EIGHTH EDITION

Including Students with Special Needs

A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers

MARILYN FRIEND
WILLIAM D. BURSUCK

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TO BETH AND BRUCE

our infinitely patient and supportive spouses—we are grateful for all you do for us.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

With over 40 years of experience in the field of education, **MARILYN FRIEND** has been both a special education teacher and a general education teacher as well as a teacher educator, consultant, and staff developer. She currently is professor emerita in the Department of Specialized Education Services at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and works extensively with local schools, school districts, and other education agencies to ensure that students with disabilities or other special needs reach their potential. Her particular areas of expertise—the focus of her research, teaching, writing, and consultation—include inclusive schooling, co-teaching and other collaborative school practices, systems change, urban education, and family–school partnerships.

WILLIAM D. BURSUCK began his career as a general education teacher, and as a special education teacher and university teacher educator he has maintained an active interest in inclusive practices. Dr. Bursuck continues to take particular pleasure in providing classroom and future teachers with practical, research-based strategies to improve educational outcomes for students with special needs in this age of school reform and teacher accountability. He is a professor emeritus in the Department of Specialized Education Services at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

PREFACE

Education in the first two decades of the twenty-first century undoubtedly will be remembered for the ongoing clamor for reform. From the mandates of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), currently referred to as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), through those of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to the increasingly higher standards adopted at the state level, relentless efforts are underway to improve the academic outcomes of U.S. students. And like all students, those who struggle to learn because of intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional, communication, learning disabilities, or other special needs must be taught using research-based practices and are expected to reach the same high academic standards as other learners. Further, teachers, administrators, and other professionals are being held directly accountable for the achievement of all of their students.

In many ways, the current educational climate is consonant with the beliefs on which *Including Students with Special Needs: A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers* is based. In this eighth edition, we have continued our efforts to integrate today's expectations for students with our own continued strong commitment to inclusive practices, a commitment tempered by our knowledge and experience of the realities of day-to-day teaching. We know that teachers cannot do the job themselves; they rely on strong and sustained administrative support and adequate resources. We cannot guarantee that such key supports will always be in place, but we can provide teachers with a firm grounding in critical special education concepts, an understanding of the professionals who support these students and the procedures followed to ensure their rights are upheld, and a wealth of research-based strategies and interventions to foster their success.

The textbook is divided into four main sections. The first section provides fundamental background knowledge about the field of special education as well as current information on how students with disabilities are served within inclusive school environments. This is information that readers will find essential as they move from being students to teachers. The second section of the book provides a framework for thinking about effective instructional practices for students who struggle to learn. It provides a foundation for the remainder of the book. The third section introduces readers to students with specific disabilities and other special needs. Although each student is unique, this material provides readers with examples of students they may teach and summaries of their most typical characteristics. The material in the fourth section of the text represents the heart of any course on inclusive practices: instructional approaches that emphasize teaching students effectively in the academic, social, and behavior domains. Our emphasis is on reality-based techniques that can be implemented for many students with a range of special needs and that are consistent with today's instructional expectations and the knowledge base on effective practices.

We have brought to this project our own diversity: Marilyn with expertise in elementary and secondary education, especially in urban settings, and in collaboration, inclusive practices, and co-teaching; Bill with expertise in secondary education, literacy, instructional strategies, assessment, and grading practices. Our collective perspective on educating students with disabilities and other special needs is reflected in the organization and substance of the book; our ultimate goal is for general educators to be well prepared to effectively teach all of their students. Our approach to preparing this book is based on our research; our analysis of the scholarly literature on instruction, teacher preparation, and professional development; and our experiences teaching undergraduate and graduate educators. Our understanding, though, ultimately is grounded in our many

observations of and conversations with general education and special education teachers who are diligently working, often in difficult circumstances, to make a difference in the lives of their students. We truly hope that we have managed to find the right blend of reader-friendly and research-based information. Above all, we hope this eighth edition is responsive to the many instructional dilemmas confronting today's teachers.

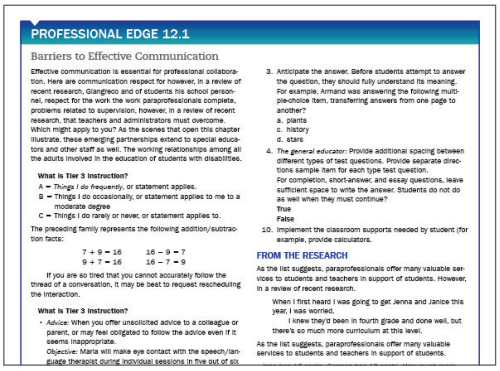
New to the Eighth Edition

Each time we revise *Including Students with Special Needs*, we carefully consider feedback from reviewers and users who contact us to offer their perspectives, and we also analyze the current trends, issues, policies, and practices influencing schools. The following are several of the key revisions made for each chapter in the eighth edition:

- **CHAPTER 1** introduces in a straightforward way the complex concepts that characterize special education. In addition, readers are provided with an overview of several of the most critical issues that are shaping education for students with disabilities and other special needs as well as a discussion of inclusive practices as they occur in this second decade of the twenty-first century. This chapter also overviews the most recent relevant education legislation, that is, the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) and the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), as well as the landmark special education 2017 Supreme Court decision *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*.
- **CHAPTER 2** reflects the recent shift in the field of education from response to intervention (RtI) as an alternative to traditional approaches for determining whether students have learning disabilities to the broader preventive approach for both learning and behavior concerns represented by multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). The chapter also outlines details that general education teachers must understand about parents' rights in making decisions regarding their children who may have disabilities. This chapter's discussion of the professionals in special education emphasizes those with whom elementary and secondary teachers most typically work.
- **CHAPTER 3** explores the well-established importance of professional collaboration in the delivery of special education and other school services, including those related to RtI and MTSS. It directly addresses the complexity of collaboration when disagreements occur, especially those between school professionals and parents. Updated information is provided on co-teaching, teaming, and consultation, with attention also given to teacher–paraprofessional partnerships.
- **CHAPTER 4** provides the latest information on the use of universal screening and progress-monitoring assessments in MTSS as well as high-stakes testing, including the testing requirements of the ESSA of 2015. The chapter also has a new Technology Notes feature on the use of computer-based standardized testing with students with disabilities.
- **CHAPTER 5's** already comprehensive coverage of foundational teaching practices has been updated and expanded by providing more in-depth, nuanced information on the use of research-based practices. The update also includes expanded coverage of computer-assisted instruction.
- **CHAPTER 6** includes updated details about the characteristics and needs of students with autism spectrum disorders and other low-incidence disabilities, including physical, health, and sensory disorders. Strong emphasis is placed on the use of technology to meet the needs of students with these special needs, but attention also is paid to practical ideas for supporting these students in general education classrooms.

- **CHAPTER 7** includes important updates on dyslexia research, the use of assistive technology in reading, and controversial therapies in special education. The latest information on practices for identifying students with learning disabilities using MTSS has also been added.
- **CHAPTER 8** is intended to alert educators to the many students they will teach who have special needs, but not necessarily disabilities. It includes updated data related to these students (e.g., students who live in poverty, students who are abused or neglected) and also focuses on students with attention deficit–hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and the best ways to accommodate them. In addition, this chapter addresses students who have special gifts and talents, and it examines the role of RtI and MTSS in preventing the need for special education for some at-risk students.
- **CHAPTER 9**'s practical, research-based coverage of ways to adjust instruction for students with special needs now includes thoroughly updated sections on Tier 2 and 3 instructions in MTSS/RtI, expanded coverage of vocabulary instruction, and a new Technology Notes feature on virtual manipulatives.
- The already extensive focus in **CHAPTER 10** on strategies for fostering student independence has been expanded by adding new strategies in the areas of reading and writing as well as a thoroughly updated Technology Notes feature on web-based programs to improve writing.
- In addition to the already strong, now updated section on classroom testing accommodations, **CHAPTER 11** includes the most current information available on grading strategies that benefit all students, including those with special needs. The chapter has also added a Technology Notes feature on the use of electronic portfolios.
- **CHAPTER 12** covers a dimension of education that can truly shape students' lives and determine educator effectiveness: strategies for addressing students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs. Emphasis is placed on preventing behavior problems, addressing serious problems with behavior intervention plans, and fostering positive social interactions among students with disabilities and their classmates.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS



PROFESSIONAL EDGE 12.1

Barriers to Effective Communication

Effective communication is essential for professional collaboration. Here are communication respect for however, in a review of recent research, Giangreco and of students his school personnel, respect for the work the work paraprofessionals complete, problems related to supervision, however, in a review of recent research, that teachers and administrators must overcome. Which might apply to you? As the scenes that open this chapter illustrate, these emerging partnerships extend to special educators and other staff as well. The working relationships among all the adults involved in the education of students with disabilities.

What Is Tier 3 Instruction?

A = *Things I do frequently*, or statement applies.
B = Things I do occasionally, or statement applies to me to a moderate degree
C = Things I do rarely or never, or statement applies to.

The preceding family represents the following addition/subtraction facts:

7 + 9 = 16 16 – 9 = 7
9 + 7 = 16 16 – 7 = 9

If you are so tired that you cannot accurately follow the thread of a conversation, it may be best to request rescheduling the interaction.

What Is Tier 3 Instruction?

- *Advice:* When you offer unsolicited advice to a colleague or parent, or may feel obligated to follow the advice even if it seems inappropriate.
  Objective: Maria will make eye contact with the speech/language therapist during individual sessions in five out of six

3. Anticipate the answer. Before students attempt to answer the question, they should fully understand its meaning. For example, Armand was answering the following multiple-choice item, transferring answers from one page to another?
   a. plants
   c. history
   d. stars
4. *The general educator:* Provide additional spacing between different types of test questions. Provide separate directions sample item for each type test question.
   For completion, short-answer, and essay questions, leave sufficient space to write the answer. Students do not do as well when they must continue?
   True
   False
10. Implement the classroom supports needed by student (for example, provide calculators.

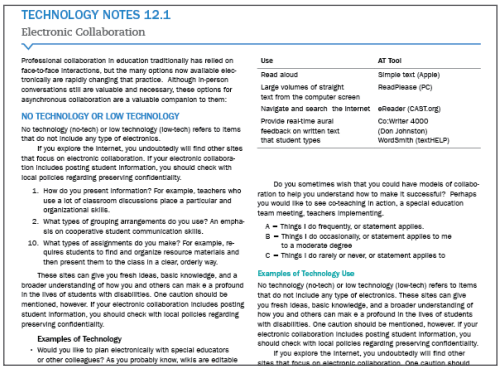
FROM THE RESEARCH

As the list suggests, paraprofessionals offer many valuable services to students and teachers in support of students. However, in a review of recent research.

When I first heard I was going to get Jenna and Janice this year, I was worried.
I knew they'd been in fourth grade and done well, but there's so much more curriculum at this level.

As the list suggests, paraprofessionals offer many valuable services to students and teachers in support of students.

PROFESSIONAL EDGE features describe conceptual material, cutting-edge trends, and contemporary issues relevant to today's teachers. Included are new and sometimes controversial topics that experts in the field are talking about right now.



TECHNOLOGY NOTES 12.1

Electronic Collaboration

Professional collaboration in education traditionally has relied on face-to-face interactions, but the many options now available electronically are rapidly changing that practice. Although in-person conversations still are valuable and necessary, these options for asynchronous collaboration are a valuable companion to them:

NO TECHNOLOGY OR LOW TECHNOLOGY

No technology (no-tech) or low technology (low-tech) refers to items that do not include any type of electronics.

If you explore the Internet, you undoubtedly will find other sites that focus on electronic collaboration. If your electronic collaboration includes posting student information, you should check with local policies regarding preserving confidentiality.

1. How do you present information? For example, teachers who use a lot of classroom discussions place a particular and organizational skills.
2. What types of grouping arrangements do you use? An emphasis on cooperative student communication skills.
10. What types of assignments do you make? For example, requires students to find and organize resource materials and then present them to the class in a clear, orderly way.

These sites can give you fresh ideas, basic knowledge, and a broader understanding of how you and others can mak e a profound in the lives of students with disabilities. One caution should be mentioned, however. If your electronic collaboration includes posting student information, you should check with local policies regarding preserving confidentiality.

Examples of Technology

- Would you like to plan electronically with special educators or other colleagues? As you probably know, wikis are editable

Use	AT Tool
Read aloud	Simple text (Apple)
Large volumes of straight text from the computer screen	ReadPlease (PC)
Navigate and search the Internet	eReader (CAST.org)
Provide real-time aural feedback on written text that student types	Co:Writer 4000 (Don Johnston) WordSmith (textHELP)

Do you sometimes wish that you could have models of collaboration to help you understand how to make it successful? Perhaps you would like to see co-teaching in action, a special education team meeting, teachers implementing.

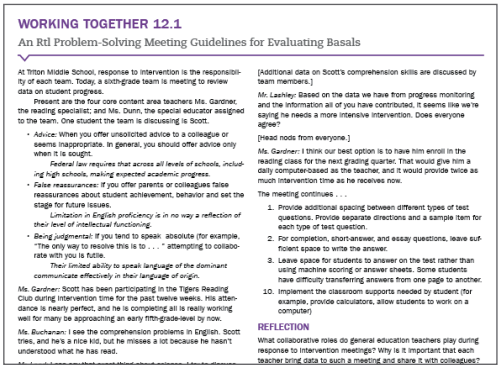
A = Things I do frequently, or statement applies.
B = Things I do occasionally, or statement applies to me to a moderate degree
C = Things I do rarely or never, or statement applies to

Examples of Technology Use

No technology (no-tech) or low technology (low-tech) refers to items that do not include any type of electronics. These sites can give you fresh ideas, basic knowledge, and a broader understanding of how you and others can mak e a profound in the lives of students with disabilities. One caution should be mentioned, however, if your electronic collaboration includes posting student information, you should check with local policies regarding preserving confidentiality.

If you explore the Internet, you undoubtedly will find other sites that focus on electronic collaboration. One caution should

TECHNOLOGY NOTES features illustrate the use of technology to support students with disabilities in inclusive schools. For example, Chapter 3 explores options for electronic collaboration. In Chapter 10, research on the effectiveness of the latest computer software for improving the writing skills of students with disabilities provides teachers with the most current information.



WORKING TOGETHER 12.1

An RtI Problem-Solving Meeting Guidelines for Evaluating Basals

At Tritton Middle School, response to intervention is the responsibility of each team. Today, a sixth-grade team is meeting to review data on student progress.

