It has been said that there is nothing new under the sun. If “nothing” and “new” are construed broadly, that axiom is nearly indisputable: everything is a variation of something else, from the moment of the creation of this planet and the sun itself.

But if the axiom were not so generously interpreted, we authors would be justified in reciting what we think is new about this, the eighth edition of this introduction to special education.

What remains the same are the authors. Each is a professor of special education at the University of Kansas, and each is affiliated with the Beach Center on Disability. Ann and Rud co-founded the center in 1988 and have co-directed since then, but Michael Wehmeyer will direct it, with Karrie Shogren as associate director, when the Turnbulls retire from the directorship.

What also remains the same is our emphasis on evidence-based inclusion of students with disabilities in general education. We also gave the first edition that same emphasis, and at the time, some thought we were too pro-inclusion. But the evidence, since then, is that special educators, general educators, related service professionals, and families can collaborate with each other for inclusion. All editions of this book have cited the evidence; this edition does, too, but the evidence is now overwhelming that the pro-inclusion posture of the first edition was correct then and remains so.

New to This Edition

Notwithstanding these two factors, there are significant changes in this edition.

• The first and most obvious is that this edition is now available as an eText. An eText format benefits you in three ways: It is affordable, it has a search function that allows you to efficiently locate coverage of concepts, and it has clickable key terms that take you directly to the glossary definition. Index entries are also hyperlinked and take you directly to the relevant page of the text. You may navigate to particular sections of the book by clicking on desired sections within the expanded table of contents. You may highlight sections of the text and add reader notes by typing onto the page for enhanced review at a later date. As an eText, this edition also provides links to interactive materials that elaborate on the written text and give you a chance to apply your knowledge.

• Video Margin Notes provide real-world examples of text concepts and introduce you to individuals leading exceptional lives, including videos recorded by Dan Habib, a prize-winning videographer in the field of special education. When we offer a link to Dan’s videos, we do so by also describing the student, family, or professional who appears in the video. In this way, we combine Dan’s work with our own, “doubling down” as it were on the opportunity for you to learn. It is important for you to know that Dan is not only a superb professional, but he is also the father of a young man who has a disability and is featured in the My Voice feature in Chapter 11.

• Apply Your Knowledge activities in each chapter help you apply knowledge and ensure that you are understanding as you read. These activities provide immediate feedback about your responses.

• At the end of each chapter, you can access interactive multiple-choice Check Your Understanding quizzes to self-assess comprehension. By using this material, you can become confident as you prepare for your examinations. In their diagnostic form, these exercises can help you identify points of knowledge, areas of weakness, or knowledge gaps to better direct you in reviewing materials.
• The eText also contains links to Pearson’s eLearning modules—individual learning objects, self-contained at the topic level. Each module advances a single, practical, and applied learning outcome.

Modules include learning outcomes, presentations of concepts and skills, opportunities to apply your understanding of those concepts and skills, and assessments to check for understanding. The modules have three main sections. The Learn section presents the essential information you need in order to meet the module's learning outcome. The Apply section includes exercises that give you an opportunity to practice applying this concept in a classroom context. And finally, the Assess section provides a test so you can measure your understanding of material presented in the module, as well as your ability to use this material in an instructional setting.

In the new edition, you will find:
• The module “Writing Annual Goals” in Chapter 1 to enhance coverage of the components of an IEP.
• The module “Multi-Tiered Systems of Support” in Chapter 2 to enhance coverage of response to intervention.
• The module “Differentiating Instruction” in Chapter 3 to enhance the chapter's discussion on becoming a culturally responsive teacher and advocate.
• The module “Co-Teaching” in Chapter 13 to enhance the chapter's discussion on collaborative training.

In sum, this new eText format will enrich your learning.

• In the eighth edition, we still use vignettes to introduce students, families, and educators, thereby giving a face to the didactic text itself. But we have replaced some vignettes with new ones in Chapters 2, 7, 9, 10, and 11. Similarly, we retain the “My Voice” feature but add new voices, freshening the text while still giving voice to the students, families, and teachers who, together, demonstrate how collaboration advances inclusion and appropriate education. New “voices” appear in Chapters 2, 4, 7, 10, and 11.

Inasmuch as the vignettes and “My Voice” features tell about collaboration, we have dropped a feature that was in previous editions, namely, “Partnership Tips.” We have, however, written about partnership, in the text of each chapter, so that our readers will have explicit instruction about that indispensable element of special education.

• In addition, we have added new strategies and addressed new technologies, added new IEP Tips and Into Practice features, updated statistics and pie charts with data from the U.S. Department of Education showing where students currently receive their education, aligned the text to the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Initial Level Special Educator Preparation Standards, and updated references to evidence-based, peer-reviewed practices and strategies.
Inclusion

Chapter Vignettes. These opening narratives tell the stories of students and their families, friends, teachers, and other educators and service providers from a wide range of cultural and linguistic groups and geographic locations. The stories tell you how exceptional lives can be made all the more exceptional when you use evidence-based teaching techniques and apply them to students with disabilities, in the general curriculum. We refer to these vignettes throughout each chapter to exemplify our key points and content.

CHAPTER TEN
Understanding Students with Autism

Don Habib and Betsy McNamara: Into the Future

Samuel Habib has come a long way and is making strides in his daily life. He is improving his ability to communicate with his family, teachers, and peers. He is learning to manage his medical conditions. He is becoming more self-sufficient. He is learning to take care of himself. He is learning to make decisions. He is learning to take responsibility for his own life. He is learning to live a full and independent life. He is learning to be happy, find love, live independently, find fulfillment, and contribute to society.

Samuel's progress is a result of the hard work and dedication of his parents, Dan and Betsy, his teachers, his doctors, and his friends. They have all worked hard to create a supportive environment for Samuel. They have all worked hard to create a safe and welcoming environment for Samuel.

The future has promise for Samuel, even as it does for Dan and Betsy. Samuel is now: learning in the general education curriculum. He is doing well. He is developing his skills and abilities. He is learning to live a full and independent life. He is learning to be happy, find love, live independently, find fulfillment, and contribute to society.

My Voice. This feature continues our focus on connecting personal ways to the content of the book. “My Voice” is a reflection on living with exceptionalities and how education affects the person's life.

View these videos. These margin notes illustrate text concepts in action and introduce you to additional leading exceptional lives.

As you watch the video titled “The Cole Twins Overcome Learning Disabilities and Go to College,” consider the role that high expectations had on the twins’ success: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLM9sV5Y5jc
Practical Application

Real Scenarios, Real Solutions

**Into Practice.** This feature describes practical, step-by-step examples of how to use universal design and secure inclusion, respond to the multicultural nature of American schools, and practice collaboration and partnerships. Every categorial chapter presents strategies across grade levels to give all prospective teachers real-life examples. These strategies represent the best of the best from teachers and programs across the country.

---

**Inclusion Tips.** The information in this feature provides helpful advice and strategies for including students in the general curriculum. We address student behaviors, social interactions, educational performance, and classroom attitudes in relation to what teachers may see in the classroom, what they may be tempted to do, other responses, and best practices for including the student’s peers in the process.

---

**BOX 8.3 | INTO PRACTICE**

**Accommodations for ADHD**

Because students with ADHD have various traits, you will need to make a variety of accommodations for them. You might consider the following:

For students who display tantrum behaviors:
- Send them to quiet areas, sit them down to talk, or encourage them to share what is wrong.
- Give them a quiet place to sit when they feel overwhelmed.
- Help them develop coping strategies.

For students who display outbursts:
- Send them to quiet areas, sit them down to talk, or encourage them to share what is wrong.
- Give them a quiet place to sit when they feel overwhelmed.
- Help them develop coping strategies.

For students who are impulsive:
- Encourage them to take more time to plan and think before they act.
- Help them develop strategies for self-regulation.

For students with excessive motor activity:
- Encourage them to engage in physical activity during breaks.
- Encourage them to use sensory tools to help them stay focused.

For students who have mood characteristics:
- Encourage them to participate in physical activities.
- Help them develop coping strategies.

For students with excessive vocal activity:
- Encourage them to participate in physical activities.
- Help them develop coping strategies.

For students who have academic challenges:
- Encourage them to use a calculator or graph paper to space numbers.
- Give them more time to complete assignments.

For students with social skills challenges:
- Encourage them to participate in social activities.
- Help them develop coping strategies.

---

**BOX 7.3 | Inclusion Tips**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>What You Might See</th>
<th>What You Might Be Tempted to Do</th>
<th>Alternate Responses</th>
<th>Ways to Include Peers in the Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student refuses to follow directions and uses inappropriate language.</td>
<td>Student refuses to follow directions and uses inappropriate language.</td>
<td>Monitor their behavior and redirect them.</td>
<td>Encourage them to participate in group activities.</td>
<td>Meet with their parents and discuss their needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student withholds ideas or participation.</td>
<td>Student withholds ideas or participation.</td>
<td>Encourage them to participate in group activities.</td>
<td>Monitor their behavior and redirect them.</td>
<td>Meet with their parents and discuss their needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student refuses to pay attention to the teacher.</td>
<td>Student refuses to pay attention to the teacher.</td>
<td>Monitor their behavior and redirect them.</td>
<td>Encourage them to participate in group activities.</td>
<td>Meet with their parents and discuss their needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student refuses to work on assignments.</td>
<td>Student refuses to work on assignments.</td>
<td>Monitor their behavior and redirect them.</td>
<td>Encourage them to participate in group activities.</td>
<td>Meet with their parents and discuss their needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interactive Exercises. Apply Your Knowledge activities in each chapter and Pearson’s eLearning modules help you apply knowledge and ensure that you are understanding as you read. At the end of each chapter, you can access interactive multiple-choice Check Your Understanding quizzes to self-assess comprehension and increase your confidence as you prepare for examinations.

Obviously, it takes a student who does not use English a long time to master it for school purposes. While the student is learning English, she also must master the content of a curriculum offered in English. The lack of useful English undoubtedly impedes that mastery and may suggest to some teachers that the student has a disability. But be cautious of reaching that conclusion: The student may simply need to learn the majority language.

IEP Tips. For students who have disabilities, the IEP and the IEP process is the guiding force to their inclusion and progress in the general education curriculum. Throughout the chapters, we include margin notes that help link content with this practical focus. These margin notes supplement the narrative that describes how professionals can be partners with other professionals, parents, and students to provide an appropriate education in the general curriculum. All of these additional references help inform teachers of their role in the IEP and the IEP process and integrate this content into meaningful, professional contexts.

Nondiscriminatory Evaluation Process Features. These features illustrate the procedure for identifying students with disabilities as well as students who are gifted and talented (see Chapters 5–16).

Addressing the Professional Standards. Each chapter concludes with a list of relevant knowledge and skill statements from the Council for Exceptional Children’s Initial Level Special Educator Preparation Standards. This will help you see how the book’s content relates to your future professional educational behaviors and dispositions. A full listing of these standards is provided in an appendix at the end of the text.
This eighth edition of *Exceptional Lives: Special Education in Today’s Schools* aligns with a comprehensive and integrated collection of supplements to maximize students’ education and instructors’ ease of teaching the material. To access the Instructor’s Manual and PowerPoint Slides, go to www.pearsonhighered.com, search the catalogue for this edition, then click on the “Resources” tab. Here you will be able to complete a one-time registration for a user name and password and download the supplements.

**Online Instructor’s Manual with Test Items (0-13-386584-3).** The instructor’s manual helps to synthesize all of the resources available for each chapter while it also sifts through the materials to match the delivery method (e.g., semester, quarter) and areas of emphasis for the course. These materials are useful for traditional courses as well as online or online-supported courses.

**Online PowerPoint Slides (0-13-3855560-0).** These visual aids display, summarize, and help explain core information presented in each chapter. All PowerPoint slides have been updated for consistency and to reflect current content in this new edition.

**TestGen (0-13-3955877).** TestGen is a powerful test generator available exclusively from Pearson Education publishers. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own 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 your use in creating a test, based on the associated textbook material. Assessments—including equations, graphs, and scientific notation—may be created for both print and online testing.

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)

**Acknowledgments**

Many people have contributed to this book. From the Turnbulls’ perspective, their son, Jay, has been their best professor, teaching them time and again how and why to respond to his very self-determined ways, his great expectations, and his insistence on living as a full citizen. Although Jay died suddenly in 2009, he lives in our memories and affects how we approach special education and this book. As you will note from the dedications, that is true of all authors.

With respect to the Turnbulls, however, Amy Turnbull Khare and Kate Turnbull, the Turnbulls’ two daughters; Rahul Khare and Chip Brookes, their sons-in-law; and Dylan Kumar Khare, Cameron Turnbull Khare, and Maya Annika Khare, their grandchildren, have taught us to preserve the enthusiasm of youth as we write this, the eighth edition of this book, and to bear in mind that every child is special.

Michael Wehmeyer would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of his wife, Kathy, and sons, Geoff and Graham, in all his professional activities as well as those of his colleagues in the University of Kansas’s Department of Special Education, at the
Beach Center on Disability, and in the Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities.

Karrie Shogren would like to acknowledge her close network of friends in all of her professional endeavors. She would also like to acknowledge the ongoing support she has received from her colleagues in the Department of Special Education and Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas.

Of course, the families, students, and teachers featured in the vignettes are indispensable to this book. If they had not opened their lives to us, we could not have written about them. In every way, they are your professors and ours, too. Our gratitude to them is unbounded.

This book is the product of collaboration among many different talented professionals. At the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas, we have had the immeasurable benefit of Lois Weldon's many skills. She never flinched when presented with yet another draft of a chapter, with still another request to create figures and boxes, or with unexpected deadlines. We could not do what we do daily without her calm, cool, and composed work ethic.

Jane Wegner of the Schiefelebusch speech-language-hearing clinic at the University of Kansas and Evette Edmister, a speech-language pathologist in Des Moines, Iowa, and professor at the University of Northern Iowa (who trained with Jane at the University of Kansas), once again contributed a superb chapter on communication impairment. Sally Roberts, associate professor in the Department of Special Education and associate dean at the School of Education at the University of Kansas, did likewise with respect to the chapter on hearing impairment. Sandy Lewis at Florida State University once again wrote the chapter on visual impairment and helped us all understand how to educate students with that disability.

Christina Robb, our development editor, contributed her organizational skills to our collaborations and helped coordinate the interactive material for the eText. Hope Madden worked tirelessly to coordinate the new vignettes, My Voices, and Dan Habib video. Ann Davis, the executive editor of our publisher's special education texts, has been a key member of our planning team and reminded us how important it was to humanize our book by emphasizing values and reiterating the voices of the students, teachers, and family members. Joe Sweeney, Kerry Rubadue, and Tammy Walters helped usher the book through the production process.

We also gratefully acknowledge the input and insight of several reviewers who helped us keep our book current and in step with their classrooms and students: Patricia Lynch, Texas A&M University; Mary Pearson, University of Central Arkansas; and Randy Seevers, University of Houston-Clear Lake.
Who Is Dylan Schwind?

Let’s start at the beginning. He’s the 8½-year-old adopted son of Darlene and Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Schwind. He was born in China and adopted when he was two years old. He has lived in China and in four different places in the United States, moving as his father was reassigned from one duty post to another. He has one sister and no brothers. His mother does not work outside the home. Those are the beginning facts you need to know about him.

Now what about his education? Here, the answers are far less clear-cut. Professionals identified him as needing supports and services and have provided them since he was a toddler. Soon after adopting him, Darlene noticed that he had delays in some areas: He isolated himself from other children, he did not want to be touched, and he was content with entertaining himself for hours on end. During the next three years, Darlene talked to several pediatricians; each assured her that Dylan would catch up. Upon arriving in Washington, D.C., she finally convinced a physician to have Dylan tested for motor delays. At the age of five, he had the motor skills of a 2½- to 3-year-old. His occupational therapist suggested that he be evaluated for autism or attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). (You will learn about these disabilities in Chapters 10 and 8, respectively.) He then referred Dylan to a developmental pediatrician, who abandoned the unjustified
conclusion that “he’s just developing slowly” and confirmed that Dylan had autism and ADHD.

Dylan has a strong advocate in his mother, Darlene. Special educators either quickly become partners with her—or fail to, at their peril. Dylan can prosper when special educators provide the services he needs, according to the evaluations he has had, in the settings that allow him to prosper, and in collaboration with his mother and other professionals.

