FOCUS on Exceptional children

The General Education Collaboration Model: A Model for Successful Mainstreaming

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The Education for All Handicapped Children's Act (EHA) was designed to improve the quality of education received by children and youth with exceptionalities, including provisions for an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Thus, EHA requirements stipulate that students be removed from general education programs only when the nature or severity of their exceptionality is such that education in regular classrooms, even with the use of supplementary aids or services, cannot be conducted satisfactorily (Office of the Federal Register, 1987). For many children and youth with mild disabilities, this requirement has been translated to mean education in resource room and other pull-out programs (U.S. Department of Education, 1987).

Critics argue that service provision outside the regular classroom has led to discontinuity in instruction (Wang, Reynolds, & Walberg, 1986), reduction of curricular options for students with exceptionalities (Stainback & Stainback, 1984), and education with a limited scope. As a result, children and youth with disabilities are prevented from gaining skills that would facilitate their full-time reentry into regular classrooms (Dunn, 1968). Alleged byproducts of pull-out and other segregated programs include lower self-concept and self-esteem for students with disabilities than for nonhandicapped peers (Rogers & Saklofske, 1985); less than adequate social skills (Madden & Slavin, 1983); and lack of preparation for adulthood, manifested by a high rate of unemployment among people with exceptionalities (Will, 1984).

The present educational system also has proven inadequate for students without labeled exceptionalities (Reynolds, Wang, & Walberg, 1987). Specifically, at least 20% of nonlabeled children and youth experience difficulty in regular classrooms. "These children are commonly described as slow learners, students who exhibit social, conduct, and behavior difficulties; possess low self-esteem; or have problems in understanding or using language (Will, 1986, p. 413).

Prompted by these issues, educators, policy makers, researchers, and theorists have called for a variety of educational reforms, all designed to serve more effectively and efficiently mildly handicapped and at-risk students in general education programs. Although

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specific methodologies vary, reform procedures consistently identify general and special education collaboration and shared decision making as essential ingredients for success. Yet, in spite of general acceptance of a need for greater cooperation and involvement between regular and special education, few models for achieving such collaboration have been presented. In particular, conceptual and procedural models that offer a broad perspective (i.e., focus on educational practices, environmental factors, and personnel considerations) are needed. In response, we offer the General Education Collaboration Model, designed to support general educators through collaboration with special educators.

GENERAL EDUCATION COLLABORATION MODEL

The General Education Collaboration Model, illustrated in Figure 1, is designed to support general educators working with exceptional children by means of collaboration with

special educators or having special educators in the classroom. Based on shared input, shared responsibility, and shared decision making (AASA/NAESP/NAASP School-Based Management Task Force, 1988; Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989; Crisci & Tutela, 1990), the model facilitates integration of students with mild-to-moderate learning and behavior difficulties into general classrooms; at the same time, it provides assistance that allows students to be successful. The model emphasizes both instructional variables and learner behaviors, based on the rationale that instructional variables and learner behaviors cannot be separated from instructional settings (Salend, 1990).

The following four major assumptions underlie the General Education Collaboration Model:

- The general educator assumes primary responsibility for teaching; the special educator's role is to provide support and resources to enhance student success.
- Social and academic interactions in the general education classroom are beneficial for all students, including those with disabilities.
- Students, parents, and school personnel prefer education in the general education classroom to pull-out and other segregated programs.
- Contingent upon appropriate support and resources, most general education teachers and administrators are willing and capable to serve students with mild-to-moderate disabilities in general classrooms.

COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

The General Education Collaboration Model is based on five essential elements:

1. Flexible departmentalization (Jones, Gottlieb, Guskin, & Yoshida, 1978; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Margolis & McGettigan, 1988).
2. Program ownership (Roubinek, 1978).
3. Identification and development of supportive attitudes (Heller & Schilit, 1987; Hersh & Walker, 1983).
4. Student assessment as a measure of program effectiveness (Jones et al., 1978; Rogers & Saklofske, 1985).
5. Classroom modifications that support mainstreaming (Myles & Simpson, 1989, 1990; Simpson & Myles, 1989).

