Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education Guidebook

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This guide was created with material from the following resources:

Institute on Disability (2009). *Brief highlights of research on inclusive education*. Presented as the Inclusive Education Leadership Summit. April 10, 2009. Durham, NH: Institute on Disability, University of New Hampshire.

Mollenhauer, L. (2003). *An Inclusive School Culture.* Ontario Community Inclusion Project of Community Living, Ontario.

Maryland State Department of Education and Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education.

The indicators of program quality resource guide. (1993). Center on Education and Training for Employment, The College of Education, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education Guidebook

Table of Contents:

Guide for Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

Introduction

Quality Indicators are statements of specific practices that have been documented through research and/or school-based experiences to promote the creation of inclusive learning communities where all students can be successful. The Quality Indicators listed in this Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education Manual (Manual) have been identified through an extensive review of research literature and examination of similar documents developed by eight states that have successfully used Quality Indicators to advance inclusive education practices in their schools. Input on the New Jersey Indicators was obtained from administrators and teachers across the state and piloted in schools in five New Jersey districts. The final Manual is made up of this Guide, the Quality Indicators Instrument, i.e., 90 Quality Indicators with a rating scale and over 100 clarifying examples from New Jersey schools; and an Appendix.

This Quality Indicators Guide can be used as:
1) a rating scale with which districts/schools can assess their current status implementing inclusive education practices;
2) to initiate discussions among school personnel to identify priorities for school improvement;
3) a framework to guide programming;
4) a planning process to delineate and evaluate progress toward achieving specific goals to expand inclusive education. The categories of Quality Indicators are divided into eleven areas. Each area is dependent upon the strength of the other. The categories are all equally important because no one factor in isolation can bring about an inclusive school culture (Mollenhauer, 2003).

Quality Indicators: Eleven Areas of Practice

1. Leadership

2. School Climate

3. Scheduling and Participation

4. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

5. Program Planning and Development

6. Program Implementation and Assessment

7. Individual Student Supports

8. Family-School Partnerships

9. Collaborative Planning and Teaching

10. Professional Development

11. Planning for Continued Best Practice Improvement

Several key changes were made in the Quality Indicators Instrument and Guide as a result of the pilot schools' experiences. The number of Indicators was reduced, terminology simplified, and examples from New Jersey school districts added. In addition, it was found to be considerably more effective to disseminate the Quality Indicators in a forum that will allow proper time and guidance for staff to give thoughtful consideration to each Indicator. Specific suggestions to guide a team in facilitating the completion of the Quality Indicators are provided later in this Guide. One pilot school developed a short PowerPoint presentation to highlight the reasons for obtaining input from stakeholders via the Quality Indicators. A sample PowerPoint presentation has been provided in the Appendix with information regarding the status of inclusive education in New Jersey to help the stakeholders gain perspective on the task.

Purpose of the Quality Indicator Manual:

Quality Indicators are most effectively used in conjunction with a self-assessment process that helps to measure current levels of implementation and guide action planning toward targeted practices. Quality Indicators can be used by school districts and school buildings to assess the current status of inclusive education practices; identify areas of programmatic strength as well as areas in which further development is needed; and generate a strategic school improvement plan for inclusive education. This

Manual is designed to be a technical assistance tool – not a monitoring device. However, districts that have participated in the New Jersey Department of Education monitoring process and found that ensuring least restrictive environment (LRE) is an area requiring attention, will find this tool to be helpful in addressing the varied needs of all students within their schools.

This Manual is designed to be a catalyst for change and can be used in a number of different ways, as:
- An educational opportunity to learn about the key indicators needed to have an inclusive culture and the factors that contribute to them;
- A qualitative self-assessment of a school staff's attitudes, practices, policies and procedures around inclusion;
- A reflective process to examine and challenge underlying assumptions, beliefs and values that influence behavior;
- A resource in action planning toward school improvement plans (Mollenhauer, 2003).

The process of self-assessment should, as a matter of course, generate management information about the overall quality, which, in turn, can then be used to develop goals, objectives and a set of targeted actions to drive improvement in inclusive practices.

Overview of the Steps in the Process

1) Get Organized
2) Have Stakeholders Complete the Quality Indicators Instrument
3) Summarize and Highlight Priority Areas
4) Identify Goals and Objectives
5) Develop an Action Plan for School Change

Who Should Manage the Process?

First, identify a Quality Indicators Key Team (Key Team) to be the primary group of people who are overseeing the process. They coordinate all of the steps listed above. A Key Team is generally made up of eight to ten people led by an administrator (e.g., principal, Assistant Superintendent, Director or Supervisor of Special Education) and is representative of the stakeholders who will complete the Quality Indicators Instrument, e.g., general and special education teacher(s), a parent, and others. If building-based, the team should include the principal. The key tasks involved in managing the process include:

- Identifying stakeholders groups to fill out the Quality Indicators Instrument
- Assigning one or more Key Team members to oversee each stakeholder group in their completion of the Instrument
- Facilitating the actual completion of the Quality Indicators Instrument and clarifying any Indicators which are confusing to those filling them out
- Tallying and summarizing the results
- Meeting together to developing an action plan based on the results.

The Quality Indicator Planning Form (in the Appendix) can help with these steps.

Detailed Description of the Process

1) Get Organized:

Clarify the purpose

It is important for the Key Team leader and members to be clear about what is to be accomplished. The overall purpose might be described as 'enhancing and improving the practices in the school culture so that it is more inclusive and supports the achievement of all students.'

Articulate the principles and values

Be ready to clarify the objectives of this process. Examples can include:
- To focus on the present and future and not get bogged down in the past
- To provide opportunities for stakeholders to raise, debate, clarify and resolve issues related to inclusion so they have some ownership with the change process
- To ensure a manageable action plan
- To involve stakeholders with their points of view and include those who feel a part of the school as well as those may who feel excluded (Mollenhauer, 2003).

Determine who will participate:

It's important to have a broad range of people with diverse perspectives involved in the process. As many stakeholders as possible, i.e., those people who can influence and/or are affected by inclusion in the school, should complete the Quality Indicators Instrument. Stakeholders may include:
- Administrators: principals, vice-principals, guidance people, department heads, supervisors, etc.
- Teachers: general education, special education, ESL, specials teachers, etc.
- Paraprofessionals, teacher assistants, etc.
- Related services professionals
- Child study team members
- Support staff: office support, custodians, cafeteria staff, etc.
- Students
- Parents/Guardians

Who are the facilitators and what is their role?

The facilitator(s) are member(s) of the Key Team or individuals trained by them. Their primary role is to introduce and oversee the completion of the Quality

Indicators Instrument; to clarify individual Indicators, answer any questions, ensure that everyone participates, and keep people on track and on schedule.

The Key Team will design the process and develop a work plan

The pilot schools found that having stakeholders complete the Indicators in groups, rather than distributing and having them returned individually (e.g., placing in mailboxes), was an excellent way to stimulate discussion about inclusion and best practice. The following are things to consider as you design your process for distributing/having stakeholders complete the Quality Indicators Instrument:

• What stakeholders will participate?

• Who will coordinate the invitation to stakeholders?

• Who will copy the Quality Indicators Instrument?

• Will the stakeholders be meeting as large or small groups? Where can the various groups meet?

• Should the Quality Indicators Instrument be completed during or after school? What are the implications for attendance?

• How will we recruit facilitators if more are needed? What preparation, if any, will they need?

• What resources, if any, are required to complete the process and where will we get the resources?

• How will the results of the Quality Indicators Instrument be tallied and summarized?

• How can we ensure confidentiality for stakeholders completing the Quality Indicators Instrument?

• What is the best way to review the summaries, set goals and develop an action plan?

• How will we communicate the purpose and results of the process to stakeholders? (Mollenhauer, 2003).

2) Have Stakeholders Complete the Quality Indicators Instrument

There are 11 Quality Indicator categories (i.e. the 11 areas identified on page 1 of this Guide) and four ratings next to each Indicator reflecting the status of its implementation, ranging from *fully* to *not yet implemented*. Each individual stakeholder will be given a Quality Indicators Instrument to review and rate each Indicator. All stakeholders may,

or may not complete the Indicators in all 11 areas; this is up to the Key Team. If it is determined that, due to time constraints or other reasons not all participants can complete the Indicators in all 11 areas, stakeholders should at least complete any categories which the Key Team determine directly relate to their area of skill and responsibility in the school. More specific guidelines for facilitating completion of the Quality Indicators are provided below.

3) Summarize and Highlight Priority areas

Next, compile a summary of the ratings assigned to the Quality Indicators. The key tasks are to:

- Count the number of ratings to each statement, for each category.
- Add the columns for a total number of ratings to each statement. A Summary Sheet is available in the Appendix to post all of the totals for each Quality Indicator.
- Calculate the percentage of responses for each statement. The amount of detailed breakdown of the totals is up to the individual schools, e.g., a school may want to get a total of the amount of general education teachers who checked indicators number 1 as partially implemented, versus special education teachers.

4) Identify Goals and Objectives:

The purpose of this step is to identify manageable and specific goals and objectives based upon the stakeholders' input. It is critical that key stakeholders have a role in this step as experience has shown their participation will result in their having a vested interest and greater commitment towards accomplishing the goals.

In developing the goals and objectives, keep in mind that goals are more general and can be derived from the 11 areas of practice. The objectives are steps to the goal, are measurable and prioritized based on the results of the Quality Indicator Summaries. For example, the Quality Indicator category #10 reveals that the IEPs for students with challenging behaviors generally do not include positive behavioral support strategies. In this example, the goal will be to improve supports to individual students and the objective may be to decrease the number of students who face disciplinary action by 10% in Year 1. An example of an action could be to provide

training and support to teachers on positive behavior supports. A second action may be to train CST staff on how to develop a functional behavioral assessment. It is very important for the objective to be written in a manner that is clear, observable and measurable so that stakeholders will know if and when the objective has been achieved.

