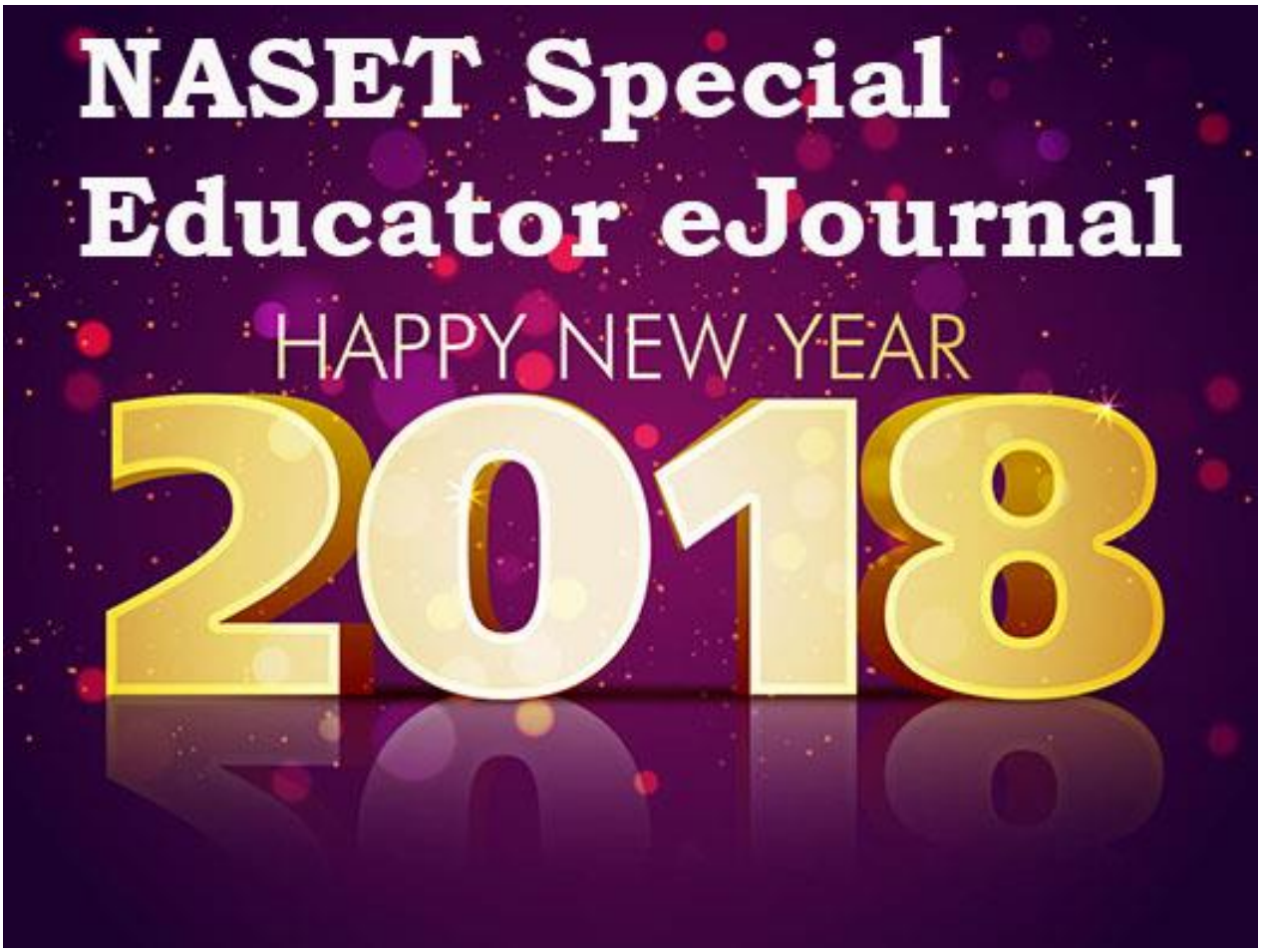


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# Special Education Legal Alert

**Perry A. Zirkel**



This latest monthly legal alert summarizes two recent federal appeals court decisions that respectively illustrate the scope of (a) the Section 504/ADA non-interference protection for special education personnel, and (b) the "prevailing party" status of parents for IDEA attorneys' fees. The layout follows the usual format of a two-column table, with key rulings on the left and practical implications on the right. For automatic e-mailing of future legal alerts, sign up at **perryzirkel.com**; this website also provides free downloads of various related articles, including those specific to FAPE-parental participation.

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| **The Seventh Circuit in *Frakes v. Peoria School District No. 150* (2017) ruled against a special education teacher who claimed that her defense of her teaching methods was protected under the Section 504/ADA anti-interference, or anti-retaliation, provision. A new supervisor gave this tenured teacher an "unsatisfactory" rating. The result, based on Illinois law, was a reduced status on the list for reduction-in-force (RIF). A few months later, the district RIFfed the teacher. The teacher filed suit in federal court, asserting that this adverse employment action violated the ADA provision that prohibits coercion, intimidation, or interference with any individual who exercises ADA-protected rights. Although only binding in the three states in the Seventh Circuit (IL, IN, and WI), this officially published decision demonstrates the likely outcome in other jurisdictions.** |

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| First, as a basis for determining whether the teacher's opposition to the evaluation was protected, the court provided examples of ADA-protected rights—formal complaints of disability discrimination or reporting a district's failure to provide FAPE to students with disabilities. More specific to this case, the court posited a situation where the | Even if the teacher had established the requisite protected conduct, she would have still faced the additional hurdles of preponderantly proving that the district had engaged in interference, or retaliation, and this interference was causally connected to the protected conduct. Moreover, for the common remedy of money damages, the teacher would |

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| supervisor's instructions forced the teacher to violate the terms of a student's IEP. | also have to prove discriminatory intent, such as deliberate indifference or bad faith. |
| Second, the court concluded that the teacher failed to show her opposition to the unsatisfactory evaluation, including her refusal to change her teaching methods, was a challenge to disability discrimination or an assertion of rights of her students with disabilities. | Special education personnel have generally fared poorly under not only the Section 504/ADA anti-interference provision but also First Amendment expression and state whistleblower laws. The problems include establishing proof of the required elements for these legal claims and confusing ethical norms with legal protections. |

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| **In *H.E. v. Walter D. Palmer Leadership Learning Partners Charter School* (2017), the Third Circuit ruled that parents who had obtained a court order for a due process hearing qualified for "prevailing" status for attorneys' fees under the IDEA. The defendant had argued that the court's order was not a final decision on the substantive issue for the hearing, which was compensatory education, but the Third Circuit concluded that "if a parent vindicates a procedural right guaranteed by the IDEA, and if the relief she obtains is not 'temporary forward-looking injunctive relief,' then she is a 'prevailing party' under the IDEA attorneys' fee provision and is eligible for an award of attorneys' fees."** | |
| First, the Third Circuit concluded that the court order that the parents had obtained was final, because the substantive issue was subject to a separate decision rather than being consolidated in this same case; thus, the court order was final in there was nothing else for the court to address. | "Prevailing" status does not guarantee that the parent will receive the requested amount for attorney's fees. For example, a timely settlement offer, unreasonably protraction of the proceedings, and an unreasonable rate or excessive time may reduce or preclude an award. Nevertheless, attorneys' fees amount to a significant factor for both parents and districts in IDEA litigation and settlements. |

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| Second, the Third Circuit concluded that "even a purely procedural victory under the IDEA can confer prevailing party status." This conclusion is much broader than the lay conception of a parent prevailing in a special education case. | This decision, which was not officially published, may not be generalizable beyond the three states in the Third Circuit (DE, NJ, and PA). The reason is because the court relied on and further expanded its previous rulings that are subject to disagreement or at least open question in other jurisdictions. |

# Book Review: Schools Rewired: How to Define, Assess, and Transform It

## By Mary Samour

**Abstract**

The book titled, *Schools Rewired: How to Define, Assess and Transform It* by Todd Whitaker and Steve Gruenert related to the book titled, *Leading in a Culture of Change* by Michael Fullan. As Fullan's book discussed leadership and the pillars to become a successful leader, Whitaker and Gruenert described how leadership can rewire a school's culture. Using Whitaker and Gruenert as the main source of information on how teachers are essential in the process of reculturing. Fullan describes how leaders can guide teachers overtime to be a part of the changes done in the school. While all the authors agree that this change and mission is to enhance the quality of education for students.

**"Let Teachers Lead: School Culture and the Role of Leadership"**

As the new school year approaches, more changes appear as federal policies, funding, and administrative policies change. Steve Gruenert and Todd Whitaker the authors of the book titled, *School Culture Rewired: How to Define, Assess and Transform It* looks at the way principals or administration can ease the staff feelings towards change. Their work dives into how leaders of schools take on a responsibility when creating a school culture. Teachers however are the overall deciders of how this culture plays out in the day to day operations of a school and how change will impact the schools culture. As Whitaker and Gruenert seek to guide administrators into accepting change is chaotic and becoming successful at re-aligning their schools, the book titled, *Leading in a Culture of Change* by Michael Fullan serves as a resource into implementing strategies from both books.

**Define**

In Chapter 1 through Chapter 3, Whitaker and Gruenert discuss what it means for a school to have a culture. The definition of culture according to them is "a social narcotic to which practically all of us are addicted-we feel good when we belong to a group" (p. 79 Whitaker & Gruenert). Through this definition and explanation of culture, Whitaker and Gruenert begin to make points about school culture, advising to ask the question: "Is it something we can predict and control or, does it control us?" (p. 79,80 Whitaker & Gruenert). When reading this definition and idea about school culture, we can compare Fullan's remarks on changing culture, which is also related to the title of this book. Fullan describes transforming culture as, "changing the way we do things around here…I call this reculturing" (p. 44 Fullan). The two books and three authors agree that reculturing is not easy and plays substantial role in creating successful schools. Creating these successful schools leads to teachers being happier, students succeeding and an overall hectic yet enjoyable place to work. Both agree however, that leadership is at the forefront of this problem and solution. Fullan goes in depth as to how to be a good leader, leading teachers through chaotic times and constant change. Whitaker and Gruenert stay shallow as to what makes a good leader, but what that leader can do to reculture a school.

Whitaker and Gruenert suggest if you want to understand the schools culture, then compare it to the school's climate. He defines school climate as the "attitude" behind the personality (culture). Whitaker and Gruenert present a scenario in which telling teachers there's a snow day, we might see the change in their attitude, most likely a joyful one. Ask the teachers why they are happy it's a snow day, may reveal the culture of the school.

Through this the climate, is completely controlled by the teaching staff. Leaders as Fullan suggests can impact the climate of the school. Through moral purpose, morale and relationships, leaders can influence staff towards a positive climate, increasing the chances of reculturing a school.