Although each model component is presented as a discrete item, in actuality components are interwoven; each compo-

nent significantly affects the others and cannot operate effectively in isolation. In fact, for school reform and mainstreaming to be effective, all components of the model must be in place.
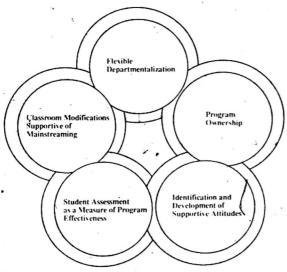

FIGURE 1
Essential Elements of
General Education Collaboration Model

Flexible Departmentalization

Departmentalization recognizes that individuals within a school organization each have unique job functions. In fact, their roles often are designed such that educators are able to function independently. To provide an optimal education for *all* students, however, departmentalization must allow for coordination, communication, and control.

Coordination here refers to the orchestration of defined roles for service delivery personnel. In recognition of this need, Judy Schrag (1990), Director of the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, observed that:

> Special education program enhancements include better coordination across special programs and general education, increased roles of the building principals, continued exploration of the circumstances under which students with special needs can be educated in the regular classrooms and exploration of refinements in our assessment and classification procedures. (p. 7)

Coordination of special and general education programs requires that individuals be aware of their own responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of others. Thus, much of the teacher discontent concerning mainstreaming programs stems from a lack of orchestration (e.g., role duplication or conflict) of school personnel responsibilities (McCoy & Prehm, 1987).

As it relates to departmentalization, *communication* serves as the basis for developing a collaborative relationship. Hence the need to involve all school organization members, including administrators, parents, teachers, support personnel and students. Communication ensures that involved persons are working toward the same purpose and that each individual provides program implementation feedback. Improved communication is the *sine qua non* of effective general-special education collaboration,

The need for shared decision making and participatory management has been recognized for some time. In his book, *Eupsychian Management: A Journal,* Maslow (1962) presented a management theory based on humanistic psychology and the premise that optimal involvement of all participants in decision making results in (a) the well-being of all involved, and (b) an efficient organization that meets the needs of the individual. As in society in general, schools are not operating under Maslow's ideal; moreover, they likely never will. Yet, the advantages of involving a variety of participants (e.g., teachers, administrators, parents, students, members of the community) in decision making and in creating a supportive environment are increasingly being recognized (Clune & White, 1988; Mertens & Yarger, 1988; Sickler, 1988; Walberg & Lane, 1989; White, 1989).

In the context of departmentalization, adoption and implementation of an effective *control system* is another critical issue. The control system should address the following questions: How long will the alternative service delivery model (e.g., mainstreaming, support services) be in place before efficacy issues are addressed? Who holds responsibility for those issues? Are there assurances for shared decision making? What criteria will be used in the decision-making process (Jones et al., 1978)?

Program Ownership

Historically, issues related to mainstreaming have been the domain of special education (McIntosh, 1979). Thus, special educators have assumed responsibility for determining if and when special needs students can be served appropriately in general education settings, which general education programs and instructors will best meet mainstreamed students' needs, and how mainstreaming may best be accomplished. This system, in combination with other ill-considered

mainstreaming activities, has retarded general educators' participation in and embracement of mainstreaming practices. Knoff (1985), for instance, reported that many general educators feel imposed on by mainstreaming, consider themselves unprepared to teach students with disabilities, and are put upon by mainstreaming practices.

Significant improvements in the mainstreaming system can be expected only with the support of and close working relationship between general and special educators (Roubinek, 1978). In this regard, the General Education Collaboration Model stresses shared responsibility by general and special educators for students with disabilities. Accordingly, general educators must accept responsibility for mainstreamed students placed in regular education programs. In return, general educators can expect full participation in the decision-making processes associated with mainstreaming along with appropriate support (e.g., training, consultation). The importance of shared ownership and ownership clarification cannot be underestimated (Heller & Schilit, 1987; Hersh & Walker, 1983).

Identification and Development of Supportive Attitudes

The advantages of placing students with disabilities in general education classes have been well established. Thus, pursuing what the National Association of Retarded Citizens (1973) referred to as "an existence as close to normal as possible" (p. 72) for persons with disabilities, parents and professionals have increasingly endorsed both the least restrictive environment concept and mainstreaming. At one time mainstreaming was considered radical. Today, however, it is estimated that most students with disabilities receive part of their education in regular class settings (U.S. Department of Education, 1987). Moreover, many educators have accepted the philosophy of mainstreaming students with mild handicaps in regular classes, a recognition that bodes well for a continuation of this trend. Yet, in spite of this backing, limited attention has been given to preparing general classroom settings to accommodate students with disabilities.

