

## ABSTRACT

LEAMAN, N. L. Inclusionary practices in physical education. MS in Exercise Science-Special Physical Education, August 1998, 33pp. (P. DiRocco)

Inclusion is the practice of educating students with disabilities in the same environment with their peers. There has been much discussion and disagreement on how and when inclusion should be used. In this paper, a variety of topics were discussed. These topics included the following: a) What is inclusion, b) benefits of inclusionary practices, c) factors that may contribute to an unsuccessful inclusionary program, d) how an inclusive Physical Education program can be developed and fostered, and e) some topic areas involving inclusion that warrant future research. The research involved in writing this paper came from periodicals and books as well as from speaking with a variety of individuals on the topic of inclusion. The information presented was then examined and analyzed. The analysis included a discussion of the majority of the topics listed above. Based on the findings it could be recommended that everyone involved in an inclusive program should be properly educated on inclusion, and inclusion can not be successful unless the needs of the student are considered the greatest importance.

INCLUSIONARY PRACTICES IN  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS PRESENTED  
TO  
THE GRADUATE FACULTY  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
MASTER OF EXERCISE SCIENCE

BY  
NICOLE L. LEAMAN  
AUGUST 1998

COLLEGE OF HEALTH, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND RECREATION

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-LA CROSSE

DEPARTMENT OF EXERCISE AND SPORT SCIENCE

SPECIAL PHYSICAL EDUCATION CRITICAL ANALYSIS PROJECT

FINAL APPROVAL FORM

Candidate: Nicole Lynne Leaman

We recommend acceptance of this Critical Analysis Project in partial fulfillment of the candidate's requirements for this degree:

M.S. in Exercise and Sport Science: Special Physical Education

The candidate has successfully completed the Critical Analysis Project final presentation.

Patrick DiPocco

Signature of Critical Analysis Project Advisor

5/26/98

Date

Manny Feby

Signature of Committee Member

5/26/98

Date

Walter D. Hieber

Signature of Committee Member

5/26/98

Date

David T. Johnson

Signature of Associate Dean, College of HPER

5-4-98

Date

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my friends and family for their help and support throughout the writing and editing of this paper. I would also like to thank Dr. DiRocco for his guidance and patience.

I would also like to thank my husband, whom I met and married while toiling over the completion of this paper. Thank you for all of your love and support.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Need.....	2
Purpose.....	2
CURRENT KNOWLEDGE BASE.....	3
Inclusion.....	3
Evolution of Inclusion.....	4
Benefits of Inclusion.....	8
Possible Causes of Unsuccessful Inclusionary Programs.....	11
Inclusion vs. Exclusion.....	13
Roles of Higher Education in Inclusionary Practices.....	15
Inclusion in Physical Education.....	16
Roles of Other Individuals in Inclusive Physical Education.....	20
Future Research.....	22
CRITICAL ANALYSIS.....	24
Inclusion.....	24
Guidelines for Successful Inclusion.....	25

The Physical Education Setting.....	26
Physical Education for All.....	28
The Bottom Line on Inclusion.....	29
SUMMARY.....	31
REFERENCES.....	32

## INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

### Introduction

The topic of this critical analysis is inclusion. This paper examined the literature regarding a variety of aspects of inclusion. Initially, the author discusses what inclusion is and how it differs from mainstreaming and integration. Secondly, the development of inclusion as an educational approach will be investigated. This will be followed by a discussion of federal regulations for special education and the impact they have had on the development of inclusion. The author will then consider the benefits that can be gained from inclusion by the students, with and without disabilities, the schools and by society itself. After looking at the benefits that can be gained from a successful inclusionary program, some factors that may cause an inclusionary program to be unsuccessful will be discussed. The various philosophies of how inclusion should be approached in the schools will be analyzed, followed by a discussion regarding appropriate roles for higher education in this process of change. An inclusive physical education program will be described along with strategies that may assist in fostering inclusive physical education and in helping to make it successful. Possible ideas for future research in the area of inclusion will then be discussed.

Finally, the author will critically analyze all of the information presented, and try to decipher what is positive and what is negative about inclusion. An analysis will then

be given on what makes a successful inclusive program work and what kinds of things need to be done to create more successful inclusive programs.

### Need

Lack of consistency in the interpretation of inclusion reduces the effectiveness of inclusionary programs (DePaepe, 1984). The concept and use of inclusion will never reach its full potential unless we all share common ideas and a common goal. The only way inclusion will be truly successful is if the school system has a goal to keep the child's needs first. This means looking at each child as an individual and determining what methods and procedures would benefit the child the most (Stainback & Stainback, 1992). Anytime the goal wavers from this, we are risking the educational future of the child.

### Purpose

The purpose of this paper was to investigate the various philosophies and methods concerning inclusion in both physical education and regular education. Through the investigation and analysis it is hoped that the positive and negative aspects of inclusion may be determined and best practices in physical education may be discussed.