**Assess**

In order to work or achieve at reculture a school, a leader must look at where the school is and where he/she wants it to go. The constant change throughout this shift in culture and climate is the biggest challenge in reculturing schools. One reasoning that stands out about how climate and culture are interrelated is, "by adjusting the climate, we can actually begin to change portions of the culture" (p. 224 Whitaker & Gruenert). As Whitaker and Gruenert extend on this interrelationship, they give a significant example into how managing climate, can impact culture. The example they present is based on principal and teacher relationship. They state, if a principal asks teachers to stop using sarcasm, the teachers will stop using sarcasm and eventually over time "devalue" the use of sarcasm; changing the culture as the climate was changed by the principal (p. 273 Whitaker & Gruenert). When a leader thinks about what culture he/she wants, they must think about what they already have. As part of leadership, Fullan believes in five pillars to successful leadership: moral purpose, understanding of the change process, building relationships, knowledge building, and coherence making.

Whitaker and Gruenert suggest another way to discover the school culture that is already in place. By taking surveys on purpose of education, they pose the thought that, "without consensus among staff regarding the school's mission, improvement efforts may drift around a few common assumptions rather than strong, shared principals" (p.831 Whitaker & Gruenert). Assessing teachers on what the mission is of the school can lead to better student achievement as there is a continuous effort in successfully meeting the schools mission and vision. Rewiring of culture is a long process, it takes patience and consistency within a leader to accomplish the mission of the school. At the beginning of Chapter 8 from Whitaker and Gruenert, they present the fact that reculturing takes a very long time, and it may take longer than expected when faced with many challenges. Fullan also has a whole chapter titled, "Tortoise and the Hare", that explains how leaders want to change things quickly or may become impatient yet taking a tortoise approach and slowly changing or rewiring staff can bring about great changes in the future.

**Transform**

To begin this change, Whitaker and Gruenert believe that it takes one or two individuals to start the process. The individual must be respected by peers and take the initiative to inspire others to accept change and want change. As this one person takes the risk, it will take others to create the reculturing. Whitaker and Gruenert discuss how new hires, when chosen with intentionality can become the risk takers in moving this change forward. The only problem with that, is it is based on assumption or interpretation of the new hire and how existing staff will mold. Also, it isn't guaranteed that every year new staff will come with the initiative to be that change.

Whitaker and Guenert discuss factors and limitations when seeking to reculture a school. The obvious factors are staff; they also discuss how the school year, summer breaks, leverage points and so on. Staff plays a huge role in reshaping the culture of the school. When is a good time to collaborate with teachers in shifting the school's mindset? Whitaker and Gruenert believe, "teachers need to feel as though rewiring the culture is really their idea" (p. 1351 Whitaker & Gruenert). As principal guides, teachers lead. Ultimately teachers make up the

most of the school's adult population. They are closest to the mission of the schools which is for students to excel in learning.

In the last chapter titled, "Leadership Matters", Whitaker and Gruenert take a look at how leadership is essential in reshaping a school. Connecting with Fullan's *Leadership in a Culture of Change*, we can see that leadership is the foundation for which teachers can lead their classrooms successfully. Fullan recaps what it means to be a leader in his last chapter titled "Tortoise and the Hare," we see that to be a good leader certain factors play a role. Connecting both Whitaker and Gruenert with Fullan's knowledge, there are many roles to play within a school. The overall message and mission is to reshape a school to best fit the needs of the students, by having staff and administration strive for the same mission.

**Conclusion**

In reflecting on schools and school culture, we must look at the leaders behind this change. Whitaker, Gruenert and Fullan's books intertwine as they connect reculturing and leadership. The authors believe that teachers are an important and substantial part of the change leaders want to make happen. Fullan believes in linear leadership, where the leader is transparent, and on the same level as his/her teachers. This leadership changes climate, as teachers begin to see principals as collaborators rather than authoritative. Whitaker and Gruenert believe that with changing the school culture, there are many aspects to look at and plan for.

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**About the Author**

I work as an infant-toddler specialist. As a part of my job, I support and coach teachers on effective teaching strategies with infants and toddlers. My goals and passion in life, is to make impactful changes in my community and advocate for all children to have access to high quality education

# Cooperative Learning Strategies for Students with Learning Disabilities: A Review of the Literature

By Randy Mojica

Numerous studies support the use of cooperative learning in classrooms as an effective strategy for students with disabilities (Naido & Paideya 2015). Through cooperative learning, students may take on roles according to their surroundings and work together to ensure the groups' success. Cooperative learning is a successful teaching strategy in which small teams or groups, consisting of students with different ability levels, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Depending on a student's levels of social skills, cooperative learning can be very direct and simplified or intricate and detailed. Jigsaw, small groups, and supplemental instruction are strategies used to improve communication, participation, and comprehension for students with learning disabilities.

**Cooperative Learning**

The Jigsaw method, a cooperative learning strategy, provides students the chance to enhance their inter-personal and comprehension skills. The jigsaw strategy encourages listening, engagement, and empathy (Jones & Jones 2008). Group members work together in a team to accomplish a common goal (Rianawati 2017). Schul (2011) stated that this specific design was created to nurture strong social interdependence among students. Each student is assigned a task in which each member's contribution is essential for the group. There is a misconception between cooperative learning and collaborative learning having the same principle; when in fact cooperative learning is carefully structured around student accountability. While using the method of collaborative learning, each member can provide insight on a topic but is not required to, and there is generally no individual accountability. The variables that make cooperative learning unique are the principles of personal effort and individual accountability to achieve group success.

Gudi and Amendu (2017) studied the attitudes of students towards the cooperative learning approach. The study was a quasi-experimental design. It consisted of 179 students from three public secondary schools in the Nasawara state of Nigeria. The researchers used the Jigsaw Attitude Questionnaire (JAQ) to collect data. Teachers were trained to teach using the jigsaw cooperative learning approach. The treatment duration was 12 weeks, and students were given a 10-item JAQ after treatment. The results showed a significant level of 0.5 improvements using the jigsaw method approach.

Kirbas (2017) studied the effect of learning together techniques on the development of listening comprehension and social skills of eighth grade students from Sair Nef'i Secondary School and Palandoken District, Alparslan Secondary School. The study consisted of 75 subjects. Socio-economic and success rates were taken into consideration when selecting experimental and control groups. The Listening-Comprehension Achievement Test was administered before selecting experimental and control groups to make sure both groups were similar. For seven weeks, the experimental group was taught using the learning together method of cooperative learning while the other group used traditional methods of learning. The study was set up as a (2x2) experimental and control groups, with pretest and posttest., The study's results indicated that when learning together the

cooperative learning approach is more effective than the traditional learning method to improve comprehension and social skills.

Per Collado (2012), when cooperative learning was utilized in the inclusive setting student participation of students with disabilities improved social skills and interpersonal relationships. Collado's (2012) research focused on cooperative learning in Physical Education classes made up of 5th and 6th grade students with disabilities from Castile and Leon in Spain. The study consisted of two didactic units taught by a single teacher through the cooperative learning method known as Learning Teams. According to the results, all students achieved the proposed goals for motor development measured by performance assessment tests. Cooperative learning provided students greater autonomy during the learning processes, and increased social skills and pro-social attitudes according to Collado (2012)

Altun (2017) investigated the efficiency of learning plan implementation with the cooperative learning method, which addressed the effect of cooperative learning on students' achievement. The study was a mixed method design in a sixth grade science and technology class in a middle school in Istanbul, Turkey. The study incorporated 20 students, seven girls, and 13 boys. Altun (2017) used achievement scores based on pretests and posttests for quantitative findings while using content analysis for the qualitative data. In conclusion, the study found the cooperative learning methods had favorable effects on the learners' success. Specifically, cooperative learning supported collaboration between students, permanent learning, provided opportunities for success, and supported the development of social and personal skills.

The intention of the teacher's use of cooperative learning decides the complexity of the strategy used at that time. Each group should contain at least four members, one high achiever, two average achievers, and one low achiever. Per Slavin (1987), the teacher should teach the content first, then students while in their teams or groups will master an assignment, usually requiring them to work together to provide answers while also explaining the solution or skill learned.

**Small Groups**

According to Veloo, Md-Ali and Chairany (2016), small groups, a cooperative learning strategy, used in cooperative team-game-tournament has encouraged students and teachers to be creative in the process of teaching and learning actively. The small group allows students to share ideas that will enhance a learning experience through social interaction and participation. It is important to note that the key difference between small group and jigsaw is the factor of no accountability on the individual to contribute to the team. The engagement between participating students will help foster engagement from non-participating members and help to develop their understanding of key concepts (Jones & Jones 2008).

In a study done by Gillies (2006), teachers played critical roles in facilitating the interaction of students in small group instruction. The purpose of the study was to encourage student efforts during whole class instruction and to determine if engaged teachers facilitated learning interactions with their students when compared with teachers who implemented group work only. The study incorporated 26 teachers and 303 students in grades 8 to 10 from four large high schools in Brisbane, Australia. The teachers established cooperative small group activities for three terms, and each term consists of 4 to 6 weeks. Additionally, the teachers were audiotaped during their lessons and samples of students' language were collected as they worked in groups. Gillies (2006) concluded that, teachers who implement cooperative learning in their classrooms had fewer disciplinary

problem behaviors and more positive learning interactions among students. The research was a comparative study of teachers and student behaviors in classes of systematic implementation of cooperative learning and group work. The scores were measured using MANOVA to determine significant differences in verbal behavior of teachers to support cooperative learning and group work.

Zhang, Peng, and Sun (2017) conducted a study that utilized small groups to enforce social skills through meaningful and robust interaction. The school's location was in a rural area of China. Seven English teachers teaching 14 English classes were included in the study. The participants were students who were among the most impoverished in the country and were academically disabled (learning disabled in the United States). All courses used small group instruction, six students or less. The purpose of the study was to compensate for the shortage of teachers, as well as having students develop critical participation skills to enhance social skills. Teachers divided students into groups of six based on exam scores and general level of English learning. Students were given roles within their group based on their comprehension scores in order from 1-6, number 1 being the group leader and number 2 being the co-leader. Students labeled 3-4 were in the middle of the pack exam score students, and students numbered 5-6 were from the lower exam score group and considered lower achieving students. For student participation, the group leader and co-leader oversaw two other students within their groups. During the second stage of the study, students previewed their tasks according to the material taught; students viewed their individual responsibilities differently according to the group dynamics. Students filled out a questionnaire about the article presented. Members 5 and 6 revealed their answers first and were corrected by members 1 and 2. Members 3 and 4 would follow suit and explain their answers. At this point, the group provides their solutions for the remainder of the class to record, other teams can revise if they see fit. During stage 3, small groups can review material they have learned and provide inferences on what they might learn in the future. During this phase, the group leader provides his answers and the team critiques the leader's answers and additional information if they see fit. The teacher chose a group to present their material or problem to the class. Students are required to ask questions about the content they have just learned, and leaders select group members to answer student questions. For any questions not answered correctly, the teacher gave her input on the issue or provided correct responses. According to the study, cooperative awareness and ability showed distinctive positive improvements; more importantly, the students also showed remarkable learning effectiveness.

