

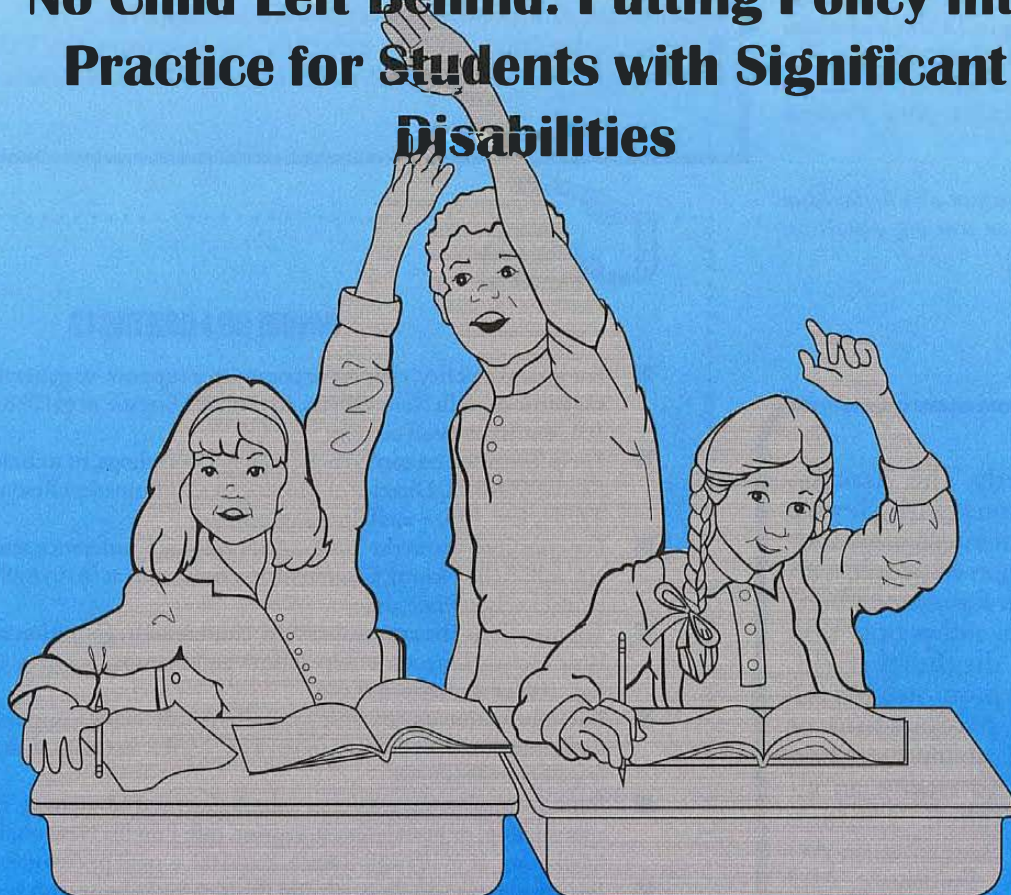
# TASH CONNECTIONS

Equity, Opportunity and Inclusion for People with Disabilities since 1975

## Inside This Issue

- Pear Supports and Access to the General Education Curriculum
- Adequate Yearly Progress Provision of NCLB
- The Demography of Inclusive Education
- Creating Universally Designed Reading Environments
- Education-Focused TASH Techs and Conference Sessions

## No Child Left Behind: Putting Policy into Practice for Students with Significant Disabilities



*"To ensure that all children have a fair, equal and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and State academic assessments."* 20 U.S.C. Section 6301, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| New TASH Board Members.....                    | Page 3  |
| ADAPT Freedom Rally.....                       | Page 4  |
| Summary of No Child Left Behind Act.....       | Page 5  |
| Peer Supports.....                             | Page 8  |
| Adequate Yearly Progress Provision.....        | Page 12 |
| Education-Focused TASH Techs.....              | Page 18 |
| TASH Conference Sessions on Education.....     | Page 19 |
| TASH Legacy Symposium.....                     | Page 24 |
| The Demography of Inclusive Education.....     | Page 26 |
| Creating Inclusive Learning Environments.....  | Page 30 |
| Universally Designed Reading Environments..... | Page 32 |

*TASH Connections is available on audiocassette, in large print, and in Braille for people whose disabilities make these alternative formats preferable. Call (410) 828-8274 ext. 102 to request an alternative format.*

*Requests for permission to reprint material appearing in TASH Connections should be sent to: TASH Connections, 29 W. Susquehanna Avenue, Suite 210, Baltimore, MD 21204, Attn: Priscilla Newton, Editor.*

*Permission requests can also be faxed to (410) 828-6706 or sent via e-mail to: [pnewton@tash.org](mailto:pnewton@tash.org).*

**TASH** (formerly The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps) is an international advocacy association of people with disabilities, their family members, other advocates and people who work in the disability field. **TASH** actively promotes the full inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of life. To receive an information packet, contact: **TASH**, 29 W. Susquehanna Avenue, Suite 210, Baltimore, MD 21204 or phone (410) 828-8274, ext. 8 or e-mail: [info@tash.org](mailto:info@tash.org).

## TASH MISSION

**TASH** supports the inclusion and full participation of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of their communities as determined by personalized visions of quality of life.