But Dylan is also a child whom some special educators seem to want to overlook; and if not for Darlene, they might get away with overlooking him. That’s not a comfortable judgment to reach, but it’s defensible. Even though he was diagnosed by a pediatrician, schools in two different districts, each in a different state, stonewalled on giving him early education services even though he was eligible for them.

Finally, but not insignificantly, he is also the son of a career army officer. That is significant because he and his family move every two to three years, not just from one school district to another in the same state but from one state to another. These moves or deployments are involuntary: Family members comply with orders, uprooting themselves and, at times, jeopardizing Dylan’s development in service to their country. Given the huge numbers of servicemen and women who are being activated from the reserve and the National Guard or who belong to the regular armed forces, special educators can expect to serve more and more of their families.

Military families are not the only ones who are mobile. In-state and interstate immigration occurs within the civilian population. The challenge to special educators is to provide continuity in appropriate services, which ensures that a student makes progress toward academic, developmental, functional, and emotional-behavioral goals and that he or she is educated with peers without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate for that student. So Dylan represents a significant portion of the population whom special and general educators will teach.

Has he received an appropriate education from them? You be the judge. He was in three different states before he began to have stability and receive an appropriate education; that means he was 5½ years old before he began to benefit from special education because his disabilities were not formally diagnosed until he started kindergarten. Even with that diagnosis, the school resisted a special education evaluation well into that school year.

Darlene believes that the school districts he had previously attended tried to pacify her by offering some services, based only on a rudimentary screening, with the hope that she and her family would soon be transferred out of the district and thus allow it to avoid the cost of providing Dylan with special education services. These districts screened Dylan for his academic skills, which were good. But they paid little heed to his behavioral needs or his fine-motor deficits. In a word, they refused to collaborate with other professionals. Not surprisingly, his behaviors got worse: He withdrew socially and melted down when challenged by a difficult task that educators did not adapt for him, throwing objects, sweeping items off his desk, and screaming and crying.

Although Dylan was included in classrooms with students who did not have disabilities, he seemed not to benefit from inclusion; indeed, some students were bullying him
because of his disabilities, not because of his Chinese heritage. (Schools on military bases or in communities impacted by a heavy military presence are unusually diverse in their populations.) And to Darlene’s frustration, many of his teachers ignored her, thinking they knew more than she did about Dylan and resenting that she had found reliable allies among military families whose children had disabilities and who knew how to navigate their way through obstacles in the local schools.

Finally, however, Dylan began receiving an appropriate education. Then came the next move: New testing determined that he needed no social, educational, or behavioral assistance. He is now in the second grade, receiving only occupational therapy and physical therapy, but he is regressing. His mother, with help from other professionals, is trying to implement the social, behavioral, and academic interventions he needs. She continues to fight for Dylan’s needed services before he loses any more time.

PROFILE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

Perhaps you have heard these lines. Although they apply to all of us today, they were written in 1624 by poet John Donne: “Never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee” (Donne, 1986).

Disability affects 13 percent of the U.S. school-aged population (U.S. Department of Education, 2013a); it eventually affects most of us as we age. For you, then, the disability bell could toll at least twice: once as you teach, and once as you age. For some of you, the bell tolls more frequently because you have a disability yourself or have a family member or close friend with a disability.
Watch the video entitled “When the Moon Come Up” to meet Norman Kunc, an adult who exemplifies these values. As you watch the video, keep each of the six values in mind. Reflect how Norman’s life reflects those values: http://youtu.be/k2OxpzPybT4

Overview of Today’s Special Education

When the bell tolls, it tolls not only for people with a disability but also for their families, friends, teachers, school administrators, and communities. That is why, in this book, we offer stories about real families, real children and youth, and real educators at the beginning of each chapter. But stories alone are not enough to introduce you to the field of special education, so we also review the most recent research data, combining the real-life personal face of disability with evidence-based practices in special education, public policy, and overarching values that we encourage you to adopt. In particular, three themes permeate this book: inclusion, universal design for learning, and partnerships.

Remember Dylan? He is included in the general curriculum, and he benefits from teachers who adapt their teaching for him and others. These teachers are applying universal design to their instruction, which means that teachers design instructional materials and activities to make the content accessible to all students. They do this through partnerships between education teachers, related service providers (such as speech therapists, physical therapists, and school nurses), students, and families.

Exemplary special education occurs when values guide practices. And when values-guided practices are as state-of-the-art as the ones you will read about in this book, no student, family, school, or teaching challenge will be too daunting. Figure 1.1 identifies these values.

Who Are the Students?

To answer this question, we describe the total number of students with disabilities, the gender of those students, the provision of gifted education, the categories of disabilities, and the issues of labels and language. First, however, let’s define special education. It is specially designed instruction at no cost to a child’s parents that meets a child’s unique needs in school. It consists of related services and supplementary aids and services (which we describe in Chapter 2 and then in Chapters 5 through 16).

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS SERVED

In the 2011–2012 school year, 336,519 U.S. infants and toddlers (ages birth through two) received early intervention services, and 750,558 preschool children (ages three
through five) received early childhood services (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Approximately 6 million (5,670,680, to be exact) students ages six through twenty-one received some form of special education. This brings the total number of children, youth, and young adults served by special education to 6,737,757.

**GENDER OF STUDENTS**

In the general education school population, males and females are enrolled in equal proportion, but in special education approximately two-thirds of the students are male and one-third are female (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

**GIFTED STUDENTS**

Special education also serves students who have gifts and talents (see Chapter 16). The percentage of students identified as gifted ranges from a low of 1.7 percent to a high of 22.3 percent in different states (National Association for Gifted Children, 2011). In total, approximately 3.2 million students are identified as gifted and talented in elementary and secondary schools, representing around 7 percent of the school population (Snyder & Dillow, 2012). Females slightly outnumber males.

**DISABILITY CATEGORIES**

Students with disabilities can be served under thirteen disability categories, as you will learn more about throughout this book. Figure 1.2 describes the percentages of students served under each category (U.S. Department of Education, 2013a). Nearly two-thirds of students with disabilities are classified into two categories: specific learning disabilities (36 percent) and speech or language impairments (21 percent). These two categories and the categories of other health impairments (12 percent), intellectual disability (7 percent), autism (7 percent), emotional or behavioral disorders (6 percent), and developmental delay

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**FIGURE 1.2** Disability Distribution for Students Ages Three through Twenty-One Receiving Education and Related Services under IDEA: School Year 2011–2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability type</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific learning disabilities</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech or language impairments</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other health impairments</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual disability</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental delay</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional disturbance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple disabilities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing impairments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthopedic impairments</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**NOTE:** Deaf-blindness, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairments are not shown because they each account for less than 1 percent of children served under IDEA. Due to categories not shown, detail does not sum to total.
Overview of Today’s Special Education

(6 percent) account for 95 percent of all students with disabilities. In each chapter in this book, you will meet students who have disabilities, just as you have been introduced to Dylan. You will read about their characteristics, their families, and the education they receive. But before you read about educational characteristics, a word of caution is in order.

LABELS AND LANGUAGE

How would you feel if you were Dylan and if other students or even teachers referred to you as “an autistic”? Now imagine being called “the crippled kid” or “the dyslexic.” How would you feel if you were known only by the nature of your impairments and not according to your abilities? Devalued? Probably. Indeed, that is precisely how many people with disabilities, their families, and their teachers respond when a child with disabilities is referred to as the type of disability that they experience—labeled, first and foremost, as a disabled person.

There is controversy about labeling and its consequences, which include classification into special education (Gold & Richards, 2012). Some students may benefit if a label qualifies them to receive services because the benefit of those services can outweigh the stigma that accompanies some labels. Indeed, some people with disabilities, including those with hearing and visual impairments (see Chapters 14 and 15), accept and celebrate the labels because they create cultural solidarity.

On the other hand, labeling can lead educators to make biased decisions about a student’s strengths and needs. In one study, researchers gave preservice teacher educators videos of students and asked them to identify students’ behavior as “on task” or “off task” (Allday, Duhon, Blackburn-Ellis, & Van Dycke, 2011). They told some of the preservice teacher educators that students had oppositional defiant disorder (a type of emotional or behavioral disorder), others that students had attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and still others that students were gifted and talented. The students’ labels made a difference: Teachers were less likely to rate the behavior of students who were gifted and talented as “off task.”

So we ask you to be cautious about using labels. While they may not be objectionable to some people with disabilities and their families and friends, they are to many others. Our best advice is this: Let Dylan be Dylan, not a youngster with a label. Refer to him by his name, not his label. And if you or other educators must use labels for legal or other valid reasons, such as to secure services for students, avoid those that demean and stigmatize, for they too often separate and devalue people, both inside and outside school (van Swet, Wichers-Bots, & Brown, 2011).

Three changes in terminology have occurred over the past three decades. They are important to understand because they reflect values that you should adopt in your practice. The first change abandons the term handicap and favors the term disability. To be handicapped is to have your “cap in your hand,” begging for a service such as education. Dylan does not have to beg; he is not handicapped but does have a disability.

The second change abandons stigmatizing words altogether. For example, the terms retarded and mentally retarded have been replaced by the term intellectual disability. Indeed, the word retard is highly offensive and should never be used in professional or casual conversations. The “R word” is tantamount to racial and ethnic slurs that have long been off limits. Similar changes in wording apply to other students: For instance, crippled has been replaced by physical disability.

The third change, called people-first language, puts the person before the disability. For example, instead of using phrases such as “learning disabled students,” saying “students with learning disabilities” connotes more dignity. Even better, you might consider not labeling at all. Why not just say “students”? Best of all, just say “Dylan.” Figure 1.3 provides more information about the do’s and don’ts of person-first language. These guidelines have been endorsed by dozens of national organizations within the broad disability field.

In Chapter 2 you will learn about a current approach in special education: response to intervention (RtI). It directs teachers to intensify their instruction for students who experience learning challenges before referring them for special education testing and ultimately for a formal label. This approach can help teachers avoid unnecessary labeling, as it ensures that students receive high-quality instruction in general education before being referred to special education.
Both general education and special education teachers provide instruction to students with exceptionalities. Some general education teachers get an endorsement in special education to prepare them to be successful in providing inclusive instruction. In this section, we primarily focus on personnel related to special education. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2012), 393,061 special education teachers are employed to teach students ages three through twenty-one. If you are considering a career in special education, your job prospects are good. To understand your opportunities completely, you should know that a study of supply and demand for sixty-two education fields identified fourteen as having a considerable shortage, nine of which were in areas related to special education (American Association for Employment in Education, 2008). The four areas with the most critical shortages were teachers trained to support students with emotional or behavioral disorders, visual impairments, and severe disabilities as well as those who specialize in early childhood. The regions of the country that had the most severe shortages were the northwest and the southeast. It is encouraging that the number of new teachers hired in public schools is projected to increase from 2010 to 2021 by
Overview of Today’s Special Education

28 percent (Hussar & Bailey, 2013). This 28 percent increase refers to general and special education teachers; separate data were not provided for special education teachers alone. Tremendous variation exists in how school districts provide staffing for students with exceptionalities. Variation at the school district level in the numbers of special education teachers that are hired is nearly twice as large as variation in the general education staffing (Levenson, 2012). The percentage of highly qualified special education teachers increased from 88.8 percent in 2006 to 94.2 percent in 2010 (Boe et al., 2013).

Not all special education professionals are teachers. Other educational personnel provide services to students with disabilities and include school social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, recreation and therapeutic specialists, medical/nursing staff, orientation and mobility specialists, physical education teachers, psychologists, audiologists, counselors, rehabilitation counselors, interpreters, and speech pathologists. The number of nonteaching personnel who provided special education services for students ages three through twenty-one totaled 181,192 during 2006 (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Additionally, 396,468 paraprofessionals are involved in providing instruction to students with disabilities.

You now know that there is a broad range of educational roles. What you may not know is how rewarding it can be to be an educator of students with exceptional needs.

Overview of the Law and Special Education

For more than thirty years, the education of students with disabilities has been governed by a law that Congress enacted in 1975 called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Whatever role you play in American schools, you almost certainly will have to know about this law, the rights it gives to students, and the duties it imposes on schools. Let’s begin with a bit of its history.

Two Types of Discrimination

During the early and middle decades of the twentieth century, schools discriminated against students with disabilities in two significant ways (Turnbull, Stowe, & Huerta, 2007). First, they often completely excluded many students with disabilities. If such students were admitted, they were not provided with an effective or appropriate education. Second, schools often classified students as having disabilities who in fact did not have disabilities. This practice is known as misclassification. Frequently, these students were members of culturally or linguistically diverse groups.

Beginning in the early 1970s, advocates for students with disabilities—primarily their families, parent advocacy organizations, and civil rights lawyers—began to sue state and local school officials, claiming that exclusion and misclassification violated students’ rights to an equal education opportunity under the U.S. Constitution (Turnbull, Shogren, & Turnbull, 2011). Relying on the Supreme Court’s decision in the school race-desegregation case Brown v. Board of Education (1954), they argued that because the Court held that schools may not segregate by race, schools also may not segregate or otherwise discriminate by ability and disability. Students are students, regardless of

Watch the video entitled “Teach Special Education” and consider points made in this video about the profession of special education that particularly resonate with you: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XsaK3pWyII
their race or disability. You will learn more about Brown’s impact in Chapter 3, when we describe the deplorable history of discrimination against students from culturally diverse backgrounds, especially in special education.

Judicial Decisions and Legislation

Advocates for students with disabilities were successful. In 1972, federal courts ordered the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia to (1) provide a free appropriate public education to all students with disabilities, (2) educate students with disabilities in the same schools and basically the same programs as students without disabilities, and (3) put into place certain procedural safeguards so that parents of students with disabilities could challenge schools that did not live up to the courts’ orders (Mills v. Washington, 1972; Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1971, 1972; Turnbull et al., 2007).

These two cases prompted Congress to act. In 1975, it enacted IDEA (then called the Education of All Handicapped Students Act, or Public Law [P.L.] 94–142). At that time Congress intended to open up the schools to all students with disabilities and make sure that those students had the chance to benefit from education.

Nowadays the challenge is to provide access and ensure that students really do benefit. Special education is explicitly outcome-driven. There are four outcomes: equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Later in this chapter you will read about these outcomes, but first you need to know about IDEA’s basic components.

When Congress reauthorized IDEA in 2004, it enacted the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. Sometimes you will hear people refer to the law by that name or its abbreviation, IDEIA. But Congress recognized that people are familiar with the law’s former name (before the 2004 reauthorization), so it provided that the short title of the reauthorized law is Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (abbreviated as IDEA). Therefore, in every place in which we refer to the 2004 law, we call it Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA.

THE SPAN OF SPECIAL EDUCATION: BIRTH THROUGH AGE TWENTY-ONE

Having enacted IDEA in 1975 to benefit students ages six to eighteen, Congress has expanded the group of students who have a right to special education. The law now applies to infants and toddlers from birth through age two, young children (ages three through five), and older students (through age twenty-one). IDEA recognizes that infants and toddlers have needs unlike those of older children (ages three through twenty-one). Accordingly, it consists of two parts, each of which is age specific: Part B and Part C. (Part A sets out Congress’s intent and national policy to provide a free appropriate public education to all students with disabilities, from birth through age twenty-one.)

PART B

Part B benefits students (such as Dylan Schwind) who are ages three through twenty-one. To define eligible students, IDEA combines a categorical approach (that is, it describes the categories of disabilities; Dylan’s is autism) with a functional approach (that is, it provides that
the student must be unable to function successfully in the general curriculum without special education). The IDEA categories for students ages 3 through 21, in order from the most frequent to least frequent, are specific learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, other health impairments (which includes attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder), autism, intellectual disability (formerly called “mental retardation” but now, by act of Congress, renamed to be “intellectual disability”), developmental delay, emotional disturbance, multiple disabilities, hearing impairments, and orthopedic impairments (we use the preferred term “physical disabilities”). The categories of deaf-blindness, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairments are not shown in Figure 1.2 because each represents less than one percent of children served under IDEA. Nevertheless, we discuss each of these categories in a separate chapter. Moreover, we discuss attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder in a separate chapter. We discuss “mental retardation” in the chapter now titled “Intellectual Disability.” We discuss “emotional disturbance” in the chapter now entitled “Emotional or Behavioral Disorders.” We do not have a chapter on “developmental delay,” but we discuss that topic when describing Part B and Part C of IDEA. There is also a chapter on students who are gifted.

