

**BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
HANDBOOK FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is provided as a resource for parents, teachers, administrators, and support staff involved in the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Inclusive education will be defined and the benefits listed. The handbook includes guidelines, procedures, strategies, and resources.

The philosophy of "Inclusive education" is simple: whenever possible, children belong with their age appropriate peers in general education classrooms at their home schools. The implementation of this philosophy occurs in different ways for each student.

A. HISTORY OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BERKELEY

The seeds of the inclusive education movement were sown in Berkeley more than fifteen years ago. At that time the district offered placements in the early childhood education classes to preschoolers with special needs. In 1984 the Model School (now John Muir School) opened after a group of parents, staff, school board and community members developed a vision of a school where students with disabilities were full time members of general education classes with the support needed to achieve their potential. Since that time the concept of the general education classroom as a place for *all* students has been refined as we learn together how to develop our classroom communities as places that support the needs of each student. In 1996 some 50 preschool through high school students with significant disabilities were full time members of general education classrooms with special education support. As in many progressive movements, the continued growth and improvement in the program can often be attributed to the efforts of some committed and visionary individuals. Through the dedication and efforts of parents, teachers, administrators and the students themselves the movement continues to progress.

B. MISSION OF THE BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TASK FORCE/INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In January 1993 the Inclusive Education Task Force was formed in order to develop the implementation of inclusive education district-wide. The task force included parents, special education teachers and instructional assistants, general education teachers, related service providers, community members, special education and general education administrators and was chaired by Joann Biondi, the Director of Special Education Services. The task force developed a set of objectives.

1. Develop recommendations for an expansion of the existing objectives outlined in the BUSD "Strategic Plan";
2. Coordinate our efforts with those of general school restructuring;
3. Develop district guidelines for inclusive education service delivery;
4. Identify district and individual school site needs related to the inclusion of students with severe disabilities;
5. Develop and implement short- and long-term action plans based on the needs assessments;

6. Review district job roles and responsibilities for special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service providers based on current best practices in the field, coordinating our efforts with personnel unions;
 7. Secure in service training for district staff, students, and families based on identified needs;
 8. Develop a library of materials related to awareness of different abilities for use by staff, students and families;
 9. Infuse information on ability awareness into the core curriculum;
 10. Develop evaluation systems for students with severe disabilities which reflect current best practices in assessment; and
 11. Exist as an ongoing resource for technical assistance for educational personnel, administrators, families and students.
- *Adopted February, 1993.

In September 1996 the task force became the Inclusive Education Advisory Committee. The entire committee meets monthly with working subcommittees meeting once a month or as needed.

C. DEFINITION/PRACTICES

Commonly Asked Questions

What is inclusion or inclusive education?

Inclusion represents an opportunity for students with disabilities who have been educated in "special" separate programs to attend their home schools and participate in general education classrooms and curricula with their age-group peers. Inclusion is an evolutionary process through which the needs of the individual students are addressed by general and special education staff who help provide the necessary supports to meet the students' needs. The inclusion process teaches staff and students the value of diversity. It provides a learning environment intended to better prepare everyone involved for cooperative living in a diverse community.

What is the difference between inclusion and mainstreaming?

Inclusion means students are assigned to, and fully participate in, the same general education classrooms as their age-group peers. All included students are considered primary members of the general education classroom.
Mainstreaming most often means that students from a self-contained special day class participate in some specific activities within the general education program. Mainstreamed students are considered primary members of the special education classroom.

What is the status of inclusive education in the Berkeley schools?

Presently many students with moderate to severe disabilities are being successfully included in general education classrooms on a full-time basis. Eligibility for inclusive education requires that the student have an active and current Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The teachers of these students are being given a variety of levels of support, as appropriate to the needs of individual students and to the classroom settings. Several elementary schools, as well as Hopkins Preschool, Willard Middle School and Berkeley High School have students included at this time.

What assumptions underlie inclusive education?