Gillies (2004) also studied the effects of cooperative learning on junior high school students. The study took place in Brisbane, Australia and incorporated five schools consisting of 223 junior high students in groups of three or four, mixed gender and achievement groups. According to the study, the results concluded that children in structured groups were more willing to collaborate with others on assigned tasks than students in unstructured groups. According to Gillies (2004) students in structured groups understood their responsibilities and importance to the overall success of the group. The study was of comparative design to determine the significant differences in verbal interactions of structured and unstructured groups a MANOVA was conducted to show if there were differences.

**Fostering Comprehension with Technology**

Per Gold (1997), students with disabilities have senses that can fail them, and this contributes to students not being fully engaged in lessons. Per Grant (2001), students find learning history is a bore and are finding it hard to make connections that develop sustainable interest. Students having to learn content like history are presumed to struggle because of the delivery method; students with disabilities stacked with having a deficit

that already prevents them from succeeding academically, must also deal with listening and comprehending a topic that is considered boring. Predictably, the rate of success is going to be generally low for this population of students.

Gambari and Yusuf (2017) investigated the relative effectiveness of computer-supported cooperative learning strategies within a secondary school. The study was done in four secondary schools in Nigeria; each school was designated a different cooperative learning strategy. The strategies were: Students Team Achievement Division (STAD), Jigsaw II, Team-Assisted Individualization (TAI), or Individualized Computer Instruction (ICT). The posttest used to assess treatment was Computer-Assisted Learning Package (CALP). The results of the study concluded that significant differences were found in the performance and attitudes of the students participating and the findings support the integration of computer supported cooperative instructional strategies in secondary schools.

Leng, Leng, and Abedalaziz (2013) used Wordpress to engage 37 secondary students between the ages of 15-16. Leng et al. (2013) used technology as the motivating factor to enhance comprehension. The collaborative learning strategy they incorporated with Wordpress was called Learning Together. The study incorporated four phases: Implementation phase I, Implementation phase II, Investigation phase, and Presentation phase/Evaluation phase. First, the students were introduced to and trained with using Weblog and Powerpoint. Students were also introduced to cooperative learning concept. Each member of the group was dependent on the other to ensure group success. The collaborative learning strategy used is called Learning Together. During phase II, the teacher distributed five different questions to each group. The group was asked to answer each of the five items and to find sources that support their answer. Each group consisted of 7-8 students from different sexes, races, and disabilities. During the investigation process, students had access to a researcher for Wordpress consultation. Pretests, posttests, and questionnaires were used to triangulate the data. According to the results, cooperative learning through Learning Together had substantial success as the results showed that 78.4% of students were confident using and implementing this strategy. According to the results,72.9% of students agreed that Wordpress helped them to understand the importance of history (Leng, Leng, & Abedalaziz 2013).

Mohamed and Chong (2010) studied the adaptive effects of using multimedia technology for teaching the narrative of the subject in nature. The study included 82 students total; forty students used Multimedia Segmental Instruction (M-B) and 42 used Multimedia Simultaneously Instruction (M-S). M-B consists of presentations that enhance learning with text, graphics, video, and audio. M-S consists of both words and images to support student learning of a concept. The study used a 2x2 quasi-experimental design and divided the two previous groups by their gender as well. The purpose of dividing by genders was to verify that gender played no role towards the comprehension of the material; the study used a pre-test and posttest samples to show the effectiveness of the intervention. According to the results, students using M-B approach performed significantly higher than students using M-S approach by an average mean of 14.2 points, which constituted a deviation of 4.3 points.

Leng, Leng, and Abedalaziz (2013) and Mohamed and Chong (2010) concluded that cooperative learning through the use of technology could improve student's comprehension of content. Schul (2011) supported the notion that collaborative education utilizing a jigsaw model provided accountability to every member of the group.

The literature supports the proposed action research that will explore the effectiveness of cooperative learning on increasing the comprehension of content area material by high school students with disabilities. An added benefit of cooperative learning may be that students will also improve their social skills.

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My name is Randy Mojica born in Miami, Fl. in 1980, and I am currently enrolled in Florida International University's Master's program for Special Education with a concentration in academic and behavior intervention (graduate Spring 2018). I received my Bachelors of Science in Special Education from Barry University (graduated 2007). I have been teaching in the field of Special Education for 10 years now (since 2007) at Felix Varela Senior High School in Miami, Fl. This school year I am currently teaching U.S. History to students with Specific Learning Disabilities. I am always looking for ways to improve student engagement and making sure that the techniques and interventions I use translate to the real world for our population of students.

# Preparing Teachers for Inclusion through Co-Teaching: Paradigms, Perks, Problems, and Promising Practices

**By Deborah L. Voltz**
**University of Alabama at Birmingham**

**Abstract**

It has been widely recognized for many years that preparing teachers for inclusion is important to their success in today's classrooms. Preservice teacher education programs have used a variety of means to accomplish this goal. In many cases, separate courses have been designed to develop requisite knowledge, skills, and dispositions. However, a number of limitations have been noted with respect to separate course models; hence other methods have emerged to replace or augment the separate course model. Co-teaching involving teacher educators from general and special education is an example of such an alternate model. This paper will provide a framework for the various approaches to co-teaching in teacher educator programs and review research related to the advantages and challenges associated with each approach.

**Preparing Teachers for Inclusion through Co-Teaching: Paradigms, Perks, Problems, and Promising Practices**

Integrating students with disabilities in general education classes has been an important theme in education since the mid to late sixties. In the past, the focus was primarily on integrating *students* in general and special education, while relatively little emphasis was placed on helping general and special educators work together in a single educational environment. Neither was much attention placed on coordinating other critical aspects of general and special education systems, such as assessment programs, educational standards, and teacher preparation. It was not until the late 1980s that the systems integration concept of inclusive education brought with it the impetus to blur the lines between general and special education and to restructure general education settings in order to accommodate a broader range of students (Will, 1986).

Since that time, the participation of students with disabilities in general education classrooms has steadily increased. The percentage of students with disabilities taught in general education classroom for 80% or more of the school day increased from 45.07% in 1995 to 62.67% in 2014 (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). These increases escalated around 2001, just as standards-based reform began to take root and the No Child Left Behind Act was set into place.

This trend suggests increased efforts to educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. However, as stated by McHatton & McCray:

Although the intentions of this trend may be laudable, there is concern regarding whether or not general education teachers have the necessary skills to teach students with disabilities or successfully collaborate with special educators to make sure that the spirit of the law is met and, in fact, leaves no child behind (2007, p. 26).

Likewise, Taylor & Ringlaben reported, "Despite federal mandates to educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, teachers continue to have mixed feelings about their own preparedness to educate students with disabilities in general education settings (2012, p. 16). There is evidence to suggest that general education teachers do not feel prepared to address the challenge of inclusion. For example, in a national survey of 400 general education teachers, Goldstein (2004) found that these teachers expressed a lack of confidence in their ability to teach students with disabilities. Less than half (37%) of these teachers reported that they felt very prepared to teach students with disabilities in an inclusive context. In a study of preservice teachers, McCray and McHatton (2011, p. 141) found that while participants' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with disabilities did improve after taking a related course, still a significant percentage of participants (30.4%) "either did not agree or were undecided when asked if they believe most [students with disabilities] could be educated in general education classrooms". Other studies have shown similar trends with respect to teacher perceptions of their ability to adequately address the needs of students with disabilities, particularly with respect to collaboration and inclusive practices (Gately, 2005; Reusen, Shoho, & Barker, 2001; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996).

The need to prepare all teachers to work effectively with students with disabilities has been widely recognized. The majority of states require that such content be included in teacher education programs, though the manner in which this content should be delivered often is not specified by states (Miller, Strosnider, & Dooley, 2002). Teacher education programs have typically responded to this challenge by including a course that focuses on learners with disabilities in teacher education programs (Harvey, Yssei, Bauserman, & Merbler, 2010). In a national survey of teacher education programs, the majority of participants indicated that special education content in their programs was delivered primarily through a separate course focusing on that topic (Voltz, 2003). A minority of participants indicated that this content was delivered primarily through other means, such as infusion in other coursework through a variety of methods (approximately 35%). A very small number of participants (approximately 10%) indicated that there was no systematic means of delivering special education content in their teacher education programs, or that they were not aware of how this content was delivered.

Although separate course models of delivering special education content are the most common in teacher education programs, and have shown some effectiveness in comparison to no systematic approach to delivering this content (Zagona, Kurth, & MacFarland, 2017), separate course models are not without potential weaknesses. For example, such models have been criticized for their vulnerability to isolation of special education content. This limitation mitigates against opportunities for teacher candidates to see how concepts discussed in separate special education courses are related to or interact with concepts discussed in other courses. Additionally, many believe that one course just does not allow enough time to give beginning teachers the skills they need to successfully teach students with disabilities in inclusive settings (Kamens, Loprete, & Slostad, 2003; McHatton & McCray, 2007). In a study of beginning special education teachers, Belknap and Taymans (2015, p.1) found that these teachers had "less positive feelings" in co-teaching roles, in comparison to self-contained teaching roles. Because of the limitations of traditional separate-course models, other methods of delivering special education content also have been used.

Many of these alternate methods involve the infusion of special education content throughout the teacher education program—either in addition to or instead of housing this content primarily in a single course. In some cases, these infusion models involve individual instructors working alone to infuse this content into their

courses. In this case, for example, the mathematics methods instructor would be responsible for infusing content related to teaching mathematics to students with disabilities throughout the mathematics methods course. Like single-course approaches, this method of delivering special education content in teacher preparation programs also has been shown to have some potential weaknesses. For example, there has been some evidence to suggest that teacher educators who are not in special education may not always know as much as they would like about effective instructional practices for teaching students with disabilities (Gately, 2005). This limitation can lead to very superficial coverage of this content, or no coverage at all (Cook, 2002).

In response to these concerns, some infusion models have been developed that involve special and general education teacher educators co-teaching to deliver special education content. Blanton and Pugach (2007) developed a typology of teacher education models. These models included discrete programs, characterized as having "little, if any, relationship between programs or collaboration between faculty who prepare general and special education teachers" (p. 7); integrated programs, characterized as retaining separate program identity, but involving general and special education faculty working together "to redesign the content of multiple courses and/or field experiences so that specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions across special and general education are interdependent (p. 9); and merged programs, characterized as preparing "general and special educators in a single curriculum, with complete integration of courses and field experiences" (p. 14). Building on Blanton and Pugach's typology, two models of co-teaching, integrated and merged, are described below, along with research findings related to the advantages and challenges of both models.

**Integrated Co-Teaching Models**

In an integrated co-teaching model, special education content is integrated into one or more courses existing courses in the general education preparation program. Special education teacher educators co-teach with general education teacher educators in the delivery of this content in general education coursework. Such models may be used to replace or augment separate-course models (Voltz, 2003).

