

# High Quality Clinical Practice in Inclusive Educational Settings: Some Possible Criteria

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# Session Purposes

- Discuss the concept of “high quality clinical practice” in inclusive settings at this opportune point in time
- Offer some basic ideas for conceptualizing, identifying, and assessing high quality inclusive placements
- Suggest that our analyses should be accompanied by a practitioner-driven, applied research agenda

# Brief Historical Analysis of Inclusion

- Progressive integration of students with special needs (and all other students) into common educational settings characterized by high academic & behavioral expectations, a positive and supportive classroom climate, and responsive teaching practices
  - Least restrictive environment, mainstreaming, REI, partial and full inclusion
  - Normalization
- From *access to success* in general education curriculum with appropriate accountability
- Formal linking of teacher preparation to teacher practice and teacher practice to pupil learning

# Federal Administrative Perspectives

- Increased focus on P-12 outcomes and what teacher preparation programs have or have not been doing about them
- Arne Duncan (2009)
  - Teacher education as “mediocre”
  - Move for more *relevance* to plight of P-12 education
  - Charter schools, alternative certification, and Race to the Top funding strategies
  - Traditional teacher preparation conceived as *one* of many possible independent variables

# NCATE's Perspectives

- A “New Way of Doing Business”
- Formed an expert panel on *clinical preparation, partnerships, and improved pupil outcomes*
- Teaching as a *practice-based* profession akin to medicine, nursing, or clinical psychology
- Practice-based professions require
  - Strong clinical components
  - Supported induction experience
  - Ongoing opportunities for learning
- Redesign is intended to “bring educator preparation into better alignment with the urgent needs of P-12 schools”

# NCATE

- Establish a set of *guiding principles* for the clinical preparation of teachers
  - Improve ability to understand pupil needs
  - Use of practical and evidence-based pedagogical skills
  - Ability to use research evidence and judgment in practice
- Teachers are faced with more formidable challenges than ever before AND they and those who prepare them are being held increasingly accountable

# NCATE

- Proposed solutions
  - Enhanced clinical preparation
    - Use of more simulations, case studies, and analyses of teaching and learning outcomes (e.g., TWS)
    - Sustained, intense, mentored school-embedded experiences
- School-embedded experiences requires
  - Increased collaboration with partners
- Transformative initiatives that
  - Focus on P-12 learning
  - Improve the evidentiary base of the profession
- Closing the gap between
  - Theory and practice
  - Coursework and classroom
  - Preparation and induction
- Wrapping coursework around clinical practice

# NCATE's Transformative Initiative

- Connect to urgent local, state, and national needs
  - Projects which contribute to knowledge base of effective practice
  - Projects that simultaneously transform educator preparation and P-12 schools
  - Improve relevance
    - Robust clinical preparation, including educator preparation in school settings
    - Stronger preparation in assessment to improve learning
  - Increasing knowledge about what works in teacher education
    - Exploring follow-up performance data and its effective use in teacher educator preparation
  - Address crucial needs of schools

# How Should We Respond to “New Way of Business”?

- Serious cost/benefit analysis
  - Status in the academy ---- to impact on children, their families, communities, states, and nation
- Respond in a “constructive”, “socially acceptable” and “sustainable” manner
  - Must recognize the significant educational challenges confronting P-12 schools
  - Recognize that there really are ways for us to be more responsive to school partner needs
- Proceed in a systematic manner & focus on sustaining effective practices

# Identification of High Quality, Inclusive Educational Settings: Three Big Ideas

- Inclusion is about more than setting
  - Physical integration
  - Academic integration
  - Social integration
- Teaching practices and pupil outcomes are most critical variables
  - Evidence-based practices (EBPs)
    - Legal, legislative, ethical, and scientific bases
    - Ultimately a consumer protection issue
  - Practice-based evidence focus
- No one can do it alone: Necessity of building partnerships and learning communities

# An IEP for LRE: Possible Criteria

- Select Clinical Practice Settings on basis of:
  - ***Inclusiveness***
    - Extent to which settings are characterized by physical, academic, and social inclusion
    - Responsiveness to all types of diversity
  - ***Evidence-based practices***
    - Extent to which professionals use practices that promote positive pupil outcomes
    - Extent to which progress monitoring is in place and shows meaningful pupil growth
  - ***Partnerships***
    - Extent to which professionals and families work collaboratively to promote positive pupil outcomes
- Ongoing analysis of selected settings to
  - Delineate practitioner roles and responsibilities
  - Identify naturally occurring EBPs
  - Increase pre-service educators' participation in critical roles and responsibilities and evidence-based practices

# Assessing Inclusiveness

- Physical integration
  - Inclusive classroom should exist in context of inclusive schools & communities
    - Not a placement but a philosophy of education
  - Pupils reside in common physical setting for extensive amount of school day
    - How much time is sufficient?
- Academic integration
  - More than access to curriculum and staff
  - Opportunity to learn and succeed in GE
    - Active participation in class
    - Making adequate progress through the curriculum
    - Increasing independent work skills
    - Presence of instructional accommodations
    - Ongoing monitoring of pupil performance

# Assessing Inclusiveness

- **Social Integration**
  - Educators provide instruction that facilitates pro-social interactions
    - Use of dependent and interdependent group contingencies
    - Cooperative learning and peer teaching programs
  - Opportunity to acquire good social skills
  - Making friendships
  - Engaging in social interactions that are positive, reciprocal, and satisfying to all participants

# Assessing “Evidence-Based Practices” in Educational Settings

- ▶ Evidence-based practice in medicine is defined as: *“the integration of best research evidence with clinical expertise, and patient values.”* (Sackett et al, 2000)
- EBP as part of a **decision-making approach** that places emphasis on evidence to:
  - Guide decisions about which practices to use and not use.
  - Evaluate the effects of **any** practice on important pupil outcomes.
- EBP as a **consumer protection** issue.
  - Assumes that EBP are more likely to be effective than interventions that are not evidence-based.
  - “For any practitioner, it is difficult to justify using non-EBP as the first line of attack, if there is an available EB alternative” (Kazdin, 2004).

# Assessing “Evidence-Based Practices”

- Using Innovation Configurations (ICs) from NCCTQ as starting point
  - Improving teacher preparation around classroom organization and behavior management
  - Improving teacher preparation in use of inclusive educational practices
    - Foundations and models
    - Collaborative teaming/planning
    - Access to general education curriculum
      - UDL
      - Differentiated instruction
    - Learning strategies
    - Family involvement
    - Student self-determination
  - Reading and Literacy Instruction
- Identification of other EBPs through practice-based evidence
  - Important role of monitoring pupil performance on critical P-12 outcomes

# Assessing Partnerships

- Partnerships with whom?
  - General, special, and remedial education teachers and other educational professionals
    - Para-educators
    - Occupational and physical therapists, mental health, child protection services
    - Administrators
  - Families and communities
- What types of partnerships?
  - Professional collaborations
    - Collaborative teams
    - Co-Teaching
    - Collaborative consultation
  - Peer Collaborators
    - Peer buddy systems

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