## CURRENT KNOWLEDGE BASE

### Inclusion

Mainstreaming, integration, and inclusion are three key words often used synonymously in public schools today. These three words represent three very different concepts, yet the words are often used interchangeably. Inclusion is the concept of educating all children with disabilities in regular education settings and involving the use of special resources, personnel, and curricula to make them successful within these settings (Block & Vogler, 1994). For instance, individuals with severe mental retardation may participate in a regular classroom even if they need extra help in areas such as gaining living skills and adaptive behaviors. This differs from mainstreaming in both concept and definition.

Mainstreaming refers to an educational practice of taking a student with disabilities out of a segregated classroom and placing that student into a regular classroom without changing the curriculum or classroom procedures to meet the special needs of the student (Grosse, 1991). What separates mainstreaming from inclusion in the most obvious way is that in inclusion, the curriculum is adapted to fit the needs of the student, while in mainstreaming, the curriculum remains consistent for all of the students. Thus in mainstreaming, help is given, but there is no individualization made for curriculum.

Integration involves removing individuals from special classrooms and placing them in regular classes, but more often than not, the only classes involved in integration are those such as music, art, and physical education. Integration takes place only when it has been predetermined by the school staff to have a high probability of success. Integration is more commonly utilized with individuals who have mild to moderate impairments and not with those individuals that have severe mental or physical disabilities (Block, 1994).

### Evolution of Inclusion

Many individuals have been discriminated against and consequently ostracized from society for a variety of reasons (Beirne-Smith, Patton, & Ittenbach, 1994). For example, members belonging to minority races and unorthodox religious groups have often been viewed negatively and treated differently by the larger majority. Any characteristic an individual may possess that differs from what is considered to be "normal" may result in discrimination against that individual. These characteristics include the presence of disabling conditions and/or cognitive impairments.

Individuals with disabilities have been segregated from society for years. They have been denied their rights as human beings and hidden away because society thought that was best for them. Although we are rapidly nearing the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a century filled with progress and new ideas, we continue to struggle with the concept of fully accepting individuals with disabilities as equal members of society. The practice of

inclusion in public education exemplifies this ongoing struggle that many school personnel are debating.

Inclusion is a concept that has been built out of the fight to reestablish the rights of individuals with disabilities; those rights that were given to them because they were individual people, then taken away from them because they were individuals with disabilities. It is not a new concept but it has been misinterpreted and misused for so long that its meaning and intentions are no longer clear. One of the factors contributing to the lack of clarity is that many individuals take the idea of inclusion and change it to accommodate their own endeavors (Beirne-Smith, et al., 1994). Teachers, parents, and school officials at a variety of times have changed what they feel inclusion is in order to accommodate current ideas of where they want students placed or of what they think students need. For instance, if a child's home school does not have a special education program, they are often bused to another school as opposed to designing a program for the student at the school closest to their home. In doing this, they have interpreted inclusion as being a place where the child is most easily accommodated and not as a program where the child can learn with his/her peers using a curriculum adapted to fit individual needs.

Inclusionary practices have just started to become more known within the last seven or eight years (Block, 1994). Prior to that, special education and segregated classes were widely accepted. Special education classes before 1975 existed only in a few areas within the United States. At that time, individuals with disabilities were either placed in

institutions, or if they were allowed in school, were placed in segregated schools or classrooms (Beirne-Smith, et al., 1994).

In 1975, P.L. 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) was passed. This act stated that all children with disabilities, age 3-21, had a right to be educated in an environment which was most like that of their peers and to receive a free and appropriate public education. This act introduced the concept of least restrictive environment, which was a very important stepping stone on the road to inclusion. The concept of least restrictive environment involves educating children with disabilities, to the maximum extent possible, with children without disabilities. This also stipulates that individuals with disabilities will be removed from educational environments only when their disability is such that education in regular classes cannot be achieved (Block, 1994).

At the time EAHCA was passed, most special education classes were still segregated and physical education was considered to be totally separate from special education. The EAHCA was an important step towards changes in the education of individuals with disabilities. The concept of least restrictive environment introduced the idea that integration could be successfully achieved. When the Regular Education Initiative, which has become synonymous with inclusion (Block, 1994), was introduced, people began thinking about what would happen if all students were educated together in regular classrooms. The Regular Education Initiative encouraged special education and regular education to work together which logically lead to ideas of full inclusion (Davis, 1989). When EAHCA was reauthorized in 1990, inclusion started to become an

important word and a foreseeable practice. In 1990, the law was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The federal government did help to bring about the concept of inclusion, but its lack of providing specific regulations for its development has also contributed to the misconceptions about inclusion. The laws they have passed have touched on the need for inclusive schools, but they have not told anyone how to accomplish this task. If the laws become more specific, inclusion may become better understood and subsequently, more widespread.