5) Develop an Action Plan:

The purpose of developing an action plan is to ensure that steps are being taken to strengthen the inclusive school culture. The Key Team is responsible for developing the action plan, expanding the Team to include individuals needed to move the effort forward. The plan should include: the prioritized goals and objectives; actions/resources; timelines (by when); assigned responsibilities (by whom); and, status of progress (there is an Action Planning Form in the Appendix of this guide, along with an example). In addition to the goals and objectives, discussions should include what is feasible within one school year, or what may be targeted as Year 2 or Year 3 goals.

Directions for Facilitators: Stakeholder Completion of the Quality Indicators Instrument

Ask people to introduce themselves if they do not know each other.

Introduce the Purpose of the Session

Explain that the purpose of the session is to get a present read on inclusive practices in the school. Tell them the summary of all the ratings will allow the school to highlight what they are doing well and make improvements in the other areas.

Take a minute to discuss what is meant by inclusion, (e.g., students with disabilities attend general education classrooms with the appropriate supplemental aides and services). Highlight the information regarding the state's present status, the benefits and the need to provide more effective inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities in the public schools (information pertaining to this is included in the Appendix). A summary of the research put together by the Institute on Disability at the University of New Hampshire is also attached. In addition, it is important to identify specific reasons your particular school is using this Manual and what you hope to achieve. If time allows, you can show them a short Powerpoint presentation to highlight this information. (A sample Powerpoint is provided for you in the Appendix.)

Take the time to point out that:
- The Quality Indicators will draw out discussion about areas in which the school is inclusive as well as identify practices that can be improved. Participants shouldn't feel that this is a test at which they can fail. The school will have areas to celebrate and areas which need to be addressed.

- The Quality Indicator statements that participants will be asked to reflect on and rate describe effective practices and no school will be equally strong in all the areas.

- The summaries generated by completing the Quality Indicators will not be a perfectly accurate reflection of the school culture. It is intended to be a snapshot as well as provide an opportunity to discuss and reflect upon the school's culture

(Mollenhauer, 2003).

Participants are now ready to complete the Quality Indicators Instrument. The following describes the steps the facilitator needs to take to move participants through the Quality Indicators Instrument.

Provide an Overview

Explain that there are 11 sections beginning with *Leadership*. (Note: let participants know that some of the questions may not pertain to their roles. Ask them to be patient through those sections.)

Describe the Steps in Detail

The facilitator will explain:
Each section has specific indicators that pertain to that area of practice. For example, in the *Leadership* category, the first indicator states: "The district's mission statement reflects the philosophy that ALL children can achieve." If a participant is unsure of what that Quality Indicator means, the facilitator can give an additional example to the one(s) provided. If it is still unclear, the facilitator should direct the participant(s) to place a question mark (?) next to that Indicator number to indicate that they are unsure of its meaning.

Status of Implementation column:
Participants are asked to check off ONE box regarding the status of implementation in the school for each Quality Indicator. Explain what each rating means and post the explanation of the ratings so that people can check them if needed. The choices are:

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
- **Substantially** - there is much evidence that the statement is true, but there are a few practices that could be strengthened
- **Partially** - some evidence can be given that the statement is true, but there are a number of practices needing improvement or opportunities for strengthening
- **Not yet** - there is very little or no evidence that the practice presently exists.

What if an Indicator does not apply to that person's scope of knowledge?

If the participant feels that he/she is not in a position to rate the implementation of an Indicator, then direct them to draw a line across that specific or group of indicators to indicate their lack of knowledge in this area.

Completed by:

Participants will be asked to check off the description that best fits them, please ask them to check it off on the first page of the Quality Indicator Instrument they fill out.

Start the Process

Participants are now ready to rate the Quality Indicators Instrument. Even if completed in a group setting, each person should fill out his or her own individual form.

Wrap Up the Session

At the completion of the process be sure to collect all the Quality Indicator Instruments and give them to the person responsible for tallying the results.

Describe the next steps to participants. For example, 'summaries will be generated by the Team from the information collected and used to prioritize goals for an action plan.' Indicate that people will have an opportunity to review the summaries and will be kept in the loop as the process unfolds. Thank the participants for their time and careful consideration in taking part in this important process to improve their school's inclusive practices.

Congratulations on taking the first steps toward change.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

January, 2010

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

These quality indicators are meant to be guideposts of best practices in inclusion. Legal requirements, unless directly related to inclusion (New Jersey Special Education Code references provided in these cases), are not listed. District compliance with the law is assumed.

The examples are provided to give the evaluator a clear idea of what the indicator is asking. The examples are not exhaustive nor meant to be the only examples possible. They are drawn from many, different New Jersey school districts.

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
- **Substantially** - there is much evidence that the statement is true, but there are a few practices that could be strengthened
- **Partially** - some evidence can be given that the statement is true, but there are a number of practices needing improvement or opportunities for strengthening
- **Not yet** - there is very little or no evidence that the practice presently exists.

Please place a check by the one that applies:

Completed by:

____ General Educator ____ Special Educator ____ Paraprofessional ____Principal ____ V.P. or other admin.

____ Student ____ Family member ____ OT/SP/PT _____Other (Specify)

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	1. LEADERSHIP	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	The district's mission statement reflects the philosophy that ALL children can achieve.	The mission of a school district in Camden County, working in partnership with families and community, is to develop the unique potential of each individual and prepare all students to meet the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards by creating a challenging and diverse learning climate that promotes the development of the whole student, and prepares its students with the knowledge skills and integrity to meet life's challenges and enrich their community. A school in Hunterdon County will ensure, for each child, meaningful and challenging educational experiences in a supportive caring environment.				
2.	General and special education administrators (including Board of Education members) are familiar with research that supports the educational benefits of inclusive education and the concept that ALL students should be included, i.e., that inclusion is not something that a child must earn.	The Director of Special Education will provide updates/in-services to highlight research and changes in the law.				

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
- **Substantially** - there is much evidence that the statement is true, but there are a few practices that could be strengthened
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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	1. LEADERSHIP	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
3.	Administrators involve all stakeholders (families, administration, teacher and student) to make inclusion work.	-Parents are invited to provide input and ideas on inclusion at Parent Advisory Committee Meetings. -Administrators provide information and workshops to parents on inclusive practices and district initiatives on inclusion. -Administrators encourage teams to value parent input in problem solving the details of inclusion for their children. -Administrators provide information and workshops for school personnel on collaboration				
4.	School administrators ensure that teachers use the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) as the basis for the instruction of all students.	- The instruction for children with developmental disabilities (Down syndrome, autism, etc.) is based upon the CCCS even though the content they are expected to learn may be modified.				
5.	District guidelines for hiring general and special education staff include the expectation that an applicant's willingness to implement inclusion and knowledge of inclusive practices will be primary considerations in hiring.	-During an interview, the administrator asks a fourth grade teacher how she/he would differentiate a lesson on two specific core curriculum objectives to a class which includes: (1) a student whose reading level is two years behind; (2) a student with Down syndrome who will receive a modified curriculum, i.e., not be held responsible for all curricular objectives. -During an interview, the administrator asks a special education teacher to describe the special educator's role in a co-taught classroom.				

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
- **Substantially** - there is much evidence that the statement is true, but there are a few practices that could be strengthened
- **Partially** - some evidence can be given that the statement is true, but there are a number of practices needing improvement or opportunities for strengthening
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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	1. LEADERSHIP	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
6.	Administrators advocate for resources to support effective inclusion.	-A superintendent advocates to the district's Board of Education to dedicate money saved by bringing students back-to-district (savings in busing and tuition) toward staff training and added personnel to support students with disabilities and learning differences in general education classrooms.				
7.	Administrators analyze student performance data and input from teachers in identifying professional development, which would benefit teachers and students.	- End of the year testing reveals exceptional strength in the writing skills of one multi-ability fourth grade class where the teacher had developed a writing rubric and taught her students to use it consistently. The teacher is asked to provide a workshop to her colleagues on using writing rubrics.				
8.	Administrators ensure that IEPs are accessible to teachers who have students with IEPs in their classrooms and encourage them to review and implement the IEP.	-Administrators ensure that, by the beginning of the school year, teachers have a list of the students with IEPs who will be in their classes. -A workshop is provided for general education teachers on reading/using IEPs.				
9.	Administrators ensure that teacher assistants (also known as paraprofessionals, paraeducators, aides, etc.) and those working one-to-one with students receive information regarding supports needed by students with IEPs in the classes they support.	- Teacher assistants are provided with short student profiles for the students they support. The teacher(s) and teacher assistant discuss what the student(s') support will look like in the classroom to ensure a focus on goals and independence. - The principal ensures that time is dedicated for teacher assistants to consult with teachers. See N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.5(d).				
10.	Principals are proactive, committed and visible in efforts to support teachers in their inclusive efforts and ensure successful inclusion in their buildings.	- Principals recognize and keep successful co-teaching teams together.				

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	1. LEADERSHIP	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
11.	Principals communicate that all staff are responsible for all of the children in their building so that students with IEPs are not "owned" by special education staff.	- General education teachers are encouraged to take instructional responsibility for students with disabilities in their classrooms.				
12.	Principals support the establishment of a system of school-wide positive behavior supports (PBS) (or, other systemic positive behavior approaches) to reduce office referrals, suspensions, expulsions and the number of students sent to our-of-district schools for students with challenging behaviors.	- Over the course of the year, a PBS team made up of teachers and administrators develops and implements activities in a school-wide PBS plan. The school collects data to track results and refine school-wide supports.				
13.	Principals identify and implement incentives to promote teacher acceptance and use of inclusive practices.	-A teacher with a large number of students with IEPs in her class is relieved of bus duty to enable more planning time.				
14.	Principals are knowledgeable about different collaborative models (co-teaching, consultation, combination models and effective use of teacher assistants, etc.) and his/her role in ensuring the success of whichever model(s) is (is) used.	-A principal attends a workshop and visits a school using a consultation model in preparation for developing such a model in her school.				
15.	Principals ensure collaborative planning time is worked into staff schedules and used productively.	-A principal schedules enough time for collaborating teachers to plan together. - A principal schedules time for consulting secondary teachers, assigned to different departments (e.g., special educators providing support to science, English, history teachers) to meet together to discuss the progress of students they have in common. - Grade level teams are encouraged to use a written agenda to keep their discussion on track.				