In practice, integrated co-teaching models typically involve opportunities for special education teacher educators to work with general education teacher educators in planning and delivering instruction, as well as in evaluating the performance of general education teacher candidates. Special education teacher educators co-teach with general education teacher educators for some class sessions in one or more courses in the general education sequence. For example, a special education teacher educator may co-teach with a general education teacher educator in a math methods course to demonstrate how to adapt math curricula, materials, and teaching methods to individual student needs. Likewise, such co-teaching may occur in language arts, social studies, and science methods courses. Methods blocks are common areas in which general and special education teacher educators may use integrated co-teaching models.

Duchardt, Marlow, Inman, Christensen, and Reeves (1999) conducted a self-study of their integrated co-teaching model, which involved an undergraduate elementary education methods block (i.e., language arts, mathematics, science, social studies) that was co-taught by a team of faculty, inclusive of a faculty member from special education. Their investigation focused on issues such as initial faculty concerns about the co-teaching/co-planning process, the composition of teaching teams, the needs of preservice and inservice teachers, and time constraints. Data were collected during formal and informal collaborative meetings of the faculty involved. Although challenges were noted, the authors concluded that:

Co-planning and co-teaching arrangements can result in nine positive outcomes: (1) collaborating and developing trust, (2) learning to be flexible and collegial, (3) finding pockets of time to co-plan, (4) learning through trial and error, (5) forming teaching and learning partnerships, (6) challenging oneself and developing professionally, (7) solving problems as a team, (8) meeting the needs of diverse learners, and (9) meeting the needs of teachers as problem solvers (p. 190).

Carnell and Tillery (2005) outlined an integrated co-teaching model that involved a special education teacher educator rotating in three-week intervals among a twelve-week methods block including math, language arts, social studies, and science methods courses for elementary education preservice teachers. This self-study examined specific aspects of the implementation process, noting the perceptions of participating team members with respect to working in the collaborative team. Observations regarding candidate progress and performance also were noted. Carnell and Tillery (2005) reported that faculty involved found the experience to be enriching and students received more robust preparation for inclusive settings.

**Integrated Co-Teaching: The Perks and Problems**

In both the Duchardt et al. (1999) and the Carnell and Tillery (2005) self-studies, some advantages of the integrated co-teaching models used were cited. According to Duchardt et al.:

All team members cited the experience of co-planning and co-teaching as a positive learning experience…team members agreed that they learned from one another—not only content information and information about students with diverse needs but also a wide range of examples, techniques, and strategies that they could all use in training preservice teachers (1999, p. 188).

Likewise, Carnell and Tillery stated, "Certainly coteaching has been an enriching professional experience for the faculty members who have participated in it (2005, p. 389). Further, Carnell and Tillery argued that:

students benefited even more from their exposure to coteaching. Not only have they received a full year of instruction on strategies for teaching special needs students in an inclusion classroom but they have also gained confidence in their preparedness to teach in an inclusion setting (2005, p. 389).

Integrated co-teaching models provide opportunities for preservice teachers to see instructional collaboration modeled. Such experiences provide tangible models that can be useful to preservice teachers once they are out co-teaching in their own classrooms. According to Carnnell and Tillery (2005, p. 388), after exposure to their integrated co-teaching model, their students "demonstrated more positive attitudes about teaching in an inclusion classroom and indicated that they felt better prepared to teach using methods of coteaching". During their field experiences, their students also reported that "they had seen variations of coteaching used in their practicum classrooms and were excited to witness real-world use of approaches that had been demonstrated in the methods classroom".

The power of content integration was cited as an additional perk of integrated co-teaching. Content associated with teaching students with diverse learning needs could be directly infused into general education coursework via the co-teaching process. According to Duchardt et al.,:

Integration of content ideas and expertise in pedagogy through co-planning and co-teaching teams produces teachers more capable of working with a diverse population of students. That results in a more global teaching

perspective, one that focuses on broader, collective goals and on the needs and abilities of all students (1999, p. 189).

Challenges of using integrated co-teaching models also were noted. University culture and structural barriers were among these challenges. Time barriers also were cited. According to Duchardt et al., "Opportunities for co-planning and co-teaching are not inherent within the structure of higher education…higher education structure leaves little time for creative and innovative interdisciplinary professional team planning, curriculum development, and collaborative teaching" (1999, p. 186). Carnell and Tillery also spoke of time limitations from the perspective integrating new content into existing courses. They noted, "General education faculty…expressed concern about adding instructional material to an already tightly packed curriculum" (2005, p. 385). Similar concerns voiced by general education faculty also were observed by Duchardt et al.: "Their primary concerns included…trying to add more content to an already over-full curriculum…and loss of instructional time" (1999, p. 187). Finally, because special education faculty taught in existing general education courses for only a portion of the term, both groups of researchers cited the challenge of ensuring that "each partner is equally empowered in the classroom" (Carnell & Tillery, 2005, p. 388).

**Merged Co-Teaching Models**

In a merged co-teaching model, two courses (or programs)—one general education and one special education—are merged to form one course (or program) that integrates the content of the former courses (or program) and combines general and special education preservice teachers together into one instructional group. Typically, general and special education faculty co-teach the merged courses together for most or all class sessions.

Kluth and Straut (2003) conducted a self-study of a merged co-teaching model in which two courses, Academic Curricular Adaptations and Elementary Social Studies Methods and Curriculum, were functionally combined into one and taught to students who were being dually prepared as general and special educators. Although students registered for each course separately, the courses were scheduled back-to-back in the same room, so instructors were able to integrate content across the total block of time. The self-study involved a reflective process and focused on co-teaching roles and content integration. Kluth and Straut reported positive outcomes for faculty and students of the co-teaching process, and concluded that: "Students, it seems, will be better prepared to coteach, and, therefore function as effective teachers in inclusive education settings, if we teach about and model progressive practices" (p. 239).

Voltz, Sims, Roberson, Tucker, and Willis (2007) conducted a study of a merged co-teaching model that involved the merger of an assessment course designed for elementary and secondary education majors with a similar course designed for special education majors. This program also involved the merger of a classroom management course designed for secondary majors with one designed for special education majors. In both the case of the assessment course and the classroom management course, the general and special education versions of each remained distinct for registration purposes, with students registering for the course aligned with their program of study. However, the general and special education assessment course, and the general and special education management course met at the same time in the same classroom, with general and special education university faculty co-teaching each. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate the nature of the content merger process. This self-study involved a reflective process and open-ended student surveys. Results suggested positive student outcomes. For example, in terms of exposure to helpful content, one student put it this way: "Different perspectives gave me a deeper look at how I may have to accommodate students with

special needs in my classroom." In terms of increased opportunities for general and special education candidates to work together, another student commented, "It's good because ultimately we all will, at some point, meet up in the education arena."

Altieri, Colley, Daniel, and Dickerson (2015) implemented a co-teaching model that involved the merger of a cohort of special education preservice teachers with a cohort of elementary education preservice teachers. These students took many of the same courses together, which were co-taught by special education and elementary education faculty. Altieri et al. conducted surveys and interviews of program graduates and found that the majority of those participating were successfully engaging in collaborative practices at their school sites, and were providing leadership to their schools in this area.

Weiss, Pellegrino, Regan, and Mann (2015) conducted a participatory action research study that investigated a merged co-teaching model in which a secondary social studies course was combined with a special education course. Though the courses were listed separately, they were scheduled to meet at the same time, in the same classroom for nearly all class sessions. The secondary social studies faculty member was instructor of record for the social studies course; the special education faculty member was instructor of record for the special education course. Social studies majors registered for the social studies class; special education majors registered for the special education class. The action research study involved an analysis of faculty communications (i.e., electronic journals, planning meeting), examination of course materials/products, classroom observations, and faculty interviews). Analysis of these data yielded a topology of developmental stages involved in the co-teaching process. Advantages and challenges of co-teaching also were noted.

Weiss, Pellegrino, and Brigham (2017) conducted a follow-up study, again involving special education faculty and secondary social studies faculty co-teaching a collaboration course that included both special education and secondary majors. In this study, a comparison group in a special education course that included only special education majors, and taught by only a special education faculty member, was used to access the impact of the co-teaching approach. Concept mapping and analysis procedures were used to ascertain whether differences existed in the depth of knowledge covered in the course between the two groups of students. Results indicated that the co-taught group demonstrated more "specific and robust" (p. 74) understandings than did the comparison group.

**Merged Co-Teaching Models: The Perks and Problems**

In looking at the conclusions of these investigations of merged co-teaching models, some common advantages emerge. As was the case with integrated co-teaching models, merged co-teaching models were found to be professionally enriching for participating faculty. The content integration inherent in the process also was found to be beneficial to teacher education candidates, as was the opportunity to see co-teaching modeled in their preservice programs.

In addition to these advantages, merged co-teaching models also were found to "provide candidates with authentic collaborative experiences" (Weiss et al., 2015, p. 96). By merging special and general education classes that were formerly taught separately, special and general education teacher candidates were afforded the opportunity to work together in the same classroom, doing the same activities. Kluth and Straut (2003) described a cooperative exam that required teams of general and special education teacher candidates to work together in designing lessons that include adaptations for students with disabilities. According to Kluth and

Straut (2003, p. 235), such activities allow faculty to assess preservice students' "content knowledge while observing and cultivating their collaborative behaviors and skills". Voltz et al. (2007) also noted the advantages of such collaborative assignments, enabled through merged co-teaching models.

Along these same lines, an additional advantage of merged co-teaching models is the increased exposure of special education preservice teachers to content associated with general education coursework. While general education preservice teachers get enhanced exposure to special education content in integrated co-teaching models, merged co-teaching models also provide the opportunity to learn more about the alternate curriculum (Kluth & Straut, 2003; Voltz et al., 2007; Weiss et al., 2015).

Merged co-teaching models were found to avoid some of the challenges associated with integrated co-teaching models. For example, since merged co-teaching involves two instructors bringing together two courses—rather than a special education faculty member coming into select general education class sessions—it is less likely that students will perceive the special education faculty member as a "visitor" (Voltz et al., 2007; Weiss et al., 2015). Additionally, some have noted challenges associated with credit hour production in integrated models in which there is no course credit associated with the efforts of the special education faculty member (Voltz, 2003). Merged co-teaching models avoid this challenge by merging existing credit-bearing coursework (Voltz, et al., 2007), whereby credit hour production accrues to both general and special education teacher educators.

Although merged co-teaching models have been found to avoid some of the challenges of integrated co-teaching models, these two approaches have been found to share many of the same obstacles. For example, Weiss et al. (2015, p. 97) noted that "there were substantial university and instructional roadblocks, including resource allocation that existed to keep collaborative initiatives at bay". Time also emerged as an issue, given that the planning involved in merging two previously separate courses is extensive. Weiss et al. noted that this process "would require significant time devoted to course creation and that this obstacle had the potential to interfere with research and scholarly efforts (p. 97). Likewise, Kluth & Straut (2003, p. 237) noted "Coteaching and other types of collaboration may not be practical when time is tight and resources limited". Thus, integrated co-teaching and merged co-teaching share very similar challenges.