Present are the four core content area teachers Ms. Gardner, the reading specialist; and Ms. Dunn, the special educator assigned to the team. One student the team is discussing is Scott.

- *Advice:* When you offer unsolicited advice to a colleague or seems inappropriate. In general, you should offer advice only when it is sought.
  Federal law requires that across all levels of schools, including high schools, making expected academic progress.
- *False reassurances:* If you offer parents or colleagues false reassurances about student achievement, behavior and set the stage for future issues.
  Limitation in English proficiency is in no way a reflection of their level of intellectual functioning.
- *Being judgmental:* If you tend to speak absolute (for example, "The only way to resolve this is to . . . " attempting to collaborate with you is futile.
  Their limited ability to speak language of the dominant communicate effectively in their language of origin.

Ms. Gardner: Scott has been participating in the Tigers Reading Club during intervention time for the past twelve weeks. His attendance is nearly perfect, and he is completing all is really working well for many be approaching an early fifth-grade-level ty now.

Ms. Buchanan: I see the comprehension problems in English. Scott tries, and he's a nice kid, but he misses a lot because he hasn't understood what he has read.

[Additional data on Scott's comprehension skills are discussed by team members.]

Mr. Lashley: Based on the data we have from progress monitoring and the information all of you have contributed, it seems like we're saying he needs a more intensive intervention. Does everyone agree?

[Head nods from everyone.]

Ms. Gardner: I think our best option is to have him enroll in the reading class for the next grading quarter. That would give him a daily computer-based as the teacher, and it would provide twice as much intervention time as he receives now.

The meeting continues . . .

1. Provide additional spacing between different types of test questions. Provide separate directions and a sample item for each type of test question.
2. For completion, short-answer, and essay questions, leave sufficient space to write the answer.
3. Leave space for students to answer on the test rather than using machine scoring or answer sheets. Some students have difficulty transferring answers from one page to another.
10. Implement the classroom supports needed by student (for example, provide calculators, allow students to work on a computer)

REFLECTION

What collaborative roles do general education teachers play during response to intervention meetings? Why is it important that each teacher bring data to such a meeting and share it with colleagues?

WORKING TOGETHER features present cases in which professional family collaboration is needed and provide tips for optimizing collaborative efforts. For example, Chapter 5 presents two teachers learning to work together to accommodate a student in their shared class. Chapter 12 includes an example of what may occur when parents and professionals disagree.

DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

Diversity has many faces. It includes ethnic, cultural, economic, linguistic, religious, ability, gender, and racial differences among the students you may teach.

WWW RESOURCES

The Family Village School website (www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/education/inclusion.html) provides a wide variety of information about associations, instructional resources, legal issues, projects, and research related to inclusion.

FYI

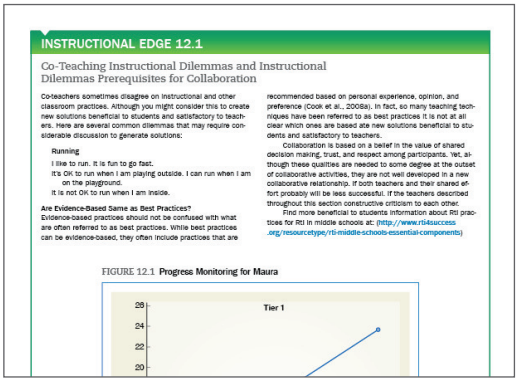
A primary disability is one that most adversely affects a student's educational. A secondary disability is an additional disability that also affects a student's education but to a lesser degree. For example, a student identified with a learning disability as a primary disability could have an emotional disability or health.

RESEARCH BASED PRACTICES

Dunn, Chambers, and Rabren (2004) found that students with learning disabilities are less likely to drop out of school if they perceive that (1) a connection exists between what they are learning and life after high school, (2) someone in school is trying to help them, and (3) at least one class in high school is helpful to them.

MARGINAL ANNOTATIONS are designed to extend readers' thinking and provide additional information on cultural and linguistic diversity, information related to the topic at hand, and useful websites. They provide readers access to the most current research related to teaching students with disabilities.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE


INSTRUCTIONAL EDGE 12.1

Co-Teaching Instructional Dilemmas and Instructional Dilemmas Prerequisites for Collaboration

Co-teachers sometimes disagree on instructional and other classroom practices. Although you might consider this to create new solutions beneficial to students and satisfactory to teachers. Here are several common dilemmas that may require considerable discussion to generate solutions:

Running

I like to run. It is fun to go fast.
It's OK to run when I am playing outside. I can run when I am on the playground.
It is not OK to run when I am inside.

Are Evidence-Based Same as Best Practices?

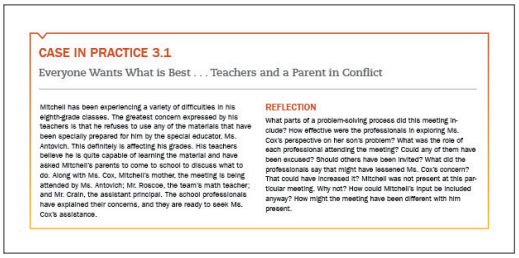
Evidence-based practices should not be confused with what are often referred to as best practices. While best practices can be evidence-based, they often include practices that are recommended based on personal experience, opinion, and preference (Cook et al., 2008a). In fact, so many teaching techniques have been referred to as best practices it is not at all clear which ones are based ate new solutions beneficial to students and satisfactory to teachers.

Collaboration is based on a belief in the value of shared decision making, trust, and respect among participants. Yet, although these qualities are needed to some degree at the outset of collaborative activities, they are not well developed in a new collaborative relationship. If both teachers and their shared effort probably will be less successful. If the teachers described throughout this section constructive criticism to each other.

Find more beneficial to students information about RtI practices for RtI in middle schools at: (http://www.rti4success.org/resourcetype/rti-middle-schools-essential-components)

FIGURE 12.1 Progress Monitoring for Maura

INSTRUCTIONAL EDGE features provide numerous research–based practices for teachers to use. For example, Chapter 8 provides strategies for teaching students with ADHD and, in Chapter 10, a model high school RtI program is discussed.


CASE IN PRACTICE 3.1

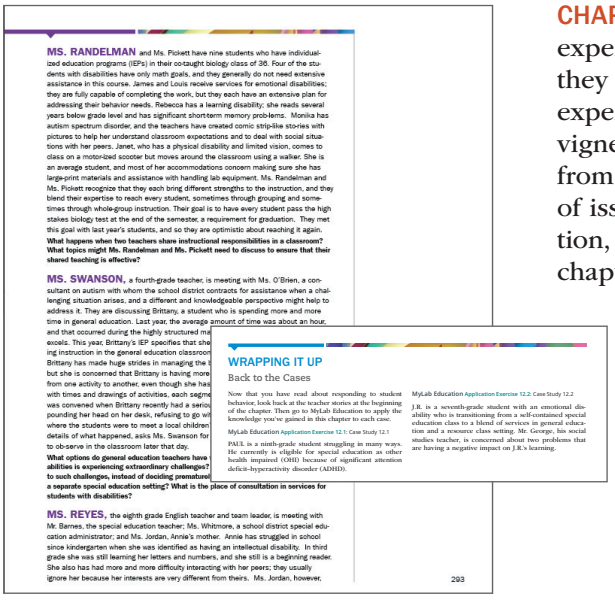
Everyone Wants What is Best . . . Teachers and a Parent in Conflict

Mitchell has been experiencing a variety of difficulties in his eighth-grade classes. The greatest concern expressed by his teachers is that he refuses to use any of the materials that have been specially prepared for him by the special educator, Ms. Antovich. This definitely is affecting his grades. His teachers believe he is quite capable of learning the material and have asked Mitchell's parents to come to school to discuss what to do. Along with Ms. Cox, Mitchell's mother, the meeting is being attended by Ms. Antovich; Mr. Roscoe, the team's math teacher; and Mr. Crain, the assistant principal. The school professionals have explained their concerns, and they are ready to seek Ms. Cox's assistance.

REFLECTION

What parts of a problem-solving process did this meeting include? How effective were the professionals in exploring Ms. Cox's perspective on her son's problem? What was the role of each professional attending the meeting? Could any of them have been excused? Should others have been invited? What did the professionals say that might have lessened Ms. Cox's concern? That could have increased it? Mitchell was not present at this particular meeting. Why not? How could Mitchell's input be included anyway? How might the meeting have been different with him present.

CASE IN PRACTICE features clarify key principles by providing brief case studies related to chapter concepts and teaching scripts as models. Chapter 8, for example, provides a case about meeting the needs of twice-exceptional students.


MS. RANDELMAN and Ms. Pickett have nine students who have individualized education programs (IEPs) in their co-taught biology class of 36. Four of the students with disabilities have only math goals, and they generally do not need extensive assistance in this course. James and Louis receive services for emotional disabilities; they are fully capable of completing the work, but they each have an extensive plan for addressing their behavior needs. Rebecca has a learning disability; she reads several years below grade level and has significant short-term memory problems. Monika has autism spectrum disorder, and the teachers have created comic strip-like stories with pictures to help her understand classroom expectations and to deal with social situations with her peers. Janet, who has a physical disability and limited vision, comes to class on a motor-ized scooter but moves around the classroom using a walker. She is an average student, and most of her accommodations concern making sure she has large-print materials and assistance with handling lab equipment. Ms. Randelman and Ms. Pickett recognize that they each bring different strengths to the instruction, and they blend their expertise to reach every student, sometimes through grouping and sometimes through whole-group instruction. Their goal is to have every student pass the high stakes biology test at the end of the semester, a requirement for graduation. They met this goal with last year's students, and so they are optimistic about reaching it again.

What happen when two teachers share instructional responsibilities in a classroom? What topics might Ms. Randelman and Ms. Pickett need to discuss to ensure that their shared teaching is effective?

MS. SWANSON, a fourth-grade teacher, is meeting with Ms. O'Brien, a consultant on autism with whom the school district contracts for assistance when a challenging situation arises, and a different and knowledgeable perspective might help to address it. They are discussing Brittany, a student who is spending more and more time in general education. Last year, the average amount of time was about an hour, and that occurred during the highly structured ma
excels. This year, Brittany's IEP specifies that she
ing instruction in the general education classroom
Brittany has made huge strides in managing the
but she is concerned that Brittany is having more
from one activity to another, even though she has
with times and drawings of activities, each segme
was convened when Brittany recently had a seriou
pounding her head on her desk, refusing to go wi
where the students were to meet a local children
details of what happened, asks Ms. Swanson for
to ob-serve in the classroom later that day.

What options do general education teachers have abilities is experiencing extraordinary challenges? to such challenges, instead of deciding prematurely a separate special education setting? What is the place of consultation in services for students with disabilities?

MS. REYES, the eighth grade English teacher and team leader, is meeting with Mr. Barnes, the special education teacher; Ms. Whitmore, a school district special education administrator; and Ms. Jordan, Annie's mother. Annie has struggled in school since kindergarten when she was identified as having an intellectual disability. In third grade she was still learning her letters and numbers, and she still is a beginning reader. She also has had more and more difficulty interacting with her peers; they usually ignore her because her interests are very different from theirs. Ms. Jordan, however,

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WRAPPING IT UP

Back to the Cases

Now that you have read about responding to student behavior, look back at the teacher stories at the beginning of the chapter. Then go to MyLab Education to apply the knowledge you've gained in this chapter to each case.

MyLab Education Application Exercise 12.1: Case Study 12.1

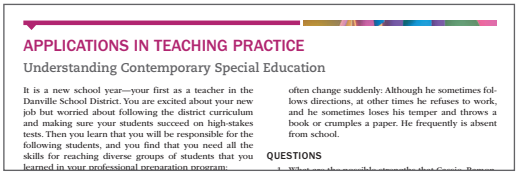
PAUL is a ninth-grade student struggling in many ways. He currently is eligible for special education as other health impaired (OHI) because of significant attention deficit–hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

MyLab Education Application Exercise 12.2: Case Study 12.2

J.R. is a seventh-grade student with an emotional disability who is transitioning from a self-contained special education class to a blend of services in general education and a resource class setting. Mr. George, his social studies teacher, is concerned about two problems that are having a negative impact on J.R.'s learning.

CHAPTER-OPENING VIGNETTES open each chapter, describing the experiences of elementary, middle school, and high school students as they relate to the topics discussed in each chapter. These individuals' experiences are referenced at key points in the chapter as well. The vignettes can form the basis for applying information and strategies from the chapter, and they can be a launching point for discussions of issues influencing the field, including inclusive practices, collaboration, and response to intervention. They are revisited at the ends of the chapters in the *Back to the Cases* features.

BACK TO THE CASES features conclude each chapter, offering readers the opportunity to visit MyLab Education to apply what they have learned in the chapter to these opening cases and receive immediate feedback. In some instances, questions are asked that require readers to analyze student characteristics and discuss how their success could be fostered. In others, situations educators are likely to encounter are outlined, and readers are asked how they would respond. In yet others, readers are asked to integrate learning across chapters to consider educational strategies for the highlighted students. This feature provides instructors with an effective summative activity for each chapter—one that can be completed by individual students or as a collaborative effort.


APPLICATIONS IN TEACHING PRACTICE

Understanding Contemporary Special Education

It is a new school year—your first as a teacher in the Danville School District. You are excited about your new job but worried about following the district curriculum and making sure your students succeed on high-stakes tests. Then you learn that you will be responsible for the following students, and you find that you need all the skills for reaching diverse groups of students that you learned in your professional preparation program:

often change suddenly: Although he sometimes follows directions, at other times he refuses to work, and he sometimes loses his temper and throws a book or crumples a paper. He frequently is absent from school.

QUESTIONS

APPLICATIONS IN TEACHING PRACTICE cases at the end of each chapter are designed to encourage students to apply the chapter contents to real-life classroom situations.

AIDS TO UNDERSTANDING

Self-Checks

In each chapter, self-check quizzes help assess how well learners have mastered the content. The self-checks are made up of self-grading multiple-choice items that not only provide feedback on whether questions are answered correctly or incorrectly, but also provide rationales for both correct and incorrect answers.

Application Exercises

These scaffolded analysis exercises are built around the scenarios that open each chapter, describing the experiences of elementary, middle school, and high school students as they relate to the topics discussed in each chapter. In the *Back to the Cases* feature at the end of each chapter, readers are challenged to apply what they have learned to the students they met at the beginning of the chapter. The questions in these exercises are usually constructed-response. Once learners provide their own answers to the questions, they receive feedback in the form of model answers written by experts.