The following statements provide the rationale for inclusive education:

- All students can learn.
- All students benefit from living, growing, and learning together throughout the formal education process.
- Effective schools should be effective for *all* students.
- The learning styles and goals of students vary widely in every general education classroom
- All students are entitled to have access to a variety of curriculum and instructional options, with adaptations and modifications necessary to meet their individual needs.
- Collaboration between general and special education personnel draws on the expertise of both groups and is an effective method for serving students with disabilities in the general education classroom.
- The success of all students is a shared responsibility among all education personnel.

Questions Often Asked by General Education Teachers (These topics will be addressed in more detail later in the handbook.)

Why is this student in my classroom?

It's the natural environment for a student to grow and develop with other children their age. In this environment, a student's needs and goals can be met in meaningful ways. In addition, including students with appropriate supports and services exemplifies the principle of the least restrictive environment in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, I-D-E-A, which states that we should consider the regular class first for each student.

What will these students be learning?

They will learn to the best of their ability just like everybody else.

What will I do and how will I do it?

Teach the student and make the student a part of your class.

How is this different from what the resource specialist does at my school?

The resource specialist supports a caseload of up to twenty-eight students who require less special education assistance to meet their goals. Inclusive students have more intensive needs and the ratio of special educator assistance is similar to a special day class. Students in either setting may also receive speech, adaptive physical education (APE) and other support services.

How can I find out more about inclusive education?

Talk to other general education teachers who have had students with severe disabilities included in their class. Talk to your inclusion support teacher. Check out the Inclusive Education Library located at LeConte School. Check the resource section at the end of this handbook.

D. RATIONALE: WHO BENEFITS FROM INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

Inclusive education provides both social and academic advantages for everyone involved. Benefits listed below have been generated by Berkeley staff and parents, Napa Valley Unified staff, and San Diego City Schools, as well as by researchers here in California and elsewhere.

People in inclusive schools benefit from:

- Decreased prejudice and fear.
- An appreciation of the value of diversity.
- Preparation for cooperative living in a diverse community.
- Acceptance of every person as a contributing member of the community.

Students with disabilities benefit from:

- Exposure to natural role models.
- Consistent access to and participation in the core curriculum and other course options.
- Opportunities to form friendships with peers within their community and to develop appreciation of all people.
- Increased exposure to subject and interest areas that might not be available in segregated settings.
- Continued access to functional and community-based instruction as needed.
- Increased exposure to appropriate peer models and opportunities for meaningful communication.
- Development of increased interdependence and willingness to take risks, including the increased ability to experience the same successes and failures as their age-group peers.
- Increased levels of expectation by teachers and peers and development of increased expectations of themselves.

General education students benefit from:

- Additional adult support across classrooms and increased small group instruction.

- An understanding of the cultures and abilities of other members of their community.
- Opportunities to participate in a cooperative learning environment which includes representation from all student populations, thereby to develop problem-solving, decision-making, and other analytical skills.
- Exposure to a variety of instructional personnel, teaching styles, and techniques.
- Opportunities to develop leadership and advocacy skills.
- Opportunities to develop friendships with individuals who experience disabilities.
- Opportunities to use alternative communication and mobility techniques.
- Opportunities to develop collaborative skills with others and to recognize individual learning styles, strengths, and preferences.
- Opportunities to demonstrate mastery learning through tutoring or other support roles in the classroom.

Special education personnel benefit from:

- Being included in the life of the school community as a whole.
- Broader professional validation and opportunities to gain respect and understanding from all staff.
- Increased opportunities for interaction with general education students.
- Opportunity to exchange knowledge and expertise with general education teachers and administrators.
- Increased awareness of core curriculum at all grade levels.
- Opportunities to teach important functional activities and skills in the settings in which the activities take place and the skills are used, and in the presence of the students' non-disabled peers.
- Fuller awareness of the expectations of general education teachers and the performance of students who are not disabled.
- Increased opportunity for professional growth and opportunity to observe and participate in various types of instruction in content areas.

General education teachers benefit from:

- Broader professional validation, respect and understanding from all staff.
- Opportunities to exchange strategies, knowledge and expertise with special education personnel.
- Increased opportunity to collaborate with special education personnel and families.
- Fuller appreciation and understanding of the individual learning styles, preferences, and modalities of both special and general education students.
- Opportunity to expand ability to provide instruction according to individual needs and strengths.
- Opportunity to become involved in the IEP process.