These same categories apply to children ages three to six (those in early childhood special education), but each state may also provide special education to children who do not yet have a disability label but meet the functional criteria for special education services, which include the following:

- Are experiencing developmental delays in one or more of the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive behavior and development; and
- Because of these delays, need special education and related services.

IDEA gives the states discretion about whether they will choose to serve children ages three through five (early education). All states have selected to do so.

**PART C**

IDEA also gives the states discretion about whether they will choose to serve infants and toddlers (ages birth through two, also known as zero to three). Again, all states have opted to provide early intervention services. Part C benefits any child under age three who (1) needs early intervention services because of developmental delays in one or more of the areas of cognitive development, physical development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive development or (2) has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in a developmental delay.

Part C does more than benefit the children who have identified delays. It also gives each state the option of serving at-risk infants and toddlers (children under age three). These are children who would be at risk of experiencing a substantial developmental delay if they did not receive early intervention services. Note the difference: A child with a diagnosed condition that has a “high probability” of resulting in a developmental delay is not the same as a child who is “at risk” of having a delay.

**Special Education and Students’ Eligibility**

As you have already read, IDEA defines special education as specially designed instruction, at no cost to the child’s parents, that meets the unique needs of a student with a disability. A student with a disability is one who has the disabilities identified previously in this chapter (the categorical definition) and who, because of the disability, needs special education and related services (the functional definition). Thus, special education is reserved for students who need it because of their disabilities. Dylan is one of the beneficiaries of IDEA: He has a disability that requires special education services and supports.

**WHERE SPECIAL EDUCATION IS PROVIDED**

IDEA defines special education as specially designed instruction. Thus, special education is the process of delivering special education or individualized instruction, as contrasted to a particular place such as a general education classroom or a special education
classroom. What do you remember from the vignette about where Dylan receives his special education? Special education occurs in classrooms (where Dylan receives his), students’ homes, hospitals and institutions, and other settings. Under IDEA, special education must be available wherever there are students who qualify for its benefits.

**Components of Special Education**

Special education is individualized to the student; that is the meaning of “to meet the unique needs” of a student. To meet a student’s needs, it is usually necessary to provide more than individualized instruction. Educators and other professionals in special education do this by supplementing their instruction with what are known as related services. These are services that are necessary to assist the student in benefiting from special education. Figure 1.4 identifies and defines related services. Note that speech therapy, which Dylan receives, is a related service.

**IDEA: Six Principles**

It is not enough for IDEA simply to identify the eligible students and to specify the services they have a right to receive. Because of schools’ past discrimination through exclusion and misclassification, IDEA also establishes six principles that govern students’ education (Turnbull et al., 2007). Figure 1.5 describes those six principles. Because IDEA is complex and contains general rules, exceptions to the general rules, and even exceptions to the exceptions, we will describe the general rules and, sometimes, the exceptions.

**Zero Reject**

The principle of zero reject prohibits schools from excluding any student with a disability (as defined by IDEA) from a free appropriate public education. The purpose of the zero-reject principle is to ensure that all children and youth (ages three through twenty-one), no matter how severe their disabilities, will receive an appropriate education provided at public expense. To carry out this purpose, the zero-reject rule applies to the state and all of its school districts and private schools (if the public system places a student into a private school), state-operated programs such as schools for students with visual or hearing impairments, psychiatric hospitals, and institutions for people with other disabilities.

**EDUCABILITY**

To carry out the zero-reject rule, courts have ordered state and local education agencies to provide services to children who traditionally (but unjustly) have been regarded as not able to learn because of the profound extent of their disabilities. The courts say that “all” means “all”: Congress was very clear that it intends IDEA to benefit all children with disabilities, no matter how severe their disability.

**DISCIPLINE**

To assure that all students with a disability receive an appropriate education and that the schools are safe places for teaching and learning, IDEA regulates how schools may discipline students who qualify for IDEA’s protection. The principles of the IDEA discipline amendments are simple, but their details are complex. The general principles are as follows:

- Equal treatment. The school may discipline a student with a disability in the same way and to the same extent as it may discipline a student without a disability, for the same offense.
- No cessation. No matter what the student does to violate a school code, the school may not expel or suspend the student for more than ten school days in any one school year.
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• Unique circumstances. The school may take into account any unique circumstances related to the student and the student’s behavior in violating a school code of behavior when the school is deciding whether to change the student’s placement in order to discipline the student.

• Short-term removals. The school may suspend the student for not more than ten school days in any one school year. It has no duty to offer any services to the suspended student during those ten days.

• Manifestation determinations. When the school proposes to change the student’s placement for more than ten days, it must determine whether the student’s...

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**FIGURE 1.4 Definitions of Related Services in IDEA**

The related services apply to Part B and students ages three through twenty-one unless we note that they belong to Part C only and thus only to children ages birth through two.

- **Assistive technology and services:** acquiring and using devices and services to restore lost capacities or improve impaired capacities (Part C, but also a “special consideration” for Part B students’ IEPs).
- **Audiology:** determining the range, nature, and degree of hearing loss and operating programs for treatment and prevention of hearing loss.
- **Counseling services:** counseling by social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors, or other qualified professionals.
- **Early identification:** identifying a disability as early as possible in a child’s life.
- **Interpreting services:** various means for communicating with children who have hearing impairments or who are deaf-blind.
- **Family training, counseling, and home visits:** assisting families to enhance their child’s development (Part C only).
- **Health services:** enabling a child to benefit from other early intervention services (Part C only).
- **Medical services:** determining a child’s medically related disability that results in the child’s need for special education and related services.
- **Occupational therapy:** improving, developing, or restoring functions impaired or lost through illness, injury, or deprivation.
- **Orientation and mobility services:** assisting a visually impaired or blind student to get around within various environments.
- **Parent counseling and training:** providing parents with information about child development.
- **Physical therapy:** services by a physical therapist.
- **Psychological services:** administering and interpreting psychological and educational tests and other assessment procedures and managing a program of psychological services, including psychological counseling for children and parents.
- **Recreation and therapeutic recreation:** assessing leisure function, recreation programs in schools and community agencies, and leisure education.
- **Rehabilitative counseling services:** planning for career development, employment preparation, achieving independence, and integration in the workplace and community.
- **School health services:** attending to educationally related health needs through services provided by a school nurse or other qualified professional.
- **Service coordination services:** assistance and services by a service coordinator to a child and family (Part C only).
- **Social work services in schools:** preparing a social or developmental history on a child, counseling groups and individuals, and mobilizing school and community resources.
- **Speech pathology and speech-language pathology:** diagnosing specific speech or language impairments and giving guidance regarding those impairments.
- **Transportation and related costs:** providing travel to and from services and schools, travel in and around school buildings, and specialized equipment (e.g., special or adapted buses, lifts, and ramps).
- **Vision services:** assessing vision in an infant/toddler (Part C only).
behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability. A manifestation exists when the student's behavior was caused by the disability or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or when the student's conduct was the direct failure of the school to implement the student's individualized education program (IEP).

• Response to no manifestation. If the school determines that the student's behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, it may discipline the student in the same way as it disciplines students without disabilities except that it may not terminate the student's education (the “no cessation” rule). It may, however, place the student in an interim alternative educational setting.

• Response to manifestation. When a school determines that the student's behavior is a manifestation of the disability, the school must take immediate steps to remedy any deficiencies contributing to the school’s failure to implement the student’s IEP. The school also must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan to address the student’s behavior (whether or not the manifestation is IEP-deficiency based). Unless the school and parents agree to place the student in an interim alternative educational setting, the student then returns to the student’s previous school placement.

• Services in interim alternative educational settings. When it places a student in such a setting, the school must still offer an education that ensures that the student will make progress according to the student’s IEP.

• Weapons, drugs, and injury. When a student has weapons or knowingly has or uses illegal drugs in school or when a student seriously injures another person at school, the school may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting, without first making any manifestation determination, for up to forty-five days.

FIGURE 1.5  IDEA’s Six Principles

• Zero reject: a rule against excluding any student.
• Nondiscriminatory evaluation: a rule requiring schools to evaluate students fairly to determine if they have a disability and, if so, what kind and how extensive.
• Appropriate education: a rule requiring schools to provide individually tailored education for each student based on evaluation and augmented by related services and supplementary aids and services.
• Least restrictive environment: a rule requiring schools to educate students with disabilities alongside students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate for the students with disabilities.
• Procedural due process: a rule providing safeguards for students against schools’ actions, including a right to sue schools in court.
• Parent and student participation: a rule requiring schools to collaborate with parents and adolescent students in designing and carrying out special education programs.

Nondiscriminatory Evaluation

The effect of the zero-reject rule is to guarantee all students with a disability access to an appropriate education. To ensure such an education, IDEA requires educators to conduct a nondiscriminatory evaluation of the student.

TWO PURPOSES

The nondiscriminatory evaluation has two purposes. The first is to determine whether a student has a disability. If the student does not have a disability, then she has no right to receive special education under IDEA or any further evaluation related to special education under IDEA.
If the evaluation reveals that the student has a disability, the evaluation process must then accomplish its second purpose: to identify the special education and related services that the student will receive. As you just learned, this information is necessary to plan an appropriate education for the student and determine where the student will be educated—the “what” and “where” of individualized education. In Dylan’s case, the “what” is the specific educational program he receives, and the “where” is the general and special education setting in which he receives it.

**FIGURE 1.6 Nondiscriminatory Evaluation Safeguards**

**Assessment Procedures**
- They use a variety of assessment tools and strategies to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information, including information provided by the student’s parent that may enable the team to determine if the student has a disability and the nature of specially designed instruction needed.
- They should include more than one assessment because no single procedure may be used as the sole basis of evaluation.
- They may be requested by a parent, the state education agency, another state agency, or the local education agency (initial evaluations).
- They are selected and administered so as to not be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis.
- They are administered in the language and form most likely to produce accurate information about the student’s current levels of academic, developmental, and functional performance.
- They must be used for the purposes for which the assessments are valid and reliable.
- They are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel and in conformance with instructions by the producer of the tests or material.

**Parental Notice and Consent**
- Inform the parents fully and secure their written consent before the initial evaluation and each reevaluation.
- If the parents do not consent to the initial evaluation, the school may use dispute resolution (due process) procedures to secure approval to proceed with the evaluation or reevaluation.
- Obtain parents’ consent before any reevaluation unless the school can demonstrate that it has taken reasonable measures to obtain their consent and parents have failed to respond.
- Provide to the parents a full explanation of all due process rights, a description of what the school proposes or refuses to do, a description of each evaluation procedure that was used, a statement of how the parents may obtain a copy of their procedural safeguards and sources that they can contact to obtain assistance in understanding the provisions of the notice, a description of any other options considered, and an explanation of any other factors that influenced the educators’ decisions.
- Do not treat the parents’ consent for evaluation as their consent for placement into or withdrawal from a special education program; secure separate parental consent for these changes.
- If the parents do not consent to placement, the school has no duty to provide special education and is not liable to the parents or child if it does not use dispute resolution (due process) to get authority to provide services.

**NONDISCRIMINATORY EVALUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Because evaluation has such a significant impact on students and their families, IDEA surrounds the evaluation process with procedural safeguards. Figure 1.6 highlights IDEA’s procedural safeguards and its additional provisions for notice to students’ parents and the rights of parents to consent or not to what their child’s educators propose.

Once the evaluation team has determined that a student has a disability (or, in some states, is gifted) and has identified the special education and related services that the student needs, then educators must provide the student with that kind of education and those services, describing them in the student’s IEP. In short, the nondiscriminatory evaluation leads to, and is the very foundation of, the student’s appropriate education.

IDEA does not specify who the members of the evaluation team must be. It simply says that a local educational agency must ensure that qualified personnel and the student’s parents are part of the evaluation team. But because one of the members of the student’s IEP team must be a person qualified to interpret the evaluation results, usually at least one member of the evaluation team will be a member of the IEP team. To the greatest extent possible, it is helpful to have overlap between the members of
the multidisciplinary evaluation team and the members of the IEP team. Regardless of the precise team membership, however, the result is the same: The evaluation leads to IEP decisions about program (appropriate education) and placement (least restrictive environment).

**Appropriate Education**

By enrolling students (zero reject) and evaluating their strengths and needs (nondiscriminatory evaluation), schools still do not ensure that students’ education will be appropriate and beneficial. That is why Congress has given each student in special education the right to an **appropriate education** and related services.

As we have already noted, the key to an appropriate special education is **individualization**, such as tailoring Dylan’s education to build on his strengths and meet his learning needs. Educators individualize by developing an **individualized education program (IEP)** for each student ages three through twenty-one. Children from birth through age two and their families receive an **individualized family services plan (IFSP)**. As you’ve just read, each student’s IEP/IFSP is based on the student’s evaluation and is outcome oriented. Taken as a whole, the IEP/IFSP is the foundation for the student’s appropriate education; it is the assurance that Dylan and other students covered by IDEA will benefit from special education and have real access to equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.

To guide you through IDEA’s appropriate education requirements, we will focus on the IEP process with a discussion of (1) the participants who develop the IEP, (2) the components of the IEP, (3) timelines, and (4) IEP conferences.

**PARTICIPANTS WHO DEVELOP THE IEP**

At the beginning of our discussion about appropriate education, we wrote that the nondiscriminatory evaluation lays the foundation for the student’s IEP. We also wrote that the IEP team therefore must include at least one person who can link the evaluation to the IEP. But the team must include others as well:

- The student’s parents (in Dylan’s case, Darlene or Matthew, or both)
- At least one general education teacher with expertise related to the student’s educational level
- At least one special education teacher
- A representative of the school system who is qualified to provide or supervise special education and is also knowledgeable about the general education curriculum and the availability of school resources
- An individual who can interpret the evaluation results
- At the discretion of the parent or agency, other individuals with expertise regarding the student’s educational needs, including related service personnel
- The student, when appropriate

Other people may be included in the IEP or IFSP conference. For example, a parent might wish to bring another family member or a friend who knows about the special education process. We discuss parent rights later in this chapter and in Chapter 4 (about partnerships).

**COMPONENTS OF THE IEP**

IDEA requires the IEP to include eight components, which are shown in Figure 1.7. To comply with IDEA and ensure that the student will benefit from special education, a student’s IEP team **must** include every component in each IEP.

**APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE 1.2**

Watch this video to see disability rights activist Keith Jones discuss his parents’ advice to have high expectations (http://www.includingsamuel.com/media/Video/Keith-Video.aspx). As you read this section, think about Keith. How can having high expectations for students with disabilities help provide an appropriate, beneficial education? Learn more about the components of an IEP and assess your understanding in the interactive module “Writing Annual Goals.”
In addition to addressing each of these eight required components, the IEP team must also carefully consider five special factors when developing a student's IEP. If any factors apply to the student, the team must address them through the IEP as part of that student's special education, related services, or supplementary aids and services:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Components of Every IEP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The IEP is a written statement for each student ages three through twenty-one. Whenever it is developed or revised, it must contain the following statements:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The student’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How the student’s disability affects the student’s involvement and progress in the general curriculum (for students ages six through twenty-one)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How a preschooler’s disability affects the child’s participation in appropriate activities (for children ages three through five)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A description of the benchmarks or short-term objectives for students who take alternate assessments that are aligned to alternate achievement standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Meet each of the student’s needs resulting from the disability in order to enable the student to be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meet each of the student’s other educational needs that result from the disability</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. How the student’s progress toward annual goals will be measured and when periodic reports on the student’s progress and meeting annual goals will be provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research, to the extent practicable that will be provided to the student or on the student’s behalf and the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student to</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals</td>
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<td>• Be involved in and make progress in the general curriculum and participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Be educated and participate in those three types of activities with other students with disabilities and with students who do not have disabilities</td>
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<td>5. An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the student will not participate with students who do not have disabilities in the regular classroom and in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the student’s academic and functional performance on state- and district-wide assessments; if the IEP team determines that the student will not participate in a regular state- or district-wide assessment or any part of an assessment, an explanation of why the student cannot participate and the particular alternate assessment that the team selects as appropriate for the student</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. The projected date for beginning the special education, related services, supplemental aids and services, and modifications, as well as the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of each</td>
</tr>
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<td>8. Beginning no later than the first IEP that will be in effect after the student turns sixteen, and then updated annually, a transition plan that must include</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Measurable postsecondary goals based on transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>• A statement of transition services, including courses of study, needed to assist the student to reach those postsecondary goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Beginning no later than one year before the student reaches the age of majority under state law (usually age eighteen), a statement that the student has been informed of those rights under IDEA that will transfer to the student from the parents when the student comes of age</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• If the child’s behavior impedes his or other students’ learning, the IEP team must consider whether to use positive behavioral interventions and supports or other strategies to address the child’s behavior.