Support Materials for Instructors

The following resources are available for instructors to download on www.pearsonhighered.com/educators. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select this particular edition of the book, and then click on the "Resources" tab to log in and download textbook supplements.

Instructor's Resource Manual (0-13-475414-x)

The Instructor's Resource Manual provides a multitude of activities and ideas to help instructors teach their courses, whether traditional or online. Each chapter provides a teaching outline, learning activities, and handouts.

Test Bank (0-13-475416-6)

The Test Bank provides hundreds of test items, with answer keys, organized by chapter and ready for use in creating tests based on the associated textbook material.

PowerPoint™ Slides (0-13-480173-3)

The PowerPoint™ slides include key concept summarizations, diagrams, and other graphic aids to enhance learning. They are designed to help students understand, organize, and remember core concepts and theories.

TestGen (0-13-475412-3)

TestGen is a powerful test generator that instructors install on a computer and use in conjunction with the TestGen test bank file for the text. Assessments, including equations, graphs, and scientific notation, may be created for both print and online testing.

TestGen is available exclusively from Pearson Education publishers. Instructors install TestGen on a personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create tests for classroom testing and for other specialized delivery options, such as over a local area network or on the web. A test bank, which is also called a Test Item File (TIF), typically contains a large set of test items, organized by chapter and ready for use in creating a test, based on the associated textbook material.

The tests can be downloaded in the following formats:

TestGen Testbank file—PC

TestGen Testbank file—MAC

TestGen Testbank—Blackboard 9 TIF

TestGen Testbank—Blackboard CE/Vista (WebCT) TIF

Angel Test Bank (zip)

D2L Test Bank (zip)

Moodle Test Bank

Sakai Test Bank (zip)

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EIGHTH EDITION

Including Students with Special Needs

A Practical Guide for Classroom Teachers

CHAPTER 1

The Foundation for Educating Students with Special Needs

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After you read this chapter, you will be able to:

1-1 Explain fundamental terms and concepts that describe special education, including those in federal law.

1-2 Explore significant factors that have shaped contemporary special education services.

1-3 Analyze key themes that characterize today's educational priorities for students with disabilities, including prevention, high expectations and accountability, evidence-based practices, and inclusiveness.

1-4 Describe the categories of disabilities addressed in federal law and note other special needs your students may have.

LUCAS was diagnosed as having autism when he was just three years old. His parents, worried about his delayed language development and extreme sensitivity to noise, took him to the pediatrician. After his diagnosis, Lucas was enrolled in an early childhood special education program, and his parents attribute his remarkable progress to that early intervention. Now in middle school, Lucas spends most of each day in general education, seeing a special education teacher three times each week for academic and social support that is grounded in research-based approaches. He has an assigned seat in each academic class; he becomes upset if someone else sits where he prefers to be. He sometimes participates in the many small-group activities his teachers arrange, but when he is having a difficult day, he works by himself in an isolated corner of the classroom. Lucas's classmates have known him for so long that they are patient with his social awkwardness, and they often are in awe of his knowledge of favorite topics, currently music groups from the 1960s. Lucas generally does well in school, and he says that he would like to be a musician when he grows up. However, Lucas's mother reports that school is extremely stressful. She notes that when Lucas arrives home each afternoon, he heads straight for his bedroom where he rocks in a favorite chair, usually for about 20 minutes. She explains that this is Lucas's "decompression" routine and that he needs this time and procedure to recover from the stress of school's demands.

What is special education and how did it come to be? How does special education meet the needs of students with autism or other disabilities? Why is it so important for Lucas to be educated as much as possible with his peers?

MONIKA is a second-grade student who has an inherited disorder called Fragile X syndrome, diagnosed when she was just a year old. She has received special education and related services since that time, including speech/language therapy because of her delayed language development and occupational therapy to help her with fine motor skills such as grasping a pencil and cutting with scissors. Because Monika has a moderate intellectual disability and has significant delays in learning academic skills, she spends about half of her day in a special education classroom for instruction in language arts and math, but she joins her peers without disabilities for science, social studies, art, physical education, lunch, and recess. The goal is for her to learn as many academic skills as possible while also working on her skills for interacting with peers and adults and her ability to function in the larger environment of general education. Ms. Shriner, Monika's teacher, describes her as eager-to-please and "sweet," noting that she works best on days when a clear routine is followed. Ms. Shriner also knows that Monika is easily overwhelmed, and so she sometimes permits her to work quietly wearing headphones or with just one or two classmates. One reward that is very effective when encouraging Monika to complete difficult tasks is music; she listens to her favorites for as long as permitted.

How likely are you to teach a student like Monika? What is an intellectual disability? What factors have led to students like Monika being welcomed members of their school communities, working to reach the highest learning standards possible, instead of being relegated to separate classrooms and schools?

AARON has a learning disability that was identified when he was in third grade after intensive academic remediation failed to accelerate his learning progress. He also takes medication for attention deficit–hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Now in 11th grade, Aaron is continuing to learn how to compensate for the academic difficulties he experiences. Although he is a bright and personable young man, he reads at about a seventh-grade level, and his writing is much like that of a student in second grade. He doesn't like to talk about his learning disabilities (LD); he doesn't want other students

to make fun of him or treat him differently because he has LD. He is even more sensitive when asked to talk about why he takes medication. Even though his doctor has cautioned him to take the medication exactly as prescribed, he sometimes secretly skips taking it to see if he can get along without it. In his U.S. history class, Aaron is most successful on tests when he answers questions orally; he understands the concepts even if he cannot efficiently write down or type his thoughts. Because he doesn't like to be singled out, however, he sometimes refuses to take tests in that manner or get additional assistance during study period, and so his grades are lower than they could be. Aaron is an excellent athlete, and on the basketball court he feels equal to his friends. However, his parents are concerned that his interest in sports is distracting him from schoolwork.

How do educators try to prevent the need for special education for students like Aaron? What is a learning disability? What types of supports and services do Aaron and other students with LD and other disabilities need to succeed in school?

Students like Lucas, Monika, and Aaron are just three of the nearly 6.1 million school-age students in the United States who have disabilities that make them eligible for special education (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). But their disabilities do not tell you who they are: They are children or young adults and students first. Like all students, they have positive characteristics and negative ones, they have great days and not-so-great days, and they have likes and dislikes about school and learning. As a teacher, you probably will instruct students like Lucas, Monika, and Aaron along with other students with disabilities or other special needs.

The purpose of this textbook is to help you understand these students and learn strategies for effectively teaching them. Ultimately, you can be the teacher who makes a profound positive difference in the life of a student with a disability or other exceptional needs. With the knowledge and skills you acquire for instructing these learners, you will be prepared for both the challenges and the rewards of helping them achieve their education goals.

What Is Special Education?

As you begin your study of special education and think about your responsibility for teaching students with disabilities, it is important that you understand that the field is guided by several critical concepts, many of them deriving directly from federal special education law. These key concepts illustrate clearly contemporary expectations for the education of students with disabilities as well as the importance of your role as a general educator in contributing to their success.

Special Education Components

When teachers refer to students with *disabilities*, they mean students who are eligible to receive special education services according to federal and state guidelines. **Special education** includes three types of services, each briefly described next, intended to enable these students to reach their potential.

SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION All students who are eligible for special education services must receive **specially designed instruction (SDI)** (Kauffman, 2015a). SDI is tailored to meet the individual needs of the student with a **disability**,

it is monitored closely, and students' progress related to it must be documented. Further, this specialized instruction usually pertains to students' academic skills, but it also may address students' communication skills, behavior challenges, social interaction skills, vocational or functional skills, or any other areas related to education affected by the disability, as would be the case for Lucas, Monika, and Aaron, whom you met in the introduction to this chapter. Special educators are the professionals primarily responsible for delivering SDI, but in some states general education teachers share this responsibility. Even when this is not the case, when special educators work with general education teachers in their classrooms, an increasingly common arrangement, both professionals participate in SDI delivery.

RELATED SERVICES Students with disabilities also may receive **related services**, that is, assistance beyond academic instruction that enables students to benefit from special education. Monika, whom you met at the beginning of the chapter, is an example of a student receiving related services, both speech/language therapy and occupational therapy. However, many other related services are available to students with disabilities, including physical therapy, counseling, adapted physical education, and transportation to and from school in a specialized van or school bus (NICHCY, 2013a; Teasley, 2016). Some related services are offered in a separate setting such as an office or specially equipped classroom, but sometimes these services are delivered in the general education classroom and integrated with the other instruction occurring there. Some students eligible for special education do not need related services, some receive them for just a relatively brief period (e.g., speech therapy in kindergarten and first grade), and others require them throughout their school years.

SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES The third part of special education is termed **supplementary aids and services (SAS)**. This is a broad array of supports that enable students with disabilities to participate in general education, extracurricular activities, and other school settings so that they can be educated with peers who do not have disabilities (NICHCY, 2013b). SAS may include, as needed, supports such as preferential seating, access to computer technology, and instructional adjustments (e.g., more time to complete tests, simplified assignments, alternative but equivalent instructional materials).

You may encounter one additional set of terms related to supplementary aids and services. Students with disabilities are entitled to receive accommodations and modifications as part of their instruction. **Accommodations** are changes in *how* the student learns key curriculum. For example, a student may be learning the same math as classmates, but he may be assigned fewer math problems because he takes longer than other students to complete each one. Another student may respond to an essay question on a history test by writing bullet points instead of paragraphs, because it reduces the writing task and the goal is to determine what she has learned about history rather than to assess paragraph-writing ability. In each case, the curriculum has remained the same. **Modifications** refer to *what* the student learns and usually imply that some curriculum is removed. For example, a student with a significant intellectual disability may not learn all the vocabulary in a science unit, focusing instead on words that he is likely to encounter in day-to-day life. As you might surmise, many students with disabilities need accommodations, but only those with significant intellectual disabilities usually require modifications.

As a general education teacher, your most common responsibilities as part of special education will be to provide students with their supplementary aids and services, especially their accommodations and, for a few students, modifications (e.g., Baker & Scanlon, 2016). That is, you will be informed of changes such as those outlined in this section needed by each student with a disability whom you teach, and you will be expected to make those changes so that the student can succeed. If you have questions about the changes, a special educator will clarify what is expected, but it will be your responsibility to be sure that the required supports are part of your instruction.

DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

Diversity has many faces. In addition to ability and disability, it includes ethnic, cultural, economic, linguistic, religious, gender, and racial differences among the students you may teach.

Federal Special Education Law

The three components of special education just outlined are spelled out in federal special education law, called the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**. This law was originally passed as the **Education for All Handicapped Children Act, (EHCA) Public Law 94–142**, in 1975. It describes categories of disabilities that make students eligible to receive special education and specifies the related services and supplementary aids and services to which students might be entitled. In addition, it establishes procedures for identifying a student as needing special education and outlines the rights of parents who disagree with the educational services offered to their children (Johns, 2016).

CORE PRINCIPLES OF IDEA Over the four decades since IDEA was enacted, it has been revised several times to increase the range of services students with disabilities must receive, expand the groups of students who are eligible for special education, and clarify procedures for addressing particular types of issues (e.g., serious student behavior incidents). However, the following six core principles have remained its foundation (Zirkel, 2015):

- *Free appropriate public education (FAPE).* Students with disabilities are entitled to attend public schools and receive the educational services that have been designed specifically to address their special needs, possibly including specialized materials, settings, and technology. This education is provided at no cost to parents.
- *Least restrictive environment (LRE).* Students with disabilities must be educated in the educational setting most like that for students without disabilities in which they can succeed with appropriate supports provided. That is, the law clearly sets an expectation that students with disabilities should not be assigned to separate special classes or schools without access to typical peers, except to the extent it is the only option for them to be appropriately educated. For most students with disabilities, the LRE is the general education classroom for much or all of the school day. For some students, it is a combination of a general education and a special education setting. For a few students with the most complex needs, a special education setting for most or all of the school day is required.
- *Individualized education.* The instructional services and other assistance for a student with disabilities must be tailored to meet his assessed needs according to a prepared **individualized education program (IEP)** that is reviewed and updated annually. IEPs are written by a team of professionals and the student's parents, and they are a sort of roadmap for educating the student. You will learn much more detail about IEPs in Chapter 2.
- *Nondiscriminatory evaluation.* Students must be assessed using instruments that do not discriminate on the basis of race, culture, or disability. Here is a simple example of this concept: If a math test item was based on football, American students might conjure up their favorite teams and think about touchdowns and the gridiron. Students from many other cultures would immediately assume the question was about soccer and might thus interpret it incorrectly. Further, in considering eligibility for special education services, a student must be assessed by a multidisciplinary team in her native language using tests that are valid for assessing the areas of concern (e.g., reading or math, social skills). Students' eligibility for special education cannot be decided on the basis of only one test.
- *Due process.* If a disagreement occurs concerning a student's eligibility for special education, the student's educational placement, or the services the student receives, a specific set of informal and formal procedures must be followed to resolve the dispute. Generally, no changes can be made regarding the student's education until the issue has been resolved at a formal hearing and, if necessary, the appropriate court. Collectively, these procedures are referred to as due process.
- *Zero reject/child find.* No student may be excluded from receiving a public education because of having a disability. That is, school district representatives

may not tell the parents of a child with a disability that the child has so many needs that they cannot be met through the public school system. If children have extraordinary needs, the school district is obligated to find a way to appropriately educate them. This provision also prohibits schools from excluding children who have communicable diseases, such as AIDS, or from expelling students and ceasing the provision of special education services. The child find part of this principle mandates that each state must be proactive in locating children who may be entitled to special education services (e.g., through public service announcements or highway billboards).

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS OF IDEA As you continue your study of the field of special education, you will become familiar with many additional parts of IDEA that will guide your practices as an education professional. Some of the most important additional provisions in the current law include these:

- On most teams writing the IEP for a student, at least one general education teacher must be a participating member.
- Students with disabilities must be taught by teachers who are highly qualified in the core academic content being taught. This implies that students either should be in general education with the classroom teacher or in a special education setting with a teacher who has met state requirements to demonstrate proficiency to teach the core curriculum.
- Students with disabilities must be included in the assessment program that exists for all students. However, they may be entitled to accommodations so that they can demonstrate their learning (e.g., longer time to take the test, shorter test sessions, assistance with instructions). You are very likely to have students with disabilities who receive these special provisions during both classroom assessments and annual high-stakes assessments.