Parents of included students benefit from:

- Inclusion in the life of the school community.
- Increased awareness of the similarities between their child and others; increased expectations of their sons/daughters.
- Access to related school programs for their son/daughter (day care, camp, etc.).
- Potential for friendship development among children in their home neighborhoods.
- Opportunities for continued relationships with parents of both disabled and nondisabled students at the school.

All benefit from:

- New opportunities for collaboration among general and special education personnel through co-teaching, team teaching, small group instruction, etc.
- Fuller appreciation and understanding of the individual learning styles, knowledge of different curricula, preferences, and modalities of all students and enhance their ability to teach according to those needs and strengths.

SECTION II ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Inclusive Education Advisory Committee developed a list of guidelines for the roles and responsibilities for each member of a student's team.

Site Administrator in Inclusive Programs

Guidelines

The site administrator at inclusive schools

- promotes and supports inclusive education at the school site according to BUSD policy ;
- fosters a climate of ownership of all students;
- participates in acquiring and sharing current information on inclusive educational practices and programs;
- facilitates adaptation of the school environment to meet the educational needs of students;
- participates in resolving issues regarding placement, scheduling, parental and staff concerns ;
- ensures that programs are adequately staffed;
- anticipates and plans with staff for the next school year regarding classroom placement, staffing scheduling, and in-service needs and activities;
- promotes involvement of all families in the school's activities;
- is collaboratively involved in the IEP process for identified students; and
- uses the Student Study Team and a problem-solving vehicle.

General Education Teacher In Inclusive Programs

Guidelines

The general education teacher, in collaboration with the other members of the IEP team, will be responsible for the following:

- making continued efforts to be informed of all his or her students' abilities and needs;
- acquiring information about inclusive education (for example, attending in service workshops, reading current literature, participating in conversations with other members of the IEP team);
- participating in IEP meetings and sharing responsibility for the implementation of IEP objectives;
- meeting periodically with other teachers involved in Inclusive educational programs;
- participating in student planning meetings and transition planning meetings and helping to establish an efficient and effective process for home-school communication;
- establishing a climate of acceptance in his or her classroom and in the school;
- assisting in hiring and sharing supervision of instructional assistants when appropriate;
- exploring ways to include all students in all aspects of the curriculum and all school activities; and
- collaborating with special education support staff.

Inclusion Support Teacher

Guidelines

Under the supervision of the special education program supervisor and the school site administrator, the inclusion support teacher

- does extensive public relations and advocacy work initially to establish and maintain inclusive classrooms/sites (in collaboration with the school site principal);
- collaborates with general educators and administrators as well as parents, instructional assistants, related service personnel, and special education administrators;
- consults with and supports general educators;
- adapts general education curriculum across grade levels, provides alternative curriculum and written instructional programs;
- trains and supervises instructional assistants who are dispersed in several locations;
- provides direct instruction to heterogeneous groups of students including general education students;
- acts as the team coordinator for individual student instructional programs and teams;
- assumes duties at the general education site as a priority including attendance at faculty meetings, staff development days and other site committees/duties.
- demonstrates tolerant, accepting attitude toward all students and communicates respectfully and effectively with students and other staff members;
- demonstrates a commitment to provide the assistance needed for students to be successful members of general education classrooms.
- uses strategies to facilitate social relationships and develop formal support systems between students with disabilities and their non-disabled schoolmates;
- uses collaborative teaming skills; and
- uses positive strategies to manage student behavior.