The EAHCA set general guidelines to foster the practice of inclusion. Due to EAHCA's lack of specificity for procedures and a variety of misinterpretations by school personnel, many schools are not practicing inclusion as the law intended. The IDEA reauthorization also emphasized that children with disabilities should be educated with children in regular classrooms to the greatest extent possible (Stein, 1994). Specifically, IDEA requires the following:

To the maximum extent appropriate disabled children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of disabled children from regular education environments occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily (10 U.S.C. 1415(5)(B)).

IDEA emphasized what is required in the schools and offered suggestions on how to provide a variety of least restrictive environments where the students should be educated, but did not provide procedural detail regarding how to deliver services in the least restrictive environment. Therefore, the laws left the responsibility to the teachers, parents, and administrators to carry out the spirit and intent of the laws to the best of their knowledge and abilities. As such, it is essential that all people involved in delivery of services for students with disabilities interpret and understand the laws in the same manner.

### Benefits of Inclusion

The benefits of inclusion are many, but they do not surface immediately. An increase in positive adaptive behavior on the part of students with disabilities is one of the biggest benefits that can be gained from inclusionary practices (Block & Vogler, 1994). Adaptive behavior refers to the "degree and efficiency with which the individual meets the standards of personal independence and social responsibility expected of his age and cultural group" (Beirne-Smith, et al., 1994). In the past, students with similar disabilities were placed together in a segregated classroom. For instance, in a speech therapy program, six students that could not talk well would be placed in the same classroom to learn how to talk. Without a constant positive example of proper speech exhibited by nondisabled peer models, how were they supposed to learn this skill? Participating in an inclusionary program allows students with disabilities to observe appropriate behavior

throughout the school day, not just at a few opportune moments. This opportunity has been shown to increase the development of proper adaptive behaviors (Block & Etz, 1995).

Another benefit gained from inclusion is greater acceptance into society as an adult. Children with disabilities who are seldom seen in society among their peers would have much difficulty finding acceptance as an adult. However, if children with disabilities are allowed to have learning experiences in the same classrooms, year after year alongside their peers, then it is more likely peer acceptance will be fostered later in life.

The benefits of inclusion are felt by more than just those individuals with disabilities. Children without disabilities are also affected in a positive manner. Nondisabled individuals are given an opportunity to accept other children on the basis of who they are as people, as opposed to looking solely at their disability. Each and every student in the classroom has certain areas in which he or she excels. By fostering inclusion, all children are provided numerous opportunities to experience the fact that it is acceptable to be different and that differences are not bad. It has been shown that contact between people can make a difference in attitudes and behaviors if the contact is frequent, interactive, pleasant, focused on common goals, meaningful, long, and mutually respectful (Sherrill, Heikinaro-Johansson, & Slininger, 1994). These characteristics accurately describe a good and potentially successful inclusive program.

Teachers may also feel benefits from inclusion. In an inclusive setting, teachers are often given the opportunity to team teach. In this teaching method, the teachers work together to determine what is best for their students, plan the lessons, and teach the classes. This gives them the opportunity not only to have extra assistance so that they do not experience teacher burn out, but also to watch and learn from a fellow teacher on a daily basis which may in turn increase their effectiveness as a teacher. These things can be very helpful for a new teacher, or even for a teacher who has been teaching for several years and needs some fresh ideas.

Other people in and out of the school system may also receive benefits. Parents of students with disabilities may find that their children are much more capable of independent behaviors. When the students are constantly exposed to their nondisabled peers, they may come to realize that they are not so different and they can do more on their own. It may also be found that the students without disabilities help their parents to better understand individuals with disabilities, which may in turn help to develop a better support system for the parents of individuals who are disabled.

One of the reasons that schools do not support inclusion is because they often feel that it will cost them more money (Stein, 1994). Contrary to this feeling, inclusionary programs have often been found to cost the school less than or the same as comparable segregated programs (Kelly, 1994). In a segregated school system, students are often placed in separate classes from their peers and are taught by teachers who are trained to teach individuals with special needs (Block, 1995). In this system of special education,

the government helps each district pay for special education teachers, physical therapists, occupational therapists, and transportation (Whitmire, 1996). The yearly price tag per student in this system is \$25,000 (Whitmire, 1996). The schools in this system also rarely have therapists or specialists of any kind at the school full time. They are forced to share the specialists with either other school systems or businesses. In an inclusive school system, not as much money is spent on special education teachers or transportation for individuals with disabilities, so more money can be spent on specialists, special assistants, adaptive equipment, and teaching materials. An inclusive system allows each school district to have their own specialists and advocates that all students receive benefits from these specialists. An inclusive program may not cost less than a traditional program, but it also does not cost more, and it may be found that the money spent becomes more beneficial for those involved.