• If the child has limited English proficiency, the IEP team must consider her language needs in the IEP.

• If the child is blind or visually impaired, the IEP team must provide (not merely consider providing) instruction in braille and the use of braille. The team may determine that such instruction is not appropriate for the child, but only after it evaluates the child’s reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media, including an evaluation of his future needs for instruction in braille or the use of braille.

• For every child, the IEP must consider the child’s communication needs. If the child is deaf or hard of hearing, the team must consider language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communication with peers and professional personnel in her language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in language and communication mode.

• Also for every child, the IEP team must consider whether he needs assistive technology devices and services.

Dylan, his parents, and his teachers have also taken into account his strengths (determination to learn). It is especially important for the IEP team to consider a student’s strengths, as Dylan’s team has done, because it is too easy for educators to focus primarily on a student’s needs. A student’s present strengths, especially as educators build on them to address the student’s needs, often shape the expectations that educators, parents, and even the students have.

TIMELINES

IDEA requires an IEP to be in effect at the beginning of each school year. Educators and parents may make changes in the IEP either through a team meeting or by developing a written document that amends or changes the current IEP. Also, the team must review and, if appropriate, revise the student’s IEP at least once a year.

IEP CONFERENCES

IDEA does not have detailed requirements about the process that must be followed at IEP conferences. Ideally, however, those conferences reflect partnerships among educators and parents. Sadly, research on the IEP process has generally reported that the traditional process tends to involve legal compliance—a paperwork process—rather than problem-solving, dynamic teamwork (Turnbull, Turnbull, Erwin, Soodak, & Shogren, 2015). That fact is regrettable because the U.S. Supreme Court, in interpreting IDEA, has said that the “core” of the law is the “cooperative process” that occurs among the IEP team members, especially the student’s parents (Schaffer v. Weast, 2005).

To ensure that the conference is indeed a meeting of partners, including the parents, IEP conferences should incorporate ten activities (Turnbull et al., 2015):

1. Prepare in advance
2. Connect with the parents and student, and then start
3. Review the student’s nondiscriminatory evaluation and current levels of performance
4. Share your thoughts and take into account the parents’ and students’ thoughts about resources, priorities, and concerns
5. Share each other’s visions and great expectations and attainment of equal opportunity, independent living, full participation, and economic self-sufficiency
6. Consider interaction of proposed and prioritized goals, services, and placement
7. Translate priorities into written goals
8. Determine the nature of special education, related services, least restrictive placement, and supplementary aids and services
9. Determine what, if any, appropriate modifications the student needs to participate in state and district assessment and take into account the five special factors
10. Conclude the conference

In addition to parents, students can be valuable members of the IEP team. You will learn in later chapters about how to prepare students for meaningful participation.
The purpose of the required IEP review meeting is to determine whether the student is making progress toward achieving annual goals. Accordingly, IDEA requires the IEP team to review the student’s IEP and revise it as appropriate to secure that kind of progress. A review may cause a reevaluation and even a change of placement. Throughout this book, you will find IEP margin tips, which are suggestions for how you can participate effectively in the IEP conference and in the development of students’ IEP documents.

**IFSP CONSIDERATIONS**

The IFSP describes the services that both the infant (or toddler) and the family will receive. Like the IEP, the IFSP is based on the child’s development and needs; it specifies outcomes for the child. Unlike the IEP, however, the IFSP also provides the option for families to identify their resources, priorities, and concerns related to enhancing their child’s development. Furthermore, the IFSP must include outcomes and services for the child’s family if the family wants to achieve specific outcomes related to the child’s development.

**Least Restrictive Environment**

Once the schools have enrolled a student (the zero-reject principle), fairly evaluated the student (the nondiscriminatory evaluation principle), and provided an IEP/IFSP (the appropriate education principle), they must contribute one more element to the student’s education—namely, education alongside students who do not have disabilities. This is the principle of the **least restrictive environment (LRE)**, formerly known as mainstreaming or integration and now known as inclusion. Dylan benefits from the LRE presumption, as you learned by reading about him and the “where” of his education earlier in this chapter.

In early intervention (ages zero through two), IDEA favors education in the student’s “natural environment,” which could be home or an out-of-home child-care or education center. In all other education (ages three through twenty-one), IDEA favors placement in general education. The term **general education** has three dimensions: the academic curriculum, extracurricular activities, and other nonacademic activities (for example, recess, transportation, mealtimes, dances, and sports).

**THE RULE: A PRESUMPTION IN FAVOR OF INCLUSION**

IDEA creates a presumption in favor of educating students with disabilities alongside those who do not have disabilities. It does this by requiring that (1) a school must educate a student with a disability with students who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate for the student and (2) a school may not remove the student from the regular education environment unless, because of the nature or severity of the student’s disability, he or she cannot be educated there successfully (appropriately, in the sense that the student will benefit), even after the school provides supplementary aids and support services for the student.

**ACCESS TO GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

IDEA specifically states that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by having “high expectations” for them and ensuring their maximum access to the general education curriculum in the regular classroom in order to meet...
both their developmental goals and, to the greatest extent possible, the challenging academic expectations established for all children.

**SETTING ASIDE THE PRESUMPTION**

The school may set aside this presumption of inclusion only if the student cannot benefit from being educated with students who do not have disabilities and only after the school has provided the student with supplementary aids and services in general education settings. In that event, the school may place the student in a less typical, more specialized, less inclusive program. Generally, the most typical and inclusive setting is general education, followed by resource rooms, special classes, special schools, homebound services, and hospitals and institutions (also called residential or long-term-care facilities). You will learn more about these different settings in Chapter 2.

**EXTRACURRICULAR AND NONACADEMIC INCLUSION**

Schools also have to ensure that students with disabilities may participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities and services such as meals, recess periods, counseling, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational activities, special interest groups or clubs, and referrals to agencies that assist in employment and other aspects of life outside school. In short, when providing academic, extracurricular, and other nonacademic activities and services to students who do not have disabilities, schools must include students with disabilities (such as Dylan) in all those activities and services to the maximum extent appropriate for each child with a disability. That is because, as Congress said in 1997 and repeated in 2004, special education is a service for children rather than a place to which they are sent.

**Procedural Due Process**

Schools do not always carry out IDEA’s first four principles: zero reject, nondiscriminatory evaluation, appropriate education, and least restrictive environment. What’s a parent to do? Or what if a school believes that one type of special education is appropriate but a parent disagrees and believes that the proposed placement will not benefit the student? The answer lies in the procedural due process principle, which basically seeks to make schools and parents accountable to each other for carrying out the student’s IDEA rights.

When parents and educators disagree, IDEA provides each with three different ways to resolve their disagreements. First, they may meet face to face in a resolution session. Second, they may resort to mediation. IDEA does not require mediation, and it may not be used to deny or delay the right to a due process hearing. But IDEA strongly encourages mediation. Third, if the parties still cannot resolve their disagreements, each has a right to a due process hearing (a mini-trial) before an impartial hearing officer. The due process hearing is similar to a regular courtroom trial. At the hearing, the parents and schools are entitled to be represented by lawyers, present evidence, and cross-examine each other’s witnesses. If the local education agency or the parent is dissatisfied with the decision of the hearing officer, either may appeal to state or federal courts. Dylan’s parents have not yet exercised any of their due process rights. Perhaps they never will, but they may have to if they want Dylan to benefit fully from his IDEA rights.

**Parent and Student Participation**

Although due process hearings and other procedural safeguards provide a system of checks and balances for schools and parents, IDEA also offers another, less adversarial accountability technique: the parent-student participation principle. You have already read that parents have many rights. They have the right to be members of the IEP team, to receive notice before the school does anything about the student’s right to a free appropriate public education, and to use three dispute-resolution techniques (procedural due process).
In addition, parents have the right to have access to school records concerning their child and to control who has access to those records. Further, the state education agency must include parents on state and local special education advisory committees, thereby ensuring that their perspectives are incorporated into policy and program decisions.

Finally, one year before a student reaches the age of majority (usually age eighteen), the school must advise him or her that all of the IDEA rights that belonged to the parent will transfer to the student when he or she attains the age of majority. The only exception to this transfer-of-rights rule is that the parents’ rights will not transfer to the student if the student has been determined, under state law, to be incompetent. In that event, the rights transfer to the student’s legally appointed guardian.

**Bringing the Six Principles Together**

How do the six principles ensure an appropriate education for students with disabilities? Figure 1.8 highlights the fact that the first four principles—zero reject, nondiscriminatory evaluation, appropriate education, and least restrictive environment—are the inputs into a student’s education. The other two principles—procedural due process and parent–student participation—are accountability techniques, ways to make sure that the other four principles are implemented correctly. The figure identifies the principles and their purposes and shows their relationships.

How, you may ask, should I and my colleagues in schools carry out these laws? That’s a good question, and we answer it by (1) describing the principles of nondiscriminatory evaluation, appropriate education, least restrictive environment, and parent participation in Chapters 5 through 16 and (2) providing you with evidence-based strategies to apply as you implement these principles.
**Special Education Goals and Results**

After the schools started to implement IDEA in 1977, the federal criteria for evaluating special education results were primarily numerical. The questions were “How many more students are being served annually and in what types of placements are they being served?” Numbers, however, do not tell the full story. That is why Congress amended IDEA in 1997 to require state and local education agencies to report outcomes. State and local education agencies still count and report to the U.S. Department of Education the number of students being served and tally their placements. But they now must also report data that show that students are making progress toward their individual goals and toward other goals, too.

The reasoning behind this results-based accountability is that IDEA declares that improving education results for students with disabilities is an “essential element” of the nation’s policy of ensuring equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Those are the nation’s goals. Without documented results, it is difficult to know how well schools support students to attain these goals. So results count. They count for Congress. They count for your students. They count for Dylan. They certainly count for Stelios Gragoudas, who has cerebral palsy. Read about Stel in My Voice Box 1.1 and consider his results.

The same IDEA results-related task exists for general education: to improve educational results for all students. The federal law affecting general education is the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which you will learn more about in the following section. It is important to know, however, that each state and each of its school districts must set goals for improving the academic scores of all students, whether in general or special education, on standardized tests. If students do not meet these goals by obtaining higher scores, ESEA provides several ways of improving the schools.

**FIGURE 1.9** Percentage of Students with and Without Disabilities Scoring at Each Level on Reading and Math National Assessments, Fourth and Eighth Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students with Disability</th>
<th>Students Without Disabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Fourth grade math</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Below basic</td>
<td>45 (14)</td>
<td>38 (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Basic</td>
<td>38 (41)</td>
<td>37 (37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Proficient</td>
<td>16 (37)</td>
<td>16 (37)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Advanced</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
<td>2 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Fourth grade reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Below basic</td>
<td>69 (27)</td>
<td>20 (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Basic</td>
<td>20 (35)</td>
<td>9 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Proficient</td>
<td>9 (29)</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Advanced</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Eighth grade math</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Below basic</td>
<td>65 (21)</td>
<td>27 (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Basic</td>
<td>27 (40)</td>
<td>7 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Proficient</td>
<td>7 (29)</td>
<td>1 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Advanced</td>
<td>1 (9)</td>
<td>1 (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. Eighth grade reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Below basic</td>
<td>65 (21)</td>
<td>27 (40)</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Basic</td>
<td>27 (40)</td>
<td>7 (29)</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Proficient</td>
<td>7 (29)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Advanced</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
<td>1 (10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education has always been an important part of my life. My parents always stressed the importance of having the best education you possibly could obtain. It wasn’t only learning that excited me; it was also being with other students, playing kickball, and making friends that enriched my educational experience.

I began my school career at the same time that P.L. 94–142 (better known today as IDEA) was passed. Therefore, educating students with disabilities was a new experience for my school district. The faculty did not know how to include students with disabilities into a program for students without disabilities. My teachers did the best they could by including me in all the instances they thought were appropriate. For the subjects that I needed extra help in, I went to a resource room where I could receive the extra assistance I needed. Thinking back, I liked that system. Even though I was out of my homeroom for a couple of hours a week, I still felt as if that room was my base. It was where all my friends were and where I could do exactly what all the other students were doing.

All that changed when I went to middle school and high school. It was as if my education took a 360-degree turn. When a student moves up to middle school, academics are the focal point of the educational experience. Therefore, my educational team had to answer a very important question: Could I keep up with the academic program that was offered at the middle school? My teachers were not too optimistic. They believed that even though I had fared well in elementary school, middle school was going to be too challenging for me. My parents, however, insisted that I be included in the general curriculum as much as possible. So my IEP called for me to be placed in the general curriculum for some of my subjects and in a resource room for the others.

This program was similar to my elementary school experience, with one great distinction. In middle school, my base was not the place where I felt included. It was the place where I felt excluded. That base was my resource room, where I was excluded from most of the students who were in my academic classes. This did not allow me to form the kinds of friendships that I did in elementary school. I do not have many fond memories of that period of my educational career.

High school was a similar situation. Even though I had good grades in all of my academic classes, my teachers still recommended that academics should not be the focal point of my education and that I should focus on vocational goals. My parents did not agree with this plan. They always believed that I should be pushed to my limit.

The school agreed with hesitation and opted to place me in a collaborative program within the high school. I would be able to participate in the high school classes, and the collaborative program would provide me with a tutor and other supports that I needed to succeed in high school. As I look back, the program was not all that bad. It provided me with additional services that I needed to succeed in my high school, such as speech therapy and adapted gym.

However, the same thing that had happened in middle school was happening all over again. Instead of feeling like a student at my high school, I felt like a guest. Even though I had my classes with students in the high school, when class was over, they would go in one direction and I would go back to the collaborative program. Even though I was free to eat lunch with them, I chose not to because I felt like an outsider who was only a guest in the high school and I felt at home eating lunch with my fellow classmates in the collaborative program.

I always knew that I wanted to go to college. It was what everyone else in my class was thinking about, so I caught the bug as well. Once again, however, I met opposition from my special education teachers. The teachers from my high school classes were more supportive because they knew the work I had done in their classes and felt that I was ready for college-level academics.

The process of applying to school was very exciting. The experience of going to visit schools, meeting students with disabilities who were already in college, writing essays, and finding out how colleges supported people with disabilities was extremely informative.

It also provided me with a new idea of what it meant to be independent. To that point, independence to me meant going to the mall by myself or going on a trip with my friend instead of my family. In college, independence meant making sure I had all of the supports that I needed to live independently or talking with professors about accommodations that I needed in class. College gave me two things. It gave me the academic background that I needed to begin the career that I am still in today. Equally important, it gave me the skills I needed to live independently and to direct my own future.

I have earned my Ph.D. and am working in higher education in Massachusetts. Sometimes I think it would be amusing to go back to my high school and show some of my old teachers what I have accomplished since I started postsecondary education, but then I think it would be a better idea to focus my attention on improving special education and education as a whole so that every student with a disability can receive the most appropriate education alongside classmates without disabilities.

—Reprinted with permission from Stelios Gragoudas

Both IDEA and ESEA emphasize that results—measured by academic achievement—count for all students. For that reason, each student with a disability must take the state and district assessments, the tests of student achievement. As evidenced by the 2013 data reported in Figure 1.9, scores for students with disabilities on national assessments are substantially lower than their classmates without disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 2013b).
What does IDEA stipulate in terms of results? Is the focus on academic achievement alone or on longer-term results? Congress went beyond academic subjects alone in emphasizing equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency as national goals and thus the appropriate outcomes for students with disabilities. Here are the four terms and general definitions for each:

- **Equality of opportunity.** People with disabilities will have the same chances and opportunities in life as people without disabilities. Without equal opportunity, they cannot achieve the other three outcomes. Dylan has a right to equal opportunity to benefit from education. He has always had this right, even though some of the schools he attended failed to give him equal opportunities to benefit from education.