In particular, selecting teachers, school staff, and students who are aware and supportive of students with disabilities is a basic requirement for successful mainstreaming (Hersh & Walker, 1983). As Martin (1974) cautioned, unless educators develop strategies for creating an accepting environment for students with disabilities, "we will be painfully naive, and I fear we will subject many children to a painful and frustrating educational experience in the name of progress" (p. 150). Reister and Bessette (1986) also contended that integration

programs can be successful only to the extent that they create an educational environment in which children and youth with disabilities thrive, develop, and experience acceptance. Such a supportive environment requires strategies that assure not only that appropriate instructional materials and procedures are used, but that social, emotional, and attitudinal concerns receive proper attention.

The overall atmosphere within a school determines the extent to which the General Education Collaboration Model or any alternative mainstreaming strategy will be accepted and employed (Gersten & Woodward, 1990). Hence, attitudes of administrators, teachers, parents, and students must be assessed to determine to what extent these essential people are prepared and willing to accommodate students with disabilities in regular class settings.

With regard to *administrator* attitudes, O'Rourke (1980) found a significant relationship between teaching personnel and building principals' attitudes toward students with exceptionalities. Hence, principals' positive attitudes, as well as administrative support for working with all students (including those with exceptionalities), must exist if mainstreamed students are to receive optimal educational benefits (Heller & Schilit, 1987; McIntosh, 1979). Indeed, we recommend that administrative personnel should be selected, partly, on the basis of their integration attitude and their willingness to accommodate both disabled and normally developing students. Administrator attitudes toward students with disabilities can be modified (Donaldson, 1980); however, it is more efficient to select for educational leadership positions individuals who demonstrate positive attitudes toward mainstreaming and students with special needs, and who are, thus, able to establish a positive school atmosphere.

Positive *teacher* attitudes are also essential determinants of mainstreaming success. Research on teacher attitudes toward mainstreaming has shown that general education teachers generally perceive themselves to be ill equipped to deal with students with disabilities (Miller, 1990). Yet, they agree that mainstreaming is a positive educational practice, contingent on appropriate teacher support and training (Knoff, 1985; Moore & Fine, 1978; Reynolds, Martin-Reynolds, & Mark, 1982; Stephens & Benjamin, 1981; Williams & Algozzine, 1979). Myles and Simpson (1989) reported that 86% of general educators surveyed were willing to accept an exceptional child in their classrooms on a full-time basis, given appropriate support and training. Without support and training less than 33% of the respondents were willing to accept mainstreamed students in their general classrooms.

Mainstreaming success also hinges on the leadership and involvement of *parents*, both those with exceptional and with

normally developing children (Heller & Schilit, 1987). Indeed, the activities and lobbying of parent groups led to the largest special education system reform in history (i.e. Public Law 94-142).

Many parents of children with disabilities report that they are willing to place their children in general classrooms, contingent on appropriate support and individualization (Myles & Simpson, 1990; Simpson & Myles, 1989). Of the parents of children with learning disabilities surveyed by Abramson, Wilson, Yoshida, and Hagerty (1983), 72% responded that educating handicapped and nonhandicapped children together would improve the handicapped children's academic achievement. In a related study 79% of parents surveyed by Abelson and Weiss (1984) agreed that handicapped and nonhandicapped children could learn in the same classroom, but 40% of the participating parents stated that handicapped children's educational gains would come at the expense of the quality of other students' education. As noted, most parents whose children have had mainstreaming experiences appear to support those programs, contingent on appropriate services and attitudes.

Recognizing the importance of *student* attitudes, Simpson (1987) observed that a noteworthy factor in the success or failure of mainstreaming is whether normally developing students accept, understand, and interact with peers with exceptionalities. Clearly, mainstreaming programs must include methods and procedures that facilitate normally achieving students' awareness and acceptance of exceptional students in the mainstream (Sasso, Simpson, & Novak, 1985). In the absence of this component, students with exceptionalities will fail to become fully integrated in mainstreamed settings.

As we suggested, *individuals with whom children and youth with disabilities will interact in general education settings* must be maximally supportive. Relative to the General Education Collaboration Model, therefore, teachers, administrators, and other adult staff members (e.g., custodians, cafeteria workers) must receive information about individuals with disabilities along with facts on the rationale and advantages of integration and mainstreaming. As a part of this process, adults need opportunities to discuss their mainstreaming roles and their attitudes and feelings regarding mainstreaming. Thus, a supportive general educational environment for students with disabilities is best developed by combining information with discussion opportunities.

