# REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES

of the

HIGHER EDUCATION TASK FORCE ON QUALITY INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

for

1995-1996

prepared by

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#### Preface

The Higher Education Task Force on Quality Inclusive Schooling was formed in 1995, as a sub-activity of the New York State Partnership for Statewide Systems Change 2000. The academic year 1995-1996 was the first of an anticipated five year term over which the Task Force would undertake its work. This Report on the activities of the Task Force during the first year is intended to review the work undertaken. Importantly, all matters included here should be viewed as work-in-progress. It will serve as a means of summarizing these efforts for ourselves as members of the Task Force and Network of Statewide Representatives, for the leaders of the Partnership 2000 project, and for interested associates in the profession and community.

Questions and comments regarding the Task Force and the contents of this Report may be directed to the Chair of the Task Force.

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# Purposes of the Task Force

The central purpose of the Task Force is stated in the proposal for the New York Partnership for Statewide Systems Change 2000:

Goal #4: Expand Inclusive Teacher Education approved programs leading to certification in both general and special education throughout New York State.

The Task Force would be charged to develop protocol models for inclusive teacher education at three different age/grade levels (early childhood, elementary, and middle/high school).

(p. 15 of the proposal)

At the first meeting of the Task Force, the Partnership 2000 project was described, and the work of the Task Force was situated within this larger effort. Four immediate roles that the Task Force would play toward the larger purpose were outlined:

- > stimulate the thinking of the members in regard to teacher preparation for inclusive schooling; that is to educate ourselves in this matter;
- > provide and create models for teacher preparation
  programming;
- > provide support and critique of institutional plans
  as they were developing; and
- > share our efforts with the review agencies of the State Education Department to facilitate new program proposal review and approval.

# Forming the Task Force and the Statewide Network of Institutional Representatives; Membership of the Task Force and the Network

In order to provide access to the Task Force to institutions across the state, a "Request for Proposals" was developed and mailed to over one hundred institutional officers, directors and deans of education, and teacher educators, soliciting their interest in participating in this work. Virtually all institutions involved in teacher preparation in New York State were included in the solicitation.

It was conceived that responses to the RFP could indicate two levels of interest:

- > For membership in the Task Force itself, the chief criterion for participation was a commitment to design and implement an inclusive teacher preparation program in the five year span of the Task Force's work.
- > For membership in the Statewide Network, individuals and/or institutions needed merely to want to be kept abreast of the Task Force's work, and be willing to respond to that work when needed.

#### The Institutions and Members of the Task Force

The response from institutions was greater than expected. While it was anticipated that approximately ten institutions would seek membership on the Task Force, nineteen institutions indicated that interest and required commitment. Among the nineteen are a diverse set of colleges and universities: large and small; public and private; upstate and downstate, and urban, suburban, and rural campus settings; institutions that have early childhood, elementary, secondary, special subject and special education programs.

Rather than limit the number of institutional members on the Task Force, and thus arbitrarily (since there were no compelling criteria by which to do so) eliminate institutions that might benefit from participation and from whose presence other members might benefit, the decision was made to include all institutions willing to make the commitment. At the same time, it was recognized that some attrition in membership would likely occur over the five year span.

Institutions were asked to identify at least two individuals who might serve on the Task Force. Having two or more members would serve to insure that at every meeting at least one representative would be present, fostering continuity of involvement for the institution, and allowing the Task Force to progress with its work unencumbered by irregular participation. Several institutions have yet to identify a second representative, and are being encouraged to do so.

Below are listed the institutional and individual members of the Task Force.