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	1. LEADERSHIP	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
16.	Principals are knowledgeable about and involved in the design and implementation of current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices.	- A Principal attends a conference featuring new research on instructional practices. Upon his return, he turnkeys the information to the staff. - A Principal sets up a committee to review research on strategies to support students with disabilities in math classes.				
17.	Teachers are evaluated on whether they are using ongoing formative assessments to identify students at risk and adjust/ improve instruction for all students.	- A district's classroom observation form includes indicators on using progress monitoring/curriculum-based assessment, questioning to check for understanding and other strategies to check progress/tailor instruction.				
18.	Teachers are evaluated on the effectiveness with which students with disabilities are actively engaged in classroom instructional activities with the rest of the class, including implementation of supports in their IEPs.	- A district's classroom observation form includes indicators on differentiation; use of varied instructional strategies addressing multiple learning styles, needs and interests; use of class wide strategies which support organization and predictability; use of behavior expectations clearly communicated and consistently applied.				
19.	The roles and responsibilities of teacher assistants are clearly outlined and communicated to teacher assistants and the teachers with whom they work.	-The district has a handbook for teacher assistants, which they provide to all new hires. -As part of their training for teachers on collaboration and teaming, the role and supervision of the teacher assistant in their classroom is one of the topics covered.				
20.	Administrators provide teachers with an opportunity to identify challenges, review evidence-based practices and determine professional development needed.	-Professional learning communities are in place throughout the school district and, through these teachers provide input into professional development needed.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	2. SCHOOL CLIMATE	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	The school environment is one that celebrates diversity and staff members work to create an atmosphere where human differences are understood and appreciated.	- Adults in the school consciously and consistently model respect for differences in their words and actions. - Teachers arrange student desks in clusters of four or five to create natural communities, i.e., promote sharing and interaction. - Students are encouraged not to exclude children from recess activities, the lunch table, etc. - Teachers use literature to address issues of diversity. - Teachers give all students opportunities to share successes, challenges, etc. in a "safe" atmosphere. - Teachers connect children with similar interests.				
2.	There is a school-wide approach to building positive relationships among all students across all activities (academic and nonacademic) and all settings.	- Schools in the district are implementing one or more of the following: school-wide anti-bullying programs; student problem-solving; using students as conflict mediators; school-wide positive behavior supports; character education programs, etc.				
3.	There is a school-wide effort to teach active participation and responsibility in society.	- Schools in the district implement one or more of the following: school cleanup and recycling projects; community volunteering and sharing programs; school citizenship and key club groups, etc.				
4.	Teachers, teacher assistants, other staff, students and their parents have an understanding of disabilities and the special needs that having a disability can create.	- Classroom teachers lead a discussion on disability—what it means to have a disability and what it does not mean? - Disability awareness activities are provided on a continuous basis to address staff turnover.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	3. SCHEDULING AND PARTICIPATION	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	All students with disabilities are assigned to the same school attended by nondisabled students in their neighborhood unless their parents have elected to send them elsewhere.	- As part of a district's redistricting plan, students with disabilities are returned to their neighborhood schools rather than being bused across town based upon program availability. Supports are realigned to support greater inclusion.				
2.	School administrators schedule special education staff according to the school-wide need for student support and students' IEPs, not on the basis of disability type, program, or label alone, as well as considering teacher certification needs.	- A consultation model is used by a high school to support many students. Rather than assigning Special Education teachers to programs (e.g., autism program) or rooms (e.g., resource room, general education classroom) consultants are assigned to carefully support/track specific students within general education classes in a subject area (e.g., science, math, history) through observation, consultation with and assistance to the teacher and student.				
3.	The vast majority of students with disabilities spend most or all of their day in age appropriate general education classrooms.	- A Hunterdon County district included 89% of its students with disabilities in general education classrooms at least 80% of the school day as of December 1, 2007. http://www.nj.gov/education/data/				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	3. SCHEDULING AND PARTICIPATION	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
4.	Efforts are made to assign all students with disabilities equally across chronologically age appropriate general education classrooms in order to reflect natural proportion of students with IEPs throughout each grade level's classrooms.	- In a school there are eight fifth graders with IEPs and four, fifth grade classrooms. Rather than placing all eight students with IEPs in one classroom, (informally known as "the inclusion class") two students are assigned to each fifth grade classroom and personnel supports distributed across classrooms according to students' needs using one or more collaborative models (e.g., co-teaching, consultative, etc.).				
5.	Students with disabilities arrive and leave classrooms at the same time as their nondisabled peers, unless stipulated otherwise in their IEP.	- Students with IEPs do not arrive late and leave school early based upon the special bus schedule.				
6.	Students with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to socialize with their nondisabled peers during nonacademic times.	- Students with IEPs eat lunch at tables with the other students and not at a table with just students with disabilities or a teacher assistant or other adults.				
7.	Students with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate in all school sponsored age-appropriate activities (e.g., sports, field trips, clubs, dances, graduation, school plays, community service activities, etc.).	- Families of students with disabilities receive the same school district bulletins and activities information as all students in the district. - Sports activities are physically accessible. - Supports are provided so that a student with complex disabilities can travel to Florida on the senior class trip.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	4. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
	ALL OF THE FOLLOWING REFER TO MULTI-ABILITY ("INCLUSIVE") GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS					
1.	Teachers incorporate visual, tactile and kinesthetic materials and activities to meet a variety of learners' needs	- As a short project on the causes of the Civil War, the students are given options to write a story or essay; create a graphic; develop a storyboard; or, create and perform a short play.				
2.	Teachers use class-wide routines and procedures to support classroom management and learning.	- The class develops and posts a list of behavior expectations which all agree to follow; the teacher uses wind chimes to signal time for transitions; schedules and homework are always posted on the board in the same area, etc.				
3.	When a student with disabilities requires a modified curriculum, teachers modify curricular goals and classroom instruction using the same or similar, age appropriate materials for assignments, homework and tests.	- A student with Down syndrome requires a modified curriculum. The science teacher surveys the curriculum and prioritizes those concepts/skills she determines the most essential, paying special attention to the Core Curriculum Content Standards.				
4.	Teachers use multiple formats to provide instruction such as individual, pairs, small groups and whole class.	- On day 1, a teacher introduces a new math concept to the whole-class then breaks the class into groups to practice the concept. He gives a short exit survey. On day 2, from the exit survey, he identifies students ready for an enrichment activity; a second group in need of additional practice activities; a third group requiring re-teaching.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	4. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
5.	Teachers involve students with disabilities by regularly using instructional strategies that support more complex thinking rather than watering down the curriculum. Example of watering down: While students without IEPs are expected to analyze the characteristics of various nations, students with IEPs are merely asked to locate the nations on the map.	-Teachers in a high school American History class plan activities that foster dialogue, analysis, and verbal interaction such as: (1) presenting both an article and video on the same concept, person or event; (2) breaking up a video/DVD/long reading by inserting questions or brief discussions to encourage deeper thought; (3) slowing things down so that students have more time and opportunity to actively process unfamiliar and abstract content.				
6.	Teachers regularly plan lessons involving materials to supplement the text (e.g., videos, DVDs, web resources, magazine articles, newspapers, etc.).	-Struggling readers and ESL students in a 10th grade biology class are provided with a book with many illustrations, but few words, on the functioning of DNA.				
7.	Teachers measure student understanding, and refine instruction using a variety of ongoing (formative) assessments.	- Teachers in a middle school use curriculum-based assessment; rubrics; teacher observation; questions; student writings; oral language; short quizzes; projects and other methods to check for understanding and refine instruction during each unit.				
8.	Teachers integrate class-wide technology seamlessly into their lessons, e.g., Web Quests, smart boards, DVDs, PowerPoints, etc.	-During a high school social studies lesson on the industrial revolution, the teacher uses a smart board to show political cartoons, video, PowerPoint slides and provide notes.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	5. PROGRAM PLANNING AND IEP DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	The IEPs of students with disabilities reflect their individual educational needs, including academic and functional (e.g., behavioral, social, communication, life skills, etc.) skills needed to access the general education curriculum.	- A student with a reading disability needs critical reading skills to access texts. Goals in the IEP target increasing the student's reading fluency and comprehension - A student on the autism spectrum has goals in the area of social skills to support interaction in group work with other students				
2.	At the IEP meeting, placement in a chronologically grade appropriate general education classroom with supports is the first option discussed for every student, regardless of the severity of their disability or their present placement.	- The IEP team for a fourth grade student with Down syndrome considers her present profile (needs, interests, strengths, goals, etc.) in tandem with the activities typically taking place in a fourth grade classroom to determine appropriate supports.				
3.	For students sent to out-of-district schools due to a lack of staff skill, supports or programs options within the district, a clear, concise plan is put in place to train staff and get supports into place to enable the district to return the students to their neighborhood schools.	-A third grade student with autism, who is also nonverbal, attends an out-of-district school. In September, 2009 the IEP team targets September, 2010 for the student's return to his home school. The team (including the parents) sets a timetable to accomplish his transition, including identifying a fourth grade classroom, training the teacher(s), problem solving supports and strategies for his next IEP and activities to help him transition (e.g., social stories, visits to the school in the spring, etc.). The IEP team members take responsibility for different parts of the transition plan to ensure timely implementation.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	5. PROGRAM PLANNING AND IEP DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
4.	Written transition procedures and activities are in place to smooth the transition of students from grade to grade and from school to school.	- In the late spring, a district provides an orientation for students moving from the middle to high school, including providing a tour of the building, reviewing important points in the student handbook, practicing opening lockers and having "veteran" high school students answer their questions. - A student with autism is entering kindergarten. His preschool teachers create a social story about going to kindergarten, which his mom reviews with him several times prior to the beginning of school. Prior to the end of the school year, his preschool teacher and case manager meet with his new kindergarten teacher to provide input, ideas for working with him successfully. He visits his future kindergarten classroom twice before school begins.				
5.	The Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements (at the beginning of the IEP) include useful, jargon-free, up-to-date information which can be used by the IEP Team to determine goals and by teachers to plan instruction, i.e., the student's talents and strengths; academic challenges; interests, and strategies that work and don't work.	- Margo has difficulty with verbal communication (her thoughts run ahead of her language) so she has difficulty interacting with other students socially and with following whole class discussions. Her IEP team ensures that the PLAAFP clearly describes this challenge. IEP strategies include allowing extra wait time between questions and answers and encouraging peers to do the same when conversing with Margo.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	5. PROGRAM PLANNING AND IEP DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
6.	IEP teams use a transdisciplinary approach to develop goals, objectives and supports.	- The occupational, speech and physical therapists discuss the child's needs, develop joint goals, and determine where and how these will be addressed during a typical day, preferably within the classroom setting.				
7.	Student IEPs contain a small number of key academic and functional goals and these goals are measurable and observable.	- Given access to the Internet, John will locate 10 sources of information on a given topic within a 45-minute class period. - Given 2nd grade material, Jerry will read orally at 60 wpm with no more than 2 errors.				
8.	IEP goals and supports are relevant, age-appropriate, and sensitive to the culture of the student.	- Coupons for a pizza party, rather than smiley face stickers, are used as part of a behavior incentive plan for high school students. (age appropriate) - Learning to use word processing tools, rather than neat handwriting, is an IEP goal. (relevant) -Based on research, the IEP Team suggests to teachers that students of Hispanic backgrounds benefit from instruction that is socially and personally relevant. (sensitive to culture)				
9.	IEPs for students with disabilities (including those functioning on or above grade level in the general education classrooms) include, when needed, goals targeted to developing peer interaction, communication and other social skills.	- A student on the autism spectrum is performing above grade level in academics in the general education classroom so requires no academic goals. But, he does have goals in the area of social interaction which his teachers/speech therapist focuses on at appropriate times throughout the school day.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	5. PROGRAM PLANNING IEP DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
10.	For students with challenging behaviors, IEPs include behavioral support strategies that are positive (i.e., emphasize preventing problem behaviors and teaching the student alternative behaviors rather than relying on punishment) or, if needed, a behavior intervention plan based upon a functional behavior assessment, which includes input from staff working with the child and from the parent.	- Using a functional behavior assessment process, unclear academic demands are identified as one of the triggers for uncooperative behavior for one student. As part of a behavior intervention plan, the teacher provides a list of what students are expected to complete within allotted time frames. A student is shown how to make schedule/task lists and prompted in their use until he uses it independently.				
11.	Beginning at age 14, students are prepared and supported to effectively participate at their annual IEP and/or other meetings.	- Prior to the IEP meeting, the student's case manager prepares the student to take part in the meeting by discussing his vision for his future, his current goals for the year, and the next year and what steps need to be taken towards those goals.				
12	There is a multi-year plan to develop capacity within the district to prevent students from being placed in out-of-district settings.	- Planning for school building improvements, takes inclusion for students with complex disabilities into consideration, e.g., ramps; larger general education classrooms; nonflorescent lighting; FM systems in classrooms; elevators, etc. - IEPs are analyzed and staff training needs determined, prioritized and provided over a three-year period.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	6. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	A variety of methods are used in the classroom to collect data on student progress in the curriculum. and, for students with IEPs, on their IEP goals.	- Teachers use progress monitoring (repeated samples of student performance on equivalent forms of the same task across time) to measure student progress in general. - Ongoing, teachers check for understanding of a unit on the Civil War by asking questions; listening to student discussions; and using project rubrics, quizzes, and tests.				
2.	A variety of methods are used to collect data on a student's progress on his IEP goals.	- A teacher assistant observes Jason at recess, collecting anecdotal data regarding his progress in a social goal (e.g., Given a 15 minute recess period, Jason will appropriately initiate interaction with at least one peer.) - The special educator uses progress monitoring to measure Jerry's progress on his personal reading goal, e.g., Given 2nd grade material, Jerry will read orally at 60 wpm with no more than 2 errors.				
3.	Student IEP goals and objectives are addressed throughout the day in academic and nonacademic activities and routines as appropriate.	- A student has a goal to increase his initiation of verbal interactions. His team uses a matrix to identify several times during the school day when this goal can be addressed (e.g., in-class group work; lunch) versus working on skills in the isolation of pullout environments. Staff in each setting is alerted to the goals and ideas for supporting his progress.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	6. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION, AND ASSESSMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
4.	Supports and strategies listed in the IEP are implemented and updated according to the student's progress.	-To support the growth of independence, a student's IEP specifies that adults will prompt him to refer to a task list, while gradually fading the prompts as the student becomes independent in this skill. By the end of the year the student no longer needs repeated prompts during the day. *Prompting* as part of the task list goal is removed from his IEP. The new goal is that the student will use a task list, without any prompting.				
5.	Related services personnel collaborate in the delivery of services and supports and assessment of student progress.	- A speech therapist in an elementary school frequently "co-teaches" group lessons with a general education teacher. During the lesson, the therapist works with all of the students, but, pays particular attention to facilitating discussion in the groups with students with IEP speech-language goals. The teacher and speech therapist share notes on the progress of individual students.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	7. INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SUPPORTS	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	Where it is determined that a student's goal cannot be effectively addressed within an existing class activity, the staff ensures that this "alternative" instruction is timed; temporary; and the student comes and goes at logical breaks in the classroom schedule (if the alternate activity takes place in another room).	- A student needs to learn how to use a new Alternative and Assistive Communication device. This cannot be done within the general education setting. Over a three-week period, the student meets one-to-one with a speech therapist and teacher assistant in a conference room twice per week during a special period for initial lessons in its use. - All of the students in a co-taught second grade class, with the exception of 3 students, understand multiplication of three numbers by two numbers. One of the students has an IEP, the other two do not. One of the teachers takes the students aside during a station activity to review the concept and do guided practice. - A high school literacy coach works individually with several adolescent students who have difficult reading issues to improve fluency and comprehension. The instruction is individualized to each student's needs. The sessions are scheduled for individual students based upon their schedule to ensure they are not missing out on academic content.				
2.	CST members demonstrate knowledge of: (1) the array of supports available to support students within general education classrooms; (2) general education classroom practices which support inclusion; and, (3) write IEPs that reflect this knowledge.	- CST members refer to the list of supports at NJAC 6A:14-4.3 when considering how to include a child in the typical daily activities in a fourth grade class. - CST members are familiar with strategies for differentiating the content, instructional activities and assessments for students in a multi-ability, fourth grade classroom.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	7. INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SUPPORTS	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
3.	CST members are knowledgeable about global activities in general education classrooms at school and grade levels of the students on their caseloads.	- A CST case manager visits classrooms and interviews teachers in their assigned schools/grades regarding the types of activities that occur in their classrooms on a typical day. This is to prepare for discussions at student IEP meetings regarding support options to maximize students' placement in the LRE, i.e., within general education classrooms with appropriate supports.				
4.	The goals of students who are supported by teacher assistants are shared with the teacher assistants.	- The classroom teachers consult with the teacher assistants regarding the goals and supports of students with IEPs in their classrooms and what the delivery of support should look like. - A teacher assistant gets a short profile of the student that highlights his strengths, interests and the goals to be addressed over the course of the school year.				
5.	A plan is developed to help the teacher assistant to increase student independence while fading their support.	- In a goal on increasing independence, steps are provided via IEP objectives to, within 3 months, move the teacher assistant away from walking directly alongside the student from the bus to the building, to watching from the school entrance as the student exits the bus and walks into the school naturally with friends from his class.				
6.	As needed, students use low-tech assistive technology (e.g., pencil grips, wood blocks to raise desk level, etc.) and high-tech assistive technology (computer software, Alpha-Smarts, FM systems, etc.) to ensure meaningful participation in instructional activities.	- A portable FM system is provided in the classes attended by a student with a significant auditory processing problem. - A student with cerebral palsy is provided with a lab stool with a back so that he can participate fully in the lab with his lab partner at the lab table.				
7.	At age 14, transition IEPs reflect goals and objectives that specifically target skills needed for post-school life (e.g., postsecondary education, work, community living, recreation and leisure).	- A student begins to do job sampling in the school and outside in the community to begin to identify work skills and interests.				