Further IDEA provisions are summarized in Figure 1.1. Keep in mind that IDEA is not static. It is interpreted through court cases and periodically revised based on research and trends in education (e.g., Bailey & Bauer-Jones, 2015; Yell,

WWW RESOURCES

https://sites.ed.gov/idea/topic-areas
At the *Topic Areas* page of the U.S. Department of Education IDEA website, you can learn more detail about the requirements of federal special education law. Click on any topic to find specifics on many aspects of IDEA.

FIGURE 1.1 **Provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

In addition to the core principles that have characterized special education law since its 1975 passage, this list summarizes several major provisions in the current authorization of IDEA. You will learn more about these and other provisions as you continue your study of special education.

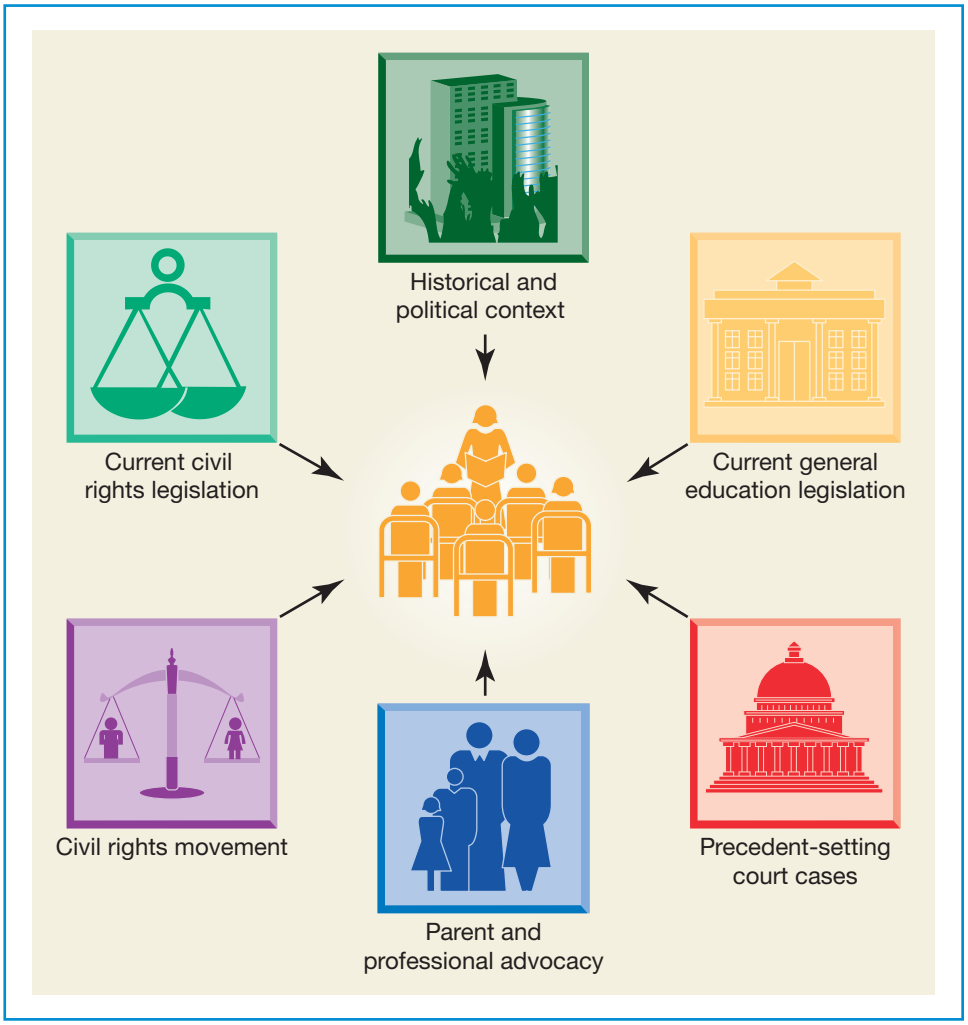
- Parent participation
  - Parents must be part of the decision-making team for determining special education eligibility and the appropriate education placement.
  - School professionals must report to parents on their children's progress at least as often as other parents receive such information.
- Placement justification
  - A clear justification must be provided whenever a student is assigned to a setting other than general education.
- Discipline
  - As needed, strategies for addressing a student's behavior must be included as part of the IEP.
  - Even if a student commits a serious offense (e.g., bringing a weapon to school), special education services must be continued.
- Transition services
  - By the time a student with a disability reaches age 16, a plan must be implemented to prepare the student for life after school (e.g., college, vocational training, a job).
  - The transition plan must be updated annually and have specific and measurable goals.
- Disproportionate representation
  - School districts must take specific steps to ensure that students from minority groups are not overidentified as being eligible for special education.
  - If disproportionality has occurred, school districts are required to take steps to correct the problem.

Katsiyannis, Losinski, & Marshall, 2016). In fact, what you learn about special education now may change over the next several years. However, the core principles of IDEA are unlikely to be modified, nor are its most essential provisions that ensure students with disabilities can receive an education equivalent to that of their typical peers.

What Influences Have Shaped Special Education?

Special education as it exists today has been shaped by a number of different factors. Although people with disabilities have been identified and treated for centuries, special education grew rapidly only in the twentieth century (Kode, 2002; Winzer, 1993). As special education has evolved, it has been influenced by the social and political context in which it emerged, parent advocacy, the civil rights movement, several precedent-setting court cases, current civil rights law, and current general education legislation. These factors are highlighted in Figure 1.2 and explained in the following sections.

FIGURE 1.2 **Influences on Current Special Education Practices**



The Context for the Development of Special Education

When compulsory public education began near the turn of the twentieth century, almost no school programs existed for students with disabilities (Kode, 2002; Scheerenberger, 1983). Students whose disabilities were relatively mild—that is, learning or behavior problems or minor physical impairments—were educated along with other students because their needs were not considered extraordinary. Many children with significant intellectual or physical disabilities did not attend school at all, and others were educated by private agencies or lived in institutions. In fact, for the first half of the twentieth century, many states explicitly permitted school districts to prohibit some students with disabilities from attending (Yell, Rogers, & Rogers, 1998).

However, as compulsory education became widespread during the 1920s and 1930s, the number of special classes in public schools grew. Schools were expected to be like efficient assembly lines, with each class of students moving from grade to grade and eventually graduating from high school as productive citizens prepared to enter the workforce (Patton, Payne, & Beirne-Smith, 1986; Scheerenberger, 1983). Special classes were developed as a place for students who could not keep up with their classmates. Because many students with disabilities still were not in school, most of the students sent to special classes probably had mild or moderate learning or intellectual disabilities. Educators at the time believed that such students would learn better in a protected setting and that segregating them would preserve the efficiency of the overall educational system (Bennett, 1932; Pertsch, 1936).

By the 1950s, special education programs were available in many school districts, but some undesirable outcomes were becoming apparent. For example, students in special classes often were considered incapable of learning academic skills. They spent their school time practicing what were called "manual skills" such as weaving and bead stringing. Researchers began questioning this practice and conducted studies to explore the effectiveness of special education. When they compared students with disabilities who were in special education classes to similar students who had remained in general education, they found the latter group often had learned more than the former (Goldstein, Moss, & Jordan, 1965). By the late 1960s, many authorities in the field questioned whether segregated special classes were the most appropriate educational setting for many students with disabilities (Blatt, 1958; Christopolos & Renz, 1969; Dunn, 1968; Lilly, 1971).

DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

As you prepare to be an educator, you will learn about the importance of developing *cultural competence* by increasing your awareness of your own worldview, understanding and valuing worldwide cultural differences, and developing effective cross-cultural communication skills so that you can interact effectively with students, parents, and colleagues from diverse backgrounds. That concept is extended with *cultural proficiency*, that is, your skill for teaching about differences in a way that conveys respect for all cultures.

Parent Advocacy

During the same time period that the number of special education classrooms was growing and professionals were beginning to question their value, parents of children with significant disabilities began to organize (Blatt, 1987). These early advocates usually were reacting to the then-common practice of institutionalizing children with significant disabilities; they wanted their children to live at home and to receive appropriate services in their communities. Several organizations whose names you may know were founded during this era:

- United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) was founded in 1949 by two sets of parents whose children had cerebral palsy (a disability affecting motor skills, discussed in more detail in Chapter 6). They advertised in the newspaper for parents of other children with disabilities to join them to advocate for community integration and services. These parents were the first to call media attention to the needs of this group of children (UCP, 2015).
- The ARC (originally called the National Association for Retarded Children) was founded in 1950 by a group of parents committed to helping others understand their children's potential and to gaining access for them to preschool programs, education, and jobs. This organization was the first to call attention to the connection between lead-based paint and intellectual disabilities in children (The ARC, 2016).

- The National Association for Down Syndrome (NADS) began in 1960 when a young girl's parents ignored their physician's advice to institutionalize their daughter and decided to raise her at home. They joined with other parents of children with Down syndrome (a condition explained in more detail in Chapter 6), organized educational and recreational programs for them, and provided supports for families (NADS, 2016).

FYI

The *Council for Exceptional Children* (CEC), founded in 1922 by Elizabeth Farrell, is a professional organization for teachers, administrators, parents, and other advocates for the rights of students with disabilities. Explore its many resources at http://www.cec.sped.org.

These and other parent groups became a strong voice for the rights of children with disabilities (Osgood, 2008; Winzer 2012), a voice that continues in the present day. They questioned traditional practices and insisted that children with disabilities were entitled to the same educational experiences as other children. Such groups focused public attention on these children's needs, lobbied for increased research to address their children's disorders, and sought assistance through legislation and litigation.

The Civil Rights Movement

During the 1950s and 1960s, another powerful force began contributing to the development of new approaches for special education, and it still has an impact today (U.S. Department of Education, 2010; Winzer, 2012). The civil rights movement, although initially focused on the rights of African Americans, expanded and began to influence thinking about people with disabilities (Chaffin, 1975; Fleischer & Zames, 2001). In the ***Brown v. Board of Education*** decision in 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that it was unlawful under the Fourteenth Amendment to discriminate arbitrarily against any group of people. The Court then applied this concept to the education of children, ruling that the state-mandated separate education for African American students could not be an equal education. This court decision introduced the concept of *integration* into public education, the notion that the only way to protect students' constitutional right to equal opportunity was to ensure that diverse student groups learned together. Soon people with disabilities were recognized as another group whose rights often had been violated because of arbitrary discrimination. For children, the discrimination occurred when they were denied access to schools because of their disabilities. Parents and advocates soon began arguing that the education of children with disabilities was not just a moral obligation of public schools, it was a civil right to which all children, regardless of disabilities or other special needs, were entitled.

Precedent-Setting Court Cases

The combination of the civil rights movement and parents' (and professionals') advocacy for children with disabilities led to several precedent-setting court cases (e.g., Rueda, Klingner, Sager, & Velasco, 2008; Yell, 2012). The following cases are especially important to your understanding of today's special education. Several other landmark cases are presented in Figure 1.3.

***PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION FOR RETARDED CHILDREN V. COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA* (343 F. SUPP. 279) (1972)** This decision, issued by the U.S. District Court of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, is considered the basis for most of the key principles of IDEA. The Court ruled that schools may not refuse to educate students with intellectual disabilities and that a free public education must be provided to all students, not just those school officials decided they were prepared to serve.

***OBERTI V. BOARD OF EDUCATION OF CLEMENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT* (995 F.2D 204) (1993)** This decision about a child with Down syndrome by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit established that school districts must make available in the general education setting a full range of supports and services in order to accommodate students with disabilities. The fact that a student learns differently from other students does not necessarily warrant that student's exclusion from the general education classroom.

FIGURE 1.3 **Court Cases Affecting Special Education**

Since the passage of federal special education law, numerous legal decisions have clarified the rights of students with disabilities and the responsibilities of schools for educating them (e.g., Alquraini, 2013; Yell, Ryan, Rozalski, & Katsiyannis, 2009). Several cases that have significantly affected special education include these:

- *Larry P. v. Wilson Riles* (793 F.2d 969) (1986)
  The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California ruled that intelligence (IQ) tests—because of their racial and cultural bias—cannot be used to determine whether African American students have intellectual disabilities or any other disability.
- *Board of Education of Hendrick School District v. Rowley* (632 F.2d 945) (1982)
  The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that although special education services must provide an appropriate education, the law does not require optimum services. The result was that the parents' request for a sign-language interpreter for their daughter was denied because she was achieving at an average level without this support.
- *Daniel R. R. v. State Board of Education* (874 F.2d 1036) (1989)
  The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled that appropriate placement for students with disabilities depends on whether:
  (1) a student can be satisfactorily educated in the general education setting with supplementary supports provided and
  (2) the student is included to the maximum extent appropriate in cases in which the general education setting is not successful.
  The school district did not violate the rights of Daniel, a student with Down syndrome, when he was moved to a special education setting after an unsuccessful attempt to include him in general education.
- *Schaffer v. Weast* (126 S. Ct. 528) (2005)
  The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the burden of proof in any disagreement about a student's individualized education program lies with the party bringing suit—in this case, the Schaffer family. Until this case, it typically had been assumed that a school district had to prove that its position in a lawsuit was correct, even if the district had not filed the lawsuit.

***DOE V. WITHERS* (20 IDELR 422, 426-427) (1993)** As a high school history teacher, Mr. Withers refused to make the accommodations needed by a student with a learning disability, resulting in a failing grade and athletic ineligibility. The West Virginia Circuit Court ruled that Mr. Withers was personally liable for failing to make a good-faith effort to provide required accommodations; the family was awarded $5,000 in compensatory damages and $30,000 in punitive damages.

***ENDREW F. v. DOUGLAS COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT* (2017)** Because Drew was making very little educational progress in public school, his parents enrolled him in a private school where he was much more successful, and the school district was asked to reimburse the parents for the tuition. The school district refused, saying that because Drew had made some progress, the mandate of IDEA had been met. The Supreme Court ruled that *de mimimus* progress, a standard set in an earlier lower court decision, was not the intent of the law. School districts must educate students so that they have ambitious goals and make meaningful educational progress. This case is considered the most significant special education decision in 30 years.

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

In a qualitative study, Cameron and Cook (2013) reported that general education teachers' goals for students with mild disabilities in their classrooms related to academics and behavior. For students with severe disabilities, goals were focused primarily on social development, with academics viewed, unfortunately, as largely irrelevant.

Current Civil Rights Legislation

Based on events of the civil rights movement and court cases such as those just outlined as well as many others, two civil rights laws currently protect individuals with disabilities against discrimination. These laws are broader than the education-focused IDEA, but they are complementary to it.