Adelphi University

Joseph W. Hrubes

Buffalo State College

Katherine C. Sacca, Associate Professor Exceptional Education Department

Sarah D. Weidler, Associate Chair Elementary Education & Reading

David Pomerantz, Associate Professor Exceptional Education

Cazenovia College

Stephanie F. Leeds, Associate Professor Director of Child Studies

Kathryn Barbour, Associate Professor

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Jim Burns, Head

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Rosemary Cameron, Associate Professor Elementary Education

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Special Education
Chair, Counseling, Research, Special Education
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Diane C. Schwartz, Professor Education

LeMoyne College

Janet Duncan, Assistant Professor Department of Education Jane Swiderski, Instructor Department of Education

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Joan M. Black, Associate Professor Chairperson, Education Program

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Medgar Evers College - CUNY
Pauline Bynoe, Instructor

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National Institute for Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology

Judy Egelston-Dodd, Professor

Peter A. Lally Director, CBGS

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Nazareth College

Kay Marshman

Mary Palamar Director, Graduate Special Education

Craig Hill
Director, Undergraduate Special Education

Queens College

Lee Ann Truesdell, Associate Professor Special Education

Linda Gibson, Associate Professor Special Education

Russell Sage College

Linda Davern, Assistant Professor Education Department

St. Bonaventure University

Kim S. Riggs, Professor Special Education

Paul Schafer, Professor

#### Education

St. Francis College

Eileen Brennan, Assistant Professor Education Department

St. John's University

Barbara J. Nelson Associate Dean

Deborah Saldana, Assistant Professor

St. Joseph's College

Sr. Miriam H. Corr, Professor Child Study

Ann Powers Chairperson, Child Study Department

SUNY New Paltz

Nancy Dubetz, Assistant Professor Department of Elementary Education

Spencer Salend, Professor Department of Education Studies

Utica College of Syracuse University
Laura Dorow, Assistant Professor

Lois Fisch, Assistant Professor

Task Force Staff

James Black Coordinator, Systems Change Project Syracuse University

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Alicja Jarzab System Change Project Associate Syracuse University

Gerald M. Mager Chair of the Task Force Professor, Teaching & Leadership Syracuse University Luanna Meyer Director, System Change Project Professor, Teaching & Leadership Syracuse University

#### The Institutions and Members of the Statewide Network

The Statewide Network of Institutional Representatives is a collection of individuals who indicated their interest in the goals of the Task Force, and wished to be associated with its work. Eleven institutions are represented through the Network. All Network communications are managed through the electronic mail medium, having access to which served as a criterion for membership in the Network.

Below are listed the institutional and individual members of the Statewide Network.

College of Staten Island

David Podell, Associate Professor

Jed Luchow, Associate Professor

CUNY - Brooklyn College Christine E. Pawelski, Assistant Professor Alberto Bursztyn, Assistant Professor

LIU - Brooklyn Campus Laurie R. Lehman, Assistant Professor Ionas Sapountzis, Assistant Professor

LIU - CW Post College
Joel Mittler, Associate Professor

Marymount Manhattan College Helene Napolitano

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Kathleen Gormley, Associate Professor
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Tim Feeney, Instructor

St. Lawrence University

James Shuman, Chair, Department of Education

St. Thomas Aquinas College
Anne Gross, Associate Professor

Meenskohi Gajria, Associate Professor

SUNY - Fredonia

Melinda Karnes, Chair, Education Department Gregory F. Harper, Dean, Division of Educational Studies

SUNY - Oswego

Bobbi Schnorr, Associate Professor Joanne Eichinger, Associate Professor

SUNY - Potsdam

Eileen Raymond, Assistant Professor Anjali Misra, Associate Professor

New York State Education Department
Kate Gulliver, Higher Education Academic
Program Review Office

Charlene Gurian, Office for Special Education Services Training, Information & Dissemination Unit

#### Events and Meetings of 1995-1996

The work of the Task Force was initiated before the Task Force itself was convened, in the form of a "Higher Education Leadership Institute on Inclusive Teacher Education." This Institute was held in Albany, on October 5th and 6th, 1995. Two keynote speakers addressed the participants: Dr. Celia Oyler of Syracuse University, and Dr. Edwin Ellis of the University of Alabama. Representatives of the State Education Department spoke on matters of certification changes and teacher recruitment: Dr. Charles Mackey of the Office of Certification, and Mr. Peter Byron of the Office of Bilingual Special Education. Portions of the video "Inclusion in New York: An Inside View" were screened. Participants engaged in small group discussions on issues and potentials for inclusive education at three schooling levels and for administrative leaders.