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	8. FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	Parents are asked for their input into the district's planning and inclusion initiatives.	-The district distributes a survey to families to obtain input regarding its efforts around inclusion.				
2.	The district keeps families (both special education and general education) informed about the status of the district's efforts to transition students to less restrictive settings.	- At back-to-school night, each school has an area set up with fliers about the district's inclusion initiative, some research articles and an administrator who people can speak to all parents re: their concerns and questions. - Updates on inclusion initiatives are presented/discussed at general PTA meetings, Special Education Parent Advisory meetings and other meetings attended by district families.				
3.	Families are encouraged to participate in decision-making and advocacy activities in the district.	- The district's administrators invite parents who are willing to come to meetings consistently and work collaboratively with the district in obtaining input from parents, to become part of a Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC).				
4.	Families are involved with disability awareness training for staff and students, as appropriate.	-Teachers partner with parents in developing activities to celebrate diversity and increase awareness of disabilities. - A college student with autism (or cerebral palsy or learning disabilities, etc.) returns to his high school to share his thoughts about growing up included in general education classes.				
5.	Family members and school staff attend workshops and conferences on inclusive education together.	- A district sending several teachers to New Jersey's Summer Inclusion Conference distributes brochures Conference to parents and teachers at PTO/PTA Parent Advisory Council meetings and raffles off two parent scholarships to attend.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	8. FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
6	The CST encourages active family involvement in the information gathering, at the IEP meeting where decisions are made about the child's supports, and later in problem solving when concerns or questions arise during the course of the school year.	-In the spring, case managers send a simple Student Profile form to parents to capture their ideas about their child's strengths, interests, challenges, strategies that work and goals they would like addressed. - The parent of a student with Down syndrome meets monthly with the student's teachers and case manager to address any challenges and fine-tune her supports.				
7.	The district provides information to parents regarding research-based educational practices and ways they can support their child's learning at home and school.	- A district provides a workshop series for parents, which includes workshops on topics, such *Positive Behavior Supports*, *Differentiation*, *Supporting Literacy* and other topics.				
8.	Special and general education staff members are encouraged to communicate with parents, consider them a resource and value their input in planning and problem solving challenges in general education settings.	- A fifth grade co-teaching team sends a letter home during the first week of school which gives a broad outline of what the students will learn; homework and grading procedures; ideas for how parents can support good study skills and homework habits; and, other information.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	9. COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	The roles and responsibilities of all teachers, related services personnel and teacher assistants/aides are clearly outlined and reflect the commitment and skills needed to teach and support all students.	-Administrators provide clear written descriptions for respective roles and responsibilities for all classroom personnel appropriate to the support model being used, i.e., consultative, co-teaching, or other.				
2.	Adults in classrooms share roles and responsibilities such that distinctions between "specialist" and the general education classroom teacher are not obvious.	-General and special educators in classrooms signal their parity by acting as equals. Neither teacher is perceived as a teacher assistant only providing support which could be provided by a teacher assistant, i.e. prompting, cueing and redirecting student participation; reinforcing students' personal, social, behavioral, and academic learning goals; helping students in organizing and managing materials and activities. (N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.5)				
3.	General and special education teachers share responsibility for assessment of student learning.	-At the beginning of the school year, high school co-teachers identify the procedures they will use to assess and grade students, including those with IEPs.				
4.	Instructional teams (i.e., any combination of co-teachers, consulting teachers, therapists, etc., supporting students with disabilities in general education classrooms) use formal processes for conducting and documenting meetings.	-A team meeting agenda form is used to help facilitate and keep meetings organized and on-task. The team members take turns taking notes and providing copies to other team members.				
5.	General educators, special educators, paraprofessionals and related service providers have the collaborative planning time that they need to plan.	-Teachers and administrators at a high school discuss the amount of weekly co-planning time needed and develop a schedule which uses prep periods, substitute support and excusal from one monthly meeting to obtain the needed planning time.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	9. COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
6.	Teachers share lesson plans, obtain input and provide guidance to teacher assistants working with them in their classrooms.	-Teachers share upcoming lessons, the lesson objectives and the paraprofessional's role in supporting the activities and students.				
7.	Specials teachers (e.g., music, PE, art, etc.) have regular opportunities to consult with a special educator about strategies to help them work with students with IEPs in their classroom.	-A music teacher has several students with IEPs in her classroom. Upon request, a consulting special education teacher is available to observe the students in her class with IEPs and meets with her to discuss refinements to classroom strategies for these students.				
8.	Grade-to-grade, between grade and school-to-school articulation strategies are in place to facilitate the sharing of successful instructional strategies as student transfer to another grade and/or school.	- At their monthly meeting, principals discuss and develop a consistent process and format for teachers to use to ensure information is shared as students transition from grade-to-grade and school-to-school.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	The school promotes awareness, knowledge and adoption of best practices in multi-ability (inclusive) classrooms and the continual updating of these practices by providing training and consultation for all school staff on an on-going basis.	- Best and research-based practices for inclusive education may include: differentiation; class wide procedures to support engagement; classroom community; behavior, etc; formative and summative assessment; flexible grouping; co-teaching and collaboration (for staff involved in this model); consultation model and collaboration (for staff involved in this model); use of positive behavior supports; supporting struggling readers in general education classrooms; effective use of technology (class wide and individual student); curriculum mapping, backward curricular design.				
2.	Training needs are tailored to meet differing needs of elementary and secondary teachers.	- Middle/high school teachers receive training on areas that address cross-curricular issues peculiar to secondary students; elementary teachers have a similar training but addresses issues peculiar to elementary students.				
3.	Special education teachers attend the same workshops as their general education colleagues.	-Special educators are trained in the use of smart boards alongside their general education colleagues.				
4.	General and special education teachers and teacher assistants working together to support multi-ability (inclusive) classrooms receive training to clarify their respective roles for the collaborative model being used (i.e., Co-teaching; Consultative; other) and ways to effectively implement the model.	- Special educators supporting general education teachers under a consultative model are trained coaching their teacher-colleagues in the use of strategies, adaptations, modifications, etc. -Teachers and teacher assistants receive training on working collaboratively.				