Procedures for positively modifying the *attitudes and behavior of normally developing children and youth* toward their disabled peers is also a basic element of the General Education Collaboration Model. Nonhandicapped students require information and experiences designed to (a) familiar- ize them with the characteristics and needs of children and youth with disabilities, (b) foster more accepting attitudes toward individuals with disabilities, and (c) promote better interactions between handicapped and nonhandicapped students. Positive attitudes toward students with disabilities do not occur automatically; hence, this frequently overlooked mainstreaming element must be planned.

Use of *curricula and procedures* designed to facilitate better understanding and sensitivity toward students with disabilities has proven significant in integration programs (Fiedler & Simpson, 1987). Accordingly, the time and resource investment required to work with classmates of children and youth with disabilities appears to be cost-efficient and utilitarian.

Not all students are candidates for mainstreaming. Thus, selection of students most acceptable for integration must be based on both objective and subjective criteria. Objective criteria may include aptitude and achievement eligibility levels. Subjective criteria may include student motivation, social responsibility, and behavior. Although student mainstreaming criteria will vary from setting to setting, exceptional students must be assigned to general education classes to possess the basic skills necessary to allow them to be successful and accepted.

Student Assessment as a Measure Of Program Effectiveness

Assessment is a key component of any program serving students with exceptionalities and acts as an ongoing part of the instructional strategy (Carroll, 1974). In fact, evaluation is a key component of PL 94–142. To facilitate successful mainstreaming, assessment must be comprehensive, encompassing student achievement, self-concept, and social integration.

Decisions pertaining to *student achievement* include types of assessment measures (or specific instruments) as well as the frequency with which they are used. Because norm-referenced standardized tests may be unacceptable for students with exceptionalities, many educators prefer curriculum-based assessment methods. As noted by Marston, Fuchs, and Deno (1986), curriculum-based assessment measures allow for (a) reliability, (b) curricula compatibility, (c) validity with respect to criterion achievement measures, (d) ease and repetition of administration, and (e) sensitivity to student growth. Thus, curriculum-based assessment methods allow for consistent validation of instructional effectiveness and student growth.

Self-concept is a construct that correlates with school achievement and social adjustment. Thus this variable must

be monitored and, if necessary, addressed through social skills instruction and other intervention programs. Results of investigations of the self-concept of students with mild exceptionalities have been conflicting; some report that the self-concept of students with mild handicaps does not differ from that of nonhandicapped peers (Coleman, 1984; Stone, 1984; Yauman, 1983); others note a marked discrepancy between the self-concepts of handicapped and nonhandicapped students (Ribner, 1978). At least in part, researchers attribute these equivocal research results to service delivery model differences. That is, resource room students who use normally achieving peers as a reference group appear to have lower self-concepts than resource room students who compare themselves with exceptional peers. But students with learning disabilities who use exceptional peers as a reference group appear to have self-concepts commensurate with those of nonhandicapped students (Coleman, 1984; Yauman, 1983). Preliminary studies of self-concept of students served in an alternative service delivery model revealed no differences between the self-concept of normally achieving and exceptional students (Hudson & Myles, 1989; Wang & Birch, 1984). To be conclusive, however, these results must be submitted to further investigation.

Social integration refers to the relationships between students. With respect to mainstreaming, social integration involves relationships between students with exceptionalities and normally achieving peers in terms of physical proximity, interactive behavior, assimilation, and acceptance (Kaufman, Gottlieb, Agard, & Kukic, 1975). Positive and accepting relationships between children with disabilities and their normally achieving peers are crucial to successful mainstreaming to the extent that exceptional students' rejection by or isolation from nonhandicapped peers could doom for failure an otherwise successful mainstreaming program (Reister & Bessette, 1986).

As suggested earlier, general education students must be made aware of the needs and characteristics of their exceptional classmates. Traditionally, little has been done to prepare general education students to interact with exceptional peers. Thus, significant change can and must occur via specific curricula and teaching strategies that facilitate normally developing students' interactions with persons with exceptionalities (Newman & Simpson, 1983).

Recognizing the importance of mainstreamed student success, we contend that ongoing assessment in a variety of areas is crucial to the success of the General Education Col-laboration Model. Such assessment should be multifaceted, taking into account the "whole" child in terms of both self-concept and social integration.