Though attendance at the Institute was less than expected, the reviews of the session suggest that it was very successful in introducing the need for teacher and

administrator education supportive of inclusive education, and in generating interest in the upcoming Task Force.

Subsequent to the solicitation of interest and commitment to inclusive teacher preparation, the Task Force itself was convened and met three times:

- > On March 22nd, in Albany, the first official meeting of the Task Force was held. The participants introduced themselves to one another and State Education Department and Partnership 2000 staff. They reviewed the commitment their membership on the Task Force represents, and considered the purposes of the Task Force toward that end. They shared their statements of institutional programmatic goals and readiness. They were addressed by Dr. Charles Mackey on current developments in the State Education Department. Through small group activities, they began to consider the meaning of "inclusion" in concept and practice.
- > On April 12th, again in Albany, the Task Force welcomed newcomers to the group, and reviewed the commitment and purposes of the Task Force. They resumed their consideration of inclusion in concept and practice. They extended that discussion to what knowledge, values, and skills would be needed by a teacher who is to practice in an inclusive classroom and school. The participants made suggestions for the format of the session to be held in Tarrytown, and requested that the Task Force meet again in that venue.
- On May 14th-15th, in Tarrytown, the Task Force met in conjunction with the annual Partnership 2000 Conference, "Inclusive Schools and Communities for Children and Youth." One session at the Conference was given to introducing the work of the Task Force to the largely elementary and secondary public school audience, and to hearing from them their views of the knowledge, values, and skills needed by beginning teachers in inclusive classrooms and schools. A second session at the Conference was given to a meeting of the Task Force members themselves: reviewing what they had heard in the earlier session; considering the recommendation to expand membership on the Task Force to include a new institution and public school and parent community members; and looking ahead to the coming year with meeting suggestions and items for the agendas.

# Inclusion in Concept and Practice

At the first meeting of the Task Force, members were asked to respond to a question posed within a scenario:

A prospective student approaches you, indicating an interest in teaching as a career, and sharing that he has heard a lot of talk about "inclusive schooling." He does not know what this means. What would you tell him is meant by this term?

Participants were asked to respond individually in writing what they might say to the prospective student.

This exercise opened to view the many and different understandings of "inclusive schooling" that the members of the Task Force had formed through their experience, study, and teaching. It was important, as the work of the Task Force got underway, for the members to appreciate the common and discrepant views they held of this concept and practice. The exercise created a better basis for discussing the preparation of teachers for inclusive schooling.

The written responses of the participants were collected and sorted into four overlapping sets which became the basis of small group work at the second meeting of the Task Force. Each group was asked to read the set of responses it received and to work from it and from their own understandings to generate a common response they might offer to the prospective student of the scenario.

Four responses were developed and displayed for discussion. They are offered below as starting points for the work of the Task Force.

### Inclusive schooling is:

- o + fully participating in school community
  - recognizing that all children have needs
- + recognize and accept all students and their differences
- o + basic human rights
  - + quality education
  - + requiring education reform of classrooms and

#### practice

- + provides services and support
- o a philosophy, the goal of which is
- + to welcome all children into the learning community
- + to establish a transdisciplinary community of educators
- + to move away from a deficit driven approach to a more individualized education that promotes high expectations
- + to rebuild effective partnerships among parents communities and schools.
- o a philosophy, the goal of which is
- + to welcome all children into the learning community
- + to establish a transdisciplinary community of educators
- + to promote high expectations though focus on the strengths of all individual children
- + to rebuild effective partnerships among parents community and schools

# Knowledge, Values, and Skills Needed for Teaching in Inclusive Classrooms and Schools

At the second meeting of the Task Force, the members were asked to build upon their understandings of inclusion in concept and practice in the following way:

Identify the knowledge, values, and skills that the prospective student would need to acquire and display through a teacher preparation program in order to be a successful teacher in an inclusive classroom and school.