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	10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
5.	Teacher assistants are trained in their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the teacher, strategies to support student independence, confidentiality of student information and other key topics relating to their role.	-The district provides workshops for teacher assistants on ways to prompt and redirect students rather than giving them the answers. - Teacher assistants are taught strategies to promote independence for the students in which they are providing support.				
6.	Professional development in person-centered planning is provided to staff involved in transitioning students with IEPs from more restrictive (i.e., separate schools or self-contained classrooms) to less restrictive settings (i.e., home school or general education classrooms).	-CST members are trained in the use of MAPS to help them in transitioning students back to the district from out-of-district schools.				
7.	Regular review of student learning data is reflected in the content of school professional development plans.	-A school provides a workshop for third and fourth grade teachers on teaching students to use writing rubrics based upon data showing problems with capitalization and punctuation.				

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Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

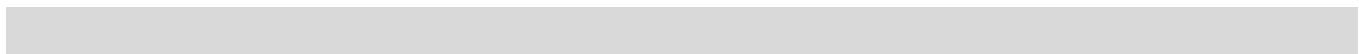|	11. PLANNING FOR CONTINUED BEST PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT	EXAMPLES	Fully	Sub-stan-tially	Par-tially	Not Yet
1.	A school strategic plan that addresses best practice-based services for inclusive education is developed and reviewed annually by a school planning team consisting of relevant stakeholders.	-A principal assembles a building-based team (himself, general and special education teacher, guidance counselor, parent, etc.) to use the New Jersey quality indicators to assess where they are with inclusion and develop an action plan to increase inclusive opportunities for students. This 'living' action plan is updated frequently by the team.				
2.	The school's plan and subsequent reports of progress in implementing the plan are disseminated to parents, school district staff and community members using transparent language and full disclosure.	-At the end of the school year, the building team does a presentation for the Board of Education and community on how the action plan on inclusion was developed and their progress thus far.				
3.	There is an annual review of students served in self-contained programs within the district and students in out-of-district placements to identify students whose needs can be met in less restrictive settings, i.e., in-district schools and/or general education classrooms with supports.	-A tool is developed, with input from parents, for case managers to assist them in flagging students appropriate to return to their home schools, identifying the supports needed to be put in place prior their return and creating a time line for their transition.				
4.	There is an official planning process established when transitioning a student from an out-of-district placement to return to settings within the school district.	- A transition protocol is developed setting out steps to create and implement a transition plan for each student being returned to the district. CSTs follow this step-by-step process when planning for a student's to return to their home school.				

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
- **Substantially** - there is much evidence that the statement is true, but there are a few practices that could be strengthened
- **Partially** - some evidence can be given that the statement is true, but there are a number of practices needing improvement or opportunities for strengthening
- **Not yet** - there is very little or no evidence that the practice presently exists.

APPENDIX

1) Glossary

2) Inclusion in New Jersey

3) Guidelines for responding to the Quality Indicator forms

4) Quality Indicator Planning Form

5) Meeting Planner

6) Quality Indicator Action Plan (and Example)

7) Quality Indicator Summary Sheets

8) Research on Inclusive Education

9) Powerpoint presentation

Glossary

Accommodation – provides access to information/demonstration of knowledge; does not change the instructional level, content or performance criteria for meeting the standards (e.g., large print, oral testing, use of manipulatives)

Age-appropriate the student is provided with curriculum and activities at the same age and/or grade level as his or her non-disabled peers.

Assistive technology- any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Authentic assessment- A form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. The goal of authentic assessment is to gather evidence that students can use knowledge effectively and be able to critique their own efforts.

Best Practice - refers to widely acknowledged instructional and assessment practices that are implemented on a routine basis. For example, nobody researches whether classroom furniture should match the size of the people who are using the tables and chairs. It is a long-recognized best practice that kindergartners should have little chairs. (Nancy Frey).

Functional behavioral assessments- a problem solving method, built on the assumption that, if a pupil keeps repeating a problem behavior, that behavior is most likely serving some purpose for the student - otherwise, he or she would not keep repeating it. The process includes an examination of any patterns to identify their purpose or their 'function'.

Instructional team – this is not the IEP team, but an informal group of people made up of individuals working directly with the student on a daily basis.

Modification – a change in what a student is expected to learn and/or demonstrate.

Peer-mediated learning approaches- an alternative classroom arrangement where students may take an instructional role with classmates or other students. Students may work in pairs or small

cooperative learning groups. Research supports the use of these approaches as alternative practice activities, however, they are not to be used for providing instruction in "new" instructional content.

Person-first language- recognizes that someone is a person, a human being first, and that the disability is a part, but not all of him or her. Use the term "person with a disability", putting the person first, rather than "disabled person", which puts the disability first, e.g., a child with Down syndrome, versus "a Down's child."

Positive behavior intervention plans- An outline of procedures to be used to address identified behaviors that will not simply eliminate serious behavior problems, but must simultaneously teach alternative positive behaviors so that appropriate behavior achieves the desired outcomes.

School staff – includes administration, teachers, paraprofessionals, related services providers, Child Study Team members, guidance, and special subject areas teachers.

Supplementary aids and services- Supplementary aids and services means aids, services, and other supports that are provided in general education classes, other education-related settings, and in extracurricular and nonacademic settings, to enable children with disabilities to be educated with non-disabled children to the maximum extent appropriate This can include direct services to the student as well as support and training to the staff working with the student. Examples can include, but are not limited to instructional, environmental, social-behavioral support in addition to staff supports.

Research Based - have a methodologically sound (meaning a mix of quantitative and qualitative) studies that have been replicated by other researchers. (Nancy Frey).

Reciprocal teaching- Reciprocal teaching refers to an instructional activity that takes place in the form of a dialogue between teachers and students regarding segments of text. The dialogue is structured by the use of four strategies: summarizing, question generating, clarifying, and predicting. The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of teacher in leading this dialogue. The purpose is to facilitate a group effort between teacher and students as well as among students in the task of bringing meaning to the text.

Transdisciplinary approach- a framework for allowing members of an educational team to contribute knowledge and skills, collaborate with other members, and collectively determine the services that most would benefit a child. Requires team members to share roles and systematically cross discipline boundaries. The primary purpose of this approach is to pool and integrate the expertise of team members so that more efficient and comprehensive assessment and intervention services may be provided.