#### Possible Causes of Unsuccessful Inclusionary Programs

Some individuals involved in a school system may feel drawbacks to an inclusionary program put into practice by individuals without proper education or knowledge of inclusion. Often times, philosophies of inclusion may be put into practice with teachers who have not been trained to teach students with disabilities in an inclusive setting. These circumstances may set the students up for failure and the teachers for bad experiences as well. Some students with disabilities may also find that it is too big of a challenge to be involved in a classroom with their peers. For instance, they may begin to feel that they can not keep up with their classwork or communicate effectively with their

peers. Nondisabled peers may find themselves not needing as much help as those with disabilities and not as skilled as the gifted students. Individuals whose abilities fall in between the gifted students and the students with disabilities may have difficulty receiving the help they need. This may happen if the instructors are failing to put the students' needs first or if they are not receiving enough support from aides or other service providers and teachers. This scenario is characteristic of a poorly planned inclusive program or a program that exceeds natural proportions (a higher percentage of individuals with disabilities than is found in society) (Stainback & Stainback, 1992).

Lack of teacher training and/or collaboration among school personnel are two possible reasons why inclusionary practices are unsuccessful. A school system that practices successful inclusion requires school personnel to work as a team (Block, 1994). In a system that utilizes teams, the teachers and service providers participate in scheduled meetings to discuss the individual needs of the students. Collaboration among team members can help the entire school work more efficiently in their efforts to deliver services to all students. This collaboration should include working together on the following: Individual difficulties with students, possible curriculum adaptations, discipline practices, peer tutoring, team teaching and school policies. Teachers and other people involved in the school must be able to work together or the teachers may begin to feel that they are not prepared to teach students with disabilities as well as their other students. With the help of inservices, special assistants, aides, parents, and other

teachers, teaching all of the children together can be a very rewarding experience both for the teacher and for the students.

Society's acceptance of differences has to start somewhere, and the schools are an excellent place to begin. The world is ever changing, and if we are going to grow with it, we need to be willing to accept individuals as they are. Every individual can be affected and influenced in a safe environment. An inclusive school system has the potential to influence the attitudes of the leaders of tomorrow's society. In doing this, tomorrow's society may be more open to individuals with disabilities and what they have to offer.

#### Inclusion vs. Exclusion

Generally, three basic philosophical beliefs exist toward inclusion. One philosophy suggests that all children, regardless of abilities or disabilities, should be allowed to participate in a classroom with their peers. This belief is known as full inclusion. A second philosophy contends that students with disabilities should not be allowed to participate in a classroom with their peers. Lastly, the most common philosophy maintains that some students should be afforded this right, but not all of them. This most common philosophy is where mainstreaming and integration are found. These are the three philosophies most often discussed when regarding inclusion with parents, teachers, and students.

Those who believe in full inclusion accept and encourage the idea that all students, regardless of ability level, can learn together in the same classroom with proper support and assistance. This would also include students with profound mental

retardation, and those with very minimal body control that require constant one on one attention and care. Most of the people who believe in the concept of full inclusion are the parents of individuals with disabilities and those people that have been involved with successful inclusionary programs (Stainback & Stainback, 1992). These are the same people that are generally very well educated on the concept of inclusion and the benefits it may hold for all students and for a school system. The next philosophy, that of not including students with disabilities in regular classrooms, is commonly shared by those people who have never been exposed to an inclusive program. These individuals who share this belief may not have any experience with individuals with disabilities and/or may have misconceptions about their possible learning capabilities. Many of these individuals have also been taught or encouraged to believe that special, segregated environments are better for students that need extra help.

Individuals from a variety of backgrounds may share the third philosophy. Individuals usually share the philosophy who have limited experience with inclusion but who have been exposed to it. The majority of those who share this philosophy feel that children with mild or moderate disabilities, such as a child with Down syndrome and mild mental retardation, may be allowed to participate in a regular classroom, but those children who have severe or profound disabilities, such as a child with spastic cerebral palsy and profound mental retardation, are more suited to a segregated classroom or school. If all people could experience a successful program that is conducted within an inclusion framework, it may be possible to develop a common concept concerning the

meaning of inclusion. If schools would allow time for collaborative practices the outcomes would enhance the development of inclusive education. These outcomes would most likely include improvements in current practices used by the school systems and in the process of teacher training used in higher education.

### Roles of Higher Education in Inclusionary Practices

If inclusion is to ultimately be successful in school systems all over the country, higher education will have to expand its role in teaching America's future educators about inclusionary practices (DePauw & Goe Karp, 1994). In the past, when teachers were presented with a child with special needs in their classroom they simply learned from experience throughout the year. Some of these teachers rose to meet the challenge successfully, while others did not. These professionals should not be put into a circumstance such as this in which they must either sink or swim. With an expanded role in the area of higher education, teachers will be better prepared to teach individuals with disabilities, and they will no longer find themselves in that position.