Instructional Assistant - Special Education In Inclusive Programs

Guidelines

Under the direct supervision of the inclusion support teacher and relevant general education teachers, the instructional assistant

- implements instructional procedures and records evaluative student performance data in general education classes and community settings;
- facilitates and supports social interactions and fosters the development of positive relationships between students with disabilities and their nondisabled schoolmates;
- uses positive strategies to manage student behaviors in classroom, school and community settings;
- assists other instructional team members (i.e., teachers and therapists) with adapting general education curriculum;
- supports and supervises heterogeneous groups of students, including general education students;
- teaches lessons to small groups of students with varying ability levels;
- works collaboratively with other team members (i.e., teachers, therapists, parents, and administrators) to provide direct service and as a member of student planning teams;
- supports students to be active participants on field trips and school assemblies or productions;
- assists all students by modeling appropriate behavior and attitudes and providing emotional support and general guidance;
- as appropriate, assists with or provides health care to students under the direction of the specialized health care nurse;
- performs clerical duties as needed;
- attends meetings and participate in in-service training as assigned; and
 - demonstrates a tolerant, accepting attitude toward all students and communicates respectfully and effectively with students and other staff members.

Integrated Related Services* In Inclusive Programs

Guidelines

Under the direct supervision of special education administrators and in collaboration with general education and inclusion support teachers, the integrated related services specialist

- conducts collaborative screenings and evaluations;
- participates as a member of multidisciplinary teams to develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of student objectives;
- collaborates on the use of assistive technology (e.g., identification of appropriate hardware, software, and adaptive equipment);
- when appropriate, assesses to identify an alternative or augmentative communication system and assist the team to develop, implement, and evaluate that system;
- plans, adapts, and provides curricular and instructional materials and activities based on the teacher's curricular objectives;
- demonstrates to the members of the instructional team (i.e. instructional assistants, general education and support teachers, other therapists, students, and parents) strategies to implement specialist-designed programs;
- supervises the implementation by other team members (including instructional assistants) of specialist-designed programs and evaluate the effectiveness of these programs;
- participates in on-going teacher, parent, and agency conferences and visits;
- co-teaches lessons with classroom teachers;
- facilitates communicative and social interactions with peers with and without disabilities within the context of school and community settings;
- implements services within general education settings;
- demonstrates a commitment to provide the assistance needed for students to be successful members of general education classrooms;
- uses positive strategies to manage student behavior; and
- demonstrates a tolerant, accepting attitude toward all students and communicates respectfully and effectively with students and other staff members.

* **Speech Pathologist, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Vision Specialist, Hearing Specialist, Orientation and Mobility Specialist, Behavior Specialist, Specialized Health Care, and Health Consultant.**

SECTION III IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

A. GETTING STARTED

In this section we include present steps for individual student planning at the school and classroom level. Sample forms have been completed for specific students to illustrate these steps, and blank forms are included in the appendix for your copying and use. Teams are encouraged to adapt all forms to suit their needs.

Student Planning Process

• Initial Steps

1. Develop brief IEP summary of student goals and objectives.
2. Review general education class(es) schedule(s) with team members.
3. Meet to discuss student's strengths and needs and develop matrix depicting opportunities within the subject area or school day to address specific objectives.
4. Discuss scheduling support for student from inclusion support teacher, instructional assistants, related services, peers and others and develop initial plans/schedule.

• Next Steps

1. Inclusion support teacher develops participation plans incorporating IEP objectives for each activity/subject through: teacher and instructional assistant observation of class routines and student performance, relevant related service assessments and general educator input to determine strategies for supporting learning.
2. Participation plans including direct instruction components and support are implemented and revised as needed or as curriculum/activities/semesters change.
3. On-the-spot adaptations are provided by support staff, general educator or peers as appropriate.
4. Team meetings for individual student planning are held regularly to define/develop upcoming curricular units, materials needing adaptation, support staff's classroom role, facilitation of student relationships with peers; i.e., for pro-active planning and problem-solving.
5. Team refines its own members' roles as they continue to develop a collaborative process (refer to roles discussed in Section II).

• Ongoing Steps

1. Team facilitates development of positive relationships among students, using structured circles, clubs or person-centered planning meetings as needed (see this Section).
2. Inclusion support teacher and staff may assume active teaching and planning roles with all students, small group instruction, or specific content areas, etc.
3. Transition planning for students' movement to the next grade begins in early Spring with, for example, visits by the future teacher to the current class, planning meetings, etc. (Please refer to Transition form, appendix)

3. FACILITATING SOCIAL INTERACTIONS, DEVELOPING COMMUNITY

Schools are institutions of socialization, a place where students learn and practice the skills needed to live and work with others in life outside of school. This is no different for students receiving special education support services. The social inclusion of these students is a key element to the success of the program. Many of the supported students will have IEP objectives focused on learning specific social skills and participating in activities that promote the development of friendships. The student's family, support teacher, former general education teachers, instructional assistants, and therapists can give information on specific interests and skills of the student in the areas of social and leisure life.