Universal design- the design of instructional materials and activities that makes the learning goals achievable by individuals with wide differences in their abilities to see, hear, speak, move, read, write, understand English, attend, organize, engage, and remember. Universal design for learning is achieved by means of flexible curricular materials and activities that provide alternatives for students with differing abilities. Rather than focus on adapting things for an individual at a later time, an accessible universally designed learning environments are created to be accessible to everyone from the beginning.

- **Differentiated instruction**- a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process.
- **Accessible formats**-providing material and information in multiple ways, e.g., auditory, visual, tactile, etc.
- **Tiered assignments and assessments**-enables students to focus on essential understanding and skills but at varying degrees of complexity and difficulty.
- **Flexible grouping**- Grouping of students is not fixed. Based on the content, project, and on-going evaluations, grouping and regrouping must be a dynamic process as one of the foundations of differentiated instruction.

Values: They are the beliefs or principles about how people should behave in our school. For example, a value might be to 'communicate openly and honestly with everyone at the school'.

Benefits for Students with Disabilities

Academic Gains:
- The Individual Education Programs (IEP's) of students with disabilities who are placed in general education classrooms, contain more academic objectives, improved quality of the curricular content, and more references to best practices than IEP's developed for students in segregated settings.
- Students in an inclusive school demonstrate, "significantly superior gains on several …scales, including reading, vocabulary, total reading and language, with a marginally significant effect on reading comprehension".

Social Gains:
- Compared to students in segregated settings, students with disabilities who are full time members of general education classrooms show significantly higher levels of engagement in school activities, higher levels of participation in integrated school environments and initiate and engage in social interactions with peers and adults to a greater degree.
- Students with disabilities in inclusive placements have had more frequent interactions and larger, more durable networks of peers without disabilities.

Benefits for Students without Disabilities
- Students without disabilities demonstrate consistent academic gains when educated alongside students with disabilities and do not show evidence of any negative impact from inclusion.

- Studies indicate no difference in academic engagement rates between classrooms with and without students with disabilities, suggesting no negative impact on instructional opportunities.

Benefits for School Personnel:
- Educators believe that educating students with disabilities in inclusive settings results in positive changes in their attitudes and job responsibilities.
- Teachers develop positive attitudes over time, especially when inclusion is accompanied by training and administrative support. In addition, teachers show increased confidence and professional growth in ability to accommodate more diverse learners in their classrooms.

Inclusion in NJ

Although progress has been made in several areas, an alarming pattern of segregation continues among students receiving special education services in New Jersey.

FIGURE 4. PRESCHOOL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Source: Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Source: Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

New Jersey continues to segregate those with mental retardation far above the National

Source: Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Almost one in four male African-American students in New Jersey is identified as having a disability

Legend:
- New Jersey
- United States

Source: Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

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Guidelines for responding on the Quality Indicator forms

The following is a guideline as to how to respond to the statements:

- **Fully** - there is much evidence that the statement is true; it would be difficult to find ways to improve
- **Substantially** - there is much evidence that the statement is true, but there are a few practices that could be strengthened
- **Partially** - some evidence can be given that the statement is true, but there are a number of practices needing improvement or opportunities for strengthening
- **Not yet** - there is very little or no evidence that the practice presently exists.

Quality Indicator Planning Form

<table>
<tr><td>

Quality Indicator Category: (Include description here)

Quality Indicator: (Include description here)

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Possible Participants: (List people who will be involved in completed questionnaires)

_____ General Educators   _____ Special Educators   _____ Paraprofessionals

_____ OT/SP/PT   _____ Students   _____ Family members

_____ Principal/VP   _____ Other (Specify)

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Logistics: Where will Quality Indicators be completed, time span needed

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Documentation/Methods :How will results be recorded and filed, who will be responsible for collecting data??

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Target Date:

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Other:

</td></tr>
</table>

(The indicators of program quality resource guide, 1993)

Meeting Planner

Date:_____

Time: _____ Location: _____

Agenda:			
Minutes	**Action to be taken**	**By whom**	**By when**

Future Meeting Dates:
Agenda for next meeting:

Facilitator: _____ Recorder: _____

Time Keeper: _____ Jargon Buster: _____

Snack Provider: _____

Quality Indicators Action Plan

School_____ **Date: _____**

Current LRE Data:

_____% General ed _____% Resource _____% Self-contained class

____% Students placed in out of district settings: _____

Quality Indicators of Inclusive Schools: _____ % indicators in place (optional)

Priority Areas for Improvement:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Other Target Areas for School Restructuring/Placement Practices/Change:

_____

_____

_____

Core Team Members:

- ❏ _____ , Principal

- ❏ _____ ,

- ❏ _____ ,

- ❏ _____ ,

- ❏ _____ ,

- ❏ _____ ,

(Maryland State Department of Education and Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education.)

❑   Date: _____

Actions – Year 1	By When	By Whom	Status

Goal:

Objective# 1 (based on the indicators)**:**

Grade(s):

 IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

Actions – Year 1	By When	By Whom	Status

Target for Year 2:

Target for Year 3

(Maryland State Department of Education and Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education.)

Goal:

Objective# **2** (based on the indicators)**:**

Grade(s):

 IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

Actions/Resources – Year 1	By When	By Whom	Status
Target for Year 2:			
Target for Year 3:			

(Maryland State Department of Education and Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education.)

Example of Action Plan

Goal: Improve Individual Student Supports			
Objective# 1 (based on the indicators): **Decrease the number of students who face disciplinary action in Year 1 by 10%.**			
Grade(s):			
IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:			
Actions – Year 1	**By When**	**By Whom**	**Status**
Provide training and support to teachers on positive behavior supports.	February 2009	Outside consultant	
Train CST staff on how to develop a functional behavioral assessment.	April 2009	Director of Special Education	
Target for Year 2:			
Target for Year 3:			

Quality Indicators Summary Sheet   Leadership

Directions: Use this summary sheet to tabulate the totals received under each of the ratings for each of the Quality Indicators.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	Best Practice Indicators	Status of Implementation			
		Fully	Substan-tially	Partially	Not Yet
	1. Leadership				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					
	TOTAL				

Quality Indicators Summary Sheet

**School Climate and
Scheduling and Participation**

Directions: Use this summary sheet to tabulate the totals received under each of the ratings for each of the Quality Indicators.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	Best Practice Indicators	Status of Implementation			
		Fully	Substan-tially	Partially	Not Yet
	2. SCHOOL CLIMATE				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
	TOTAL				
	3. SCHEDULING AND PARTICIPATION				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
	TOTAL				

Quality Indicators Summary Sheet

Directions: Use this summary sheet to tabulate the totals received under each of the ratings for each of the Quality Indicators.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	Best Practice Indicators	Status of Implementation			
		Fully	Substan-tially	Partially	Not Yet
	4. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
	TOTAL				
	5. PROGRAM PLANNING AND IEP DEVELOPMENT				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12					
	TOTAL				

Quality Indicators Summary Sheet

Program Implementation and Assessment and Individual Student Support

Directions: Use this summary sheet to tabulate the totals received under each of the ratings for each of the Quality Indicators.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	Best Practice Indicators	Status of Implementation			
		Fully	Substan-tially	Partially	Not Yet
	6. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
	TOTAL				
	7. INDIVIDUAL STUDENT SUPPORT				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
	TOTAL				

Quality Indicators Summary Sheet

**Family-School Partnership and
Collaborative Planning and Teaching**

Directions: Use this summary sheet to tabulate the totals received under each of the ratings for each of the Quality Indicators.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	Best Practice Indicators	Status of Implementation			
		Fully	Substan-tially	Partially	Not Yet
	8. FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
	TOTAL				

Quality Indicators Summary Sheet

**Professional Development and
Planning for Continued Best Practice Improvement**

Directions: Use this summary sheet to tabulate the totals received under each of the ratings for each of the Quality Indicators.

Quality Indicators for Effective Inclusive Education

	Best Practice Indicators	Status of Implementation			
		Fully	Substan-tially	Partially	Not Yet
	9. COLLABORATIVE PLANNING AND TEACHING				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
	TOTAL				
	10. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
6.					
7.					
	TOTAL				

	TOTAL				
	11. PLANNING FOR CONTINUED BEST PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT				
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
	TOTAL				

Research on Inclusive Education
April 10, 2009

> Inclusive education is characterized by presumed competence, authentic membership, full participation, reciprocal social relationships, and learning to high standards by all students with disabilities in age-appropriate general education classrooms with supports provided to students and teachers to enable them to be successful.

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 states: "Congress finds the following:
  Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities. Almost 30 years of research and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by having high expectations for such children and ensuring their access to the general education curriculum in the regular classroom, to the maximum extent possible.

- Students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities educated in general education classrooms demonstrate better performance in reading and math (Cole, Waldron, & Majd, 2004) and significantly higher gains in adaptive behavior when compared with students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities educated in separate settings.

- The largest, longitudinal study of education outcomes of 11,000 students with disabilities, the National Longitudinal Transition Study, showed that more time spent in a general education classroom was positively correlated with:

  - Higher scores on standardized tests of reading and math
  - Fewer absences from school
  - Fewer referrals for disruptive behavior
  - Better outcomes after high school in the areas of employment and independent living (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006).

This positive correlation was found for all students with disabilities, regardless of their disability label, the severity of their disability, their gender, or their family's socio-economic status.

- No studies conducted since the late 1970s have shown an academic advantage for students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities educated in separate settings (Falvey, 2004).

- Leaders in the field (e.g., Wehmeyer & Agran, 2006) identify the general education classroom as the optimal place where access to the general education curriculum occurs.