- **Full participation.** People with disabilities will have opportunities to be included in all aspects of their community and will be protected from any attempts to segregate them solely on the basis of their disability. Dylan is not segregated in schools at Fort Campbell, and that fact ensures that he can fully participate in school and then in his community.

- **Independent living.** People with disabilities will have the opportunity to fully participate in decision making and to experience autonomy in making choices about their lives. In school, training in self-determination advances this goal. If Dylan’s schools deal appropriately with his behaviors, they will advance his ability to make choices. (We will describe in Chapters 5 through 16 how schools can apply self-determination and positive support to change Dylan’s behaviors.)

- **Economic self-sufficiency.** People with disabilities will be provided with opportunities to engage fully in income-producing or unpaid work that contributes to a household or a community. Given an appropriate education, Dylan should be able to get, keep, and advance in a job of his choice.

What is the evidence related to these results? Unfortunately, research on results for students with disabilities does not provide definitive answers. However, data on multiple indicators suggest that substantial work is needed to improve student outcomes.

The first indicator is the extent to which students with disabilities are receiving a high school diploma. The national rate of students receiving a high school diploma is 90 percent (Chapman, Laird, & KewalRamani, 2010), whereas the rate for students with disabilities is 72 percent (this figure is based on allowing eight years for students to complete high school with the average number completing in five years) (Schifter, 2011). A study of predictors of dropout among students with learning disabilities, emotional disorders, intellectual disability, speech impairments, and other health impairments reported that grade retention, lower than average grades, and disciplinary suspensions and expulsions are the strongest predictors of dropout (Zablocki & Krezmic, 2012). Students who had been suspended or expelled were three times more likely to drop out than students who did not have these experiences. Students who had emotional engagement—enjoyed school, got along with teachers and peers, felt that adults cared about youth—were significantly less likely to drop out. Receiving a diploma or a general educational development (GED) certificate has been linked to a number of positive outcomes, including substantially higher income, better employment, increased health, and decreased likelihood of being in prison (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

The second indicator relates to employment. For individuals ages eighteen through sixty-four, those with disabilities have an employment rate of 32.7 percent, whereas those without disabilities have an employment rate of 73.6 percent (Houtenville et al., 2013). When race is added into the equation, the largest gap is between Hispanic individuals with and without a disability (United States Senate Health, 2013). For Hispanic individuals ages twenty-five through thirty-four, 44.2 percent with a disability and 79.9 percent without a disability are employed—a 35.7 percent gap.
The third and final indicator focuses on overall satisfaction with life. Approximately two-thirds of individuals without disabilities report that they are very satisfied with life in general; by contrast, approximately one-third of individuals with disabilities report the same satisfaction. The following trends contribute to general life satisfaction (National Organization on Disability, 2010):

- Slightly more than half of adults with disabilities report that they are struggling financially (living paycheck to paycheck, going into debt) compared with one-third of people without disabilities (58 percent versus 34 percent).
- Approximately one-fifth of adults with disabilities report going without needed health care compared with one-tenth of people without disabilities (19 percent versus 10 percent).
- Adults with disabilities are approximately twice as likely to have inadequate transportation than people without disabilities (34 percent versus 16 percent).
- Slightly more than half of adults with disabilities report accessing the Internet compared with the vast majority of adults without disabilities (54 percent versus 85 percent).

Here’s the question you have to answer for yourself: Given that there is a great deal of room for improvement in achieving results for students with disabilities, what role will you play in helping students with disabilities make progress in the general curriculum so that their long-term results are as positive as possible? We call your attention to Figure 1.10, which provides the Council for Exceptional Children’s professional ethics principles. We particularly draw your attention to the first principle that emphasizes the “highest possible learning outcomes and quality of life potential.” We hope our book helps you achieve this and many other vital goals.

### FIGURE 1.10 Council for Exceptional Children Special Education Professional Ethical Principles

Professional special educators are guided by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) professional ethical principles, practice standards, and professional policies in ways that respect the diverse characteristics and needs of individuals with exceptionalities and their families.

They are committed to upholding and advancing the following principles:

1. Maintaining challenging expectations for individuals with exceptionalities to develop the highest possible learning outcomes and quality of life potential in ways that respect their dignity, culture, language, and background.
2. Maintaining a high level of professional competence and integrity and exercising professional judgment to benefit individuals with exceptionalities and their families.
3. Promoting meaningful and inclusive participation of individuals with exceptionalities in their schools and communities.
4. Practicing collegially with others who are providing services to individuals with exceptionalities.
5. Developing relationships with families based on mutual respect and actively involving families and individuals with exceptionalities in educational decision making.
6. Using evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice.
7. Protecting and supporting the physical and psychological safety of individuals with exceptionalities.
8. Neither engaging in nor tolerating any practice that harms individuals with exceptionalities.
9. Practicing within the professional ethics, standards, and policies of CEC; upholding laws, regulations, and policies that influence professional practice; and advocating improvements in the laws, regulations, and policies.
10. Advocating for professional conditions and resources that will improve learning outcomes of individuals with exceptionalities.
11. Engaging in the improvement of the profession through active participation in professional organizations.
12. Participating in the growth and dissemination of professional knowledge and skills.

Approved, January 2010

ESEA and Other Federal Laws

Other federal laws affect special education and students in those programs. There are two types of laws: Some authorize services for students; others prohibit students from discrimination based on their disabilities.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act as Amended by No Child Left Behind Act

The principal federal law affecting general education is the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). It authorizes services for all children, including those with disabilities. Congress amended it in 2001 by enacting the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Consistent with current practice, we will refer to the federal law as ESEA, but you may hear people speak about NCLB. Remember, however, that ESEA is the proper name of the federal law.

ESEA seeks to improve educational outcomes for all students—those with and those without disabilities. Figure 1.11 identifies its six principles and highlights two requirements associated with each. IDEA is aligned with ESEA because each seeks improved outcomes for students with disabilities (Turnbull et al., 2007).

Rehabilitation Act

Like ESEA, the Rehabilitation Act authorizes services for people with disabilities. If a person has a severe disability but, with rehabilitation, is able to maintain employment, the person is entitled to two types of vocational rehabilitation services. First, when the person is sixteen years old, he may receive work evaluations, financial aid to pursue job training, and job locator services, all from the state rehabilitation agency.

Second, a person with severe disabilities, including a student, may enroll in a supported employment program. There, the student will work with the assistance of a job coach whose duties are to teach the person how to do a job and then help her to do it independently. The supported worker must be paid at least the minimum wage, work at least twenty hours a week in a typical work setting, and be able, after eighteen months of supported employment, to do the job alone without support.

Tech Act

The Technology-Related Assistance to Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988 (as amended), often called the Tech Act, grants federal funds to the states so that they can help create statewide systems for delivering assistive technology devices and services to people with disabilities, including students with disabilities. In Chapters 5 through 16, we describe how technology benefits students.

Antidiscrimination Laws

IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act create personal entitlements; they provide direct services to eligible people. By contrast, the Tech Act creates a statewide capacity to serve people with disabilities. Instead of directly benefiting the people themselves, it helps the states meet the people’s needs.

Education and rehabilitation are, of course, necessary to address the need for support created by a student’s disability. But they are not sufficient by themselves. IDEA, for example, does not prohibit public or private agencies
from discriminating against the student on the basis of the student’s disability. Yes, a student such as Dylan may receive special education, but that service might not create opportunities for the student to use the skills in college or the workplace that he or she has acquired through special education. Prejudice against people with disabilities may still limit opportunities for students to show that, although they have a disability, they are nonetheless still able.

How can society attack the prejudice? One answer is to use antidiscrimination laws such as those that prohibit discrimination based on race or gender. The first such law, enacted in 1975 as an amendment to the Rehabilitation Act, is known as Section 504 (29 U.S.C. Section 794). The second, enacted in 1990, is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C. Sections 12101–12213). These are similar laws. They provide that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of the disability, be discriminated against in certain realms of American life. Figure 1.12 sets out the meaning of “person with a disability” under Section 504 and ADA.
Chapter One

Section 504 applies to any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Because state and local education agencies receive federal funds, they may not discriminate against students or other persons with disabilities on account of their disabilities. As you will learn in Chapters 8 and 13, not all students with disabilities are entitled to IDEA benefits. But they are entitled to be free from disability discrimination. That's the effect of Section 504.

Clearly, Section 504 is limited in scope. What if a student attends a private school that receives absolutely no federal funds? What if an individual seeks employment from a company that does not receive any federal funds, wants to participate in state and local government programs that are not federally aided, or wants to have access to telecommunications systems such as closed captioning for people with hearing impairments? In none of those cases will the person receive any protection from Section 504. Here, ADA comes to the person's rescue.

ADA extends civil rights/nondiscrimination protection to people with disabilities in the following sectors of American life: private-sector employment, transportation, state and local government activities and programs, privately operated businesses that are open to the public ("public accommodations"), and telecommunications. Basically, IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act authorize federal, state, and local educational agencies to undertake programs in education and employment, respectively. Both laws provide funds for the state and local agencies to pay for those programs. By contrast, Section 504 and ADA prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of disability in education, employment, and other sectors of American life. But these two laws do not provide federal aid.

Together, these four laws support students' transition from school to post-school activities, including work. That is why the transition components of a student's IEP anticipate outcomes that are largely consistent with those that any student, with or without a disability, typically will want: work, education, and opportunities to participate in the community. Those results cannot be achieved so long as discrimination exists.

### PROFILE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS AND PERSONNEL IN TODAY'S SCHOOLS

- The six key values that permeate this book include envisioning great expectations, enhancing positive contributions, building on strengths, becoming self-determined, expanding relationships, and ensuring full citizenship.
- Approximately 6.7 million children, youth, and young adults, ages birth through twenty-one, have disabilities and receive special education services.

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**FIGURE 1.12 Definition of “Person with a Disability” in the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA define a person with a disability as one who

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities (e.g., traumatic brain injury)
- Has a record of such an impairment (e.g., history of cancer that is now in remission)
- Is regarded as having such an impairment (e.g., a person who is especially creative but simultaneously is chronically "wired" or "high" may be regarded as having some emotional disturbances or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders)

Note: A student who has HIV but is not so impaired that he or she needs special education is protected under Section 504 and ADA because the person meets the last two criteria: the person has a history of a disability, and others regard that person as having a disability. The same is true of a person who has attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (AD/HD). See Chapters 12 and 8, respectively, for other health impairments and AD/HD students' rights under IDEA, Section 504, and ADA.

Source: U.S. Department of Education.
This number constitutes 13 percent of the total school population.

- Approximately two-thirds of special education students are male.
- Students who are gifted and talented represent 6.7 percent of the schools’ enrolled students.
- Approximately two-thirds of all students with disabilities are classified into the categories of specific learning disabilities and speech or language impairments.
- Language sensitivity is important. Consistent with trends in the field, we recommend the use of disability rather than handicapped, intellectual disability rather than mental retardation, and people-first language (students with intellectual disability rather than intellectually disabled students).
- Of the fourteen fields of teacher education with the greatest shortages, nine are in areas of special education.

**OVERVIEW OF THE LAW AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

- The preludes to today’s federal special education law were the school desegregation case (*Brown v. Board of Education*) and two cases requiring schools to educate students with disabilities.
- The federal law, enacted in 1975 and reauthorized in 2004, is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.
- There are twelve categories of disabilities for children ages six through twenty-one.
- The law benefits infants and toddlers (Part C) and students ages six through twenty-one (Part B).

**IDEA: SIX PRINCIPLES**

- IDEA has six principles:
  - Zero reject, a rule against exclusion
  - Nondiscriminatory evaluation, a rule of fair assessments
  - Appropriate education, a rule of individualized benefit
  - Least restrictive placement, a rule of presuming placement in general education programs
  - Procedural due process, a rule of fair dealing and accountability
  - Parent and student participation, a rule of shared decision making

**SPECIAL EDUCATION GOALS AND RESULTS**

- Students with disabilities score substantially below students without disabilities on standardized assessments in reading and math at fourth and eighth grades.
- Congress stipulated IDEA’s four major results as equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.
- There is a substantial gap in the national rate of students receiving a high school diploma between students with and without disability (72 percent vs. 90 percent).
- Adults with disabilities have an employment rate of 32.7 percent compared with adults without disabilities, whose employment rate is 73.6 percent.
- Approximately two-thirds of individuals without disabilities report that they are very satisfied with life in general compared with approximately one-third of individuals with disabilities.

**ESEA AND OTHER FEDERAL LAWS**

- ESEA has six principles:
  - Accountability for results, a rule for enhanced student academic outcomes
  - Teacher quality, a rule to improve teacher credentials
  - Scientifically based methods of teaching, a rule to increase the delivery of research-based instruction
  - School safety, a rule to keep schools safe and drug-free
  - Local flexibility, a rule to increase local decision making
  - Parental choice, a rule to provide options for parents to transfer their child
- The Rehabilitation Act provides for work training, especially supported employment.
- The Tech Act makes assistive technology available in each state.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibit discrimination solely on the basis of disability in a wide range of services, both inside and outside of school.

**ADDRESSING THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Initial Level Special Educator Preparation Standards: Chapter 1—1.0, 1.2, 2.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 6.1, 6.5, 6.6, 7.1

Appendix: Provides a full listing of the CEC Standards with description and supporting explanation.
Jack is a combination of many characteristics, as all children are. Some of his, however, are more obvious.

He wears eyeglasses for protection because he has a visual impairment. The glasses, however, are “cool”—they have tinted lenses and red temples, and they wrap nearly all the way around his head. He also uses a specialized desk. He stands at his desk, secured by Velcro straps to arms that extend from the desk so he won’t fall. When he tires of standing, he can sit on a chair raised high enough that he will still have access to his desk even while sitting. He also has a full-sized and a miniaturized wheelchair, a “KidWalk,” so he can get around his school. And he has a significant communication disability; his friends and teachers usually understand what he is saying, but a person newly introduced to Jack will strain to understand him. To make sure he can take notes in his general education class, he uses computers, whereas his classmates do not. So much for the obvious.
What is not obvious is that Jack is one of the most outstanding students of mathematics. When other students are puzzled by a math problem and do not know the process for solving it, Jack tells them.

What also is not obvious is that the way his teachers instruct his class benefits him and his peers. They use universal design for learning. If you were to visit Jack’s class and not see his desk, chair, and computers, you would think he is just another student.

And that is precisely what his principal Shawna Draxton, teacher Pilar Chavez, special educator Sami Gross, and paraeducator Phil Lewis want: for Jack to have maximum access—full inclusion.

Jack attends an elementary charter school in a suburb of Los Angeles. Its co-founders included Suzanne Goldstein, the mother of another student who has autism, and three other mothers of children with disabilities. After three years of planning and securing a charter from the Los Angeles school district, they and the school’s newly hired principal and staff opened a school committed to including students with disabilities in all aspects of school life, to innovation in education for all children, to educating the whole child, and to reaching out to all families, in partnership.

This was not to be just any other school, not even any other charter school. It was not even to be known by its official name, Westchester Innovative School House. No, this was to be the culmination of a collective aspiration: WISH.

Here, then, is a combination of extraordinary talents: committed parents, a visionary principal, talented teachers, peers who regard each other as just another kid, and a contagious culture of being in a community with each other.

So, let’s go back to the basic question: Who is Jack Steinberg? Put what you just read about him alongside what you just read about WISH. Now answer the question. If you answered that Jack is “just another student,” you would be correct. Yes, he has disabilities. But, no, he is not separated from his teachers and peers by them.

What makes the difference is not just the founders’ and staff’s commitment to a vision of inclusive education or the careful development of a community culture. There’s more. There’s the deliberate use of evidence-based strategies for teaching and learning.

These include universal design for learning (UDL). His teachers use extra-large letters when writing on a whiteboard, and they enlarge printed materials by using photocopiers, pictures on Jack’s iPad, or optical character recognition (OCR) software that turns written text into editable Word documents, so that Jack can record his answers and then transmit them to his teachers. To help Jack communicate about his schoolwork, they reduce the number of questions he must answer on in-class tests and, to make sure he does all of his work, they assign the rest of the questions to him for homework. In a word, UDL makes learning easier for all students (large print on whiteboards), not just Jack. For him, however, there is less “brain drain.”

