

Inclusion: Learning From a Special Education Student

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Inclusive Communities

To build an inclusive community you need to include every child in the “Total School Experience”. This includes, and is not limited to the following:

- General Education Curriculum
- Academic Classes
- Elective Classes
- School Activities
- Extracurricular Activities

Some Sad Statistics I must Share

- 73% Unemployment Rate for people with disabilities today
- Special Education students have a much lower than average high school graduation rate
- Poverty is very common among adults with disabilities
- Segregated classes are all too common in many school districts
- Many persons with special needs face academic or social challenges

What is a Special Education Student Entitled to?

- A Free and Appropriate Public Education
- Access to the General Education Curriculum
- Early Childhood Supports
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Appropriate Supports and Services
- Be Taught in the “Least Restrictive Environment”
- Supports for transition to adulthood until one graduates high school or reaches age 21 (whichever comes first)

Inclusion in Elementary School

- Elementary School is where the kids go to school for their first time.
- Elementary School gives children the building blocks they need to succeed in higher levels
- This time is important to start them off right. Not teaching them the building blocks, can start a domino effect the wrong way.

Homework, Children's Stress, and Free Time Issues

- Too much homework can overstress students and parents, and cause chaos and harm to children and families
- Homework has NOT shown to increase progress in the lower grades significantly
- The amount of Homework given should not exceed 10 minutes per grade level, up to 5th grade
- High School Students should not be expected to work more than 40 hours (school + homework) in a week
- Homework should be fun, and should be easy to complete without creating a burden for parents.

Inclusion in Middle School

- Get them used to the change. Some kids have trouble with “no recess”, and getting around.
- Teach them the structure of reports. This is important because many reports need to be done in middle school.
- If they need help with work, get them the help. Do not limit their potential.
- Explain the value of group work. Many middle school projects involve group work.

Evaluating Reading Progress

- Test with both stories and facts
- Use material with both direct and indirect meanings
- Try to eliminate “Cultural Bias” by using readings who’s meaning is not correct to one culture. This can affect disabled people too.
- Evaluate the results based on reading type, because the levels can vary based on the type of reading

Transition to High School

- The campus size is much bigger. Many sports fields, specialized rooms and other facilities to be found.
- The workload is harder. Essays are a big part of it. Math often includes Algebra 2, Geometry, Trigonometry, and even Calculus sometimes.
- Sports teams, clubs, dances, plays and activities are a big part of the experience.
- With this comes more independent responsibility, ability to research on their own, and to know what to do, and where to get help.

Accommodations

- Read Out Loud
- Oral Presentations
- Tutoring
- Discussions
- Extra Passing Time
- Accessible rooms and bathrooms
- Simplified Versions of Texts
- Test Accommodations
- And others