- A meta-analysis of research in inclusive education conducted by McGregor and Vogelsberg (1998) found:

  o Students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities in inclusive had a higher likelihood to be identified as a member of a social network by peers without disabilities.

  o There is a small-to-moderate beneficial effect of inclusive education on the academic and social outcomes of students with disabilities.

  o Students with disabilities demonstrate high levels of social interaction in settings with typical peers.

  o Social competence and communication skills improve when students with disabilities are educated in inclusive settings.

  o Students with disabilities have demonstrated gains in other areas of development when they are educated in inclusive settings, such as level of engagement, involvement in integrated activities, affective demeanor, and social interaction.

  o The performance of students without disabilities is not compromised by the presence of students with disabilities in their classrooms.

  o Typical students derive benefits from their involvement and relationships with students with disabilities.

  o The presence of students with disabilities provides a catalyst for learning opportunities and experiences that might not otherwise be part of the curriculum, especially relating to social justice, prejudice, equity, and so forth.

  o Parent support for inclusion is positively impacted by actual experience with inclusion, although experience alone does not shape attitudes.

  o Parents of students with disabilities are looking for positive attitudes, good educational experiences, and acceptance of their child among educators.

- Although many teachers are initially reluctant about inclusion, they become confident in their abilities with support and experience.

- Support from other teachers is a powerful and necessary resource to empower teachers to problem-solve new instructional challenges.

- The IEPs of students with disabilities who are included in general education classes are of higher quality; that is, they include goals and objectives that are more closely related to desired adult outcomes and roles than the IEPs of students with disabilities who are in segregated classes.

- There is evidence to suggest that while start-up costs may initially increase the cost of inclusive services, the costs over time decrease, and are likely to be less than segregated forms of service delivery.

- There is an overall "added value" to the general education classroom of students with disabilities and their support resources.

- There are negative effects of educating students with disabilities in self-contained settings, including:

  - Poorer quality IEPs (Hunt & Farron-Davis, 1992)

  - Lack of generalization to regular environments (Stokes & Baer, 1977)

  - Disruption of opportunities for sustained interactions and social relationships with typical students (Strully & Strully, 1992)

  - Decrease in the confidence that general class teachers have for teaching diverse learners (Giangreco et al., 1993)

  - Absence of appropriate role and behavior models (Lovett, 1996)

  - Negative impact on classroom climate and student attitudes about difference (Fisher, Sax, & Rodifer, 1999)

References:

Cole, C. M., Waldron, N., & Majd, M. (2004). Academic Progress of Students Across Inclusive and Traditional Settings. *Mental Retardation, 42*(2), 136-144.

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Giangreco, M. F., Dennis, R., Cloninger, C., Edelman, S., & Schattman, R. (1993). "I've counted Jon:" Transformational experiences of teachers educating students with disabilities*. Exceptional Children,* 59(4), 359-37.

Hunt, P., & Farron-Davis, F. (1992). A preliminary investigation of IEP quality and content associated with placement in general education versus special education classes. The Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 17(4), 247-253.

Lovett, H. (1996). *Learning to listen: Positive approaches and people with difficult behavior.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

McGregor, G., & Vogelsberg, R.T. (1998). *Inclusive schooling practices: Pedagogical and research foundations.* USA: Paul H. Brookes.

Stokes T.F. & Baer, D.M. *An implicit technology of generalization.* J. Appl. Behav. Anal. 10:349-67, 1977. (University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada and University of Kansas, Lawrence.

Stully, J. & Strully, C. (1992). The struggle toward inclusion and the fulfillment of friendship. In J. Nisbet (Ed.), *Natural supports in school, at work, and in the community for people with severe disabilities.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., Levine, P., and Garza, N. (2006). *An Overview of Findings From Wave 2 of the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2).* (NCSER 2006-3004). Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Wehmeyer, M. & Agran, M. (2006). Promoting access to the general curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities. In D. Browder & F. Spooner (Eds.), *Teaching language arts, math, and science to students with significant cognitive disabilities* (pp. 15-37). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Promoting Inclusion by Using Quality Indicators

New Jersey Coalition for
Inclusive Education
and the New Jersey Council on
Developmental Disabilities

The Quality Indicators Project (QI Project) piloted a set of quality indicators (11 categories), self-assessment and action planning procedures within 5 districts in NJ in the 2008/2009 school year.

Quality Indicators can be used by school districts and school buildings to assess the current status of inclusive education practices; identify areas of programmatic strength as well as areas in which further development is needed; and generate a strategic school improvement plan for inclusive education.

Inclusion is not about placement, but is more about a philosophy of acceptance and belonging in the community

Legal Basis for Inclusion

- **IDEA**: Least restrictive environment: To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(5)(B))

- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:** prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by recipients of Federal financial assistance, including IDEA funds.

Inclusion in New Jersey

Although progress has been made in several areas, an alarming pattern of segregation continues among students receiving special education services in New Jersey.

Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

FIGURE 1. PERCENT OF CLASSIFIED STUDENTS IN SEPARATE FACILITIES 2003
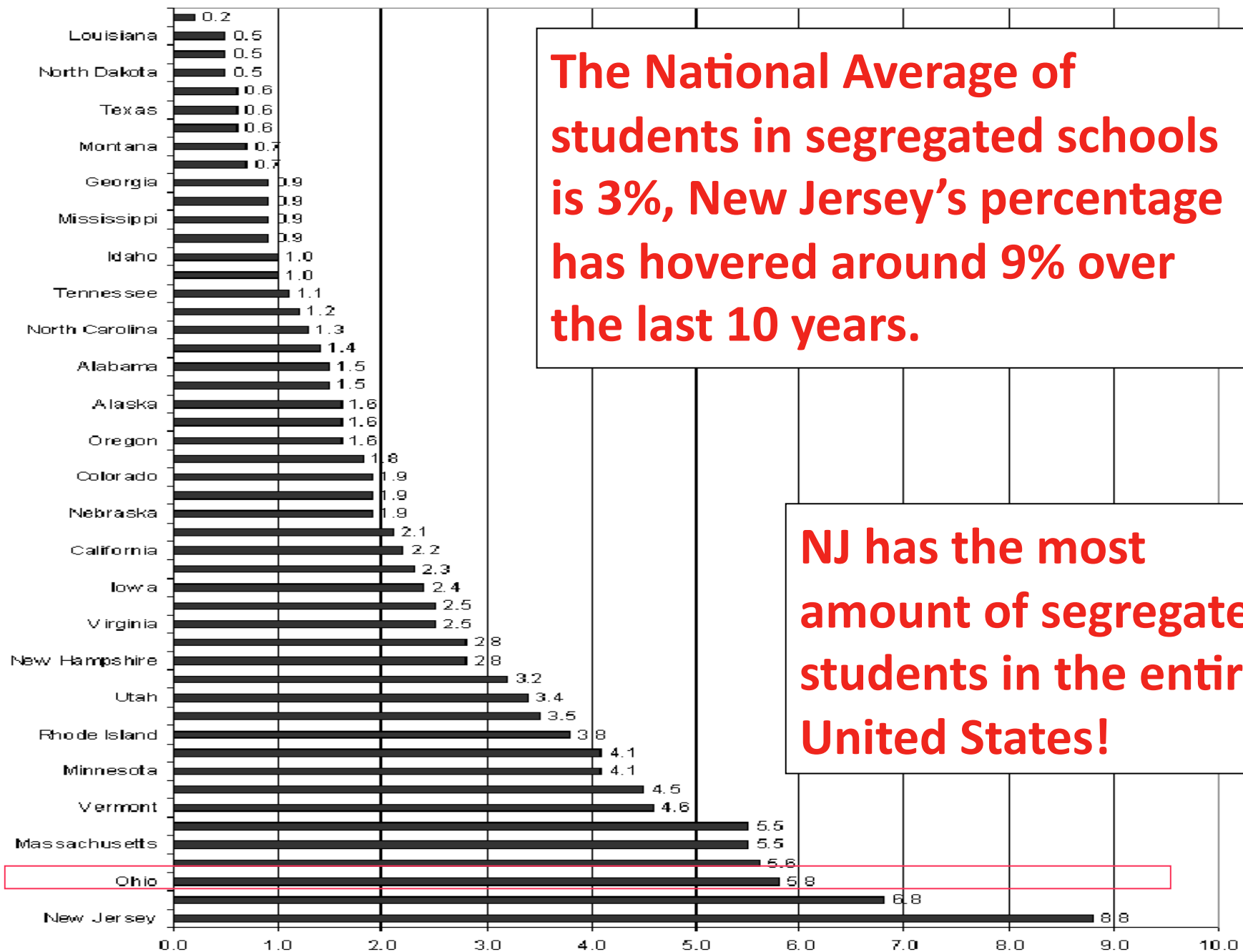
The National Average of students in segregated schools is 3%, New Jersey's percentage has hovered around 9% over the last 10 years.

NJ has the most amount of segregated students in the entire United States!

Louisiana — 0.2, 0.5, 0.5
North Dakota — 0.5, 0.6
Texas — 0.6, 0.6
Montana — 0.7, 0.7
Georgia — 0.9, 0.9
Mississippi — 0.9, 0.9
Idaho — 1.0, 1.0
Tennessee — 1.1, 1.2
North Carolina — 1.3, 1.4
Alabama — 1.5, 1.5
Alaska — 1.6, 1.6
Oregon — 1.6, 1.8
Colorado — 1.9, 1.9
Nebraska — 1.9, 2.1
California — 2.2, 2.3
Iowa — 2.4, 2.5
Virginia — 2.5, 2.8
New Hampshire — 2.8, 3.2
Utah — 3.4, 3.5
Rhode Island — 3.8, 4.1
Minnesota — 4.1, 4.5
Vermont — 4.6, 5.5
Massachusetts — 5.5, 5.6
Ohio — 5.8, 6.8
New Jersey — 8.8

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FIGURE 6. PERCENT OF STUDENTS AGED 6-21 CLASSIFIED WITH MENTAL RETARDATION IN SEPARATE SCHOOL FACILITIES (PUBLIC AND PRIVATE)