Inclusion does not happen simply because of UDL. There are also supplementary aids and services. The aids include the computers Jack uses in class to take notes. Sometimes, Jack uses an iPad and a computer, or sometimes just a single computer. One displays the written material that Pilar has on the class Smart Board, and the
other is open to a blank Google Doc onto which Jack is expected to transcribe the notes Pilar writes on the whiteboard. When a second device is not needed to display class materials, Jack has only one computer on his desk.

As to supplementary services, his paraeducator, Phil, or Sami Gross, one of the school’s special educators, has another iPad or computer open to the same Google Doc so they can type in notes that Jack has not entered before the class moves to another lesson. Phil has devised another, simple, low-cost form of universal design: When Pilar draws pictures or diagrams on the whiteboard, Phil takes a photo of them, using his smartphone, and then embeds them into Jack’s digital notes.

Jack wants to communicate by speaking, so he answers verbally in class. Neither Pilar nor Sami see his Google Doc notes while they are teaching, usually in front of the entire class. Jack raises his hand to be called on and speaks his answers. That’s how it usually goes. When, however, he does math, or teaches how to solve a problem by demonstrating it in front of his peers, a “scribe” writes what Jack says, such as “multiply the numerator” or “split it five times.”

On the playground, Jack has decided to abandon his KidWalk and instead to play kickball by having an adult hold him erect. At recess, Jack is socially independent with his peers. More often than not, he will play with one or more students. Conversations between him and his peers occur with very little to no conversation between the students and the adult who supports Jack, usually Phil. In the school garden, Jack kneels alongside his classmates to turn the soil and plant a vegetable. On field trips, Phil or another adult accompanies Jack.

Note the “Jack and Phil” combination. Last year, Jack’s aide was a woman; she had to assist him in the rest room. Jack made it clear he was uncomfortable with that arrangement. WISH’s response? Hire Phil.

To understand the culture at WISH, ask Jack’s teachers: “What winds you up each day at WISH?”

- For Shawna, it’s the kids, their families, educators growing with each other, and the application of the science of learning.
- For Pilar, it’s understanding that treating students equally means individualizing for each, and then bringing her passion for teaching into every encounter with her students.
- For Sami, it’s not making stigmatizing distinctions among the students who have and those who do not have disabilities, and collaborating with other faculty and students’ families.
- For Phil, it’s recognizing the value of compassion, the power of love, and the urgency of the present moment.
Let’s return to the “fit” between Jack and WISH. It’s not just a matter of inclusion, UDL, and supplementary aids and services. It’s that matter of culture, again. It begins with visionary co-founders. It continues through a principal, Shawna, committed to having students in school in natural proportion to the percentage of people with disabilities in the entire American population.

It includes schoolwide positive behavior support that seeks prosocial behaviors. In every classroom, there is a “CHAMPS” sign that teachers complete during class, marking each letter every time a student demonstrates Conversation with others, Help for others, Activities that include others, Movements that accommodate others, Participation that involves others, and Success that celebrates what everyone does. Now we are getting at the matter of culture plus science.

Science plus a value-driven culture: That’s WISH, the inclusive school. And it’s where Jack fits.

So who is Jack Steinberg? He’s a student, first and foremost. And in some ways, he is the heart of WISH itself, the young man who teaches others how to teach and learn, and in this chapter you will learn strategies to teach and learn from the students you work with.

- You will learn about progress in the general education curriculum, and how IDEA requires that students like Jack both have access to and progress in the curriculum like their age peers.
- You will learn the definitions of supplementary aids and services and universal design for learning and how they benefit Jack and other students.
- You will learn the meaning of inclusion and how it supports student progress as well as what is meant by multi-tiered systems of supports and how schoolwide efforts to reform schools can enhance progress.
- You will learn how a student’s IEP makes it possible for students such as Jack to participate and make progress in the general curriculum.
- Finally, you will learn what you and your colleagues in general and special education can teach students so that they will make the progress that IDEA wants and that Jack, his teachers, and his parents want for him as well.

What is “Progress in the General Education Curriculum”?

In this chapter, we address universal design and inclusion as foundations for progress in the general education curriculum. In Chapter 3 we discuss multiculturalism, and in Chapter 4 we discuss partnerships. Universal design and inclusion are means to an end: The goal is that students like Jack will receive an appropriate education by being involved with and making progress in the general education curriculum. And that end is a means to four other ends: equal opportunity, independent living, full participation, and economic self-sufficiency. When you read Chapter 1, you learned about those four national goals, and when you read what Ivey and Eric have to say about Jack in My Voice Box 2.1, later in this chapter, you will get an idea of what those four ends mean for him. So universal design and inclusion are means to an appropriate education and progress in the general education curriculum, which, in turn, are means to those four overarching goals. Before we talk about the means, then, we should think more about the end. What does “progress in the general education curriculum” mean?

First, progress is what federal law promotes and requires. As you learned from reading Chapter 1, IDEA requires each student’s IEP to state how the student will be involved with and progress in the general education curriculum, how the student’s progress will be assessed, and how state- and districtwide assessments will be modified (as appropriate) for the student. As you also learned in Chapter 1, one of the six principles of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is accountability for results. Accordingly, ESEA requires assessment of students’ proficiency and exempts no students from assessment. ESEA covers students with disabilities, but like IDEA, it allows for appropriate individualized modifications as set out in a student’s IEP. Jack takes part in state assessments with accommodations, namely, the use of a computer and an aide to help him respond. This is exactly what he does in class, so he does it on the assessments, too.

Second, progress in the general education curriculum is achieved by standards-based reform. This process identifies the academic content (reading, mathematics, science,
that students must master, the standards for students’ achievement of content proficiency, a general education curriculum aligned with these standards, assessment of student progress in meeting the standards, and information from the assessments to improve instruction and to demonstrate that the schools are indeed accountable to students, their families, and the public. Increasingly, the English Language and Mathematics standards being adopted by state education agencies (SEAs) are the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The CCSS process was initiated by governors and education leaders in 48 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories through the National Governors Association in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers. The standards were developed to provide real-world learning goals (what students should know and be able to do at each grade level) to ensure that K–12 students across the United States graduate from high school ready for college and career. In addition, teachers were involved in the development of the CCSS throughout the process, serving on work groups and providing feedback and input. Students can benefit from the CCSS by being held to high expectations to achieve clear, consistent learning goals at each grade level in math and English language arts that will prepare them for success in college and careers. Teachers benefit by having consistent goals and benchmarks from which to design instruction and ensuring that students who move from state to state or from district to district receive the same level of instruction based on high expectations.

Third, ESEA requires states to establish challenging academic content and student achievement standards that apply to all students, including students with disabilities. Academic content standards define the knowledge, skills, and understanding that students should attain in academic subjects. Student achievement standards define the levels of achievement that students must meet to demonstrate their proficiency in the subjects. States may establish alternate achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, which ESEA identifies as the 1 percent of the lowest performing students. But, even so, those alternate standards must align with the same academic content standards for all students so that these students will be able to make progress in the general education curriculum (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Finally, a student’s IEP team must consider what accommodations in the assessment process the student might need to ensure that his or her achievement is fairly evaluated. Accommodations do not change the content of the assessment; rather, they change teachers’ ways of presenting information (for example, changing the order of taking subtests), students’ ways of responding (for example, using a computer or dictating answers as Jack does), assessment timing (for example, having extended time or frequent breaks), and assessment settings (for example, taking the test in a quiet room or a small group away from the larger class) (Perie, 2010).

How Does the General Education Curriculum Benefit Students with Disabilities?

Connecting the Curriculum to Standards

As we just pointed out, the general education curriculum for students without disabilities is aligned with academic content and student achievement standards set by each
Ensuring Progress in the General Education Curriculum: Universal Design for Learning and Inclusion

state education agency for students at various grade levels. Alignment, however, does not mean that educators should overlook the individual needs of each student with a disability. Indeed, they should not. If they were to overlook Jack’s needs, they would be unable to provide him with an appropriate education, one that occurs in the general education classroom. IDEA requires school districts to provide an appropriate education based on each student’s strengths and needs and to do so by including the student (to the maximum extent appropriate) in the general academic curriculum. Further, IDEA requires educators to assess the student’s progress toward stated goals. Educators often do this by determining how well a student with a disability performs on the state- or districtwide assessments of all students, with and without disabilities.

Typically, states use three approaches to assessments. First, they define standards. These are general statements of what a student should know and be able to do in any given academic subject. Then they define benchmarks, specific statements of what the student should know and be able to do in that subject. Finally, they define indicators. These are statements of knowledge or skills that a student must demonstrate in order to meet a benchmark. Some students with disabilities will be expected to meet the same standards and benchmarks as students without disabilities; they will be assessed by the same indicators as students without disabilities. Other students with disabilities will have different standards, benchmarks, and indicators, depending on the extent of their disability. They benefit from these accommodations because, although their curriculum is aligned with that of students without disabilities, they are receiving individualized education specially tailored to them. It is reasonable to assess their progress according to their individualized education even while that education aligns with that of students without disabilities. Figure 2.1 provides an example of one state’s standards, benchmarks, and grade-level indicators for students in fifth grade.

MAKING ACCOMMODATIONS IN ASSESSMENTS

Many students with disabilities will require modifications in the methods of assessment to provide evidence of their knowledge. States that administer state-level assessments have written policies or guidelines concerning accommodations in assessments. Studies of frequent test accommodations, such as dictated responses, extended time, large print, read-aloud, and computer-based assessment (which works for Jack), have produced mixed results about their effectiveness (Cormier, Altman, Shyyan, & Thurlow, 2010). For example, studies of read-aloud accommodations for testing have found either the accommodation resulted in a boost for students with disabilities or that it provided a boost for students without disabilities. Other studies of read-aloud accommodation have suggested that that accommodation simplified the test, whereas still others have indicated that read-aloud accommodations do not produce increased student performance for students with disabilities (Cormier et al., 2010). The growing use of computer technology to administer tests is, however, beginning to make the provision of accommodations more equitable. Still, there continues to be the need to study the effect of accommodations for students with and without disabilities to ensure equity.

Under IDEA, a student who (according to the IEP team) cannot learn the same content as same-age peers who do not have disabilities and who cannot take the state assessment even if modified may provide evidence of progress through an alternate assessment. ESEA provides a number of options, but any such assessment must be linked or aligned with the general education curriculum. Alternate assessments based on grade-level achievement standards (AA-GLAS) enable students to demonstrate skills and knowledge on grade-level assessments, but the assessments are modified versions of the general assessment. Alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) refer to assessment for use with students with the most significant cognitive disabilities that involve multiple accommodations and links to alternate achievement standards. Finally, alternate assessments based on modified achievement standards (AA-MAS) are used for students across disability categories (other than primarily students with the
most significant cognitive disabilities) who need both accommodations and some modifications to the grade-level standards (National Center on Educational Outcomes, n.d.). The traditional alternate assessment was the AA-AAS version. The AA-GLAS version is the least frequently offered, whereas the AA-MAS is the newest option and is gaining in use.

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education funded two consortia of states to develop next-generation assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities linked to the Common Core State Standards in English Language and Mathematics. These consortia (the Dynamic Learning Maps, or DLM, Consortium at the University of Kansas and the National Center and State Collaborative at the University of Minnesota) are rethinking approaches to alternate assessment in the age of technology and universal design for learning.

As you will learn in Chapter 4, students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds disproportionately receive special education services, and there have been disproportionate results for many students from diverse backgrounds in terms of educational outcomes. Further, many students from diverse backgrounds are disadvantaged in the processes of referral and eligibility for special education services and for test taking.

On a global basis, the question has to be “do assessments disadvantage students from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds?” Data from the U.S. Department of Education’s National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) testing seem to suggest

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**FIGURE 2.1 Iowa Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade Level Indicators**

**Iowa Core Content Standard in Literacy**

Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literary and informational texts.

**Iowa Core Content Benchmarks/Grade Level Indicator in Literacy Grade 5**

**Benchmark A:** Students can understand stated information they have read.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Understand stated information

**Benchmark B:** Students can determine the meaning of new words from their context.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Determine the meaning of new words from their context

**Benchmark C:** Students can draw conclusions, make inferences, and deduce meaning.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Draw conclusions, make inferences, and deduce meaning

**Benchmark D:** Students can infer traits, feelings, and motives of characters.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Infer traits, feelings, and motives of characters

**Benchmark E:** Students can interpret information in new contexts.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Interpret information in new contexts

**Benchmark F:** Students can interpret nonliteral language used in a text.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Interpret nonliteral language

**Benchmark G:** Students can determine the main idea of a text.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Determine the main idea of a text

**Benchmark H:** Students can identify the writer’s views or purpose.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Identify the author’s views or purpose

**Benchmark I:** Students can analyze style or structure.

  **Grade Level Indicator:** Analyze the style or structure of a text

so. Congress requires the U.S. Department of Education to collect data for the NAEP on student achievement across ages, grades, and subjects, and it is one of the largest and most representative datasets available to determine education-related outcomes for American students. For example, data from the NAEP have shown that children with more highly educated parents earned higher average reading and math scores on the NAEP than did children with less well-educated parents. Given that the NAEP shows that in 2012 African American, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaska Native 25- to 29-year-olds had the lowest levels of educational attainment among all groups, one can surmise that children from certain ethnic groups are disadvantaged in large-scale assessments (Aud et al., 2013).

Of course, lower educational levels result in lower income. The NAEP also showed that in 2011 39 percent of African American children under the age of 18, 34 percent of Hispanic children under the age of 18, and 36 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native children under the age of 18 were living in poverty, compared with just 13 percent of white children under the age of 18 (Aud et al., 2013). There is little question that issues such as poverty, education, and race and ethnicity impact test scores.

Why Is Progress in the General Education Curriculum Valued?

Jack’s parents, Ivey and Eric, are adamant that Jack will participate in the general education curriculum. They accept no arguments to the contrary; both are well-educated professionals, and both have high expectations for Jack and believe that his inclusion in the general education curriculum and classroom is the route to achieving those expectations. Jack himself wants to be with his age-similar peers in general education, and his educators at WISH—principal Shawna Draxton and teachers Pilar Chavez, Sami Gross, and Phil Lewis—are equally committed to inclusion for Jack. Still, there is the global question: Is it good to hold students with disabilities accountable for progress in the general education curriculum? Is it fair to determine those students’ accountability for progress toward the same standards? There are two reasons to answer “yes” to each question (Wehmeyer, 2011):

• Holding schools accountable for the progress of all students when compared on identical standards may result in higher expectations and higher achievement for students with disabilities.
• By being part of the standard process for assessment, students with disabilities will be part of the reform movement of education.

Of course, there are legitimate concerns that an identical-standards approach will conflict with the individualized needs of students as set out in their IEPs, limiting needed instruction in important areas such as vocational education and basic life skills, or that students may be frustrated, discouraged, and drop out. Yet despite the difficulties of involving students with disabilities in standards-based reform, evidence shows that it is important to hold them to high expectations and provide them with access to a challenging curriculum while being vigilant to ensure that any negative impact on other instructional areas or student motivation are minimized. Read what Ivey and Eric have to say about Jack and their high expectations for him in My Voice Box 2.1. Underlying high expectations is the value of full citizenship: To deny students the opportunity to benefit from the general education curriculum may actually limit their education and post-school opportunities. That certainly reflects the Steinberg family’s perspectives. Research backs up their beliefs and shows that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities can benefit from instruction in core content areas (Wehmeyer, 2011).

How do you provide standards-based education for all students? We will answer that question throughout all chapters in this book. We begin by describing how you can design curriculum, instruction, and assessment to enable students with exceptions to progress in the general education curriculum.
Chapter Two

**BOX 2.1 | MY VOICE**

**Ivey and Eric Steinberg: Life Is a Mosh Pit, or Baseball Game**

“Life with Jack is like being in a mosh pit at a rock concert. We are just carried along, all the way. We’re not pessimistic about falling or failing. We’ve got support under us.” That’s Ivey Steinberg, talking about being a mother.

“We let Jack guide us about schoolwork and discipline, about his life. We didn’t know we would be with his physical disabilities for so long. That’s OK. Jack reinforces us. We are not resigned to his disabilities.” That’s Eric Steinberg, talking about being a father.

Mosh pits and support; self-determination and reinforcement. That’s just part of what Jack teaches his parents. Of course children teach their parents. But to expect such profound lessons from a fifth grader who has such significant disabilities might seem unrealistic. It’s not. Not at all. Why?