There are many easy strategies to incorporate into the classroom routine which will facilitate social inclusion. Many of these strategies are used with any newcomer to the class or with a child who is having trouble connecting to his peers.

1. Treat the student as a full member of the class, not an outsider. The other students will learn so much from the attitude and behaviors of adults.
2. Plan activities where students can work together in pairs or cooperative groups and perhaps create group products.
3. Accentuate the student strengths and interests and help other students see the similar interests or talents they share.
4. Become familiar with students' social skill objectives and find opportunities for the student to use them and provide support to the student as much as possible.
5. Set up a partner schedule or calendar so all the students have an opportunity to work alongside with the supported student.
6. At the elementary level, set up regular time each week for interactive activities such as cooking projects or free choice when supported students will have a chance to work on objectives and build friendships. At the secondary level, supported students can be joined by peers at job sites or for community skill training through proctor systems, Individual Work Experience or Independent study course work.
7. Encourage positive friendship behaviors between students in all school settings.

There are many materials that can provide social support to students. Many students use photo conversation books to engage in interactions with classmates. These books of photographs include pictures of the student, classmates, family members engaged in school and home activities. The books are fun for everyone to look at and talk about with each other. They also serve as a very effective support tool for students with communicative or social challenges. The support teacher can also provide fun games, magazines, or other materials for the students to use at recess or free choice each week.

There are also more formal support interventions that can be established in collaboration with the inclusion support teacher. The support teacher is available to provide regular ability awareness lessons to the class, which provide all students with specific information about a student's talents and needs and a positive general overview of our differences and commonalities. The Inclusive Education Library, located at LeConte School, has lesson plans for several grade levels. This teacher may also have books or materials that can be used to weave ability awareness into the curriculum. Many students also participate in regular support groups, often called Circles of Friends, and person-centered planning meetings during major transition years.

Circles of Friends: These support groups meet on a weekly or biweekly basis and give students an opportunity to socialize, learn specific skills, and problem solve together. Sometimes these groups meet at lunch or at recess or another convenient time based on class schedule. The meetings are facilitated by the support teacher, or trained student teacher or instructional assistant. At older grades the students themselves end up running meetings with fading adult support.

Person-Centered Planning Meetings: These meetings are designed to help a student and his/her team plan for major life transitions, such as moving on to middle school, graduating from junior or senior High, finding vocational and independent living opportunities for adults. The meeting involves all the important people in a student's life--parents, siblings, friends, relatives, teachers, therapists, community service providers, etc. They are very productive and powerful and are intended to map out each participant's dreams for the students and discuss and plan for any barriers in the way. The meeting is a formal process that extends beyond the IEP goals and services. This group process identifies the opportunities and the need areas that lie ahead for a student, as well as, the plans, solutions, and personal commitments needed to ensure smooth transitions. The support teacher can provide more information about these planning meetings.

C. COLLABORATIVE TEAMS

Positive outcomes for included students are related to the collaborative efforts of the parents, special education and general education staff involved. Listed below are some team models and key components to collaborative support for students.

IEP Team:

The team that designs the student's **Individual Education Program (IEP)**, comprised of the student (when appropriate), his or her parents or legal guardians, a couple of his or her peers (when appropriate), the assigned certificated special education teacher, the general education teacher(s) involved, the principal or site administrator and/or a special education administrator, and any related service providers involved (such as a speech pathologist, occupational therapist, or a physical therapist). If other persons are involved with a particular student or family, such as an instructional assistant, social worker, or parent/student advocate, they may participate as well.