Classroom Modifications Supportive of Mainstreaming

Researchers have demonstrated interest in classroom modifications that influence the educational process. In addition, the National Education Association (NEA) has taken a leadership role in this area. Harris (1974), NEA president, challenged schools to initiate reform to foster educational improvement, recommending, for example, that schools reduce class size and obtain the services of more specialists. A myriad of other modifications designed to enhance mainstreaming has also been suggested (Hersh & Walker, 1983).

Class Size

In his call to improve schools, Harris (1974) indicated that the educational system could improve if the average class size were reduced to 10 students. Harris's recommendation was supported by the results of an NEA survey (Teacher Opinion Poll, 1975a). When asked to state the importance of class size to (a) academic achievement, (b) social and personal development of pupils, and (c) teacher job satisfaction, 80% of teachers surveyed responded that small class size is extremely important. In a related study, 78% of general educators surveyed stated that class size is an important issue in mainstreaming. This group of teachers indicated that a maximum class size of 15 to 19 students is required to accept and accommodate one mainstreamed exceptional student (Myles & Simpson, 1989).

Although challenged (Robinson, 1990), a body of empirical data supports reduced class size. According to McKenna and Olson (1975), for example, a class size of 25 or fewer students would lead to: (a) wider variety of instructional methods, (b) better classroom management and fewer discipline problems, (c) improved teacher attitudes, and (d) improved student attitudes. Smith and Glass (1980) reported similar findings when class size was reduced to fewer than 15 to 20 students.

Thus, small class size seems to contribute to the academic achievement of mainstreamed students as well as to positive teacher and student attitudes. Therefore, the General Education Collaboration Model suggests that classes be small enough to allow teachers to meet the individual

needs of students and to provide successful mainstreaming experiences.

Consultation

According to Idol and West (1987), school consultation in special education has flourished. At least 26 states currently have policies that mandate consultation (West & Brown, 1987). In addition, consultation appears to have general educator support. Approximately half of educators surveyed by Myles and Kasselman (1990) reported that they used collaborative consultation, although a formalized consultation program was not in place in their schools. Further, 95% stated that they would use collaborative consultation for exceptional and at-risk students if it were available in their schools. When asked to select modifications needed to mainstream an exceptional student, 65% of the 100 teachers polled by Myles and Simpson (1989) selected consultation.

In a data-based analysis of consultation, Miller and Sabatino (1978) compared student academic performance in a resource room with performance in a consultation model. Results showed that student academic performance gains were equivalent for both models. According to Miller and Sabatino:

> One could argue that the consultation model was surprisingly effective, since academic gains were on par with the direct service approach. That is, regular teachers seemingly became as effective in delivering instruction to special children within their classes as resource teachers were in intensive, 'out of mainstream' classes." (p. 89)

Concurring with the position taken by Miller and Sabatino, we contend that consultation between general and special educators is necessary to the success of the General Education Collaboration Model. This vehicle provides general education with information and support regarding the characteristics and needs of students with exceptionalities.

Inservice Programs

Inservice has been viewed as contributing to program change. Although the efficacy of traditional inservice programs has been challenged (Fullan, 1985), it appears that effective inservice may assist teachers in mainstreaming students with exceptionalities. In 1975 nationwide NEA survey, teachers were asked which classroom modifications would result in improved education (Teacher Opinion Poll, 1975b,

p. 14). Opinions were diverse, totaling more than 16 different suggestions, including additional inservice programming.

According to a number of studies, teacher inservices may be desirable in implementing mainstreaming programs. For example, Myles and Simpson (1989, 1990) and Simpson and Myles (in press) found that parents of exceptional children, support service staff, and general educators favor inservice programs as a vehicle to enhance mainstreaming of students with mild handicaps. Approximately half of those surveyed selected this mainstreaming option.

The General Education Collaboration Model supports continued inservice programs as a means of enhancing the knowledge base of general educators through both group and individual training. Group inservice is well suited for providing a general body of information regarding student characteristics and needs, and individual training can give general educators specific information and feedback opportunities.

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals play an important role in special education, as evidenced by the large number of people employed in this role. As of 1980, more than 80,000 paraprofessionals worked in special education public schools (Pickett, 1980). Research suggests that special educators are aware of the contributions that aides make in the classroom. Paraprofessionals are far less widespread in general education programs, though, suggesting that they are perceived to play a minor role in supporting mainstreamed students.