At this time, future educators are commonly required to take one class that deals with individuals with disabilities and strategies for including these individuals in the classroom. Instead of having one class that deals specifically with individuals with disabilities, educators in higher education should collaborate to provide educational opportunities for all students (DePauw & Goe Karp, 1994). This idea would involve those in special education and regular education communicating and collaborating to create a new system which instructs future teachers on how to put students first and how

to adapt their teaching program and style to accommodate a variety of different ability levels. This new system would include ideas and strategies on how to teach all students in every class they take. This system would do away with the "inclusion" class and place inclusionary practices in the curriculum of every class. Knowledge about individuals with disabilities would be infused throughout the curriculum (DePauw & Goc Karp, 1994). This concept of infusion in higher education would encourage the teaching of things such as abnormal gait in a biomechanics class or how to construct an IEP in a curriculum/administration class. This method would integrate and involve special education concepts within the regular teaching courses. If these new classes are adopted by more people in higher education, the concept of inclusion may be implemented in classrooms and school systems more amiablely in the future.

### Inclusion in Physical Education

Currently, inclusion in physical education is not a common practice. In my personal experience, reverse inclusion is much more common (including students from a regular education classroom in an adapted physical education class). Inclusion in physical education can be a more difficult proposition than that of inclusion in the regular classroom. As is stated by Block, (1994, p. 17-18), "Inclusion suggests that students with disabilities receive their individual education program in physical education (IEP-PE) in the context of general physical education with adaptations and supports as needed to ensure appropriateness, safety, and success". In the classroom, a student with special needs may be given work different from that of the student's peers with little or no

attention brought to them. In a physical education classroom, there may be times when it is necessary to have a student participating in an activity while the other students participate in something else. It may sometimes be difficult to teach two different lessons without hindering or slowing down the performance of any of the students. One method of accomplishing this may be to assign a peer helper from the class to each student with special needs (Farnholtz & Rector, 1995). If needed, these helpers could participate in alternative activities with their partner. Inclusion in physical education classes should maintain essentially the same ultimate goal as is found in a regular classroom. This goal is to have children with and without disabilities working together as peers and helping each other achieve their own goals (Block & Vogler, 1994).

An inclusive physical education program is a program in which all students are able to participate regardless of the extent of their abilities or disabilities (Block, 1996). In a program such as this, a variety of factors need to be considered to keep the class running smoothly. Some of these factors include: teaching style, adapting curriculum, class format, starting and stopping signals, duration of instruction, and types of cueing (Block, 1994).

The foundation of a successful physical education program based on an inclusionary concept includes teaching methods and curriculums that allow for teaching to each student's unique abilities. Changing teaching methods so that an instructor may better teach the students may include using more demonstrations or actions to make it easier for the students to understand what is being said. The teacher should attempt to

teach to the various learning styles of the students. Teaching in an inclusive environment also means being willing to either adapt or disregard traditional curriculums and draw from the needs of your students to develop new ones. One way to foster inclusion in the physical education classroom is by developing a program in which students work on individual goals (Block & Vogler, 1994). This would allow all of the students to work on similar activities while focusing on different outcomes. A program such as this, in which some of the students may be working on different goals or activities, could be accomplished by implementing a system that uses stations. These stations could be changed and modified at various times as needed, and students could rotate in and out of other activities to the stations where they would concentrate on specific skills.

Another idea that could be implemented on a more daily basis is peer tutoring. This is a method that places role models or peers with students that need extra help. This would allow all of the students to participate in activities and would help to make the students with disabilities more a part of a group. The class format can be changed to encourage a successful inclusionary program. The basic structure of a class can be lengthened, shortened, or completely changed to benefit the students. Changes to the structure may include splitting it into smaller sections or combining it with another class. Splitting the class into small sections of time may allow for the teacher's instructional time as well as peer tutoring time and time for individual practice. Starting and stopping signals may also be changed to best assist the students with a disability to get involved in the class. These signals can be changed from auditory to visual very easily, or the signals

may become a combination of both. This would allow for all of the students to better understand the instructor and to participate in the class more easily. Sign language can be a valuable tool in a physical education class. If simple signs such as stop, go, and listen are implemented into the instructions, not only will the students have an alternate method of understanding what the teacher wants, but they may also be able to learn the signs and use them in other classes or situations.

The duration of the teacher's instruction should correlate with the attention span of the students in the class. The teacher should gain an idea of the attention span of the students and should adjust teaching time accordingly. For instance, if the teacher has several students in the class that are affected by attention deficit disorder, the instructor may wish to give shorter instructions more often. Once again the student's needs should be placed first and the class should be designed around those needs. The basis of all of the changes made to foster inclusion in a classroom should be the needs of the students (Block & Etz, 1995).

The best way to foster and develop an inclusionary program is to teach to each student's individual ability level (Block, 1994). The best teaching in general is meeting the needs of each student. However, we continue to teach through predesigned curriculums and inadvertently disregard the needs of the individual students. The use of ready-made curriculums may cause many students to fail due to a lack of their needs being met. The writers of the curriculum cannot predict every type of student or learner that you may have in your class, and therefore may leave out strategies needed to teach

certain students. Designing new curriculums could help out any class, and any teacher that wants to put students first and help all of the students can do this.