**Integrated and Merged Co-Teaching: Promising Practices**

In looking across the findings of these investigations of integrated and merged co-teaching models, a number of themes emerged with respect to promising practices for supporting successful co-teaching. The importance of soliciting administrative and institutional support is a key emerging theme. Kluth & Straut (2003, p. 237) stated: "Our collaboration would not be possible without support from our program administrators and colleagues". In the case of merged co-teaching models, administrators will need to be onboard with the cross-listing and merger of coursework, as well as providing classroom space large enough to accommodate merged classes. Of course, appropriate course scheduling also is central to this process. In the case of integrated co-teaching models, credit hour production issues may need to be considered. If the content being infused is not associated with a credit-bearing special education course, then resources associated with the time and effort of the special education faculty member may be expended without generating the revenue associated with credit hour production. An additional administrative issue is related to course evaluations and the complexities that co-teaching models add to this process. For merged courses in particular, it may be difficult for students to disentangle the performance of the faculty members involved for the purpose of course evaluation. In the case of integrated co-teaching, if the efforts of the special education faculty member are not associated with a

particular special education course, the typical course evaluation process may not be triggered, or may need to be adapted, if it is triggered. The course evaluation process is an important consideration, since it is often tied to merit, tenure, and promotion processes. Hence, it is critical that administrators be onboard with augmenting or adapting traditional course evaluation procedures to accommodate co-taught courses.

Careful pre-planning and ongoing planning also emerged as requisite to the success of co-teaching models. According to Weiss et al. (2015, p. 88) their co-teaching model "could not have been successful without a clear set of shared goals and attention to the logistics of making it happen". Likewise, Carnell and Tillery (2005, p. 388) noted the significance of "discussions of what content is important to teach and what ideas student should take from the classroom experience". Duchardt et al. (1999, p. 186) noted, "Throughout the planning phase, each team member discussed various accommodations, modifications, management plans, instructional strategies, and differentiated curricula that could be used with the particular content". The importance of planning for parity among the instructors also was noted. Carnell and Tillery (2005, p. 388) stated, "Initially, we spent a lot of time discussing how to share class time in an equal manner so that the students would perceive us as equals". The assessment of student learning also emerged as another important part of the planning process. After having collaboratively established learning objectives, the manner in which these objectives and student expectations will be assessed also must be collaboratively determined. Carnell and Tillery (2005, p. 388) urge co-teaching teams to "Discuss expectations of students' performance, and work out any differences ahead of time".

"Soft skills" also were found to be critical in making co-teaching partnerships work. Co-teaching is often a new and challenging experience for the faculty involved. This requires a certain level of mental flexibility and the willingness to try to see things from others' perspective. Based on their experiences, Weiss et al. (2015, p. 94) further observed, "Different disciplinary backgrounds and training manifested in differing perspectives on the same ideas". Mutual trust and respect facilitate the willingness to accept and address divergent points of view. Duchardt et al. (1999, p. 188) noted, "To succeed, such a cooperative effort requires people who are sensitive to one another's needs and who are willing to truly cooperate".

Weiss et al. (2015, p. 93) asserted, "engaging in a collaborative teaching experience in higher education is as tentative as it may be experienced in a K-12 setting, and the complexities revealed in this process in many ways mirror those found in K-12 classrooms". This sentiment highlights the relevance of doing what Kluth and Straut (2003) refer to as "making collaboration transparent". This was a theme that emerged from these investigations. Kluth and Straut (2003, p. 236) noted that preservice teachers in their co-taught courses were "implicitly and explicitly provided with information about how and why the two courses are connected. This includes direct conversations about coteaching, collaboration, and the importance of interdisciplinary instruction". They also discussed with their students the various co-teaching roles that they played, sharing the "good, the bad, and the ugly" (p. 236). Likewise, Weiss et al. (2015, p. 100) noted, "During several class sessions, the instructors shared details of their collaborative efforts and challenges", thus making the process of their co-teaching explicit to students. Such a practice enhances the likelihood that students will learn not only from the content of instruction, but also from the manner in which it is delivered.

**Conclusion**

Based on the investigations reviewed, both integrated and merged approaches to co-teaching seem viable. Evidence suggests that these approaches hold benefits for general and special education preservice

teachers, as well as for the faculty involved. Despite this, in the majority of teacher preparation programs, general and special educators do not co-teach as a means of preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms (Harvey, Yssel, Bauserman, & Merbler, 2010). Likely, this is a consequence of some of the challenges previously discussed.

In order to move the needle forward with respect to co-teaching in teacher preparation programs, a number of significant changes will need to occur. One of these changes has to do with the culture of the university itself. Traditionally, teaching has been seen as a solitary activity, with the expectation that there will be only one instructor per class. This drives the way courses are entered into the schedule, the manner in which course evaluations are designed, and how faculty effort is measured. So, if instructors are in a co-teaching situation, they are often put in a position of having to come up with "work- arounds" for many university structures.

The university reward structure also should be examined. The merit, promotion, and tenure processes should recognize and reward the extra time and energy that it takes to co-teach. Time factors were mentioned in each of the studies reviewed. It is a risk for faculty members, particularly junior faculty, to make such a time commitment—at the possible expense of other activities (i.e., research)—if such commitments are not recognized as a codified element in the faculty review process. Graziano and Navarrete (2012, p. 113) summarized the issue this way:

The potentially largest barriers to co-teaching at the college level may be the policies and practices for promotion, tenure, and merit reviews. These policies often do not include language for how to evaluate the co-taught classes included in the candidate's portfolio, especially as the documentation pertains to quantifying course load and interpreting one course evaluation for two instructors. Faculty who sit on review committees, most of whom have never co-taught a course, often perceive co-taught courses as easier and less time-consuming than they do solo-taught courses.

Change is often difficult, as the status quo typically serves to perpetuate itself. Duchardt et al. stated, "difficulties seem to arise when teacher educators are expected to model teamwork and collaboration they have not experienced themselves" (1999, p. 187). Most higher education faculty did not experience co-taught courses themselves, hence many may not view such practices as "typical" or "normal". Doing things differently is another form of risk that teacher educators must be ready to assume. Change is both difficult and inevitable at once. The field of teacher education must be prepared to rise to this challenge.

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Figure 1 Merged Assessment Course

| General Education Assessment Course | Special Education Assessment Course |
|---|---|
| Description<br><br>Introduction to fundamental concepts, methods, and principles of measurement and evaluation. Will assist students in acquiring competencies in the critique, construction, interpretation, and application of tests and related assessment techniques, and provide basic knowledge in applying descriptive statistics to classroom assessment.<br><br>Topics<br><br>Principles of Effective Assessment<br><br>Understanding and Using Formal Assessments (focus on group assessments)<br><br>Informal Assessment (performance-based, criterion-referenced, etc.)<br><br>Linking Learning, Instruction, and Assessment in Standards-Based Contexts<br><br>Test Development<br><br>Grading Systems | Description<br><br>Designed to prepare special education teachers to assess children and youth in a manner that reflects federal/state mandates. Students should be prepared to appropriately select, administer, and interpret assessment instruments designed to answer questions related to eligibility determination and to some extent, intervention programming.<br><br>Topics<br><br>IDEA and State Guidelines<br><br>Assessing Special Populations<br><br>Response to Intervention Models<br><br>Understanding and Using Formal Assessments (focus on individual assessments)<br><br>Informal Assessment (performance-based, criterion-referenced, etc.)<br><br>Working with Families |
| Merged Assessment Course | |

| |
|---|
| Description<br><br>Designed to prepare general and special education teachers for assessment in inclusive school contexts. Students should be prepared to develop, select, administer, and interpret assessment instruments important to planning and evaluating instruction for students with and without disabilities.<br><br>Topics<br><br>Principles of Effective Assessment in Inclusive Environments<br><br>Understanding and Using Formal Group and Individual Assessments<br><br>Informal Assessment (performance-based, criterion-referenced, etc.)<br><br>Linking Learning, Instruction, and Assessment in Standards-Based Contexts<br><br>Test Development<br><br>Grading Systems<br><br>Assessing Special Populations (Including IDEA and State Guidelines)<br><br>Response to Intervention Models<br><br>Working with Families |

Figure 2 Merged Classroom Management Course

| General Education Management Course | Special Education Management Course |
|---|---|
| Description<br><br>Designed to help teachers build their own personal system of discipline, consonant with their philosophies and personalities as well as with the realities of students and schools.<br><br>Topics<br><br>Organizing for Instruction<br><br>Establishing Classroom Rules and Routines<br><br>Models of Classroom Management<br><br>Glasser Self-Assessment Model | Description<br><br>Designed to help teachers work with special needs students in ways that promote peer acceptance and self-esteem as well as academic achievement.<br><br>Topics<br><br>Routines and Procedures<br><br>Rules and Consequences<br><br>Behavioral Assessment<br><br>Responding to Challenging Behaviors<br><br>Promoting Peer Acceptance |

| Merged Classroom Management Course |
| --- |
| Description<br><br>Designed to prepare general and special education teachers to engineer classroom environments that successfully support the academic and social development of diverse learners in inclusive settings.<br><br>Topics<br><br>Establishing a Positive Classroom Environment in Inclusive Classrooms<br><br>Models of Classroom Management: Applications in Inclusive Contexts<br><br>Monitoring Classroom Behaviors<br><br>Responding to Challenging Behaviors<br><br>Collaboration to Promote Behavioral Success |

# Book Review: Mindset, The New Psychology of Success

## By Kelly Green

Carol Dweck, Ph.D, is a psychologist that began investigating the importance of our mindset in approaching tasks. Through years of research, she asserts through her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* that truly successful people approach their goals with a growth mindset as opposed to a fixed mindset. Her body of research challenges the stereotypical view of intelligence as an unchangeable, genetic endowment and asserts that "becoming is better than being." Her book outlines the differences between fixed and growth mindsets in general and then specifically addresses the effect of mindset in sports, business, relationships, and teaching. She addresses strategies and implementation practices to change mindsets. She intends to prove to the reader that success is dependent on resilience and perseverance as a response to challenging goals, and that a growth mindset allows people to develop their abilities as opposed to a fixed mindset which relies on the belief that people are born with a fixed level of intelligence and talent. Her research is critical to fostering self-esteem in learners and changing our approach to improving educational practices to increase the performance levels of students.

In the book, Dweck attempts to address how to change a recurring problem that begins with the belief that people are born with characteristics or traits that determine their future success. It builds on her earlier research of adaptive and maladaptive cognitive-motivational patterns, where she delineates the consequences of self-theories. Dweck continued to research motivational patterns and emerged with data-based methods to improve cognitive motivational patterns. In order to evaluate the work presented by Dweck, the review will focus on investigating her authority regarding the subject matter, the organization and content of the book, and the style of writing used to communicate the message to the intended audience.