Regardless of the current use of paraprofessionals in general education programs, the General Education Collaboration Model is based on the premise that paraprofessionals are needed, to varying degrees, to support the mainstreamed students. Karagianis and Nesbit (1983) agreed with this assessment, noting that teachers' aides are "a necessary adjunct to the regular classroom where the teacher has a defined responsibility for handicapped children" (p. 19). General educators appear to concur; 65% of those surveyed by Myles and Simpson (1989) saw paraprofessionals as necessary facilitators of mainstreaming.

Paraprofessionals should be available to general education teachers who serve children and youth with disabilities. Specifically, paraprofessionals may assist teachers with a variety of tasks, including (a) reinforcing previously instructed concepts, (b) documenting student progress, and (c) assisting with daily planning. Paraprofessionals also can perform time-consuming tasks such as toilet training and modi-

fying written materials (Kargianis & Nesbit, 1983; McKenzie & Houk, 1986).

Planning Time

Additional planning time was another frequently selected modification among general educators in the 1975 NEA poll (Teacher Opinion Poll, 1975b). Respondents selecting this modification suggested that increased planning time would improve teacher efficacy. With regard to mainstreaming, planning time takes on even greater importance. According to approximately half of general educators and ancillary staff surveyed, additional planning would be required if one student with an exceptionality were to be placed fulltime in a mainstreamed setting. The majority of respondents indicated that they would prefer one hour daily planning time (Myles & Simpson, 1989; Simpson & Myles, in press). Parents did not view this mainstreaming option to be as important as school personnel did (only one-quarter indicated that one hour of daily planning was a necessary mainstreaming modification) (Myles & Simpson, 1990).

Teachers need adequate planning to be able to individualize academic tasks and plan optional or additional activities that can enhance the performance of students with exceptionalities. This time also is needed to allow general education personnel to consult with other education personnel or work with a paraprofessional. Hence, the General Education Collaboration Model incorporates adequate planning time as essential for general education teachers assigned to work with exceptional students. Additionally, the school day should be organized such that general and special educators share common blocks of time for planning.

Support Services

Availability of support service personnel has been seen to facilitate mainstreaming. Thus, the majority of general educators surveyed by Hudson, Graham, and Warner (1979) reported that although support service personnel were not generally available, they were needed to provide mainstreaming assistance.

Results similar to those of Hudson et al. (1979) were reached by Larrivee and Cook (1979), Moore and Fine (1978), and Knoff (1984). Those authors found that the availability of support services impacted teacher attitudes positively. Specifically, teacher attitudes toward mainstreaming seemed more positive when support services were available. In fact, in one study general educators indicated that, without assistance from resource personnel, they would not generally support full-time mainstreaming for students with learning disabilities or mental retardation (Knoff, 1984).

Further, both parents and support service personnel agree that support services play an important role in mainstreaming. Over half of the parents surveyed (Myles & Simpson, 1990) and three-fourths of ancillary staff surveyed (Simpson & Myles, in press) responded that support staff availability was necessary to mainstreaming. Based on these findings, teachers are generally accepting of mainstreaming and having special students in their classes if they can rely on personnel for necessary support (Larrivee & Cook, 1979). Thus, based on sound professional practice, the General Education Collaboration Model maintains that these resources are essential for successful maintenance of students with disabilities in regular classrooms.

CONCLUSIONS

The myriad needs of children, youth and their families; and the ever-changing needs of society demand new ways of providing an appropriate education to children and youth with behavior and learning problems. Schrag (1990) reminded us that "the students we serve in special education today are not the students that we served five years ago. There is an increase in the number of students with learning and behavior problems because of poverty, child abuse, ethnic and language diversity, teen pregnancy, and drug dependence." (p. 2). Hence, legislators, educators, and the general public are increasingly demanding change, observing that education will either need to evolve or dissolve.

Students with special needs will continue to pose a special challenge to schools. Thus, educational change must include a methodology for more effectively serving these children and youth. The increasing reliance on general educators to assume responsibility for high-risk and disabled students demands an efficacious support system. A multifaceted system that takes into consideration shared input, responsibility, and decision making between general and special educators is needed to ensure an appropriate education for all. The General Education Collaboration Model, with its emphasis on meeting student, parent, teacher, and administrator needs, is a valuable contribution to this undertaking.

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