Participants worked in small groups to develop lists of the needed knowledge, values, and skills. Their lists were then discussed by the whole group. These lists could be conceived of as a rough template for program design and review. Their lists are offered below.

#### Areas of Knowledge

- o content areas, subjects
- o child development, life span (cognition, social, affective, motor)
- o instructional strategies

- o disability awareness (services, agencies)
- o information about disabilities
- o legal, social, and advocacy issues
- o ethics
- o diversity issues
- o community (histories, resources)
- o assessment strategies
- o technology (communication, assistive)
- o language (modes, ASL, foreign)
- o learning styles
- o constructivist teaching
- o multiple intelligences
- o strategies for community inclusion (self-evaluation, how to find out about teaching and future self-

development, leisure, work)

- o foundations of education
- o family experiences
- o behavior change
- o conflict resolution
- o collaborative teamwork
- o affective education, emotional intelligence
- o curriculum development and adaptations
- o school systems change
- o group process dynamics

# Areas of Values

- o focus on children and their learning and development
- o each individual is valued and belongs
- o beliefs drive practices: creating settings which

value and respect differences of all learners

- o variety of instructional practices
- o creativity
- o ability to learn
- o persistence
- o sense of mission
- o flexibility
- o alternatives
- o teamwork
- o divergent viewpoints
- o joy
- o openness
- o partnerships
- o professional growth
- o individuals capacity to contribute to the community
- o potential for education to improve lives and society

#### Areas of Skills

- o building relationships/discerning what children come with
- o validating teacher knowledge about students and interpreting data picked upon daily basis
- o instructional content
- o classroom management, social living, instructional strategies
- o communication and collaborative partnerships

<u>Areas of Knowledge, Values, and Skills Essential for a Beginning Teacher in an Inclusive Classroom and School; Recommendation for Teacher Preparation Programs</u>

In Tarrytown, at the open dialogue session held to solicit advice from the attendees at the annual meeting of the Partnership 2000 project, a similar question was posed:

What knowledge, values, and skills are essential for beginning teachers in inclusive classrooms and schools?

Attendees were divided into a number of small discussion groups, with at least one member of the Task Force in each. Notes on their discussions were taken and submitted. Below they are collated, from the eight small group discussions, for future use.

- O impact to children
- o interact with children
- o zero rejection
- o field experience valued and needed
- o all teachers need course work concerning exceptional children
- o broaden their knowledge, develop attitude
- o more knowledge and skills of child development knowledge of families
- o collaboration
- o special education -- is this a place or a service
- o review standards
- O teachers need several things to be prepared to teach in inclusive classroom
- o knowledge of research findings and knowledge bases in both general and special education would increase mutual respect and effective collaboration
- o base information on needs of the students in the class, child-centered...will accommodate heterogeneous,

diverse student population

- o competency/outcome based teacher preparation
- o specific training in collaboration skills
- o firm grounding in typical and atypical child development
- o better instructional skills and classroom management skills
- O training program should focus on problem solving skills; how to be a collaborative problem solver; how to find appropriate collaboration
- o training program should provide more observation and student teaching in classrooms and more support in the areas of classroom organization and management
- o training programs should encourage an eclectic approach to provide for diverse needs -- a repertoire of skills, craft, philosophy allowing teachers to respond with a range -- Orton Gillingham through whole language without feeling disloyal to a particular stance; not just one way to teach
- O more teaching strategies, college should model more teaching style
- o teach collaboration and team leading skills
- o who should provide feedback to student teachers
- o real life hands on experience with inclusive family
- o more fieldwork
- o better general education base
- o knowledge of resources
- o behavior management skills
- o be in classroom starting freshmen year
- o self-evaluation skills -- when and where to get help
- o better understanding of certain children
- o skills for increasing parent involvement
- o how to use support services (OT, PT etc.)
- o child-centered education
- O commitment/set of values -- on part of individual who wants to "teach"
- o courses on collaboration/dynamics of communication with peers and parents
- o more special education courses for the regular education teacher
- o fieldwork in schools that are including, teaming, integrating, students should observe
- o teachers speaking at colleges to share "what works"
- o courses on "whole language," "writers' workshops," the curriculum "enhancers"
- o pay attention to the evaluations college students