The number of students with disabilities in the classroom is another important factor to take into consideration when developing an inclusive program. The idea of natural proportions is the concept of keeping approximately the same percentage of students with disabilities in the classroom as is found in society (Block, 1994). For example, if 3% of society's population has disabilities, not more than 3% of a class's population should include students with disabilities. This idea helps to prevent the development of classrooms where the students with disabilities or that need extra help outnumber the nondisabled students.

#### Roles of Other Individuals in Inclusive Physical Education

There are many different roles of individuals that can aid in the development of an inclusive physical education program. For inclusion to work most effectively, all individuals involved in its development and procedures need to be actively involved. These individuals include: administrators, teachers, aides, parents and students (Corless & Franklin, 1994).

Administrators need to set the basis for how the inclusive ideas and program will be carried out. They should be responsible for setting up necessary inservices and meetings to help make the transition smoother. The administrators should also keep in close contact with the parents, students, and teachers to ensure that everyone's needs are being considered. Administrative support and direction in the form of new policies and

time devoted to its implementation would help a great deal to insure successful inclusion programs.

The teachers need to develop an atmosphere for acceptance of the students with special needs. Their attitude toward differences is very important (Rizzo & Vispoel, 1991). The teachers must develop appropriate curriculums and instructional strategies to insure successful learning experiences for all of their students. The teachers need to be properly trained and instructed on how to teach individuals with disabilities within a regular classroom. Teachers should try to keep in contact with the parents and make sure that all of the parents are aware of what is happening in the classroom. In doing so, they will more often receive the parents' support in trying new activities.

Special assistants and aides need to work together with the teachers in order to create and implement a successful program. These individuals would be available to the teachers to help the students with disabilities succeed in the regular classroom. This may include providing anything from help with daily classroom work to daily one on one assistance.

The parents of all of the students in an inclusive program need to work together with the teachers and administrators. The parents should try to be aware of what is being taught in the classroom and of the different methods of teaching that are being used. Parents know their children better than anyone. This knowledge, if shared with the teachers could be very helpful in designing appropriate teaching methods and behavior modification programs.

All students involved in an inclusive program must be helped to accept the differences they will encounter. Attitude is very important in programs that use inclusionary practices. The parents and teachers need to help the students to maintain a positive attitude when confronted with individuals who are different from them and with difficult situations.

### Future Research

Current literature on the topic of inclusion includes writings on how inclusion affects the students with disabilities (Heenan, 1994), without disabilities (Block, 1995), school systems (Kelly, 1994), and teachers (Block, 1996). These writings also look into methods of fostering inclusion and how inclusive programs can be successful. Future research on this subject needs to continue with what has been started. People who have children and who are involved with school systems need to know more about how inclusion can be successful. Instances where individuals with disabilities are successfully included in a regular classroom setting with their peers have already been reported (Heenan, 1994). There is a continued need to have more studies that investigate the outcome of inclusion methods upon student learning. Another area of study concerns appropriate methods to successfully include individuals with severe disabilities.

Full inclusion emphasizes the idea that all students, regardless of the severity of their disability, should be educated with their peers. However, very little research has been done involving the effects of having individuals with severe impairments or behavior disorders in a classroom with their peers. People involved need to know if this

is truly beneficial for all students or if these students would accomplish more with some time out of the regular classroom or even in a segregated classroom. To gain this knowledge, researchers should begin looking at students currently involved in successful programs that utilize full inclusion. These programs could be charted and compared with students attending schools utilizing partial inclusion, and students attending schools utilizing segregation.

Another topic that should receive more attention in the future is the longitudinal effects of inclusion. As the children growing up in inclusive settings reach adulthood, research needs to be conducted on their successes and failures in employment, living arrangements, and their social adaptations into society. This will help people to determine the long-term effects of inclusion so that best practices can be developed in school systems. A longitudinal study may be the best way to determine these effects. A possible study would track and chart students from a variety of different programs from the time they enter a school system through mid-adulthood.

Aside from future research, the sharing of ideas would be a very valuable tool for those beginning an inclusionary program. This sharing could be done by individuals involved in inclusionary programs writing about their experiences and about how they have set up their programs. A sharing program has been started in Minnesota. The University of Minnesota has begun a newsletter filled with articles sent in from individuals and systems involved in inclusive programming. This newsletter also offers

strategies, resources, and places to go for further information (University of Minnesota, 1996).

The Internet is also becoming a valuable source of information concerned with inclusion practices. Computers provide a universal source for information from all over the world. Individuals interested in inclusionary practices can use the Internet to distribute and receive new and important information about inclusion. Such sources include information about workshops, preservice programs, research, successful practices, assessment methods, and legal issues.