Individual Student Planning Team:

This is essentially the same as the student's IEP team. For practical reasons, monthly or bimonthly meetings usually include *at a minimum* the collaborating general education and inclusion support teachers involved. Other members of the IEP team may attend as they have time and interest. These include the student, instructional assistant(s), related service provider(s), parents, administrator(s) and can include the student's peers as well. These teams develop and implement an individual student's educational program, evaluate his/her progress, solve problems, generate curricular adaptations and participation plans, facilitate planning sessions and formal support for the student as needed, and share information, challenges and successes.

Augmentative Communication Team

Students with augmentative communication needs can be referred for the augmentative communication team services. The purpose of the Augmentative Communication Team is to ensure that students with severe expressive communication disabilities receive an "appropriate education" and to promote the integration of these children within the educational system and their community. The student's team meets with a facilitator approximately every other month to discuss the needs of the student. Action plans are developed that support the development of the student's ability to access core curriculum and participate in school activities, with team members responsible for implementation. The team operates under a collaborative model of service delivery.

District-wide team: The Inclusive Education Advisory Committee

This team includes teachers, students, instructional assistants, related service providers, administrator(s), parents (of general and special education students) and interested community members. This team performs such activities as planning for district-wide implementation of inclusive education; obtaining in-services for staff and students in the district; developing, refining and adopting inclusive education policy and procedures for the district; developing and maintaining a library of inclusive education materials and evaluating the progress of the implementation of plans and policies.

Collaboration: A key component to the successful inclusion of a student with disabilities in a general education classroom is the collaboration of all those involved in educating the student. Collaboration is effective when each member is participating in carrying out a joint plan of action. There is a process of collective problem solving with each team member having equal status and contributing to the solution. A student's team includes the general education teacher, the inclusion support teacher, the parent(s), the administrator, the student when appropriate, and related service providers (e.g., speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, vision specialist) as outlined in the student's IEP. It is essential that the team have *time* to collaborate. Teams at schools have scheduled these meetings in a variety of ways. Some meet before school or after school (check with the site administrator or union representative to get a form to earn sick leave time or credits for advancing on the salary schedule for time beyond the duty day). Some work at schools where time is banked each week and the principal allots time for teams to meet periodically on the shortened day. At some schools teachers collaborate to release each other for meeting times. The mentor teacher program has provided resources for these meetings. One school acquired some Berkeley School Enrichment Project money for collaborative time (for all kinds of collaboration).

Integrated Therapy: In keeping with the philosophy of inclusive education and with current best practices in the delivery of related services in education, therapists work to integrate their services into the classroom, using the classroom activities and environment as a context for their services. While it may be necessary to "pull out" or "pull aside" a student at times, for the most part therapists are able to develop ways for students to work on their individual goals and objectives within classroom, school and community settings. This provides the student with many opportunities to learn functional skills within the everyday routines. Research has shown that students are able to meet their goals in these contexts. Often there are other students in the classroom who have not been identified as needing these services but benefit from the specialized skills of the therapist. Teachers are encouraged to use the therapists to collaborate about all students.

SECTION IV - POLICY & PROCEDURES

A. AGREEMENT WITH BERKELEY FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

In order to clarify the roles of individuals involved in collaborating to educate students with severe disabilities and to develop a procedure to be followed to ensure that students were placed in general education programs with the necessary supports in place, the following guidelines were drafted and agreed upon by Berkeley Federation of Teachers and school district administration representatives.

May 25, 1994

The following are **procedures** that shall be followed prior to the placement of a student identified as needing special educational services and who experiences severe disabilities, who is to be included and supported in a general education classroom or program observing the *full inclusion guidelines*.

Full Inclusion Guidelines

Article 13.4.9

1. At the **IEP meeting** where change of placement is determined, a general education teacher, principal and/or program supervisor, special education teacher, critical related service provider(s), parent and any other appropriate personnel shall be present.