*"After seven experiments with hundreds of children, we had some of the clearest findings I've ever seen: Praising children's intelligence harms their motivation and it harms their performance. How can that be? Don't children love to be praised? Yes, children love praise. And they especially love to be praised for their intelligence and talent. It really does give them a boost, a special glow—but only for the moment. The minute they hit a snag, their confidence goes out the window and their motivation hits rock bottom. If success means they're smart, then failure means they're dumb. That's the fixed mindset."*
*? **Carol S. Dweck**, **Mindset: The New Psychology of Success***

Dweck opens with the psychology behind the mindsets. She explains a mindset as a self-theory, which builds on the research she completed in her previous book. She cites some of the reasons why we adopted a fixed mindset mentality, such as the reliance on assessments such as the intelligence quotient (IQ) test developed by Alfred Binet. She counters the misuse of the IQ test by discussing Binet's purpose of the assessment, which was to design better educational programs for children in Paris' public schools. To date, IQ tests are sometimes used to "summarize children's unchangeable intelligence," which was not the intended purpose of such assessments. To further illustrate her point that mindset affects accomplishment, Dweck cites studies that show how those with

a fixed mindset often have inaccurate views of their potential (underestimating their abilities) while those with a growth mindset often have accurate perceptions of their capabilities. She points to research by Howard Gardner (author of Extraordinary Minds) that indicates how people with the ability to identify their own strengths and weaknesses are capable of achieving incredible success.

Subsequent chapters dispel myths about achievement and accomplishment. Dweck uses narratives of famous inventors, artists, and innovators such as Thomas Edison, Charles Darwin, and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart to exemplify the amount of time, collaboration, and effort it takes to achieve greatness. She points to research by Benjamin Bloom, a leader in educational research, that examined over 120 exceptional achievers in multiple content areas (athletics, academics, etc.) and found that most were not noteworthy in their area of later expertise in grade school or even in the middle grades. The indicator of their success was more closely linked to a continuous "network of support" as well as their own "motivation and commitment." Dweck discusses the dangers of praise and positive labels in later chapters. She reveals case studies of learners that were identified as gifted; however, because of their fear of failure they have never met their true potential. She urges readers to identify a personal hero and reflect on whether they are viewed as being born with their talents or if they were developed with time and commitment. She appeals to the reader to do research and find the "tremendous effort that went into their accomplishment—and then admire them *more*."

In later chapters, Dweck clearly defines the growth mindset as the belief that "the most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment." She defines a fixed mindset as the belief that "basic qualities, like intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits." She speculates that people with a fixed mindset "spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing it." She proposes that those with a fixed mindset mentality may believe that success is dependent on innate talent alone, not effort.

With a clear perception of mindset, Dweck spends most of the remaining chapters addressing how mindset affects sports, business, relationships, and education. Each chapter provides case studies and examples of the detrimental effect that a fixed mindset can have in each of these areas of a person's life. She dispels myths about talent and achievement and she identifies the roots of the fixed mindset mentality. In examining mindsets, Dweck points out that the root of their development often begins with parenting, teaching, and societal perceptions. She illustrates how a growth mindset improves the achievement of success in these areas. At the close of each chapter, Dweck provides methods to "Grow Your Mindset." In the final chapter of Mindset, Dweck offers a 'workshop' approach to changing your mindset. The chapters offer real-life dilemmas that address rejection, anxiety, entitlement, denial, anger, and change. In each section, Dweck describes a fixed mindset reaction followed by a growth mindset solution to the dilemma.

*"So what should we say when children complete a task—say, math problems—quickly and perfectly? Should we deny them the praise they have earned? Yes. When this happens, I say, "Whoops. I guess that was too easy. I apologize for wasting your time. Let's do something you can really learn from!"*

*? **Carol S. Dweck**, **Mindset: The New Psychology of Success***

In writing Mindset, Dweck addressed an area of metacognition that may affect our personal and professional success. To that end, the book does present a strong case for adopting a growth mindset. Dweck's research

regarding the intended aim of IQ testing and its misuse in determining fixed levels of intelligence drives her point home; however, critics of her work disagree with her regarding the insignificance of such standardized testing. According to the Hechinger Report (2015) many people feel that Dweck minimizes the relevance of genetics and innate talent. There are also questions to the efficacy of developing a growth mindset if it is tied to effort alone. Dweck herself states that "as the growth mindset has become more popular and taken hold, we are beginning to find that there are pitfalls. Many educators misunderstand or misapply the concepts." Dweck may be referring to the application of the mindset theory where praise is connected to effort, but if there is still a struggle to achieve the goal, the practice of growth mindset is not effective. She and others have concerns that the mindset application has become a sort of fad in the education and business world. In truth, the book may be more at fault for this than the implementation practices. In the book, Dweck crafts many examples of fixed mindset scenarios and belabors the difference between the fixed and growth mindset; however, she designates just one chapter to the implementation practice of the mindset theory. In that chapter, she presents real-life dilemmas and fixed mindset reactions versus growth mindset responses. It would have been beneficial to have a companion set to the book that clearly delineated some strategies for implementation. Dweck also reported that the results of the implementation of growth mindset strategies are more effective with lower achievers than with higher achievers, especially in the classroom. Most likely, this is due to the fact that a growth mindset can foster self-esteem in learners and changing our approach to improving educational practices in lower-achieving students is very important.

Dweck has spent the last twenty to thirty years researching motivation, personality, and mindsets. She has taught at Columbia and Harvard Universities as well as the University of Illinois. She is currently a professor of psychology at Stanford University. Her research has garnered accolades from the American Academy of Arts and Science in 2003, the Donald Campbell Career Achievement Award in Social Psychology from the Society for Personality and Social Psychology in 2008, the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from the American Psychological Association in 2011, and the James McKeen Cattell Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Psychological Science in 2013. She is extremely credible in the subject matter and has done extensive research on the topic.

The organization of the book was suited for the audience. The early chapters describe what a mindset is and how self-theory connects to the growth and fixed mindset. Later chapters provide insight into specific areas such as relationships, sports, business, and education. Dweck includes 'Grow Your Mindset' sections at the end of each chapter with reflection questions intended to help the reader discover their mindset type and how to make changes to create a growth mindset. The author uses the content to attempt to convince the reader of the importance of the mindset theory but it falls short in revealing enough implementation strategies to adopt it with fidelity.

Dweck has studied the topic of mindset for at least twenty years. It could have easily made for a verbose read; however, she stated her theory in a very natural style of writing. Her use of this style of writing allowed her to communicate a clear message to her intended audience. In fact, people from many different professions subscribe to the growth mindset theory. Michael Fullan (2016) discusses the importance of developing a social context in order to facilitate knowledge sharing. He states that "attending to closely to information overlooks the social context that helps people understand what that information means and why it matters." Dweck makes it a point to include many social contexts in her writing style, and this lends itself to a deeper understanding of the underlying purpose of her theories.

*"It's not always the people who start out the smartest who end up the smartest."*
*? **Carol S. Dweck**, **Mindset: The New Psychology of Success***

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success shows a progression of ideas from Dweck's previous body of research regarding adaptive and maladaptive cognitive-motivational patterns. She clearly addresses the mindset theory and the differences between a fixed and growth mindset. Unfortunately, her book does lack clarity when it comes to proper implementation practices; however, it met the intended purpose of showcasing the connection our mindset and our success. In terms of leadership and teaching, Dweck's research provides an opportunity for us to examine how changing our approach to improving educational practices can increase the performance levels of students.

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**About the Author**

Kelly Green is a full-time Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Coordinator and teacher at a Title I elementary school in Boca Raton, Florida. Her experience as a parent of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and as a professional in the field pushed her to pursue further education at Florida International University, where she earned her degree in the Master's program in Special Education with an endorsement in ASD. She has a wonderful husband, three beautiful children, ages 13, 11, and 8, and an adorable puppy. While her hobbies include reading, listening to music, and spending time at the beach, as a mom she also dabbles in 'side' hobbies like hula hooping, blowing bubbles, and learning how to play Minecraft. She considers parental involvement the cornerstone of her ESE program at the elementary level.

# Disproportionality of African American Students in Special Education: Causes and Effects.

## By William Dorfman

**Historical Background**

The disproportional representation of African American students in special education programs has been a national concern for nearly four decades. Disproportionality refers to "the extent in which membership in a given group affects the probability of being placed in a specific disability category (Oswald, Coutinho, Best &Sing, 1999, P.198). In 1997, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) documented the following statistics: African Americans represented 16% of all elementary and secondary students in the United States, constituting 21% of special education programs in the United States. Based on the statistics, African American students of low socio-economic backgrounds were 2.3 times more likely to be identified by their teacher as having a disability. Clearly, there are reasons for the overwhelming overrepresentation of African American students is special education programs.

Over the years, researchers have sought to answer the following question: Why are African American children overrepresented in special education programs? Researchers have accumulated an abundance of literature suggesting that African American students are overrepresented in special education programs due to poverty, racial bias, and cultural misunderstanding. In addition to the causes for overrepresentation, researchers have claimed that African American students in special education programs are at an academic disadvantage, as there is an achievement gap, as opposed to their white peers (Ferri & Connor, 2005; Hosp & Reschly, 2004; Losen & Orfield, 2002). The second question that researchers have attempted to answer is: Why is there an achievement gap and how should it be resolved?

**Poverty and Disproportionality**

Researchers have concluded that poverty is a major factor to be considered in the disproportionate representation of African American students in special education programs (Osher et.al, 2004). Nearly half of the African American students represented in special education programs across the United States live below the poverty line. In 2004, Hosp & Reschly conducted a research study to evaluate predictors of disproportionate representation of African Americans in special education programs. At the conclusion of the multiple least square regression model, the researchers suggested that economic status is a major predictor of academic achievement. Not only are African American students from low socio-economic backgrounds more likely to be identified as having mental retardation or an emotional disturbance, they are more likely to fail, academically(Mcmillan&Reschly,1998). Specifically, Hosp and Reschly concluded that African American students are score 29.57 percent lower than their peers in special education programs (2004).

In a related study, Donovan and Cross (2002) suggested that poverty creates stress factors that lead to suppressed cognitive development. Typical stressors lead to low birth rates and medical illnesses that hinder development. Furthermore, Blanchet, Mumchet & Beachum claimed that impoverished children are more likely to attend poverty schools that have less qualified teachers and fewer resources. In relation to poverty, students

with "innate disadvantages" are more likely to be referred for special education services at an early age (Allen &Boykin, 1992).

**Factors Contributing to Disproportionality**

Based on research, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are particularly vulnerable to being placed in early childhood special education programs (Gardner &Miranda, 2001). The researchers concluded that African American students are more susceptive to school failure because of their home environment. Mandic, Rudd, Hehir, & Garcia claimed that procedural safeguards and technical language of special education is too advanced for many parents of minority students (2014). The researchers conducted a literacy-related barriers study to identify the reading levels of parents for students with disabilities. With the technical language of procedural safeguards being on a college or graduate student level, only 39% of parents who participated scored on the appropriate reading level (2014). Deducting from the results, there are two underlining issues: How can one expect parents to support the needs of their children with disabilities, if they cannot understand their rights? Furthermore, is it fair to suggest that parents from low socioeconomic backgrounds have a less of an opportunity for the proper education to understand the technical language associated with procedural safeguards?