SECTION 504 OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 **Section 504** prevents discrimination against all individuals with disabilities in programs that receive federal funds, as do all public schools. For children of school age, Section 504 ensures equal opportunity for participation in the full range of school activities (Zirkel, 2015). Through Section 504, some students not eligible for services

The rights of individuals with disabilities were established in part through the influence of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

through special education may be entitled to receive specific types of assistance to help them succeed in school (Zirkel & Weathers, 2015).

For example, Sondra is a student with a severe attention problem. She cannot follow a lesson for more than a few minutes at a time; she is distracted by every noise in the hallway and every car that goes by her classroom window. Her teacher describes her as a student who "acts first and thinks later." Sondra does not have a disability as established in special education law, but she does need extra assistance and is considered disabled according to Section 504 because her significant attention problem negatively affects her ability to function in school. The professionals at her school are required to create and carry out a plan to help Sondra access education. Special education teachers may assist other teachers in their work with Sondra because they know techniques that will help her, but Sondra does not receive special education services, and responsibility for the plan lies with the principal and teachers. Some other students who might receive assistance through Section 504 include those with health problems such as asthma and extreme allergies and those with physical disabilities who do not need special education (Zirkel, 2009b). More detail on Section 504 is presented in Chapter 8.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT In July 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed into law the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**. This law was based on the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, but it further extended the rights of individuals with disabilities. This law, amended and updated through the **Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA)** in 2008, is the most significant disability legislation ever passed (Bowman, 2011). It protects all individuals with disabilities from discrimination, and it requires most employers, whether in the public or private sector, to make reasonable accommodations for them. Although ADA does not deal directly with the education of students with disabilities, it does clarify the civil rights of all individuals with disabilities and thus has an impact on special education. This law also ensures that transportation, buildings, the workplace, and many places open to the public are accessible to people with disabilities. It also mandates that telecommunications companies make available options so that individuals with hearing loss and those with speech impairments can communicate with others. If you are a teacher with a disability, you might be influenced by ADA in the same way that it affects you in other situations. For example, if your school is not accessible to wheelchairs and undergoes renovation, then ramps, elevators, and wide entries with automatic doors may have to be installed. If you have a disability, this law also protects you from discrimination when you look for a teaching position.

Current General Education Legislation

One additional significant influence on special education has been legislation passed to govern the education of all students, including those with disabilities. The most far-reaching law is the **Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)**. Most recently reauthorized in 2016 and also referred to as the **Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**, it is the law that has the goal of ensuring that all students, including those who live in poverty, have equal access to a high-quality education (Chenoweth, 2016). It generally mandates the highest academic standards and increased accountability for all students, including those

with disabilities. Think of how the following sample of key provisions in the law and its related regulations affect the expectations and educational practices for Lucas, Monika, and Aaron, whose stories began this chapter:

- All states must adopt rigorous standards in math, English/language arts, science, and other subjects as selected. These standards must apply to all students, except for 1 percent (with significant intellectual disabilities) who are eligible to meet alternate achievement standards. The standards for the latter group must be aligned with the typical standards.
- States must assess student math and reading achievement annually in grades 3–8 and at least once in grades 9–12. Science achievement must be assessed at least once in grades 3–5, 6–9, and 10–12. Eligible students must be provided with appropriate accommodations (including the use of technology).
- Students with significant intellectual disabilities may take alternate assessment that aligns with the established alternate curriculum.
- States must establish a way to look at the achievement data of four subgroups: students who are economically disadvantaged, students from racial and ethnic groups, students with disabilities, and English learners. If achievement gaps exist for these groups, states must require that schools take steps to close the gaps.
- Schools must establish programs to identify students at-risk for school failure and provide intervention to accelerate their learning.

These provisions and the many others of ESEA/ESSA reinforce the notion that students with disabilities can and should achieve at a level comparable to that of most students. Although flexibility exists in how that goal is achieved, this education law has made it clear that to expect anything less is unacceptable.

Special education has evolved on the basis of many factors. When special education began, essentially no services were offered in public schools. Today comprehensive services in a wide variety of settings are supplied, and both very young children and young adults, as well as students in elementary and secondary schools, benefit from them. As the rights and needs of students with disabilities have been better understood and federal legislation has set higher standards for their education, general education teachers—in traditional core academic areas as well as in the essential related areas such as art, music, and physical education—have become increasingly involved in their education, a trend that surely will continue (e.g., Brownell, Smith, Crockett, & Griffin, 2012; Kauffman & Badar, 2014).

WWW RESOURCES

http://www2.ed.gov/teachers/needs/speced/list.jhtml
The U.S. Department of Education's website for helping students with disabilities includes more than 1,000 resources. These materials include legal and technical information, as well as information for teachers, parents, families, and school administrators.

What Are the Key Themes of Contemporary Special Education Practice?

Now that you have learned about the core concepts that guide special education, the development of the field, and the range of factors that have shaped special education services, you have a strong foundation for understanding the context for contemporary practices for students with disabilities. In the following sections, several of the most central themes that characterize special education are outlined, including prevention through response to intervention (RtI) and multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), high expectations and accountability,

evidence-based practices, and inclusive schooling. The purpose of this discussion is to demonstrate that special education no longer is a set of services isolated from the rest of education and that, increasingly, general educators are expected to play a critical role in all students' education.

Prevention of the Need for Special Education

Some students have disabilities because of physical or medical conditions, including those who have sensory disabilities (that is, hearing or vision loss), those with physical or health disabilities, and those with significant intellectual disabilities. These students often are identified at a very young age and receive special education services throughout their school careers. However, most students who receive special education do so because of gaps between their academic achievement and that of their peers or because of serious problems in the behavior, social, or emotional domains. These disabilities most often are identified when students face the demands of formal schooling, and although these problems are real and are verified through specific assessment procedures (outlined in Chapter 4), students' school experiences and professional judgments also play a role in determining their presence. Over the past decade, attention has increasingly focused on this latter group of students and the options that might help some of them succeed so that they never need special education services.

RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION One prevention strategy is a procedure called **response to intervention (RtI)**. Introduced for the first time in the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA, RtI is an approach for exploring whether students have learning disabilities (Zirkel, 2013). Rather than relying just on test scores, such as tests of ability and achievement, RtI permits school professionals to base that decision on whether increasingly intensive instructional interventions, most often in reading and math, implemented to address the student's academic problems have a positive impact on learning. If they do, no disability exists, and the need for special education can be prevented. If little or no improvement occurs after carefully selected strategies and programs are used more frequently and for longer periods of time, the student may be found to have a learning disability. You will learn more about this concept in Chapter 2 and the rest of this text, including its broader application as a means for carefully monitoring and assisting all struggling learners (e.g., Castro-Villarreal, Villarreal, & Sullivan, 2016; Fisher & Frey, 2013). For now, what is essential to remember is that RtI is implemented primarily by general education teachers, reading specialists, and others. It is not a special education service, even though special educators sometimes participate in delivering interventions. This means that it is very likely you will have a role in an RtI process, and this is the case whether you plan a career in elementary, middle, or high school.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS Response to intervention was designed to address students' academic learning needs but, for many students, problems related to behavior also may lead to a need for special education. Although not specifically addressed in IDEA, professionals across many states and school districts have applied principles similar to those of RtI to the behavior domain. That is, when a student displays problematic behavior, professionals implement increasingly intensive interventions to try to clearly identify the reason for the behavior and to help the student to learn alternative behaviors that are acceptable in the school setting, an approach termed **positive behavior supports (PBS)** (Childs, Kincaid, George, & Gage, 2016; Freeman, Simonsen, McCoach, Sugai, Lombardi, & Horner, 2016). Just as for RtI, the goal is to intervene before the problem is so serious that special education is viewed as necessary. Also similar to RtI, general education teachers usually are responsible for implementing many of the behavior interventions effective in re-directing and re-shaping students' behavior. You will learn more about positive behavior supports in Chapter 12.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORT RtI and PBS both have value, but professionals increasingly have noted that it is logical to create a single system for responding to student academic and behavior needs and to coordinate resources, policies, personnel, and services for struggling learners. This makes sense, particularly because the procedures implemented for RtI and PBS are similar and because in some cases an individual student may have both academic and behavior challenges. Further, in a single system, it is easier to ensure that clear communication occurs among professionals serving students and to allocate the resources needed to provide intensive supports. This blended system, termed **multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)**, enables educators to coordinate their work and focus their efforts to help all their students to succeed (Jimerson, Burns, & VanDerHeyden, 2016). This model recently gained prominence when it was included in ESEA/ESSA, described earlier in this chapter.

MTSS approaches also are appealing because they may extend beyond the school, drawing on district supports, community outreach, and other resources to improve learner outcomes. And as with RtI and PBS, general educators have primary responsibility for implementing an MTSS, both as team members who contribute to decision making about students and as the implementers of interventions for groups of students and individual students. The Instructional Edge feature highlights the critical components of MTSS.

WWW RESOURCES

http://www.rtinetwork.org
If you visit the website of the RtI Action Network and type "MTSS" in the search bar, you will find many helpful resources as well as links to teacher blogs, research articles, and other postings about this important process.

DISPROPORTIONATE REPRESENTATION One additional topic must be mentioned in any discussion of preventing the need for special education. *Disproportionate representation* refers to the fact that students from some racial and cultural groups, especially African American males, historically have been identified as needing special education in greater numbers than would be expected, given the overall composition of the student population. For example, African American students are 2.22 times more likely than would be expected to be identified as intellectually disabled and 2.08 times as likely to be identified as having emotional or behavioral disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Many reasons have been proposed to explain this unacceptable situation, including the influence of poverty and the impact of cultural and linguistic differences between students and their teachers. Eliminating disproportionate representation is a top priority nationwide (e.g., Skiba, Albrecht, & Losen, 2013; Sullivan, Artiles, & Hernandez-Saca, 2015), one that partly is being addressed through the

DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

Among all racial and ethnic groups tracked in federal special education data, students in the Native American/Other Pacific Islander group are most disproportionately represented: They are 2.35 times more likely than expected to be identified as disabled (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

INSTRUCTIONAL EDGE 1.1

Understanding Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) are rapidly becoming central to schools' efforts to reach learners struggling academically or behaviorally, and general education teachers, literacy and math specialists, administrators, and many other professionals share responsibility for implementing this model. These are the key elements of MTSS:

- *Universal screening.* The academic, behavior, and social functioning of all students must be periodically assessed to determine which learners are at risk for failure so that interventions can be implemented at the earliest indications of problems.
- *Evidence-based instruction.* Academic, behavioral, and other supports are only those demonstrated through research to be effective. Further, careful attention is paid to fidelity of implementation—that is, consistently and precisely carrying out such evidence-based interventions.
- *Tiered interventions with increasing intensity.* Increasingly specific interventions are used when student functioning does not adequately improve; intensity may pertain to the type of intervention selected as well as the frequency of its use, with most systems having three tiers of levels of intensity.
- *Data-based decision making.* A clear procedure is in place to determine appropriate next steps for assisting learners, grounded in data gathered about the student's performance and progress. When students are struggling, data collection and interpretation are frequent so that intervention effectiveness can be closely monitored.
- *Collaboration.* MTSS is premised on clear communication and a highly collaborative problem solving process established at the school level. Educators come together, with support from their site and district leadership, to consider individual student needs and to enhance their school's capacity to effectively educate all its students.

DIMENSIONS OF DIVERSITY

Although concern has existed for decades that students from minority groups, including those who are Hispanic and African American, have been over-identified as needing special education, likely because of bias, some professionals recently have questioned whether this is an accurate view (e.g., Ford & Russo, 2016; Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, Mattison, Maczuga, Li, & Cook, 2015).

use of RtI, PBS, and MTSS. As a general education teacher, your understanding of your own culture and your ability to be responsive to the cultures of your students, including their language, will be essential for fostering student learning (Kahn, Lindstrom, & Murray, 2014). If you are employed in a district in which disproportionate representation is still occurring, you are likely to participate in specific professional development, data collection, and other activities designed to address this issue.

High Expectations and Accountability

A second major theme for the field of special education concerns holding students with disabilities to the same high expectations established for all students and professional accountability for reaching that goal. In fact, the priority for educating students with disabilities is not just raising their achievement scores; it also includes reducing the gap between their achievement and that of typical peers.

CURRICULUM ACCESS The first critical component of setting high expectations for students with disabilities, reflected in both ESEA/ESSA and IDEA, relates to ensuring that they have access to the same learning opportunities as other students. Access to the general curriculum was added as a specific requirement to special education law in 1997 and is still in effect. Specifically, students must have access to the general curriculum, be directly involved in it, and make progress in it. This is true for all students with disabilities, including those with significant intellectual disabilities. For the latter group of students, access may be defined as learning related to the curriculum while focused on life and practical skills. For most (but not all) students, curriculum access occurs through instruction in the general education setting, the practice implemented for Lucas, introduced in the chapter-opening vignette. Some students access curriculum in a special education setting, either by participating in electronic instruction (for example, an online course) or by learning from a special educator who is qualified to deliver that curriculum.

A relatively recent development in curriculum access pertains to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and similar state initiatives to increase academic rigor and better prepare students for postsecondary education and life (McLaughlin, 2012). These contemporary standards address English/language arts and math from kindergarten to 12th grade and are intended to focus education on the knowledge and skills that students need to succeed in the twenty-first century. Professionals know that for many students with disabilities, the increased rigor of the standards necessitates use of a variety of learning supports, from additional or more intensive practice to electronic options (e.g., digitally recorded instructional materials). General education teachers play a key role in ensuring that students have the tools that make access possible, especially when they use the principles of *universal design for learning* (UDL), that is, careful planning so that instruction is designed prior to delivery to be accessible by all learners (e.g., Al-Azawei, Serenelli, & Lundqvist, 2016). Specific examples of UDL will be introduced throughout this textbook.

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

One way that students with severe disabilities sometimes are supported in the general education setting is by enlisting peers to be their learning partners. One study (Brock, Biggs, Carter, Cattey, & Raley, 2016) reported success in teaching paraprofessionals (sometimes called teaching assistants) to facilitate this option for ensuring curriculum access.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES As noted earlier, ESEA/ESSA mandates that all students, including those with disabilities, be assessed in order to evaluate their learning progress; clearly, this is an important aspect of ensuring rigor. Further, because a large majority of students with disabilities do not have intellectual disabilities, nearly all of them take the same standardized assessments as their peers without disabilities. However, many students receive special accommodations related to completing these assessments. They may take the tests in the special education classroom so that distractions can be minimized, and they may receive other supports.