2. If the IEP team makes the placement decision for full inclusion, then **the following shall occur**:

A. When and if any of the following are deemed necessary by the team, an **emergency plan** will be developed regarding:

1. evacuation and communication in an emergency
2. special medical procedures*
3. extremely disruptive or injurious behaviors to self or others

B. All relevant staff, including related service providers, general education teacher(s), and the site administrator shall receive **training on "inclusion"**, as well as **specific information on the needs of the student involved** (relative to his/her particular disability). This information will be provided just prior to placement as well as through formal planning meetings (at 1-2 month intervals) for the duration of placement in a particular class/grade. **Information will include the rights, roles, and responsibilities of each team member, and how the IEP will be/is being implemented.**

* See Specialized Health Care Manual

C. There shall be a **special education teacher with appropriate certification** assigned to the student as the **student's case manager**.

D. The **student's planning team**, i.e., the parent(s), general education teacher(s), special education teacher and any other relevant staff, e.g., related service provider(s) and or any instructional assistant, shall have the opportunity to conference prior to placement, as there is interest.

E. At 3 weeks (or another mutually agreed upon time) following placement, the **student's progress** shall be discussed in a (as well as in subsequent) planning meeting(s).

F. The general education students in the receiving class shall receive information about inclusion and ability awareness, in the manner determined most appropriate by the individual student's planning team.

G. A support schedule will be developed by the team and followed for the student within the first two/three weeks of school, based on the particular needs of the student involved. Supports will be determined by the individual student's planning team, and include (but not limited to) any combination of the following: curricular adaptations, material supports, natural supports, e.g., peers; and/or extra adult support, which may be provided by any or all of the following persons: a certificated special education teacher, related service (s), an instructional assistant, and/or a student teacher or practicum student or another volunteer, under the supervision of the special education teacher.

H. When deemed necessary by the individual student's planning team, adaptations to the curriculum will be made on an ongoing basis through out the duration of the school year as determined during individual student planning team meetings. This is a responsibility that is shared between team members with primary responsibility for adaptations with the special education teacher.

I. Compensation for time beyond the duty day for consultation, IEP planning, assessment and conferencing shall be granted under Article 14, Section 14.4.2. (See Article 11.6.2 of Collective Bargaining Agreement)

J. A transition plan shall be developed for fully included students as they move up through grades with their chronological-age peers; to include at least provision of information in as timely a manner as possible to the receiving general and special education teacher(s) and site administrators.

3. No placement shall occur unless the procedures outlined above are implemented and the roles and responsibilities of the educational staff are articulated.

B. CLASSROOM-RELATED POLICIES

1. ITAS

Fully included students are not automatically exempt from taking ITAS and other national standardized tests. If you wish a student to participate, then arrangements can be made through Special Education.

2. Report Cards

Report cards should be done jointly by the inclusion support teacher and general education teachers. Only certain portions of the report card may be appropriate to complete. You might consider attaching a copy of the IEP goals and objectives and note progress toward meeting those goals.

3. Photo Permission

You will need to complete a photo release for the included student each school year.

4. Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences should take place in the same manner as for any other student. Both inclusion support teachers and general education classroom teachers should attend.

5. Field Trips

Students who are truly class members will be able to go on whatever trips their classmates attend. In the planning stages, support staff should work with general education staff to be sure selected destinations are physically accessible. Support staff should also get an idea of what will happen on the trip and ensure that the student with special needs can participate in dignified and meaningful ways. This would include bringing along any adaptations /equipment needed for successful participation and safety, e.g., perhaps a snack, any needed emergency procedures and equipment, possibly a book for "lecture" times; as well as any items needed to facilitate communication and learning. A small bus with a lift may need to be reserved for students who use wheelchairs for field trips. In this case, staff should then have some of the student's peers without disabilities ride with him/her on the small bus so that the student is not isolated. Ideally, the big school busses would have lifts and wheelchair tie-downs. As they do not, transportation remains a *challenge* and needs to be addressed by individual student teams as well as the district as a whole to develop and adopt satisfactory and cost effective procedures.

6. If Problems Arise

If problems arise in the general education classroom, for whatever reason (curriculum behavior, etc.) talk to the inclusion support teacher or principal immediately. Staff will assist in problem-solving on the issues. Documentation of modifications and difficulties may be needed if problems continue and the placement is in question. An IEP meeting will need to be scheduled if major modifications to the program are needed or to change the placement.

SECTION V RESOURCES/LIBRARY

Le Conte
Arts Magnet