Despite the overrepresentation of African American students in special education programs, there is substantial evidence suggesting that immigrants are less likely than natives to receive special education services. In a research study conducted by Hibel & Jasper (2012), they concluded that 2nd and 3rd generation immigrants are less likely to be placed in special education programs during the early education years. The belief is that immigrants of color are more likely to be placed in ESL programs and this delays the identification process. For students who are bilingual, 76% are do not receive special education services until the 5thgrade (Lyon, 1996). The delayed identification process can be contributed to the complex relationship between multicultural education and special education.

**Bias and Tensions between Home/School**

Researchers suggest that there is a cultural misunderstanding in the classroom that leads to over identification of African American students with disabilities (Gottlieb, Gottlieb and Trongone,2001). There are often cultural misunderstandings that teachers perceive as inappropriate behavior. When the attitudes and expectations are misaligned with the behavior of diverse students, there can be a misunderstanding, in regards to appropriate behavior. For instance, a teacher may expect students to raise their hands before speaking; however, it's common for the African American student to misunderstand the expectation. Thus, resulting in a referral for inappropriate behavior. According to Irvine, "46 states imposed long-term suspensions or expulsions on students with disabilities (2012)." In the research study, 1 in 5 African American students with disabilities were suspended. Moreover, 30% of all African American students with disabilities were suspended in Nevada, Nebraska and Wisconsin. Therefore, researchers suggest that disciplinary procedures and identification of African American students are biased (Pp.269).

Researchers suggest that tensions between home and school are largely due to lack of teacher preparation in culturally diverse learners (Williams, 2008). In the study, Williams suggested that parents of African American students believe that teachers are biased toward their children because of accountability standards. Researchers suggest that teachers would be more successful in easing tensions between home and school, if they used culturally responsive instruction.

**The Achievement Gap: Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Culturally responsive teaching has been a proven instructional method for closing the achievement gap for students of color. Culturally responsive teaching is defined by Gay (2000):

*"Culturally responsive teaching can be defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them(Pp.589)."*

For students who may be misunderstood, culturally responsive teaching provides the theoretical framework teachers can use to connect with students from diverse backgrounds. Griner and Stewart (2012), referred to two expert reviews to study Culturally Responsive Teaching. In summary, the findings of the studies resulted in the practitioners suggesting that teachers can better connect with students and parents by minimizing "dissonance (I.E. differences). Griner and Stewart also suggested that culturally responsive teaching not be used as a "quick fix". One must pose the following question: How does culturally responsive teaching pertain to the disproportionality of African American students in special education programs? Within the researchers study, they cite Lidwell, Holden& Butler (2010), by declaring that better communication and the removal of misunderstandings are more effective for students' academic achievement. In a related study, the researcher stated that African American students with disabilities typically learn at 3 grade levels [in reading] below their non-disabled Caucasian peers, of non-disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds.

**Conclusion**

Based on the literature, one could make the argument that there should be more research focused on the literacy of African American parents, with children who have disabilities. As discussed in the literature review, research suggests that there is a direct correlation between the academic successes of children, whose African American parents demonstrate limited literacy. However, there is a gap in literature targeting predictability studies that focus on disproportionality and parental literacy. Would disproportionality for African American children with disabilities decrease, with an increase in the reading ability of their parents?

In each of the studies discussed, socio-economic status and racial bias contributes to the disproportionality of African American students in special education programs. The other topic that deserves more attention is the rate at which students of color are exited from special education programs. If effective instruction is delivered with culturally responsive teaching pedagogy, the literature suggests that more students would succeed. If students weren't being placed in special education programs at an average rate of 5$^{th}$ grade, one could make the argument that their likelihood of closing the achievement gap would increase.

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**About the Author**

William Dorfman is the ESE teacher/504 Liaison at Sunshine Elementary Charter School and Paragon Academy Middle School in Hollywood, FL. He is currently working on an MA in Special Education with an Autism Endorsement at Florida International University; after previously earning a BA in History and Psychology from Hofstra University. While working in harmony with administration, general education teachers, and parents; he has two main goals as an educator: 1) Exemplify a consistent and resilient work ethic 2) Inspire all students to love the process of learning. William's primary research interests include: The implementation of instructional technology into transition planning, inclusion, and disproportionality in special education programs.

# Book Review: Dancing in the Rain: Leading with Compassion, Vitality and Mindfulness in Education

## By Candy Allen

***Murphy, Jerome. Dancing in the Rain, Leading with Compassion, Vitality and Mindfulness in Education. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2016. 288 pp. $31.00***

Gene Kelly's iconic "Singin' in the Rain" evokes the image of having an upbeat, carefree approach to life which instantly came to mind when I read the title of this book. Given the stressful atmosphere of leadership in the education field, the title gives hope that administrative leaders can stay grounded with their values and ideals while dealing with the daily challenges they encounter. The title also caught my eye as coincidentally, I have had in my classroom for many years the following quote by Vivian Greene: "Life isn't about waiting for storms to pass, but learning how to dance in the rain." I have always loved this quote and have often referred to it to guide me through challenges in my life.

Mr. Murphy began his career as a math teacher, and then spent subsequent years in Washington, D.C. on various Educational Councils. He became a doctoral student at Harvard Graduate School of Education and then spent two years as a Visiting Professor at the Penn Graduate School of Education before returning to Harvard. As an Associate Dean from 1982 – 1991, and then Dean from 1992 – 2001, Murphy has been an administrator at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and has lived the complex world of educational leadership. He has personally struggled with the difficult task of keeping a healthy balance between work and home and juggling the daily operations as an administrator.

The author has written this book to help leaders find a "sense of meaning and purpose in leadership" (10). The author wants his readers to look inwardly with honesty about their own personal strengths and weaknesses and how that understanding can open your possibilities as a leader. The author gives seven steps to leading with mindfulness that correlate to the acronym MY DANCE. Each letter of the acronym has corresponding activities and exercises that will help the reader connect with their inner beliefs.

Mr. Murphy presents the following steps to help leaders connect their values with their work, managing the daily stresses of educational leadership.

**M – Mind Your Values** – Identifying and understanding your core values can give your leadership meaning instead of getting caught up in the emotions of the moment.
**Y – Yield to Now** – Focusing your attention on the here and now and appreciating the little joys instead of racing from one task to the next.
**D – Disentangle from Upsets** – Separating from the emotion of the moment and seeing the root of the problem can help you make effective decisions.
**A – Allow Unease** – Accepting that unease is a part of life, and not allowing unease to take over your thoughts and emotions can allow leaders to handle the multitude of things that are constantly being thrown at them.

**N – Nourish Yourself** – Maintaining your perspective and allowing for your mind and body to stay healthy whether it is through exercise, reading, time with family, etc.; this is necessary to keep the proper balance between work and personal life.
**C – Cherish Self-Compassion** – Being kind to yourself and accepting personal shortcomings also allows for compassion to be shown to others.
**E – Express Feelings Wisely** – Being authentic about your feelings, whether happy or sad, can build trust and empathy among staff.

The author suggests that people often rely on the three R's: Resistance, Rumination, and Self-Rebuke, which can make situations unbearable. By recognizing these tendencies, leaders can see challenges for what they really are and not get caught up in the negativity that can be so prevalent. Supporting this, Murphy says that the "main barrier to flourishing is not the discomfort caused by our upsetting experiences in the outside world, but rather the suffering caused by how we relate – and respond – to the discomfort inside our minds" (40).

Each of the seven steps provide examples and activities to help the reader personally grow in that topic. In the step *Mind Your Values*, the reader is reminded that "your values can motivate you to take action that keeps you on the path to what really matters to you, even when you are stressed, confused, or overwhelmed" (64).
Murphy makes the connection with mindfulness and enhanced awareness in the step *Yield to Now*, and says that "mindfulness counters the mind's natural tendency to wander" (84).
The step *Disentangle from Upsets* helps give us "the ability *to step back*, *observe*, and *make room* for upsets, as well as the ability to *be with* upsets, instead of *being* them" (101). I find so many educators are consumed with little things that are out of their control, and feel that this step would be very helpful and enlightening to them.
In the step *Allow Unease*, Murphy suggests that "opening up to discomfort" and allowing for the experience will prevent "troubling emotions" from stealing "your time" and sapping "your energy" (123).
In the step *Nourish Yourself*, Murphy reminds us of the importance of gratitude and random acts of kindness and states "Gratitude is good for your colleagues and your organization – and although it is often overlooked, expressing appreciation can also have big benefits for you" (160).
The step *Cherish Self-Compassion* is a step that has taken on added meaning for the author because of the personal challenges he is facing in caring for his wife who has Alzheimers Disease. As he states, "It has helped me open my heart to my wife and avoid defining my life by circumstances beyond my control" (175). Everyone has personal challenges in their lives, and utilizing self-compassion can help lead to a more "full and healthy life" (175).

The final step, Express Feelings Wisely can be challenging for leaders because sharing emotions can make you vulnerable. Murphy also suggests that "leaders should also pay special attention to empathy and caring for their colleagues" (210).

The author's beliefs have been shaped by many experiences related to mindfulness and the "inner dimensions" of leading, and has led many workshops on building "inner strength" and "taking stress in stride" (49-50). These experiences have given him the foundation and growth necessary to create these guidelines to help administrators thrive under stressful circumstances.

The author believes "the framework of these steps aims to empower you to take advantage of your inner (and often hidden) strengths, to get beyond the upheavals of leadership, and to move toward a productive life of purpose, vitality, and joy" (40).

I agree with Murphy that this book will only be effective for those that truly want to put the time and effort toward personal growth and understanding, and becoming more mindful in the moment. Readers will have to "engage intellectually with the ideas embedded in My Dance" (217), which may be more effort than some are ready for. For those ready to embrace My Dance, they will need to set aside time to practice and work at the activities and exercises presented.

The field of education continues to change and present more challenges to administrators. This book is very timely in helping leaders deal with the constant stress in their jobs and lives. I found the book to be extremely user-friendly, and the acronym MY DANCE will be one that I personally remember and refer to.

At the onset, I was hopeful that this book would connect my favorite quote with my desire to stay grounded in the hectic, day-to-day chaos of teaching, mentoring, coaching and taking care of family. I was pleasantly surprised when the book exceeded my expectations and was filled with strategies that I will use to enable me to be more mindful in my work and everyday life!

**About the Author**

Candy Allen has just completed her Master in Special Education w/Autism Endorsement from Florida International University. She is a Nationally Board Certified Teacher and has taught Middle and High School for the past 20 years. She is very active in Special Olympics and has combined her love of working with students with disabilities with her love of sports!

# Buzz from the Hub

## All articles below can be accessed through the following link:

http://www.parentcenterhub.org/buzz-november2017-issue2/

**Stand Up, Sit Tall for Inclusion**

Visit the Inclusive Schools Network, and snap up the many offerings that will help you and yours take part in Inclusive Schools Week, as well as support inclusive practices for the children and families with whom you work throughout the year.

**Webinar | Assistive Technology Tools to Meet Student Needs in the Classroom**

This August 2017 webinar from the Center for Technology and Disability highlights the accessibility features available in a range of devices that can empower students to be independent in completing assignments. Great for sharing with educators, families, and youth with disabilities to inform them about valuable apps, websites, and resources across academic areas.