In part, it’s because Ivey does what other mothers do. She stays involved in her son’s life, so involved, in fact, that she dedicated the past two years to helping write the charter for the middle school extension of the elementary school that Jack attends, WISH, a Los Angeles charter school.

It’s also because Eric does with Jack what other dads do with their sons. They go to L.A. Dodgers baseball games, tracking players’ batting/fielding statistics; and they discuss the ratings of existing and potential CBS TV shows, for that is one of Eric’s functions at CBS.

What are the take-away messages here? One is that neither Ivey nor Eric place any limits on Jack. Both have great expectations for him. College? Yes. A job? For sure. Math and quantitative problem solving come easily to Jack. Being a statistician for a professional sports team—the Dodgers, or other teams Jack follows, such as the Green Bay Packers or Detroit Lions—is on the horizon.

Another is that they push back against others’ low expectations. Having learned that a physical therapist in Chile used an innovative technique to teach people how to walk, they took Jack to him, saw positive results, and then persuaded Jack’s therapists to use the same techniques—approaches that, until Jack proved he had learned more than they expected, were virtually unknown here.

That also means—and here is another lesson—that it is important to them that others not say what they think Jack cannot do. Why? For one thing, it goes against their great expectations. For another, facts back them up. They’ve had too many experts who were there in the beginning admit years later, “I never thought Jack would do that!” With Ivey at the local baseball park, Jack is tracking softball pitches, proving his vision is improving. With Eric at a boat house in an L.A. suburb, Jack sees other people with disabilities rowing in a shell adapted for them. To walk better, to see more acutely, to have the ambition to glide across water—propelled by one’s own strength—these reinforce Ivey and Eric.

A fourth lesson is that realism combines with determination. Both admit they are realistic about Jack in middle school and high school. Peer relationships may not come easy; teasing may occur; educators may not accommodate. Unlike WISH, middle and high schools may insist that Jack fit into them. Not good, says Ivey. “It’s not about Jack needing to conform. It’s about finding a better way. The old way is for Jack to fit. The new is for us to figure out how we fit to him.” And for Jack’s part, much is expected of him, says Eric. “There are no limits to his cognitive capabilities, so we don’t let him get away with any less than his best or with behavior that is inappropriate or immature.”

Have great expectations. Push back against pessimism. Affirm what Jack can and will do. Combine realism with determination.

Is it inconsistent for Ivey and Eric to be both optimistic and realistic? No. Their optimism is about Jack. Their pessimism is about the schools he might attend.

Is it wearisome to have to push back and be determined all the time? No. Life with Jack is like being in a mosh pit: you’ll have a wild ride, with support. WISH-ful? Yes. But wishing won’t do the job for Jack, Ivey, and Eric; their life takes work. But, as Eric said, Jack gives such reinforcement, and he is the reward for their work, whether at school, at home, or at a ballgame.

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**How do Supplementary Aids and Services and Universal Design for Learning Support Progress?**

As you learned in Chapter 1, a student has a right to special education, necessary related services, and supplementary aids and services. You also learned that IDEA defines special education as *specially designed instruction* and that related services involve a wide array of services that are necessary if a student is to benefit from special education. But what are supplementary aids and services?

**What Are Supplementary Aids and Services?**

IDEA defines *supplementary aids and services* as “ aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes, other education-related settings, and in
Ensuring Progress in the General Education Curriculum: Universal Design for Learning and Inclusion

Extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.” These services and aids supplement the student’s specially designed instruction and related services and, like that instruction and those related services, ensure that a student receives an appropriate education, especially to ensure participation and progress in the general education curriculum. For Jack Steinberg, supplementary aids include his computers and iPad, adapted desk and chair, and KidWalk and wheelchair; and supplementary aids include Sami Gross, the special educator, and Phil Lewis, the paraeducator.

Supplementary aids and services are noninstructional modifications and supports (NICHCY, 2013). As Figure 2.2 shows, they include modifications to ensure physical and cognitive access to the environment, classroom ecological variables such as seating arrangements and classroom acoustics, educational and assistive technology, assessment and task modifications, and support from other persons. Although all of these aids and services are important, we will focus on the role of universal design in promoting progress in the general education curriculum.

### APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE 2.1

**What Is Universal Design?**

*Universal design (UD)* refers to the design of buildings, environments, and products with features that ensure that all people can access the building or environment or use the product (Null, 2013). This is an important point: UD features ensure accessibility for all people, not just people with disabilities. For example, the designs of most scissors

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universal design for learning</td>
<td>Modifications to how curriculum is presented or represented or to the ways in which students respond to the curriculum</td>
<td>Digital Talking Book formats, advance organizers, video or audio input/output</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Modifications to the community, campus building, or classroom to ensure physical and cognitive access</td>
<td>Curb cuts, wide doors, clear aisles, nonprint signs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom ecology</td>
<td>Modifications to and arrangements of features of the classroom environment that impact learning</td>
<td>Seating arrangement, types of seating, acoustics, lighting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and assistive technology</td>
<td>Technology that reduces the impact of a person’s impairment on his or her capacity</td>
<td>Calculator, augmentative communication device, computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and task modifications</td>
<td>Modifications to time or task requirements (but not content or material) to assist in participation in assessment or educational task</td>
<td>Extended time, scribe, note taker, oral presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher, paraprofessional, or peer support</td>
<td>Support from another person to participate in instructional activities</td>
<td>Peer buddy, paraeducator, teacher</td>
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limit people who have fine-motor difficulties from using them easily. Did you know, however, that most such scissors are also designed for people who are right-handed? People who are left-handed must purchase specially designed scissors. However, universally designed scissors can be used by people with limited hand strength or fine-motor difficulties as well as by people who are left-handed or right-handed.

So what does universal design have to do with special education services? As schools began to implement standards-based reforms, it became obvious that instructional materials impeded many students’ progress in the general education curriculum. Students who could not read because of their visual impairments did not have access to the information they needed to learn content. Likewise, students who spoke a language other than English experienced barriers. In fact, traditional ways of representing content (written formats such as textbooks), presenting information (whole-class lectures), and having students demonstrate their knowledge and skills (through written papers and examinations) were barriers for a lot of children, not only students with disabilities. That’s where IDEA and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) come in. UDL refers to the design of instructional materials and activities to make the content information accessible to all children (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014).

Basically, UDL ensures that students with disabilities can access the general education curriculum via curriculum modifications achieved through technology and instruction (that is, pedagogy).

How Does Universal Design for Learning Facilitate Progress?

Universal design for learning contributes to progress in the general education curriculum by ensuring that all students can access academic content information and provide evidence of their learning through more than one means. Notice the words all students.

There are three principles of universal design for learning articulated by CAST. The first, provide multiple means of representation, relates to the materials that teachers use to represent the content they are asking their students to learn. The second, provide multiple means of action and expression, concerns how the materials provide alternative ways for students to demonstrate knowledge. The third, provide multiple means of engagement, deals with how the materials take advantage of student interests and motivations to engage them in learning (Meyer et al., 2014).

Figure 2.3 provides a graphic organizer for these UDL principles and identifies helpful guidelines for their implementation. You can see, for example, that as a means to provide multiple means of representation (Principle 1), you can consider providing students with auditory information, make sure that vocabulary is clear and understandable, or highlight big ideas in the text or on a whiteboard or blackboard. All of these work to ensure that content information is represented for students in ways that are as understandable as possible for as many students as possible. In Chapters 5 and on, you will learn about very specific strategies to achieve UDL, including, for example, using graphic organizers (like the UDL Guidelines!) to present big ideas. Teachers achieve universal design in representing content when they use multiple formats, such as text, graphics or pictures, digital and other media formats (audio or video), and performance formats (plays, skits) and when they use different means to deliver content information, including lectures, computerized visual presentations such as PowerPoint, role playing, and computer-mediated instruction. Similarly, students can provide evidence of their learning through reports, exams, portfolios, drawings, performances, oral reports, videotaped reports, and other alternative means. Look at the guidelines provided in Figure 2.3 and think about how you could implement the guidelines to include all students.

Instructional materials also must be universally designed. In fact, the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS), which was included in IDEA 2004 (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.), requires that publishers provide electronic formats of all instructional materials to ensure that students who have print-related disabilities can access written content.
In the “Planning for Universal Design for Learning” sections in Chapters 5 through 16, you will learn how UDL principles apply to students with disabilities and how technology and pedagogy enable them to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum, from digital talking books and e-readers to the use of pedagogical means of achieving access, such as advance organizers and concept maps. The bottom line is simply this: Universal design for learning configures instructional materials to meet the needs of each student. It focuses on a student’s strengths, takes the student’s learning capacities into account, and offers each student a full opportunity to benefit from the general education curriculum.

How Does Inclusion Support Progress?

You already know that progress in the general education curriculum is one of IDEA’s requirements, and you know why it is important for students. You have just started to learn about one way to advance that goal: universal design for learning. There is a second important way. It is called inclusion. You learned, while reading Chapter 1, that IDEA has a principle called the least restrictive environment. This principle underlies...
inclusion: Students with disabilities should participate in the school’s academic, extracurricular, and other activities with students without disabilities. Remember the vignette about Jack and WISH? The vignette explained inclusion as it affected not just Jack but as it was embedded throughout that school. We introduce you to this essential concept here and then elaborate on it in Chapters 5 through 16.

**What Is Inclusion?**

As you’ll learn about soon, students in particular disability categories may be more likely to be served outside of the general education classroom. It is important, though, that you understand that a disability label is not destiny when it comes to placement. There are examples of successful inclusion across age and disability categories, and it is IDEA’s presumption that students with disabilities, independent of category, be educated with their nondisabled peers. So what exactly is meant by inclusion? As we said at the beginning of this section, inclusion is based on IDEA’s principle of the least restrictive environment. IDEA’s presumption in favor of inclusion declares that “each state must establish procedures to assure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities . . . are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular education with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.” Nothing requires Jack Steinberg to be removed; instead, supplementary aids and services make it possible for him to learn in a general education classroom with students who do not have disabilities and are of the same age as he.

Inclusion, then, refers to the participation of students with disabilities alongside their nondisabled peers in academic, extracurricular, and other school activities. The provision of supplementary aids and services is important to IDEA’s emphasis. As you learned previously in this chapter, supplementary aids and services are defined as “aids, services, and other supports that are provided in general education classes, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate.” These aids and services facilitate placement in and compliance with the regulations for the least restrictive environment: “To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities . . . are educated with children who are nondisabled.” IDEA allows placements other than the general education classroom, but it presumes that the setting of choice for students is the general education classroom and that students will not be removed from that setting unless inclusion in the general education classroom cannot be achieved satisfactorily with the use of supplementary aids and services and specially designed instruction. Do you need to review the text about Jack? Hardly: You already know that WISH includes him fully, with supplementary aids and services.

**Characteristics of Inclusion**

Inclusion has four key characteristics: home-school placement, the principle of natural proportions, restructuring teaching and learning, and age- and grade-appropriate placements.

**Home-School Placement.** Within an inclusive model, students attend the same school they would have attended if they did not have a disability. This is the same school other children in the student’s neighborhood attend, as Jack does, contributing thereby to the education of other students (Munk & Dempsey, 2010).

**Principle of Natural Proportions.** The principle of natural proportions—to which WISH’s principal, Shawna Draxton, is fully committed—holds that students with exceptionalities should be placed in schools and classrooms in natural proportion to the occurrence of exceptionality within the general population (Brown et al., 1991). If, for example, 10 percent of students in a school district receive special education
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services, the principle of natural proportions holds that, if a classroom has thirty students, not more than three should have a disability. Indeed, Shawna wants even more students with disabilities to attend WISH, to create the perfect natural proportion that the ideal seeks.

Restructuring Teaching and Learning. Inclusion through restructuring requires general and special educators to work in partnership with related service providers, families, and students to provide supplementary aids and services and special education and related services. You will recall from the vignette how closely Jack’s team works together. Tremendous variability exists in how teachers provide special education services within general education classrooms. What Sami does for Jack is not what she does for other students; they have different needs than Jack. But in schools like WISH, which implements inclusion through restructuring, pooling the strengths and talents of educators who have different types of training and capacities allows all students to be successful in the general education classroom.

Age- and Grade-Appropriate Placements. Finally, inclusion favors educating all students in age- and grade-appropriate placements. Therefore, Jack spends all of his time at school with students in the same grade he is in.

Two major issues are at the heart of the inclusion debate: (1) eliminating the continuum of placements and (2) increasing the amount of time students spend in the general education classroom.

Eliminating the Continuum of Placements. The concept of a continuum of services has been part of special education ever since Congress enacted IDEA in 1975. The continuum refers to services that range from the most typical and most inclusive settings to the most atypical and most segregated settings.

There was a time when accommodating students with disabilities in general education classrooms through supplementary aids and services was not considered an option. That limited perspective caused Taylor (1988) to observe that students with disabilities were caught in the continuum of services. Unfortunately, once students were placed in more restrictive settings, few ever left them for general education classrooms.

The inclusion movement has tried to limit the need for more restrictive settings by creating a new partnership between special and general educators. This partnership seeks to provide individualized instruction to students in general education classrooms through a universally designed general education curriculum (Jackson, Ryndak, & Wehmeyer, 2010). The priority for inclusion in the general education classroom is now predicated on the premise that it is not often appropriate or even necessary to remove some students from the general education classroom and place them in a more specialized and restrictive setting to provide individualized and appropriate education; that in order to gain access to the general education curriculum, students must be in the general education classroom (Wehmeyer, 2011); and that there is now sufficient evidence to support inclusion as a research-based practice (Jackson et al., 2010).

Increasing the Amount of Time in General Education Classrooms. Research confirms that students with disabilities can be successfully educated in the general education classroom, given adequate support and instruction (Jackson et al., 2010), and IDEA expresses a preference for inclusion. So how can teachers increase the amount of time students with disabilities are served in the general education classroom? In Chapters 5
through 15, you will learn about strategies to promote universal design for progress, supplementary aids and services to promote inclusion and progress, and ways to support students with disabilities in inclusive settings. In the next section, you will learn why it’s important to increase student inclusion.

What Are Student Placement Trends?

Given that inclusion is the “placement of choice” in IDEA, where are students with disabilities receiving their education? The U.S. Department of Education reports annually on students with disabilities who receive special education and related services in different educational settings. Figure 2.4 shows the department’s categories of educational placement (also called environment) and defines each one.

Figure 2.5 shows the percentage of students with disabilities who are educated in each placement category, according to the most recent U.S. Department of Education (2013) report. If you were to graph changes in these percentages over time, you would observe that more students with disabilities are being served in regular classrooms for most of their school day, that fewer students with disabilities are being served outside the general education classroom, and that the amount of time they spend outside the general education classroom has decreased. In addition, the number of students in self-contained and separate facilities has gradually decreased. The number of students in residential facilities and in homebound or hospital placements has remained at a low level over this entire time period.

Not surprisingly, the percentage of students with disabilities in the different placement categories varies according to the age of students and their type of disability. More elementary students than secondary students are served in typical schools with peers who do not have disabilities. Students with less intensive support needs (for example, speech or language impairments and learning disabilities) are more likely to be in general education classrooms for the largest percentage of time compared with students with more intensive support needs (for example, students with intellectual disability or multiple disabilities). In Chapters 5 through 15 you will learn what percentage of students, by disability category, are in general education. In Chapter 3, you will learn that placement category also varies based on students’ racial or ethnic background.

What Student Outcomes Are Associated with Inclusion?

By now, most stakeholders in the education of students with disabilities have accepted the importance of including students. For many parents of younger children with disabilities, inclusion is an expectation (Khetani, Cohn, Orsmond, Law, & Coster, 2013). So what benefits accrue when students are included?
First, there is almost universal agreement that students with disabilities gain social and communication benefits from their involvement in inclusive settings (Jackson et al., 2010). Jack’s experiences at WISH underscore this finding: he’s in class, in the school assembly, and on the playground and at the garden with his classmates who do not have disabilities and he’s building relationships. Second, and particularly important in the light of current trends in standards-based reform, research shows that students with disabilities can and do benefit academically from involvement in the general education classroom. Rojewski, Lee, and Gregg (2013), for example, found that students with learning disabilities or emotional behavior disorders who were educated in more inclusive settings enrolled in postsecondary education at more than twice the rate of their peers who were not included. Cole, Waldron, and Majd (2004) found that students without disabilities educated in inclusive classrooms made significantly greater academic progress in mathematics and reading than did students without disabilities who did not have students with disabilities in their classroom. Cole and colleagues offer an explanation: The additional supports provided in the general education classroom that are intended to support the students with disabilities benefit all students. Now that’s putting the “universal” in universal design for learning! More recently, Cosier, Causton-Theoharis, and Theoharis (2013) conducted an analysis of the Pre-Elementary Education Longitudinal Study (PEELS, another U.S. Department of Education dataset, following children with disabilities through preschool and into early elementary) and found a strong, positive relationship between the number of hours students with disabilities spent in general education classrooms and math and reading achievement, confirming earlier findings.