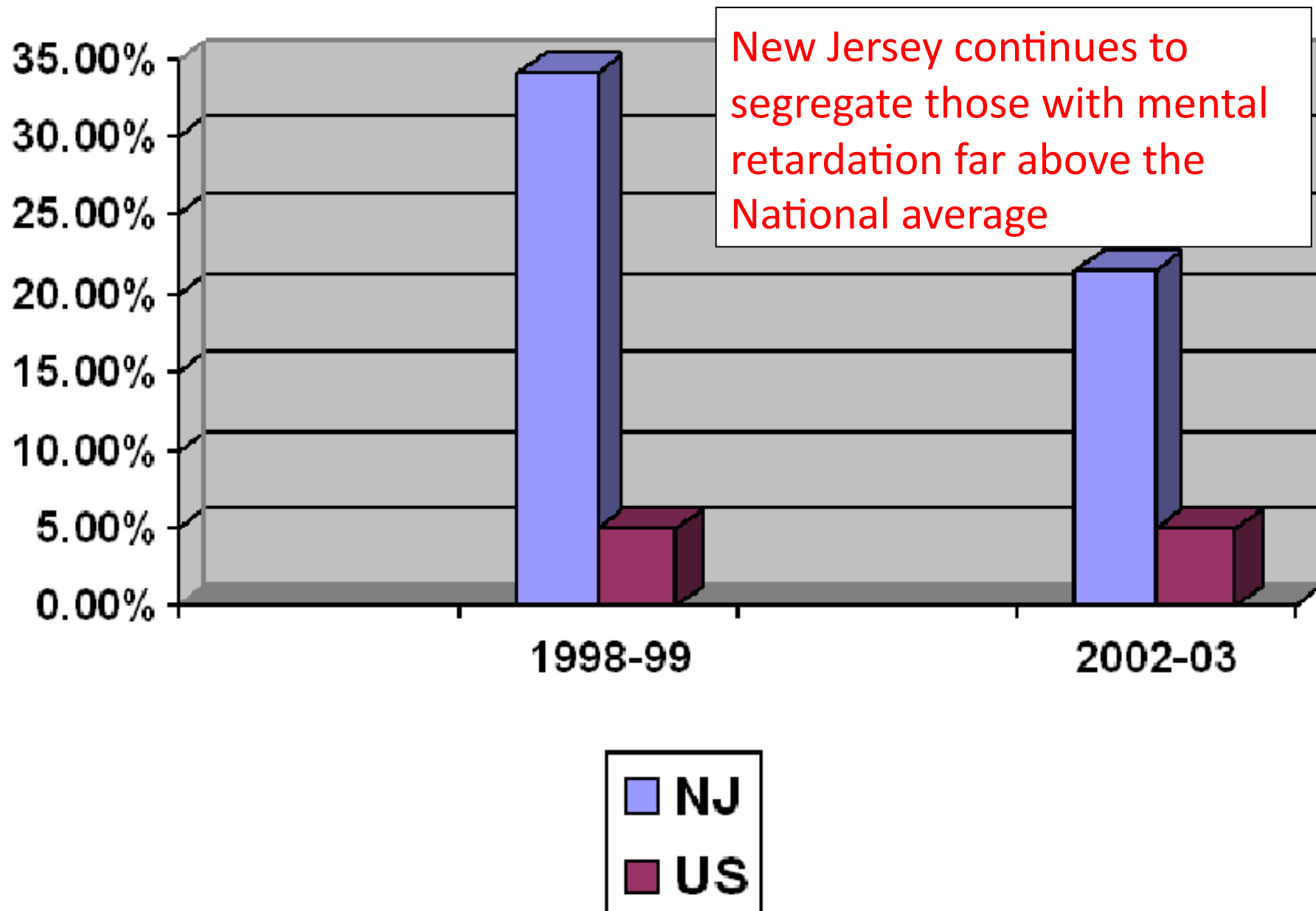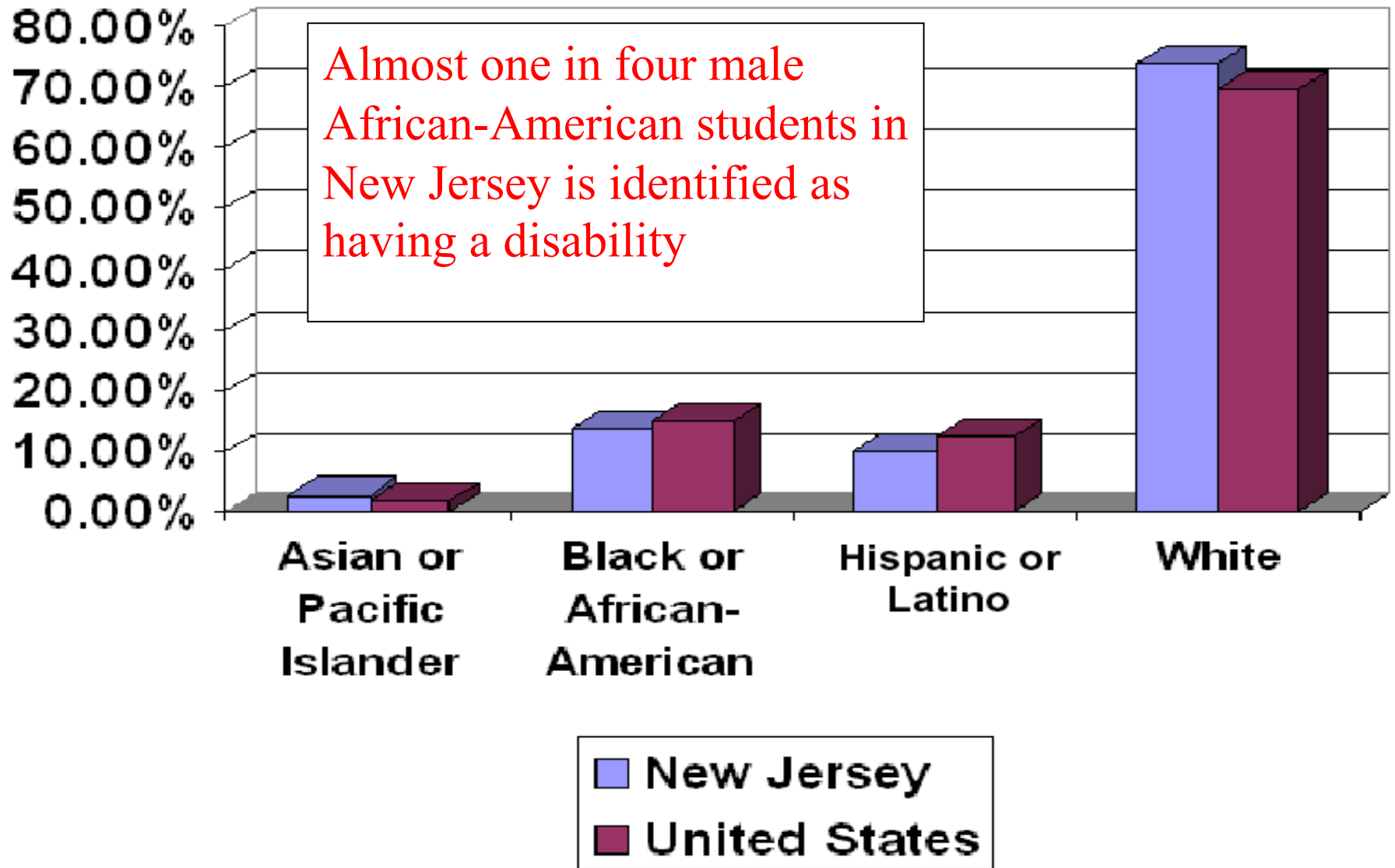New Jersey continues to segregate those with mental retardation far above the National average

FIGURE 8. PERCENT OF CLASSIFIED STUDENTS WHO SPENT MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF THEIR DAY IN GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOMS (1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR)

Almost one in four male African-American students in New Jersey is identified as having a disability

Legend:
- New Jersey
- United States

Categories: Asian or Pacific Islander, Black or African-American, Hispanic or Latino, White

Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

What are the Benefits of Inclusion?

Efficacy of Segregated Settings

- Resource rooms provide primarily whole group reading instruction with little differentiated instruction (Vaughn, Moody & Schumm, 1998).

- More instructional time and 1:1 in general education classrooms (Sontage, 1997; Logan & Keefe, 1997; Hollowood, et al., 1995)

- Placement & labeling lowered teachers' perceptions of students' efficacy (Raudenbush, Rowan & Cheong, 1992).

- IEP-specified peer interactions were not implemented in segregated settings (Gelzheiser, McLane, Pruzek & Meyers, 1998).

Beneficial Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

The largest, longitudinal study of education outcomes of 11,000 students with disabilities, the National Longitudinal Transition Study, showed that more time spent in a general education classroom was positively correlated with:

– Higher scores on standardized tests of reading and math

– Fewer absences from school

– Fewer referrals for disruptive behavior

– Better outcomes after high school in the areas of employment and independent living (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006).

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Falvey, M.A. (1995). *Inclusive and heterogeneous schooling: Assessment, curriculum & instruction.* Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, Co.

Academic Gains for Students with Disabilities

• The Individual Education Programs (IEP's) of students with disabilities who are placed in general education classrooms, contain more academic objectives, improved quality of the curricular content, and more references to best practices than IEP's developed for students in segregated settings.

• Students in an inclusive school demonstrate, "significantly superior gains on several …scales, including reading, vocabulary, total reading and language, with a marginally significant effect on reading comprehension".

Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Academic Benefits for Students without Disabilities

- Students without disabilities demonstrate consistent academic gains when educated alongside students with disabilities and do not show evidence of any negative impact from inclusion.

- Studies indicate no difference in academic engagement rates between classrooms with and without students with disabilities, suggesting no negative impact on instructional opportunities.

Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Social Gains for Students with Disabilities

- Compared to students in segregated settings, students with disabilities who are full time members of general education classrooms show significantly higher levels of engagement in school activities, higher levels of participation in integrated school environments and initiate and engage in social interactions with peers and adults to a greater degree.

- Students with disabilities in inclusive placements have had more frequent interactions and larger, more durable networks of peers without disabilities.

Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Benefits for School Personnel

- Educators believe that educating students with disabilities in inclusive settings results in positive changes in their attitudes and job responsibilities.

- Teachers develop positive attitudes over time, especially when inclusion is accompanied by training and administrative support. In addition, teachers show increased confidence and professional growth in ability to accommodate more diverse learners in their classrooms.

Still Separate and Unequal: The education of children with disabilities in New Jersey, The 2004 Report of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.