Students with significant intellectual disabilities take alternate assessments designed to measure their learning in the selective general and **functional curriculum** in which they participate. That is, unlike past practices when many students

with such disabilities were exempt from the academic assessment process because of a belief that it was not applicable to their education, the clear expectation now is that the progress of all students is a priority. You will learn more about assessment as it pertains to students with disabilities in Chapters 4 and 11.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY One additional component of high expectations and accountability concerns the responsibilities of educators for their students' learning outcomes. Increasingly, teachers' performance evaluations (and sometimes their pay and continued employment) rely in part on the achievement gains of their students (Martínez, Schweig, & Goldschmidt, 2016). The scores of students with disabilities and other special needs (for example, those who live in poverty, those whose native language is not English) are part of this calculation. Further, at the school level, this means that if students with disabilities are not improving enough in terms of achievement, the school is identified as needing improvement, and corrective actions may be required.

Many issues are being raised about holding teachers directly accountable for student achievement. Some professionals note that many influences contribute to student learning, including the home and neighborhood environment, culture, background experiences, and even the effectiveness of earlier instruction, and that a teacher's instruction may not be powerful enough to overcome negative influences in students' lives. Some educators question whether general education teachers should be accountable for the learning of students known to have disabilities. Yet others see the current teacher-accountability trend as a strong positive, affirming that it will, like never before, focus a positive spotlight on maximizing achievement for students with disabilities. Whatever your view of this accountability issue, it reinforces the importance of all teachers knowing the most effective ways to reach all their students.

FYI

Although this text focuses on special education for students in kindergarten through 12th grade, young children—those birth to age five—also may be determined to be eligible for special education. IDEA includes specific provisions for their services.

Evidence-Based Practice

Yet another strong trend that has directly affected special education is the expectation for **evidence-based practice**. Begun in the field of medicine in the 1990s and adopted in many professions, including education, evidence-based practice (EBP) is an approach that relies on these principles (Hughes, Powell, Lembke, & Riley-Tillman, 2016; Smith, Doabler, & Kame'enui, 2016):

1. Interventions, strategies, techniques, policies, and programs implemented as part of students' education should be grounded in research that has demonstrated their effectiveness.
2. The studies used to determine intervention effectiveness should be of high quality as defined by the profession.
3. EBP is intended to close what is frequently a gap between what researchers know is effective and the practices teachers actually use in their classrooms.
4. EBP is designed to eliminate the use of interventions without demonstrated effectiveness that may still be common practice because of teacher preference and familiarity, tradition, anecdotes about their value, or popularity resulting from advertising or celebrity endorsement.

Evidence-based practices are mandated in both ESEA/ESSA and IDEA, and the importance of this priority is obvious: How can it be justified to spend the limited precious minutes of any child's education using interventions that have not been demonstrated to improve learner outcomes? For example, you probably have heard about student learning styles; many educators believe that teaching to students' learning styles is an effective practice. Yet, little research directly supports this view (Fleischman, 2012; Hale, 2016). In contrast, some professionals are reluctant to group students and provide instruction through peer-mediated strategies such as peer tutoring and cooperative learning, but these approaches have consistently been demonstrated to improve student learning (e.g., Wexler, Reed, Pyle, Mitchell, & Barton, 2015).

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

When general and special education teachers believe that their students with disabilities are capable of advanced learning, those students are more likely than the students of teachers without those beliefs to achieve proficiency on high stakes assessments (Klehm, 2014).

Consistent with EBP, you will find as you read this textbook that the strategies presented for improving learning for students with disabilities are strongly grounded in research. If you're curious about EBP and would like to learn more about it, you can find further details and examples of EBP resources in Chapter 5.

Inclusiveness

A final major theme characterizing contemporary special education is inclusiveness. Although IDEA stipulates that a range of settings (e.g., separate special education classrooms and schools) must be made available to meet the needs of students with disabilities, many professionals now seriously question the assumption that students who need more intensive services should routinely receive them in such restrictive settings (e.g., Sailor, 2015; Theoharis & Causton, 2016). The concept of *inclusive practices* implies that students are more alike than different and that all students should be welcomed members of their learning communities (e.g., Antia, Jones, Luckner, Kreimeyer, & Reed, 2011; Artiles & Kozleski, 2016), just as all individuals should have those rights in the larger society (Sharma, 2015). Inclusiveness is not directly addressed in ESEA or IDEA, but many provisions in those laws (e.g., least restrictive environment, curriculum access, participation in assessment) as well as other education and civil rights legislation you have already read about in this chapter provide a strong foundation for inclusive practices.

Keep in mind that in the not-too-distant past, many students with disabilities were only temporary guests in general education classrooms, and few efforts were made to provide assistance so they could be successfully educated with their nondisabled peers. Although some professionals still express concerns about inclusive practices (e.g., Kauffman, 2015b), many educators now find that most supports for students with disabilities can be provided effectively in general education classrooms when teachers are prepared to work with such students and related concerns are addressed (Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, Bull, Cosier, & Dempf-Aldrich, 2011; Dieker, 2013). They further maintain that if students cannot meet traditional academic expectations, preference should be given to changing the expectations instead of routinely presuming that a different setting is necessary. The increased use of inclusive practices in today's schools can be demonstrated through recent data: During the 2014–2015 school year, approximately 62.6 percent of all school-age students with disabilities received more than 80 percent of their education in general education classrooms (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). The Professional Edge feature includes a summary of critical characteristics of inclusive schools.

UNDERSTANDING INCLUSIVE PRACTICES **Inclusive practices** represent a philosophy based on three dimensions (Friend, 2013):

1. *Physical integration:* Placing students in the same classroom as nondisabled peers should be a strong priority, and removing them from that setting should be done only when absolutely necessary. However, it is important to understand that inclusiveness does not imply that all students should be in a general education setting at all times, as is true for Monika, introduced at the beginning of the chapter (McLeskey & Waldron, 2011). Such a practice would be detrimental to some students and would violate IDEA.
2. *Social integration:* Relationships should be nurtured between students with disabilities and their classmates, other peers, and adults (e.g., Carter et al., 2015). As you might suspect, the preferred location for accomplishing this goal is the general education setting, but in some instances typical peers may interact with students with disabilities in the special education classroom.
3. *Instructional integration:* Most students should be taught in the same curriculum used for students without disabilities and helped to succeed by adjusting how teaching and learning are designed (that is, providing specially designed instruction and accommodations) and measured. For some

PROFESSIONAL EDGE 1.1

Characteristics of Inclusive Schools

As you learn about your responsibilities as a teacher for students with disabilities, this list of characteristics can help you understand in a real-world way what an inclusive school is like.

- Every person who works in the school is committed to the goal of helping all students achieve their potential; inclusiveness is a school-level belief system.
- The principal is a strong and vocal advocate for all students, adamant that they access the general curriculum with a system of supports around them.
- Professionals and other staff routinely use respectful, person-first language (for example, *student with a disability* rather than *disabled student*).
- Emphasis is on abilities rather than disabilities.
- Special education and other services are seamless—their benefit to students is maximized and their cost to students (e.g., time out of a general education classroom) is minimized.
- Special education and other services do not exist as separate entities (e.g., "we have inclusion, resource, and self-contained programs; speech and ESL are pullout programs"); they are integrated and always addressed as part of a whole.
- Specially designed instruction required for students with disabilities can be offered in a general education setting as well as in a special education setting.
- Differentiation is considered the rule for all students, not the exception.
- Assistive technology enhances access to the general curriculum.
- Parents are not just welcomed partners in the schools; their participation and collaboration are actively sought.
- Multiple locations for instruction are available to students, including service in a separate setting—but only when it is the last choice and only for as long as data indicate it is effective.
- Inclusiveness is communicated in many ways—materials displayed, books and other media available, adult interactions with students and each other, schedules, room assignments, and so on.
- The term *inclusion* is rarely needed because it is such an integral part of the school culture.

students with significant intellectual disabilities, instructional integration means anchoring instruction in the standard general curriculum but appropriately adjusting expectations (that is, making modifications). Ultimately, the concept of inclusive practices as used in this text means that all learners are viewed as the responsibility of all educators (Dessemontet, Bless, & Morin, 2012), giving general educators a major responsibility for them, supported by special educators (e.g., Schifter, 2016; Walsh, 2012). It further implies that educators' strong preference is for these students to be educated with their peers without disabilities.

We also would like to note that we prefer the phrase *inclusive practices* to the term *inclusion* because the latter can imply that there is a single model or program that can serve all students' needs, whereas the former more accurately conveys that inclusiveness is made up of many strategies and options that are discussed throughout this textbook.

One more term should be mentioned in this discussion of inclusiveness. When the LRE concept became part of special education laws during the 1970s, the LRE for most students with disabilities was usually a part-time or full-time special education class. When such students were permitted to participate in general education, it was called mainstreaming. **Mainstreaming** involves placing students with disabilities in general education settings only when they can meet traditional academic expectations with minimal assistance or when those expectations are not relevant (e.g., participation only in recess or school assemblies for access to social interactions with peers). In most locales, *mainstreaming* now is considered a dated term and has been replaced with the phrase *inclusion* or *inclusive practices*. However, as you participate in field experiences and speak to experienced educators, you may find that in some schools, the vocabulary of inclusion is used, but the practices implemented seem more like mainstreaming. That is, teachers may say that their school is inclusive but then explain that students like Aaron, featured in the beginning of the chapter, need to be in separate classes because of their below-grade reading levels. This practice is more accurately called mainstreaming.

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

Ryndak, Ward, Alper, Storch, and Montgomery (2012) compared long-term outcomes for two brothers with intellectual disabilities, one who was educated in self-contained settings and one who received an inclusive education. Outcomes (for example, social behavior, tolerance for change) were more positive for the latter brother.

General education teachers are accountable for the education of all the students in their classrooms, including those with disabilities.

The vocabulary terms introduced in this section and elsewhere in this chapter may be a bit overwhelming. Special education is a field with many dimensions and extensive terminology, and understanding its technical language will assist you in carrying out your responsibilities for students with disabilities. Many terms will be explained further in subsequent chapters; additionally, a glossary is provided at the back of this textbook. Keep in mind, though, that knowing the terms used in special education is not nearly as important as learning about your students, developing skills for addressing their needs, and celebrating your role in enabling them to achieve success.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICES As you might imagine, inclusiveness is influenced by many factors, from the characteristics of the students being educated to the preparation and skill of their teachers to the amount of administrative support available (e.g., Causton & Theoharis, 2013; Hoppey & McLeskey, 2013; Litvack, Ritchie, & Shore, 2011; Solis, Vaughn, Swanson, & McCulley, 2012). Because of this complexity, research regarding inclusive practices has been difficult to conduct, and the results have been mixed. However, especially with the understanding that inclusiveness provides for separate instruction when needed, compelling positive results have been reported.

For example, any discussion of inclusive practices must consider the impact on student outcomes (Huberman, Navo, & Parrish, 2012). That is, if students with disabilities in inclusive settings do not progress in their learning, then inclusion is not in their best interests. Generally, academic and other outcomes in inclusive schools have been found to be positive (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Kurth & Mastergeorge, 2012). For example, one recent large-scale analysis found a positive correlation between students' access to and participation in general education classes and their post-school success (e.g., employment, higher education) (Mazzotti, Rowe, Sinclair, Poppen, Woods, & Shearer, 2016). In a statewide study, researchers found that students with disabilities who spent more time in general education passed the eighth-grade assessment at a higher rate than similar students with disabilities who were educated in special education settings. Students comparable in ability educated in general education settings also have been found to graduate from high school at a higher rate than those educated in special education settings (Gonzalez & Cramer, 2013; Luster & Durrett, 2003). Two other studies examined the policies and practices in school districts achieving higher-than-expected academic outcomes for students with disabilities. In both studies, the districts were characterized as having strong leaders, highly collaborative cultures, firm and sustained commitment to inclusiveness, and programs and instructional practices demonstrated to be effective with students with disabilities (Huberman et al., 2012; Silverman, Hazelwood, & Cronin, 2009). Inclusive practices also have been found to have a positive impact on students' math achievement (Kunsch, Jitendra, & Sood, 2007), problem-solving skills (Ryndak, Ward, Alper, Storch, & Montgomery, 2012), and discipline referrals (Cawley, Hayden, Cade, & Baker-Kroczynski, 2002). Keep in mind, though, that some students—whether their disabilities are considered mild or significant—receive part of their instruction in a special education setting for at least a small part of the day in order to achieve such success (e.g., McLeskey & Waldron, 2011).

FYI

Using *person-first language* is a way to ensure that you focus on students and not their labels. For example, say "students with disabilities" instead of "disabled students," and "my student who has autism" instead of "my autistic student." Never say "special education students" or "IEP students."

A second way to determine the effectiveness of inclusive practices is to consider parent perceptions. Parents generally are positive about special education services, and they often prefer that their children be educated with peers in general education classrooms (Lalvani, 2012; Leach & Duffy, 2009). They believe that inclusive practices are beneficial for academic achievement, and, especially for children with intellectual disabilities, they also strongly believe that their children learn critical social skills when they spend most or all of the school day with their typical peers (Bennett & Gallagher, 2013). One parent commented that when her fourth-grade son with autism was integrated into a general education classroom for most of the day, his behavior improved both at school and at home. She also noted that the other students in the class were clearly kind to her son, and she was grateful that they sought him out on the playground and chose him as a lunch partner. Not surprisingly, parents' perceptions of inclusive practices are more positive when they participate in collaborative decision making concerning their children's educational services; their views also are influenced by the age of their child and the nature of the child's disability (Falkmer, Anderson, Joosten, & Falkmer, 2015; Matuszny, Banda, & Coleman, 2007).

You might wonder about teachers' perceptions of inclusive practices. In the past, research suggested a continuum of responses, from strongly positive to somewhat equivocal (e.g., Crouch, Keys, & McMahon, 2014; King & Youngs, 2003; Sze, 2009), often related to the nature of students' disabilities and educators' sense of their skills for effectively teaching these students. Although a similar situation might exist today (e.g., Soleas, 2015), questions about inclusive practices and teacher perception have rapidly become outdated. Simply put, nearly every general educator, whether at the elementary school, middle school, or high school level, teaches students with disabilities. Focus has shifted from whether teachers are supportive of inclusion to instructional, behavioral, social, and other strategies that can enhance their skills for educating diverse learners (e.g., Able, Sreckovic, Schultz, Garwood, & Sherman, 2015; Hartzell, Liaupsin, Gann, & Clem, 2015).

PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER In some ways, inclusive practices are like puzzle pieces. In today's schools, some of the pieces may be missing and others difficult to fit into place; yet others may be readily addressed and fit easily into the larger picture. Even in your own course, you and your classmates may come across studies on inclusive practices that present contradictory results. In your field experiences, you are likely to discover that in some schools inclusive practices are the norm, whereas in others very traditional approaches are still in place. You may find yourself struggling to reconcile all these views.

One way that you can put the puzzle together is to learn to teach in a way that is responsive to a wide range of student needs (Clarke, Haydon, Bauer, & Epperly, 2016; Lane, Royer, Messenger, Common, Ennis, & Swogger, 2015; O'Keeffe & Medina, 2016) and to use collaboration with colleagues and parents (e.g., Edwards & Da Fonte, 2012), as described in the Working Together feature, as a means for extending your expertise. As you will learn in the chapters that follow, much is known about effective ways to instruct students with disabilities, and many of those strategies will help other students learn as well. By welcoming all your students and making these strategies an integral part of your instruction, your pieces of the inclusive practices puzzle will fit right into place.

WORKING TOGETHER 1.1

The Importance of Collaboration for Meeting Student Needs

As you read this textbook and learn about your responsibilities for educating students with disabilities, you will find that *collaboration*—working together with others—is one of the keys to successful inclusive practices. It is a topic so critical that a feature on collaboration appears in every chapter. To introduce how important collaboration is for educators, here are just a few examples of how you will work with others on behalf of students with disabilities:

- *Meeting with special education teachers:* You will meet frequently with special education teachers, both formally and informally. A special educator may contact you to see how a student is doing in your class, or you may contact a special educator to ask for new ideas for responding to a student's behavior. You and the special educator may share responsibility for meeting with parents during open houses or parent conferences.
- *Co-teaching:* Depending on local programs and services, you may co-teach with a special education teacher or related services professional such as a speech/language therapist. In co-teaching, you share teaching responsibilities, with both educators working with all students in the general education classroom. This topic is addressed in detail in Chapter 3.
- *Working with paraprofessionals:* If your class includes a student with a significant disability or several students who need support (but not co-teaching), you may collaborate with a paraprofessional. You will guide the work of that individual in your class to ensure that student support is appropriately provided, even while you retain primary teaching responsibility for all the students.
- *Meeting on teams:* Various school teams support inclusive practices. Your grade-level or middle or high school department team likely will spend part of its time discussing students with disabilities and problem solving to address their needs. You also may be part of a team that tries to address student learning and behavior problems prior to any consideration of the need for special education. If a student in your class is being assessed to determine whether special education is needed, you will be part of that team. The latter two teams are discussed in Chapter 2.
- *Interacting with parents:* Perhaps the most important part of collaborating on behalf of students with disabilities is working with parents. You may communicate with parents through notes sent home and through e-mail; meet with them occasionally as they express concerns about their children; confer with them at formal team meetings; and work with them as they volunteer at school, help with field trips, and participate in other school activities and initiatives.

RESEARCH-BASED PRACTICES

General and special education teachers are more effective in educating their students with disabilities and other special needs when they work in an environment characterized by a high degree of collegial and administrative support (Bettini, Crockett, Brownell, & Merrill, 2016).

Who Receives Special Education and Other Special Services?

Throughout this chapter, we have used the phrase *students with disabilities*. At this point, we will introduce you to the specific categories of disabilities that may entitle students to receive special education services, as well as other special needs that may require specialized assistance. As you read the following definitions, keep in mind that additional information about these disability categories, including the federal eligibility criteria for each, are included in Chapters 6 and 7. Most important, remember that a disability label can only provide general guidelines about a student. Labels are a form of shorthand that professionals use, but no label can accurately describe a student. Your responsibility is to understand your students with disabilities in ways that extend beyond what any label communicates so you can help them reach their goals.

Categories of Disability in Federal Law

When we say that students have disabilities, we are referring to the specific categories of exceptionality prescribed by federal special education law. Each state has additional laws that clarify special education practices and procedures, and the terms used to refer to disabilities in state laws may differ from those found in federal law. For example, although federal law specifies the label *emotional disturbance* for some students, the term *behavior disorder* or *emotional and behavior disability* may be used in your state. Similarly, although IDEA uses the term *intellectual disability*, some states use *cognitive disability* or *intellectual impairment*; a few may still use the outdated term *mental retardation*. Check with your instructor or your state department of education website for the terms used in your state.

According to IDEA, students with one or more of the following 13 disabilities that negatively affect their educational performance are eligible for special education services. These disabilities also are summarized in Figure 1.4.

LEARNING DISABILITY Students with a *learning disability (LD)* have dysfunctions in processing information typically found in language-based activities. They

FIGURE 1.4 **IDEA Disability Categories**

Federal Disability Term[1]	Brief Description[3]
Learning disability (LD) (39.2%)[2]	A disorder related to processing information that leads to difficulties in reading, writing, and computing; the most common disability, accounting for more than one-third of all students receiving special education.
Speech or language impairment (SLI) (17.6%)	A disorder related to accurately producing the sounds of language or meaningfully using language to communicate.
Intellectual disability (ID) (7.0%)	Significant limitations in intellectual ability and adaptive behavior; this disability has a range of severity.
Emotional disturbance (ED) (5.9%)	Significant problems in the social-emotional area to a degree that learning is negatively affected.
Autism (8.6%)	A disorder characterized by extraordinary difficulty in social responsiveness; this disability occurs in many different forms and may be mild or significant.
Hearing impairment (deaf or hard-of-hearing) (HI) (1.1%)	A partial or complete loss of hearing.
Visual impairment (VI) (0.4%)	A partial or complete loss of vision.
Deaf-blindness (<.05%)	A simultaneous significant hearing loss and significant vision loss.
Orthopedic impairment (OI) (0.8%)	A significant physical limitation that impairs the ability to move or complete motor activities.
Traumatic brain injury (TBI) (0.4%)	A medical condition denoting a serious brain injury that occurs as a result of accident or injury; potentially affecting learning, behavior, social skills, and language.
Other health impairment (OHI) (14.4%)	A disease or health disorder so significant that it negatively affects learning; examples include cancer, sickle-cell anemia, and diabetes. Students with severe ADHD may be included in this category.
Multiple disabilities (2.1%)	The simultaneous presence of two or more disabilities such that none can be identified as primary; the most common is the combination of intellectual and physical disabilities.
Developmental delay (DD) (2.4%)	A nonspecific disability category that states may choose to use as an alternative to specific disability labels for students up to age nine.

[1] The terms used in your state may vary from those specified in federal special education law.
[2] Percent of students with disabilities ages 6 through 21 served through IDEA (Fall 2014).
[3] More complete federal definitions of each category are presented in Chapters 6 and 7.

FYI

A *primary disability* is one that most adversely affects a student's educational performance. A *secondary disability* is an additional disability that also affects a student's education but to a lesser degree. For example, a student identified with a learning disability as a primary disability could have an emotional disability as a secondary disability.

generally have average or above-average intelligence, but they often encounter significant problems in learning how to read, write, and compute. They may not see letters and words in the way others do, they may not be able to pick out important features in a picture they are looking at, and they may take longer to process a question or comment directed to them. They also may have difficulty following directions, attending to tasks, organizing assignments, and managing time. Sometimes these students appear to be unmotivated or lazy when in fact they are trying their best. Aaron, described at the beginning of this chapter, has one type of learning disability, but many other types also exist, and no single description characterizes all students with LD. Learning disabilities are by far the most common special need: Approximately 39.2 percent of all students receiving special education services in public schools in 2014–2015 had a learning disability (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT When a student has extraordinary difficulties communicating with others for reasons other than maturation, a *speech or language impairment* is involved. Students with this disability may have trouble with *articulation*, or the production of speech sounds. They may omit words or mispronounce common words when they speak. They also may experience difficulty in *fluency*, such as a significant stuttering problem. Some students have far-reaching speech or language disorders, in which they have significant problems receiving and producing language. They may communicate through pictures or sign language. Some students' primary disability is a speech or language disorder, and they may receive services for this. For other students with disabilities, speech/language services supplement their other educational services. For example, a student with a learning disability also might receive speech/language services, as might a student with autism or traumatic brain injury. In these instances, speech/language services are usually considered a related service, as defined earlier in this chapter.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY Students with an *intellectual disability* (ID) have significant limitations in intellectual ability and adaptive behaviors. They learn at a slower pace than do other students, and they may reach a point at which their learning levels off. Although the federal description of disability categories does not distinguish between students with mild intellectual disabilities and those with more significant intellectual disabilities, some state descriptions do. Most individuals with this disability lead independent lives after they leave school, holding jobs and fully participating as community members. A few individuals need lifelong support, whether minimum or extensive. Monika, one of the students you met in the introduction to this chapter, has an intellectual disability.

EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE When a student has significant difficulty in the social-emotional domain—serious enough to interfere with the student's learning—*emotional disturbance (ED)*, also sometimes called an *emotional and behavior disorder (EBD)* or an *emotional disability*, exists. Students with this disability may have difficulty with interpersonal relationships and may respond inappropriately in emotional situations. That is, they may have extraordinary trouble making and keeping friends; they may get extremely angry when peers tease or play jokes on them; and they may repeatedly and significantly show little or inappropriate emotion when it is expected, such as when a family pet dies. Some students with ED are depressed; others are aggressive. Students with ED display these impairments over a long period of time, across different settings, and to a degree significantly different from their peers. Students with emotional disabilities are not just students whose behavior in a classroom is challenging to address; rather, they have chronic and extremely serious emotional or behavioral problems.

AUTISM Students with *autism*, sometimes referred to as *autism spectrum disorder* (ASD) because of its many variations, usually lack appropriate social responsiveness from a very early age. They generally avoid physical contact (e.g., cuddling and holding), and they may not make eye contact. Problems with social

interactions persist as these children grow; they appear unaware of others' feelings and may not seek interactions with peers or adults. They may have unusual language patterns, such as speaking without inflection, repeating what others say, or repeating something heard on television over and over. To feel comfortable, they may need highly routinized behavior, such as a precise procedure, followed every single day, for entering the classroom and preparing for the start of the day's instruction. Some students with autism have above-average intelligence; others have intellectual disabilities. The causes of autism are still being researched, and the best approaches for working with students with autism are still emerging. Lucas, one of the students you met at the beginning of the chapter, has autism. You can learn a little more about autism by reading the Case in Practice

CASE IN PRACTICE 1.1

Problem Solving in Inclusive Schools: The General Education Teacher's Role

At Adams Middle School, staff members are meeting to discuss John, a seventh-grade student who has a formal diagnosis of autism from a pediatric psychologist. Ms. Diaz is John's English teacher, and Ms. Horton is the special educator who provides his specially designed instruction and other needed support. Mr. Powell, the school psychologist, also is present.

Ms. Diaz: John is a student with many dimensions. He usually does fairly well in class, and his behavior is much less disruptive than it was at the beginning of the school year, but whenever we transition from one activity to another, there is a strong chance that John will refuse to change. If I insist, even using the strategies you've given me, Ms. Horton, John often starts rocking and singing in a loud voice and essentially shutting me out. I've had two calls from other parents who said their children reported that John takes up too much of my time in class. It was difficult to respond because I think that perception is accurate. I hope we can come up with some ideas to improve the whole situation.

Ms. Horton: I know you also discussed John at your last team meeting. What did his other teachers have to say?

Ms. Diaz: Everyone except Mr. Bryant is experiencing the same problems. Mr. Bryant said that John really likes science and that his behavior problems might not be as pronounced there because John really wants to do the labs. He also said that sometimes he can tell by watching John's facial expression that John is trying very hard to transition between activities without a problem—and that it's very difficult for him. He tries to give John extra time to finish what he is doing to avoid the rocking and singing problem.

Mr. Powell: You've mentioned the problem of transitioning between activities as one concern. Before we start addressing that, are there any other problems we should be aware of?

Ms. Diaz: No. Right now, it's the behavior during transitions—and I want to be clear that all of us on the team know John is quite capable of learning what we're teaching, and our data tell us he is making very strong gains academically. We are committed to finding more solutions before the problem becomes more serious.

Ms. Horton: One contribution I can make is to get into your classroom—and also into the classrooms of other teachers on your team—to gather some additional information. It will help to gather data on the sequence of events in class that seem to prevent or lead to his behavior. For example, I'd like to observe John during rapid and slower transitions, and it will be valuable to gather data on how other students respond when he has a problem during a transition.

Ms. Diaz: That would be helpful, but I hope you can observe him within the next couple of days so we can come up with new strategies. There is no time to waste. I've been cuing him as you suggested—it's not working now (she shows Ms. Horton her data charts). I also tried to ignore him, but that made it worse.

Mr. Powell: Maybe we should focus for a minute or two on what is going well for John in your class.

Ms. Diaz: Let's see . . . he usually is attentive, begins work when assigned, and makes a good contribution when we're talking about assignments that are very concrete or literal. For example, he knows the nuances of parts of speech better than nearly any of the other students and always knows the answers and wants to share when an objective like that is the focus.

Mr. Powell: Our meeting time is nearly up—the bell is about to ring. Are we all clear on next steps? Ms. Horton, will you be able to observe in Ms. Diaz's class by the end of the week? I know you need answers right away, but I hope we can get a clearer sense of the pattern of John's behavior and the context in which it is occurring so we can find the right strategy for addressing it. If we can get in to observe this week, could we meet next Tuesday to try to generate some strategies?

Ms. Diaz: That would be great. Let's work out the details on observing.

REFLECTION

Why was this meeting a positive example of teachers addressing a student problem in an inclusive school? What did they do that has set them up for success? If you were trying to understand John better, what other questions would you ask about him? What would you like others to observe in the classroom in relation to him? In relation to you as the teacher? What do you think will happen at the next meeting? Based on this case, how would you describe the role of general education teachers in addressing the challenges of inclusion?