## CRITICAL ANALYSIS

### Inclusion

Inclusion is the practice of educating all students in the same classroom regardless of abilities or disabilities. Based upon the review of current literature reported in this paper, it appears that inclusion has been shown to have more positive than negative results. The individuals who have been involved in inclusion practices have come out of the experience with primarily positive opinions (Stainback & Stainback, 1992). There are however, some inclusion programs that may appear successful, but that are not successful in the view of the students. The programs that do not keep the needs of the students in mind may look successful on the outside by maintaining students with a variety of abilities in each classroom and promoting working together with peers, but in reality, the students are not receiving the individualized programs they deserve. The students may still be expected to learn from a uniform teaching program as opposed to having a program designed to best fit their needs. An inclusion program can be successful when all children are not required to follow the same curriculum (Craft, 1994). The professionals involved in these programs can help to accomplish this goal by remembering to put the needs of students first. Inclusion in the school system can be accomplished if all of the professionals and staff collaborate and work together to serve the students. The government or an advisory board of teachers could also help to develop plans that could make it easier for individual schools to create inclusive systems. If more

specific guidelines could be set up by state or federal governments or by teachers advocating for inclusion, the road to inclusion could become much smoother.

### Guidelines for Successful Inclusion

Development of guidelines to assist school districts in the process of setting up an inclusion program would be of great assistance. Possible guidelines could offer schools specific instructions on how to set up a new program and on how to instruct the teachers and specialists on new strategies and methods of teaching. These guidelines may also give ideas on how to best design the classrooms and curriculums to meet the needs of all of the students. Other guidelines explaining how to accomplish natural proportions in the classroom would be very valuable. Natural proportions is the concept that the proportion of individuals with disabilities in the classroom should be similar to the proportion of individuals with disabilities in society (approximately 3%) (Block, 1994). This information makes the idea of inclusion more practical and feasible. These guidelines should include ideas for use in both regular and physical education classrooms.

A consistent model for inclusionary programs would make it easier for the administrators and teachers in a school system to design and begin an inclusive program. They would have something concrete to look to for ideas and a variety of resources to turn to if they see potential problems.

### The Physical Education Setting

Inclusion in physical education is becoming more and more prevalent for individuals with disabilities. Physical education is a direct service that is required to be

available for all students, including those with disabilities (Subpart B of the rules and regulations of IDEA). At this time it is becoming more accepted for individuals with disabilities to be included in regular physical education. Individuals with severe disabilities are now being offered physical education services alongside their peers. With this occurring, changes in curriculum are even more important.

When teaching individuals with severe disabilities in a regular physical education program, it becomes more of a challenge to keep the students working and playing together as opposed to side by side with no communication. It may be necessary in some cases to allow a few members of the class to step away from the class and join into activities with an individual with severe impairments. This would allow for full participation, while not eliminating anyone from group activities.

Although physical education is an important part of a student's academic career, it is often seen as a release for students. Physical education is an opportunity for some students to excel and for others to become a part of a team and of the class. If students are not allowed this opportunity, they are missing a very important part of their education. This may prevent these students from reaching their full potential as members of the class.

The philosophies that were mentioned earlier in this paper may play an even bigger part in physical education. This is because there are people who do not think that teachers should waste their time teaching physical education to individuals in wheelchairs or with severe disabilities. These people feel that the extra time should be spent on those

with good movement skills, to make them better athletes. This philosophy is very narrow minded and should not be condoned. Physical education is important for everyone, especially those that have difficulty moving. Children with good motor abilities practice their skills everywhere they go, while for students with physical impairments, physical education class may be the only place they go where they can have fun while learning how to move their bodies. For this reason, physical education is even more important for students with limited mobility. Without the benefit of a physical education class, these students may never get the opportunity to enjoy moving their bodies and to play with their fellow students.

#### Physical Education for All

Yes, there is a place for all students in physical education. This place is with peers, having fun, and learning how to move their bodies and how to maneuver a variety of manipulatives. All children need this time for physical activities with their peers. Some people may argue that recess is where that belongs, but at recess, the students are more inclined to play with their small group of friends, and leave others out. Physical education class can teach the students to work together as they will in society. They can learn that everyone is a valuable member of the class.

An inclusive physical education class needs to be a physically and emotionally safe place for students to participate. The physical education teacher should strive to make it a place where students can be comfortable with themselves and with others. The students need to know that they do not have to be successful every time or in everything.

This knowledge comes from learning that they are all different and that no one is perfect. If the students learn this while they are in physical education class, then they will be more productive as classmates and as individuals in society.

The safety aspect of physical education involves more than just feeling safe and comfortable in the classroom. It also involves making sure that the area is safe for all of the students. In an inclusive physical education class, there may be extra possible hazards to safety such as wheelchairs, walkers, and braces. If discussed openly and cushioned correctly, these objects do not have to be hazardous. All of the students in the classroom need to be aware of possible sharp edges or points on assistive devices used in the classroom. Pads or cushions could also be used to cut down on the possibility of an accident. As long as the instructor is aware of all of the possible hazards in the classroom, he or she will be able to make the classroom safe for everyone.