In particular, research shows that students with disabilities receiving their education in the general education classroom are significantly more likely to have access to the general education curriculum. Students being educated in the general education curriculum are more likely to be working on activities linked to grade-level standards in the general education classroom (Wehmeyer, 2011). Clearly, inclusion with support (through individually designed instruction, related services, supplementary aids and services, and universal design in learning) is feasible.
and important. You will learn more about the positive outcomes of inclusion in Chapters 5 through 15. Box 2.2 has tips for inclusion.

**How Does Inclusion Facilitate Progress?**

Until the last decade, the inclusion movement consisted of two generations of different practices. The first generation focused on moving students with disabilities from segregated settings into the general education classroom. The second focused on developing and evaluating practices to support the presence of students with disabilities in the general classroom. Both phases focused primarily on the place in which students were educated.

Now, however, ESEA's standards-based reforms and IDEA's command for access to the general education curriculum have created conditions for a third generation of

**Box 2.2 • Inclusion Tips**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What You Might See</th>
<th>What You Might Be Tempted to Do</th>
<th>Alternate Responses</th>
<th>Ways to Include Peers in the Process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Behavior</strong></td>
<td>The student shows an apparently poor attitude toward other students and does not easily cooperate with them during instructional activities.</td>
<td>Discipline him for his poor behavior and separate him from the rest of the class.</td>
<td>Identify his strengths and work together on a list of positive things he can say when responding to other students during instructional activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social interactions</strong></td>
<td>He has few friends and doesn’t appear to want any.</td>
<td>Encourage him to take the initiative toward others but also allow him to be by himself whenever he chooses.</td>
<td>Collaborate with the school counselor to plan ways to teach him specific social skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational performance</strong></td>
<td>His work is acceptable, but he needs constant supervision.</td>
<td>Assign an aide to work with him and allow him to complete unfinished work at home.</td>
<td>Collaborate with the special education teacher to create step-by-step assignments that he can do on his own. Set up a reward system for each step successfully completed without supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom attitudes</strong></td>
<td>He never volunteers answers and is reluctant to participate in class activities.</td>
<td>Carefully choose activities that allow him to work alone.</td>
<td>Together with the special education teacher, work with him ahead of time on content to be covered and plan specific things for him to contribute.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
inclusive practices. Today, the focus is no longer exclusively on where a student is taught. It also includes (1) “what”—curriculum mastery, or what a student is taught and learns—and (2) “how”—the methods and pedagogy that teachers use. Nothing about the first two generations of inclusive practices is obsolete or unimportant. In fact, as we describe in Chapters 5 through 15, efforts to achieve outcomes associated with first- and second-generation inclusive practices (inclusion in the general education classroom and implementation of high-quality instructional strategies to support students in the general education classroom) continue but with new emphasis on “what” and “how.”

Implementing Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports

In subsequent chapters you will learn more about high-quality, schoolwide instructional strategies, increasingly referred to as multi-tiered systems of supports (MTSS), that promote students' progress in the general education curriculum. Multi-tiered systems of supports refer to schoolwide interventions to improve academic and behavioral outcomes for all students in which they receive high-quality instruction and supports, and, as needed, some students receive increasingly intensive intervention supports to ensure success. MTSS models have resulted from the merger of two innovative schoolwide procedures, response to intervention (RtI) and positive behavior supports (PBS), both of which promote progress and success in academics (RtI) and behavior (PBS) by implementing “tiers” of interventions. In the first tier, all students receive high-quality, evidence-based instruction and supports. Students who have difficulty succeeding with these first-tier interventions and supports are provided more intensive (often group-based) instruction or supports to promote academic or behavioral progress. Finally, students who are still not successful receive more highly specialized (often individualized) instruction or supports.

As you can see in Figure 2.6, the key to MTSS is that the intensity of supports provided to students, either behavioral supports or academic supports and instruction, increases based on student need. All students receive high-quality, evidence-based instruction in academic content areas as well as high-quality behavioral supports, but students who have difficulty academically or behaviorally then receive higher levels (often called tiers) of supports. Instead of moving the child out of the classroom or school, the intensity of the instructional and behavioral supports increases.

**APPLY YOUR KNOWLEDGE 2.2**

The U.S. Department of Education has invested significantly in the implementation of an MTSS model called SWIFT (Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation, a project within the Beach Center on Disability at the University of Kansas, where the authors of this book work).

**How Does a Student’s IEP Support Progress?**

You have learned about universal design for learning, inclusion, and multi-tiered systems of supports that promote students’ progress in the general education curriculum. We discuss other practices in future chapters. To lay the foundation for those chapters, however, we turn your attention to other important practices, beginning with students’ individualized education programs (IEPs). We discussed the IEP in Chapter 1, but we add to that discussion here because the IEP ties all of these elements together to create a high-quality educational program for students with disabilities.
In developing a student's IEP, you should remember two basic propositions of special education practices. First, individualization is a hallmark of these practices (Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer, & Park, 2003). Second, IDEA requires a student's IEP to ensure involvement with and progress in the general education curriculum and also to address his or her unique learning needs.

**Who Designs an IEP and What Are Their Duties?**

In Chapter 1, you learned that the individualized education program (IEP) is the plan for an education program for each student ages three through twenty-one. For children from birth through age two, that plan is called the individualized family services plan (IFSP). You also learned who participates in an IEP meeting and how the IEP process aligns with the priorities of the six principles of IDEA. To refresh your memory, we’ll restate who must be involved in writing an IEP: the student’s parents, a general educator, a special educator, a school representative who supervises or provides special education and knows about general education and school resources, a person who interprets the results of the student’s nondiscriminatory evaluation, any other person with expertise about the student's educational needs (at the parents’ discretion), and, when appropriate, the student.

The members of Jack’s IEP team are his parents, Ivey and Eric; his teachers, Pilar, Sami, and Phil; and Jack himself, because, for him and other students with disabilities, the following maxim applies: “Nothing about me without me.” One of his memorable contributions was to say that he wanted a male aide to assist him when he uses a restroom; now that’s an important contribution, for it advances Jack’s dignity. And, because a general and special educator were on his team, Jack’s specialized instruction under

![Kansas Multi-Tier System of Supports](image-url)
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IDEA is aligned with ESEA. As you learned in Chapter 1, IDEA and ESEA align with each other; so does Jack’s IEP.

Now let’s consider these participants’ duties when writing the IEP. They must do all of the following:

- Ensure that all of the individuals identified by IDEA as mandatory members of the team participate.
- Follow IDEA’s process for developing an IEP by considering the student’s strengths; the parents’ concerns about how to enhance their child’s education; the results of the nondiscriminatory evaluations; the student’s academic, developmental, and functional needs; and five “special factors.” In Chapters 5 through 16, you’ll learn how to conduct a nondiscriminatory evaluation for a student with a particular disability label and how to assess the student’s progress in the general education curriculum and other educational needs.
- Include all of the required components of an IEP discussed in Chapter 1.
- Specify the student’s educational placement, consistent with the principle of the least restrictive environment (which you read about in Chapter 1 and have learned more about in this chapter).

Knolton (2007) recommends that well-written annual goals should be clear and concise; expressed in terms of observable behavior and the conditions under which it will occur; logically derived from one or more present levels of educational performance; related to relevant academic, social, vocational, and/or community-referenced skills appropriate to the age of and expectations for the student; and readily accomplished in one year’s time. Heinich, Molenda, Russell, and Smaldino (1999) recommend that well-written goals address the ABCDs of goal writing:

- **(A)**udience. Who is the target of the goal?
- **(B)**ehavior. What do you expect the target for the goal to be able to do? This should be an overt, observable behavior, even if the actual behavior is covert or mental in nature. Otherwise, it is not measurable.
- **(C)**ondition. Under what conditions or circumstances do you expect the student to perform the behavior?
- **(D)**egree of proficiency. What criteria will you use to determine if the student has met the goal?

**Addressing Progress through the IEP**

It is worthwhile to repeat that one of IDEA’s purposes is to ensure that the student has equal opportunities in education and that those opportunities will lead to economic self-sufficiency, independent living, and full participation. To secure these outcomes, educators must address the student’s progress in school. Because the IEP is the linchpin to the student’s education and progress, they have to take into account the supplementary aids and services the student will need and how special education, related services, and supplementary aids and services shape annual goals and progress toward those goals.

**DETERMINE SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES**

Relying on the student’s nondiscriminatory evaluation and IEP, the IEP team should ask what supplementary aids and services the student needs to be educated with his nondisabled peers and to progress in the general education curriculum. There is a connection between supplementary aids and services and the five special considerations that a student’s IEP team must take into account. To repeat, those five considerations are (1) strategies to address a student’s behavior that impedes his or other students’ learning; (2) language needs of students with limited English proficiency; (3) instruction in braille for students who are blind; (4) communication needs, especially when the student is deaf or hard of hearing; and (5) use of assistive technology devices and
services. Jack Steinberg is held to the same standards as all other students at WISH, but his IEP team considers the accommodations he needs for communication and the importance of assistive technology.

Each factor can guide the IEP team as it considers what supplementary aids and services a student needs. Does a student need to be seated near the teacher to see or hear the lesson? Does the student work best when seated individually or with other students around a table? What is the role of the paraprofessional in providing supports? What assistive technologies might promote access? Does the student need certain assessment or task modifications to succeed? These are all part of determining needed supplementary aids and supports.

**DETERMINE ANNUAL GOALS**

As you know, the IEP must state the student’s annual goals and how educators will measure progress toward those goals, especially as the student participates in the general curriculum. The goals must relate to both the student’s educational goals and her other educational needs.

With regard to goals addressing the student’s other educational needs, students with severe disabilities need functional or life-skills content that other students acquire outside of school or at a younger age and that may not be part of the general education curriculum, particularly for older students. Most students, whether receiving special education services or not, need instruction related to making the transition from school to the adult world, including instruction in employment and community living, yet this is often lacking in general curriculum standards. Further, some students with disabilities (especially those who have visual impairments) need specialized instruction in areas such as orientation and mobility—namely, how to get from place to place—that other students do not need. Let’s return to the Steinbergs. Ivey and Eric expect that there may be some issues for Jack when he goes into middle school or high school; a transition plan will be useful for him.

The IEP team should take into account the content of the general education curriculum and how it will fail to provide the student with the skills and knowledge he needs to be a productive, independent adult, as Ivey and Eric expect Jack to be. Then the team should develop goals and objectives to address those areas. Historically, the IEPs of students with disabilities began with these alternative or functional curricular content areas. That practice, however, limited students to instruction in only those areas that the IEP team believed were important or possible. In the end, those IEPs failed to hold students to the high expectations of the general education curriculum.

Remember that IDEA does not limit a student’s educational program to content in the general education curriculum. IDEA allows educators to address students’ other educational needs, but it requires them to begin by considering how a student can participate and make progress in the general education curriculum. Thus, the team will consider the other educational needs of a student with disabilities, but it will start by asking how the student can participate and make progress in the general education curriculum.

**DETERMINE SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION**

Having considered supplementary aids and services (that is, noninstructional modifications and supports needed for students to be educated with their nondisabled peers) and written goals, the IEP team should identify the **specially designed instruction** the student needs to ensure participation and progress in the general education curriculum. Ordinarily, the IEP team does not have to identify all possible instructional techniques and strategies a student might need; that is the role of the student’s teachers for each course. Jack’s IEP provides for the accommodations with which you are now familiar. Consistent with IDEA’s requirement that the IEP must identify a student’s strengths, Jack’s identifies his math abilities. In Chapters 5 through 16, you will learn about an array of specially designed instruction across all age and grade levels and about how students’ IEPs can reflect strengths as well as educational needs.
**SPECIFY RELATED SERVICES**

Next, the IEP team should consider related services (identified in Chapter 1) that are necessary to enable a student to benefit from special education and to participate and make progress in the general education curriculum.

**DETERMINE TEST ACCOMMODATIONS OR ALTERATIONS**

Finally, the IEP team should consider whether the student can take the state or district assessments without modification, needs a modified test or other accommodations, or needs to take an alternate assessment. The IEP team cannot completely exempt the student from assessments. That is not an option.

**What Should Educators do to Support Progress?**

Promoting access begins with inclusive practices, UDL, and effective planning, but the heavy lifting occurs day in and day out in the classroom. You will learn about innovative and research-based practices in subsequent chapters, but effective instruction begins with planning, and to ensure progress for all students, educators need to create learning communities that value and support all students and design lessons and units in which all students can show progress.

**Create Learning Communities**

Effective instruction begins when educators intentionally create learning environments in which students learn to respect and value each other and everyone’s individual differences, understand their roles and responsibilities, work in a self-directed manner, and participate in setting classroom rules. Review, for a minute, the vignette about Jack and WISH, with special attention to the “CHAMPS” program. You can create an effective learning community by discovering the abilities of all your students, developing systematic ways to collect information on student progress for use in planning future lessons, and using specially designed instructional strategies to individualize student educational experiences. In Chapters 3 and 4 you will learn more about the community, about respecting and valuing diversity, and about creating partnerships with families.

**Design Units and Lessons**

Think of units of study as the maps teachers create to organize and plan content and to support student learning and achievement in the general education curriculum. Units of study identify end-of-school-year goals, standards for determining whether the goals are met, and knowledge that students will acquire. Once you as a teacher understand the big picture for the school year, you must map backward to determine what your students will need to know and do at the middle of the school year and then plan for manageable instructional units. When you have an overall idea of what you need to accomplish by the end of the school year and have chunked the content, skills, and knowledge into midyear and quarterly components, you are ready to plan specific units of instruction.

Having identified the learning targets, you can plan day-to-day activities to support students in achieving the outcomes of each unit of instruction. Generally, lesson plans identify the theme of a lesson, the purpose of the lesson, how the lesson will be conducted, what students are expected to accomplish, and how those accomplishments will be measured.

At both the unit- and lesson-planning level, you should identify the skills, processes, or knowledge that *all* students, including students with disabilities, should master and how the teacher and other educators will support all students in doing so.
One such strategy is to identify the big ideas that all students should learn from the lesson or unit. Once you know what you want all students to know, you can develop lesson objectives that allow students to demonstrate, through different means, that they grasp the big ideas.

One way to create those objectives is to use cognitive taxonomies. Cognitive taxonomies classify the cognitive demands of learning targets. Perhaps the most familiar cognitive taxonomy is the one developed by Bloom and associates. Bloom’s taxonomy is a means of categorizing the cognitive skills that students use when achieving learning targets. As one ascends Bloom’s taxonomy, the cognitive demands on students are more complex. By developing lesson objectives that range from less to more complex cognitive demands, you can ensure that all of your students acquire knowledge about the content and have flexible options for providing evidence of that knowledge.
HOW DOES A STUDENT’S IEP SUPPORT PROGRESS?

- A student’s IEP must be based on both the general education curriculum and the student’s unique learning needs.
- There are required members of the IEP team.
- The team must develop the IEP based on the student’s strengths, the parents’ concerns, the nondiscriminatory evaluation, the student’s needs, and five special factors.
- There are eight required components of an IEP; the team must address each component.

WHAT SHOULD EDUCATORS DO TO SUPPORT PROGRESS?

- Educators should create learning communities that enable students with disabilities to become integrated into their classrooms.
- Educators should create unit and lesson plans that incorporate universal design features and include goals and objectives that vary in complexity, thereby ensuring that all students can show progress.

ADDRESSING THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Initial Level Special Educator Preparation Standards: Chapter 2—1.0, 1.2, 2.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 6.1, 6.5, 6.6, 7.1

Appendix: Provides a full listing of the CEC Standards with description and supporting explanation.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING QUIZ