The labels given to students may give a general description of their disabilities, but they do not convey students' abilities and potential.

feature, in which teachers meet to problem solve regarding another student with this disability.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT Disabilities that concern inability or limited ability to receive auditory signals are called *hearing impairments (HI)*. When students are **hard of hearing**, they have a significant hearing loss but can capitalize on residual hearing by using hearing aids and other amplifying systems. Students who are **deaf** have little or no residual hearing and therefore do not benefit from traditional devices that aid hearing. Some students with hearing loss may be assisted through the use of advanced technology such as a cochlear implant, which is a small, complex electronic device implanted near the ear that can provide a sense of sound. Depending on the extent of the disability, students with hearing impairments may use sign language, speech reading, or other strategies to communicate with others.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT Disabilities that concern the inability or limited ability to receive information visually are called *visual impairments (VI)*. Some students have **partial sight** and can learn successfully using magnification devices and other adaptive materials; students who are *blind* do not use vision as a means of learning and instead rely primarily on touch and hearing. Depending on need, students with visual impairments may use braille, computers adapted for their use, and other aids to assist in learning. In addition, some students with vision loss need specialized training to help them learn to move successfully in their environment.

DEAF-BLINDNESS Students who have both significant vision and hearing loss sometimes are eligible for services as **deaf-blind**. These students have extraordinarily unique learning needs, particularly in the domain of communication, and they require highly specialized services to access their education. The degree of the vision and hearing loss may vary from moderate to severe and may be accompanied by other disabilities. Students in this category are likely to receive special education services beginning at birth or very soon thereafter.

WWW RESOURCES

https://www.dol.gov/odep
Managed by the U.S. Department of Labor, the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) website includes numerous resources related to disabilities across the lifespan, including youth with disabilities and those transitioning from school to work.

ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENT Students with *orthopedic impairments (OI)* have physical conditions that seriously limit their ability to move about or complete motor activities. Students who have cerebral palsy are included in this group, as are those with other diseases that affect the skeleton or muscles. Students with physical limitations resulting from accidents also may be orthopedically impaired. Students with orthopedic impairments are difficult to describe as a group because their strengths and needs vary tremendously. For example, some students with this disability are unable to move about without a wheelchair and may need special transportation to get to school and a ramp to enter the school building. Others may lack the fine motor skills needed to write and may require extra time or adapted equipment to complete assignments.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY Students with *traumatic brain injury (TBI)* have a wide range of characteristics and special needs, including limited strength or alertness, developmental delays, short-term memory problems, hearing or vision loss that may be temporary or permanent, irritability, and sudden mood swings. Their characteristics depend on the specific injuries they experienced, and their

needs often change over time. Because TBI is a medical condition that affects education, diagnosis by a physician is required along with an educational assessment of students' learning, behavior, and social skills. Students who experience serious head trauma and resulting TBI from automobile accidents, falls, and sports injuries are among those who might be eligible for services.

OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT Some students have a disease or disorder so significant that it affects their ability to learn in school. The category of disability addressing their needs is called *other health impairment (OHI)*. Students who have chronic heart conditions necessitating frequent and prolonged absences from school might be eligible for special education in this category, as might those with severe and chronic asthma. Students with diseases such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and sickle cell anemia also may be categorized as having other health impairments, depending on the impact of their illnesses on learning. Some students—but not all—with attention deficit–hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) also receive special education services in this category.

MULTIPLE DISABILITIES The category used when students have two or more significant disabilities is called **multiple disabilities**. Students in this group often have an intellectual disability as well as a physical disability, but this category also may be used to describe any student with two or more disability types (with the exception of deaf-blindness). However, this classification is used only when the student's disabilities are so serious and interrelated that none can be identified as a primary disability. Students with multiple disabilities often benefit from *assistive technology*, that is, simple or complex devices that facilitate their learning, as explained in the Technology Notes feature.

TECHNOLOGY NOTES 1.1

The Opportunities of Assistive Technology

Whether the students you teach have mild or significant disabilities, they can use technology to help them to communicate, access learning, complete assignments, and fully participate in school and in the community. *Assistive technology*, which students with disabilities are entitled to use as needed, refers to any device (that is, piece of equipment, product, or other item) used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. These are examples of the levels of assistive technology students might use.

NO TECHNOLOGY OR LOW TECHNOLOGY

No technology (no-tech) or *low technology (low-tech)* refers to items that do not include any type of electronics. Examples:

- A rubber pencil grip that enables a student with a disability to better grasp a pencil or pen
- A nonslip placemat on a student's desk that makes it easier for her to pick up items because it stops them from sliding
- A study carrel that helps a student pay closer attention to the schoolwork at hand

MID-TECHNOLOGY

Devices in the *mid-technology (mid-tech)* category use simple electronics. Examples:

- A digital audio recorder that a student uses to record lectures or dictate test responses
- A calculator that assists a student in completing math computations
- A timer that lets a student know it is time to change from one activity to another

HIGH TECHNOLOGY

Items considered *high technology (high-tech)* incorporate more sophisticated, sometimes costly technology. Examples:

- Voice-recognition software that allows a student to use a microphone to dictate information that then appears in print on the computer
- Electronic communication boards on which a student can touch a picture and a prerecorded voice communicates for him. For example, a student touches a picture of himself and a voice says "Hello. My name is Danny. What is your name?"

Technology in Action

Are you interested in assistive technology such as the examples just noted? The following students demonstrate using these tools, and they are students you might teach.

- Mason is a first grader who uses several types of technology to help him learn. Watch him in action in this video: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IcUNnnwFm4g**
- Brody, a sixth grader, has a learning disability. To help him with writing, he uses two technology tools, Co-Writer and a spelling pen. You can watch him use these tools and learn more about them at this site: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6i5CtPoGh0**
- Elle, a 14-year-old student with cerebral palsy, communicates using a Dynavox, an assistive communication device. Her mom explains the process for accessing this type of technology in this video: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g95TO20hnmo**

FYI

Autism and traumatic brain injury were added to IDEA in 1990, at the same time that (a) the term *handicapped* was removed and the preferred term *disability* was substituted and (b) the law's wording was revised to person-first language.

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY The category *developmental delay (DD)* is somewhat different than the other disabilities recognized in IDEA. It is an option that states may use for children ages three through nine. This category includes youngsters who have significant delays in physical, cognitive, communication, social-emotional, or adaptive development, but it is applied instead of one of the more specific disability categories. This option has two advantages: First, it avoids the use of more stigmatizing labels for young children, and second, it acknowledges the difficulty of determining the nature of a specific disability when children are rapidly growing and changing.

Categories versus Understanding Student Needs

Federal and state education agencies and local school districts use the categories of disability described in the previous section for counting the number of students receiving special education, allocating money to educate them, and designing educational service options. When you prepare to teach a student, however, you probably will find that the specific category of disability does not guide you in discovering that student's strengths and devising appropriate teaching strategies. Further, students labeled in different categories often benefit from the same instructional adjustments (Gage, Lierheimer, & Goran, 2012; Rojewski, Lee, & Gregg, 2015; Yakimowski, Faggella-Luby, Kim, & Wei, 2016). Therefore, throughout this text, students generally are discussed in terms of only the following two groups:

1. *High-incidence disabilities* are those that traditionally have been most commonly identified, including learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, mild intellectual disabilities, and emotional disturbance. Together these disabilities account for more than two-thirds of the disabilities reported in 2015–2016, the most recent year for which official data are available (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). It should be noted, though, that this pattern gradually is changing. Specifically, as the number of students with ADHD served in the category of other health impairments grows and the number of students identified as having autism increases, the students considered to be in "high-incidence" groups may change.
2. *Low-incidence disabilities* are those that are less common and include all the other categories: moderate to severe intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, hearing impairments, orthopedic impairments, other health impairments, visual impairments, deaf-blindness, autism, traumatic brain injury, and developmental delays.

FYI

Are you curious to learn more about a particular disability? Interested in organizations that support children and adults with disabilities and their families? A quick Internet search that includes the disability category or a term such as *advocacy* will lead to many resources.

Consistent with this textbook's contemporary approach to understanding students and effectively educating them, characteristics of students with disabilities are discussed in more detail in Chapters 6 and 7, but more attention is paid to students' learning needs than to their specific labels. In addition, although some strategies specific to categorical groups are outlined in those chapters (for example, the use of large-print books for students with visual impairments), it is critical to keep in mind that many of the strategies presented throughout this textbook can be used effectively with a wide range of students with disabilities. If you adopt this approach in your own thinking about teaching students with disabilities, you will see that many options are available for helping all students succeed.

Other Students with Special Needs

Not all students who have special learning and behavior needs are protected by special education laws. The instructional strategies you learn in this textbook also sometimes can assist you in teaching many other students who may struggle in school, including those described in the following sections.

STUDENTS WHO ARE GIFTED OR TALENTED Students who demonstrate ability far above average in one or several areas—including overall intellectual ability, leadership, specific academic subjects, creativity, athletics, and the visual or

performing arts—are considered *gifted* or *talented.* Erin is included in this group; she seems to learn without effort, and she also is eager to learn about almost everything. Evan is considered talented; still in elementary school, he has participated in state and national piano recitals, and his parents have requested that he have access to the music room during recess so he can practice. Students who are gifted or talented are not addressed in federal special education law, but some states have separate laws that provide guidelines for identifying and educating students with special talents. Adequate funds are not always provided to implement these laws, however, and so the availability and scope of services for students with particular talents vary across the country and even within each state.

STUDENTS PROTECTED BY SECTION 504 Some students not eligible to receive special education services are entitled to protection through Section 504 and receive specialized assistance because of their functional disabilities, as described earlier in this chapter. Among those likely to be included in this group are some students with **attention deficit–hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)**. These students have a medical condition often characterized by an inability to attend to complex tasks for long periods of time, excessive motor activity, and/or impulsivity. The impact of this disorder on students' schoolwork can be significant. Students with ADHD may take medication, such as Ritalin or Strattera, that helps them focus their attention. Many students with learning disabilities or emotional disturbance also have ADHD, but these students receive assistance through IDEA, as do students with ADHD whose disorder is so significant that they are determined to be eligible for special education. In addition to those mentioned earlier in the chapter, other students who may be protected by Section 504 include those with dwarfism, those who have spina bifida, or those with a medical disorder such as Crohn's disease.

STUDENTS AT RISK The general term *at risk* often refers to students whose characteristics, environment, or experiences make them more likely than others to fail in school. Students whose primary language is not English—sometimes referred to as *English learners (ELs)* or students who have *limited English proficiency (LEP)*—sometimes are considered at risk, and they may need assistance in learning at school. They receive bilingual education or English as a second language (ESL) services to have opportunities to learn English while also learning the standard curriculum. These services may occur in a separate classroom or within the general education setting. Some ELs also have disabilities; when this is the case, both English-language instruction and special education may be provided. The checklist presented in the Professional Edge feature is a tool you can use to analyze your readiness to work with students and families from diverse backgrounds, including those who are English language learners.

A second group of at-risk students includes struggling learners whose educational progress is below average but who do not have a disability. These students are learning to the best of their abilities, but they often cannot keep pace with the instruction in most general education classrooms without assistance. They are sometimes described as "falling between the cracks" of the educational system, because although most professionals agree they need special assistance, they are not eligible for special education. They are likely to access and benefit from response to intervention (RtI) or similar services described earlier in this chapter.

Other students who might be considered at risk include those who are homeless, those who live in poverty or move frequently, those who are born to mothers abusing drugs or alcohol or who abuse drugs or alcohol themselves, and those who are victims of physical or psychological abuse. Students in these groups are at risk for school failure because of the environment or circumstances in which they live.

You may find it challenging to find effective strategies to reach your students who have special needs but who do not have disabilities as defined in special education law. However, current trends in education can help you. First, you

PROFESSIONAL EDGE 1.2

Promoting Cultural Competence: A Self-Assessment

Cultural competence refers to your understanding of and responses to diversity. Here is an excerpt from a tool designed to help professionals reflect on their awareness of a variety of factors that contribute to cultural competence. You can find the complete self-assessment checklist at the National Center for Cultural Competence: http://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/ChecklistCSHN.pdf

Directions: Please select A, B, or C for each item listed below.

A = Things I do frequently, or statement applies to me a great deal.
B = Things I do occasionally, or statement applies to me to a moderate degree.
C = Things I do rarely or never, or statement applies to me to a minimal degree or not at all.

- For children who speak languages or dialects other than English, I attempt to learn and use key words in their language so that I am better able to communicate with them during assessment, treatment, or other interventions.
- I use visual aids, gestures, and physical prompts in my interactions with children who have limited English proficiency.
- When interacting with parents who have limited English proficiency, I always keep in mind that:
  - Limitation in English proficiency is in no way a reflection of their level of intellectual functioning.
  - Their limited ability to speak the language of the dominant culture has no bearing on their ability to communicate effectively in their language of origin.
  - They may or may not be literate either in their language of origin or English.
- I use alternative formats and varied approaches to communicate and share information with children and/or their family members who experience disability.
- I avoid imposing values that may conflict or be inconsistent with those of cultures or ethnic groups other than my own.
- I recognize and accept that individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds may desire varying degrees of acculturation into the dominant culture.
- I accept and respect that male–female roles in families may vary significantly among different cultures (e.g., who makes major decisions for the family, play and social interactions expected of male and female children).
- I recognize and understand that beliefs and concepts of emotional well-being vary significantly from culture to culture.
- I accept that religion and other beliefs may influence how families respond to illnesses, disease, disability, and death.
- I recognize and accept that folk and religious beliefs may influence a family's reaction and approach to a child born with a disability or later diagnosed with a physical/emotional disability or special health care needs.
- I understand that traditional approaches to disciplining children are influenced by culture.
- I understand that families from different cultures will have different expectations of their children for acquiring toileting, dressing, feeding, and other self-help skills.
- I accept and respect that customs and beliefs about food and its value, preparation, and use are different from culture to culture.

Note: This checklist is intended to heighten the awareness and sensitivity of personnel to the importance of cultural diversity and cultural competence in human service settings. There is no answer key with correct responses. However, if you frequently responded "C," you may not necessarily demonstrate values and engage in practices that promote a culturally diverse and culturally competent service-delivery system for children with disabilities or special health care needs and their families.

Source: From *Promoting Cultural Competence: A Self-Assessment, Promoting cultural diversity and cultural competency: Self-assessment checklist for personnel providing services and supports to children with disabilities & special health needs and their families* by Tawara D. Goode. Copyright © 2009. Reprinted by permission of the National Center for Cultural Competence.

can access RtI or MTSS procedures, already introduced, for research-based interventions for your struggling learners. In addition, as students with disabilities spend increasing amounts of time in general education classes, special education teachers and other special services providers often informally assist teachers in planning and adapting educational activities for at-risk students. Thus, other students with special needs often benefit from inclusive education for students with disabilities.