#### The Bottom Line on Inclusion

Attitude, in many cases, is the deciding factor in determining if an inclusive program will be successful or unsuccessful (Johnson, 1987). Attitude can affect everything from placement to teaching strategies. The placement of an individual into either a segregated or inclusive program should not take place until after the services the child will receive have been determined (Beirne-Smith, et al., 1994). This placement decision takes place during the student's IEP meeting. A number of people are involved in a student's IEP meeting. If any of these individuals have negative attitudes toward inclusion, the ultimate placement of the student may be affected. For instance, if one of

the individuals involved in the IEP meeting did not feel that an individual with severe physical limitations belongs in a regular physical education class, they may be able to influence other members of the committee.

The teacher's attitudes may also be a factor in the services a student receives. Teachers tend to address more favorable comments to high-achieving students and more critical comments to low-achieving students (Johnson, 1987). This could be detrimental for the self-esteem of an individual with special needs. It is possible, though, to improve the attitudes of teachers and other individuals toward individuals with special needs through open discussions and exposure to positive programs and positive attitudes. Once these fears are exposed, they may be dealt with and hopefully eliminated.

Intense contact with individuals with disabilities may be beneficial in helping to change attitudes about them (Johnson, 1987). Inservice training designed to help teachers adapt materials and instructional methods to the needs of individuals may also aid in making attitudes more positive. This in turn will hopefully help to make individuals with disabilities more positively accepted in regular classes and in regular physical education classes.

## SUMMARY

In this paper, inclusion in both regular and physical education has been analyzed in terms of what it is, what it is not, how it can be successful, what kinds of things prevent it from being successful, and why people like or dislike inclusion as a practice. The research for this paper, aside from gathering literature, was done by talking to individuals with a variety of different opinions and discussing their views on inclusive education. These individuals included the following: teachers involved in inclusion, teachers not involved in inclusion, university level instructors, parents of individuals with disabilities and of those without disabilities (some involved in inclusive programs and some not involved in inclusive programs), and students involved in inclusive programs. The knowledge gained from these individuals was greatly varied on the topic of inclusion, but primarily positive. Inclusionary practices, either in physical education or otherwise, may not always work for everyone, but in looking at the benefits that may be gained from inclusion, everyone does deserve an opportunity to see if it will work for them.

## REFERENCES

- Beirne-Smith, M., Patton, J., & Ittenbach, R. (1994). Mental retardation. (4th ed.). New York: Macmillan College.
- Block, M. E. (1994). A teacher's guide to including students with disabilities in regular physical education. Baltimore, MD: Brooks
- Block, M. E. (1995). Development and validation of the children's attitudes toward integrated physical education-revised (CAIPE-R) inventory. Adapted Physical Education Quarterly, 12, 60-77.
- Block, M. E. (1996). Modify instruction: Include all students. Strategies, 1, 9-12.
- Block, M. E., & Etz, K. (1995). The pocket reference-a tool for fostering inclusion. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 3, 47-51.
- Block, M. E., & Vogler, E. W. (1994). Inclusion in regular physical education: The research base. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1, 40-44.
- Corless, K., & Franklin, N. (1994). Inclusion of students with disabilities into elementary physical education. California Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Journal Times, 56, 13&32.
- Craft, D. H. (Ed.). (1994). Inclusion: Physical education for all. California Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Journal Times, 56, 12.
- Davis, W. E. (1989). The regular education initiative debate: Its promises and problems. Exceptional Children, 55, 440-446.
- DePaepe, J. (1984). Mainstreaming malpractice. The Physical Educator, 41, 51-56.
- DePauw, K. P., & Goe Karp, G. (1994). Preparing teachers for inclusion: The role of higher education. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1, 51-53.

FILMED AS BOUND

Farnholtz, A., & Rector, B. (1995). Rewards and frustrations of inclusion in physical education: An adapted physical education specialist's perspective. California Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Journal Times, 57, 27-29.

Grosse, S. (1991). Is the mainstream always a better place to be? Palaestra, 7, 40-49.

Heenan, J. (1994). Inclusive elementary and secondary physical education. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1, 48-50.

Individuals With Disabilities Act of 1991, 10 U.S.C. 1415(5)(B).

Johnson, A. (1987). Attitudes toward mainstreaming: Implications for inservice training and teaching the handicapped. Education, 107, 92-96.

Kelly, L. (1994). Preplanning for successful inclusive schooling. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1, 37-39, 56.

Rizzo, T., & Vispoel, W. (1991). Physical educators' attributes and attitudes toward teaching students with handicaps. Adapted Physical Activity Quarterly, 8, 4-11.

Sherrill, C., Heikinaro-Johansson, P., & Slininger, D. (1994). Equal-status relationships in the gym. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 1, 27-31, 56.

Stainback, S., & Stainback, W. (1992). Controversial issues confronting special education. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Stein, J. (1994). Total inclusion or least restrictive environment? Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 12, 21-25.

University of Minnesota (1996). What's working in inclusion. Together We're Better, U of M, Spring, 1-10. Available from: Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, 109 Pattee Hall, 150 Pillsbury Dr. SE, Minneapolis, MN, 55455; (612)624-4512.

Whitmire, R. (1996). Special ed cost conflict. Green Bay Press-Gazette, June 23, A-2.