fill out at the end of the semester on their professors/teachers and pay attention to who is a good professor

- O open-mindedness, flexible, creative, resourceful, advocacy for all children
- o transfer skills, collaborative planning together, evaluation skills
- o learning styles, child development: typical and atypical, general education and general education research
- O integrated kindergarten: understanding of overlap, understand the needs of all children, the whole child; team teaching at high school level; how to work with special education teachers, language teachers needed, need more understanding of technology; integration of curriculum; how to address the classroom based on what is happening, not relying on tests.
- o high school: varied special education students, need a content area and special education, methods and behavior management, classroom management and techniques, materials particularly; workshops on behavior and students not prepared for academics, mentors needed for new teachers (many don't have the skills to teach reading and writing); deal with parents, more experiences in different settings at different levels, attitudes need hands on mentality, conduct area tests
- o junior high: more than work processing; need cooperative learning; collaborative learning of teachers, student teachers; cooperating teachers should be chosen carefully, with special education background
- o attitudes: problem with labels, faculty model behaviors, faculty go into the schools, remediation, agents should be teachers not administrators; field work with families whose children are in inclusive settings
- O collaboration: need skills and needs to be modeled in a college course; college faculty in schools; increase site-based training; use teachers and college professionals and community during training.
- o class management: essential to know at applied level; how to do in a variety of classrooms -- hands on at doing it, not just theories and not just written programs of behavior management
- o internship: early field experiences; field experiences in each course; mentoring during the first year of teaching; all teachers on the team involved in the student teacher experience; model student teaching

after medical internship -- more intense, more on your own, more feedback

- o college professors: teach each model being given as information -- if cooperative learning of peer tutoring, do it in college classrooms
- o use real teachers in collaboration with college people; use SETRC training for both preservice and inservice

# Resource List

At the second meeting of the Task Force, members were asked to bring resources -- articles, books, course syllabi, references, and other materials -- which they judged to be worth the review of other members. We thus started a resource list on which to build and through which we might continue to educate ourselves.

Below is listed all the items suggested at that meeting. The list generally follows APA Style, but undoubtedly contains some errors, and in some places does not provide complete references.

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# Projections for 1996-1997

The first year served to introduce the members to one another and develop what seemed to be a productive and comfortable working relationship among the members. It also engage the members in the basic substantive issues of inclusive education and designing teacher preparation programs toward that end. Still much work lies ahead for the Task Force.

At the final meeting of the year, those present projected a number of activities that they would like to undertake in the coming year, including but not limited to:

- > meeting within the Task Force by institutional type (small and large; public and private; elementary and secondary, and so on);
- > adding to and refining the list of resources;

- > inviting and engaging with guest speakers who represent different programs already developed and implemented;
- > receiving additional materials describing high
  quality inclusive teacher preparation programs;
- > inviting representatives from elementary and secondary schools to share their experiences with inclusive teaching and schooling, and to provide comment on our plans;
- > developing a clearer set of statements on inclusion
  and the qualities of teacher preparation programs for
  inclusive teaching;
- > supporting, reviewing, and providing feedback to one
  or more drafts of programs developed by institutions
  represented on the Task Force;
- > engaging the Statewide Network in the substantive issues of inclusion and program design; and
- > providing organizational development activities for member institutions, in anticipation of actions that will take place on home campuses.