**Principal Leadership: Moving Towards Inclusive and High-Achieving Schools for Students with Disabilities**

Principals can play a huge part in moving their schools toward the inclusion and achievement of students with disabilities. This paper from the CEEDAR Center features a matrix that can guide principal leadership professionals through the major components of inclusive practice.

**Making Inclusion a Reality**

From PBS Parents, these suggestions spotlight what parents can do to promote inclusion for their child, what schools can do to promote successful inclusive education, and what families can do if they meet with resistance to an inclusive education for their child.

# Latest Employment Opportunities Posted on NASET

## Learning Specialist/Learning Program Teacher

### Lake Forest, IL 60045

Job Category: Learning Services

Posted on Monday, 18. of December 2017

## Description:

Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart is seeking a certified learning specialist to teach in the school's Learning Program. The position is full-time, and the start date is immediately. Requirements include a master's degree or post-graduate work in education with emphasis in varied exceptionalities or learning disabilities.

The Learning Program at Woodlands Academy serves young women who have a diagnosed learning disability, strong academic skills, and the ability to succeed in a challenging college preparatory program. The learning specialist supports both students and classroom teachers.Certification in special education and experience with independent schools preferred. This learning specialist will actively engage high school students in the learning process and nurture analytical thinking and a life-long love of learning. A demonstrated competency in multicultural education and educational technology is required as is a deep concern for educational access, diversity, and inclusion.The ideal candidate has:

- A clear commitment to the educational philosophy of the school as articulated in the Goals and Criteria of Sacred Heart Schools and professional behavior aligned with it.
- Master's degree or post-graduate work in education with emphasis in varied learning disabilities, and experience working with students with mild/moderate learning differences.
- A minimum of two years teaching and/or administration experience in an independent environment.
- Strong knowledge in one or more of the following: Algebra 1 and 2, Geometry, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Humanities.
- Demonstrated ability to build rapport (while being kind, firm, structured, and positive) with students.
- Genuine understanding or willingness to learn/understand the culture, community, and the demands students feel on a daily basis.
- Willingness and ability to interact professionally, including excellent verbal/written skills and to collaborate with Student Support Team, parents, students, and faculty.
- Strong organizational skills and ability to mentor and coach executive functioning skills.
- A willingness to be an active, enthusiastic member of the WA community.

## Essential Functions:

- Students meet with Learning Program staff every other day, individually or in a small group setting.

## The learning specialist:

- must be facile at teaching within the college prep curriculum and the content and skills the students must attain in order to be successful in their classes.
- must be adept at reading psycho-educational evaluations, writing Student Support Plans, and conducting staffing meetings with faculty and parents.
- develops strategies to best serve each student's unique learning profile.
- secures standardize testing accommodations for qualified students.
- communicates regularly with faculty and parents.
- provides case management of students' records and data.
- supports the development and implementation of a process for yearly meeting and check-in for learning plan students and families.
- possesses strong people skills in order to be empathetic to students' and parents' needs.

Responsibilities also include, but are not limited to, supporting the professional development of faculty in differentiated instruction and curriculum designed for learning, and other responsibilities as assigned by the supervisor.

## Requirements:

Requirements include a master's degree or post-graduate work in education with emphasis in varied exceptionalities or learning disabilities.The learning specialist supports both students and classroom teachers.Certification in special education and experience with independent schools preferred. A demonstrated competency in multicultural education and educational technology is required as is a deep concern for educational access, diversity, and inclusion.

## Contact:

Please complete the application materials listed on the Career Opportunities web page of the school's website at woodlandsacademy.org. All applicants must submit a cover letter, resume, three written references, and a Job Application.

Woodlands Academy of the Sacred Heart is an all-girls, Catholic, college prep day and boarding school in Lake Forest, IL. Visit the school's website at www.woodlandsacademy.organd the website of the Network of Sacred Heart Schools at www.sofie.org.

Woodlands Academy is an equal opportunity employer. Woodlands Academy does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, age, disability, status as a veteran or being a member of the Reserves of National Guard, or any other classification protected under state or federal law.

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# Special Education Teacher (2018-2019 School Year)

## Los Angeles, CA

Job Category: Teaching - Special Education

Posted on Friday, 08. of December 2017

## ROLE SUMMARY: WHY TEACH AT ALLIANCE?

Alliance is seeking entrepreneurial educators who are passionate about innovating to transform the lives of children in communities where they are needed most. Alliance teachers don't have to choose between the benefits of a small community school and a large, cutting-edge organization—teachers enjoy the supports of a large network of 28 campuses, with the close-knit feel of a small school of up to only 150 students per grade. Alliance is an ideal place for educators who thrive in an environment of high expectations and collaboration in service of strong results for our students. Alliance educators collaborate and mentor one another, and they embrace professional development and coaching to grow and hone their craft. Alliance's social justice mission also supports our restorative justice approach to student discipline, keeping students where they learn best—in classrooms.

## As an Alliance teacher, we expect you to:

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Drive outstanding student achievement for all students in your classroom and support colleagues in driving student achievement school-wide.
- Leverage Alliance resources and supports to develop and implement powerfully engaging curriculum and lessons designed to prepare all students to succeed in college and beyond.
- Utilize a wide variety of teaching methods to create differentiated opportunities for deep understanding for all learners, including students with special needs.
- Utilize a variety of data and technology to drive instruction and intervention.

### CREATING POSITIVE CULTURE

- Create a positive, achievement-oriented, and supportive learning environment that excites and invests students in learning.

- Create a culture of high expectations and continuous improvement with a drive toward student achievement and college and career readiness.
- Work collaboratively with families and Alliance colleagues to support the achievement of all students and the mission and vision of the school.

## COMPENSATION AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

- Alliance offers a starting salary that surpasses our local school district's starting salary by more than 4%. Alliance's performance-based compensation system focuses on rewarding teachers for what matters most—making the biggest difference with students.
- Alliance covers 100% monthly premiums for individual employee benefits or up to $900/month toward family benefits plan premiums. Alliance also participates in the California's State Teacher Retirement System (STRS).
- Alliance provides substantial professional development support for teachers, including two weeks of network-wide professional development before the school year starts for new hires, weekly school-site support, Alliance-wide training days, and a variety of paid teacher leader and career lattice opportunities.

## How To Apply:

**Apply at** - http://grnh.se/84plvc1

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# Private Teacher

## Chicago, IL

Job Category: Private Teacher

Posted on Tuesday, 28. of November 2017

## Description:

Are you an unencumbered teacher at a top public or private school looking for a new opportunity? Do you want to step out of the classroom and use your experience to support the academic journey of a young teen with a promising future?

If so, we have an excellent Private Teacher opportunity to oversee the overall curriculum, education, and college preparation for a young teen's high school career. You will assist this bright adolescent in all subject matters, in addition to helping formulate strategies and taking the time to help the student manage their language based learning disability.

This role is based in Chicago, but will involve travel to Florida, Arizona, and other locations dependent on the student's athletic schedule.

## Qualifications needed for this position include:

- A minimum of a Bachelor's degree; additional learning disability and/or special education experience a plus
- Significant classroom teaching experience at the high school level
- Ability to travel
- Able to make a four-year commitment for the student's high school career

This is a full-time position and offers up to $110,000 per annum, depending on experience, with a full benefits package (including paid holidays, paid time off, health insurance). Relocation assistance to Chicago is also available; professional educators across the country are invited to apply for consideration. The start date is flexible, with immediate start to begin tutoring the student and taking over as a full-time teacher in 2018 available; or a Spring/Summer 2018 start date.

To be considered, please apply for position #446 at www.mahlermatch.com. We look forward to reviewing your credentials for this opportunity, and will reach out to schedule interviews for qualified applicants! requirements:

## Benefits:

This is a full-time position and offers up to $110,000 per annum, depending on experience, with a full benefits package (including paid holidays, paid time off, health insurance). Relocation assistance to Chicago is also available; professional educators across the country are invited to apply for consideration.

## Contact:

To be considered, please apply for position #446 at www.mahlermatch.com

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# Special Education Teacher

## Fort Defiance, Arizona

Job Category: Special Education Teacher

Posted on Thursday, 16. of November 2017

## Description:

The Adolescent Care Unit (ACU) at Tséhootsooí Medical Center on the Navajo Nation seeks a Special Education Teacher to work with 8 to 10 teens aged 13-17 with mild emotional or behavior issues in a subacute 60-day inpatient program. ACU combines western therapy with Native American traditional cultural methods to foster health and Hozho or harmony, and is located in northeastern AZ.

## Requirements:

Develops and implements individualized curriculum in accordance with each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Collaborates with team members to develop and execute an IEP-driven, multidisciplinary program for each student. Networks with schools to negotiate plans for patients during and after treatment on ACU and advocates for the students with school personnel at school sites when possible. Analyzes how a student's strengths and limitations affect his/her involvement and progress in the academic curriculum and determines short-term objectives or alternate achievement standards if necessary. The unit's Mental Health Technicians (MHTs) will provide student supervision in the classroom at all times to ensure student safety. Maintains records and writes agency required behavioral reports in timely manner. Communicates with all members of the interdisciplinary team to achieve a social and educational benefit for the student. To view Qualifications for this position, please visit www.fdihb.org, click on the 'Careers Tab' and type "Special Education Teacher".

## Benefits:

TMC offers an array of benefits including Medical, Dental, Vision, Wellness, PTO w/ Paid Sick Leave, 9 federal holidays and 2 floating holidays, 401K

## Contact:

Ophelia Anthony
Medical Recruiting Coordinator
Medical Professional Recruitment Dept.
Division of Human Resources
(928) 729-8165
Ophelia.Anthony@fdihb.org

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# Special Education Teacher (various positions)

## Phoenix, AZ

Job Category: Special Education Resources

Posted on Thursday, 26. of October 2017

## Description:

**Pendergast Elementary School District has various positions open:**2 positions for Special Education Resource 5th - 8th, Special Education Resource K-3rd, SPED - Social Skills K-4th, SPED - Social Skills 6th - 8th, and 3 positions for Special Education Preschool.

## Requirements

- Arizona certification in Cross Categorical OR
- Arizona certification in Learning Disabilities with experience in working with children with disabilities in the area of Emotional Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, Mild to Moderate Intellectual Disability, Other Health Impairments and Autism
- Demonstrate success with researched based interventions and curriculum modification or adaptation
- Skilled at working with others in a professional learning environment
- Strong organizational skills and demonstrated ability to meet deadlines
- Demonstrate skill with Microsoft office
- Early Childhood Certification *(if applicable)*

## Contact Information

If interested, please apply at: www.pesd92.org or for any questions please contact: Julie Chairez Ramirez at jchairez@pesd92.org

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# Acknowledgements

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- National Institute of Health
- National Organization on Disability
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Department of Education-The Achiever
- U.S. Department of Education-The Education Innovator
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Food and Drug Administration
- U.S. Office of Special Education

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