**TASH's** focus is on those people with disabilities who:

- Are most at risk for being excluded from the mainstream of society
- Are perceived by traditional service systems as being most challenging;
- Are most likely to have their rights abridged;
- Are most likely to be at risk for living, working, playing, and/or learning in segregated environments;
- Are least likely to have the tools and opportunities necessary to advocate on their own behalf;
- Historically have been labeled as having severe disabilities; and,
- Are most likely to need on-going, individualized supports in order to participate in inclusive communities and enjoy a quality of life similar to that available to all citizens.

**TASH** accomplishes this through:

- Creating opportunities for collaboration among families, self-advocates, professionals, policymakers and other advocates;
- Advocating for equity, opportunities, social justice, and rights;
- Disseminating knowledge and information;
- Supporting excellence in research that translates to excellence in practice;
- Promoting individualized, quality supports;
- Working toward the elimination of institutions, other congregate living settings, segregated schools/classrooms, sheltered work environments, and other segregated services and toward replacing these with quality, individualized, inclusive supports;
- Supporting legislation, litigation and public policy consistent with **TASH's** mission; and,
- Promoting communities in which no one is segregated and everyone belongs.



## WHOM DO I CONTACT?

- For issues of policy, chapter or committee support, or general concerns and suggestions, call: Nancy Weiss, Executive Director, at (410) 828-TASH, Ext. 101, e-mail: [nweiss@tash.org](mailto:nweiss@tash.org)
- For information on conferences, regional workshops, or technical assistance, call: Denise Marshall, Director of Meetings and Information Resources, at (410) 828-TASH, Ext. 103, e-mail: [dmarsh@tash.org](mailto:dmarsh@tash.org)
- For questions about the 2003 TASH Annual Conference sessions and presenters, call: Kelly Nelson, Conference Coordinator, at (410) 828-TASH, Ext. 105, e-mail: [knelson@tash.org](mailto:knelson@tash.org)
- For questions about membership, conference registration or exhibiting, call: Rose Holsey, Director of Operations and Member Services, (410) 828-TASH, Ext. 100 or [rholshey@tash.org](mailto:rholshey@tash.org)
- For information on governmental affairs, call: Jamie Ruppmann, Director of Governmental Relations, at (410) 828-TASH, Ext. 104, e-mail: [jrppmann@tash.org](mailto:jruppmann@tash.org)
- For information on newsletter submissions and advertising, conference sponsorship, or permission to reprint, call: Priscilla Newton, Director of Marketing, at (410) 828-TASH, Ext. 102, e-mail: [pnewton@tash.org](mailto:pnewton@tash.org)
- For information on Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities (a publication of TASH), call: Fredda Brown, Editor-in-Chief, at (718) 997-5243, e-mail: [fbrowncuny@aol.com](mailto:fbrowncuny@aol.com)
- Don't forget to visit TASH's web site at <http://www.tash.org>





From the Executive Director  
BY NANCY WEISS

## TASH Welcomes New Board Members

The results of the election are in and TASH is pleased to welcome four new board members and to welcome back three continuing members. The board members who will be continuing

to serve are June Downing, Liz Obermayer and Lu Zeph. All have been devoted members of the board, and their continued commitment is a wonderful thing for TASH.

TASH welcomes Pat Amos, Angela Burton, John Butterworth, and Laura San Giacomo as new members of the Board. Pat Amos is a parent advocate who is a founder of the Autism National Committee and has worked for years in the trenches for disability rights -- and especially the right to be free from aversives, seclusion and restraints. Her recent work has focused on promoting new legislation in New Jersey to protect people with disabilities from these abuses.

Angela Burton is a lawyer for children and an associate professor at the City University of New York School of Law. She looks forward to using her legal experience and knowledge to benefit TASH and the people we represent.

John Butterworth is a longtime TASH member who has been active in the New England Chapter and on the TASH Employment

Committee for many years.

Laura San Giacomo is the Golden Globe-nominated actress who starred in the NBC comedy *"Just Shoot Me,"* and whose film credits include *"Pretty Woman"* and *"Sex, Lies and Videotape."* Laura is the parent of a son with disabilities and has recently added "school founder" to her resume (*New York Times*, 11/9/03). Laura joins the Board as an ex-officio member in recognition of her work as a parent advocate and her role in starting The CHIME School, a new charter school in Los Angeles that offers children with disabilities the opportunity to learn side-by-side with their non-disabled peers.

TASH members will have a chance to hear from and talk with Laura at her Family Discussion at the upcoming conference in Chicago (see details below).

TASH is pleased to welcome all of the incoming board members!



## *Fighting for Inclusion: A Family Discussion with Laura San Giacomo*

**Friday, December 12 - 4:00-5:30 p.m.  
Hilton Chicago & Towers  
N.W. Hall, Room 5**



Many TASH members have fond memories of the conversation with Laura San Giacomo, star of the NBC series, *"Just Shoot Me"* at the 2001 TASH conference in Anaheim. Laura has a son with disabilities who is in a fully included classroom. She feels strongly that school districts need to provide fully qualified teachers who are knowledgeable in best practices, and who know how to teach and how to include students with significant disabilities. She is concerned that instead of putting resources toward improving services for our kids, too many schools choose to spend limited time and money fighting parents and blaming students for problems.

Come join TASH Board members Laura San Giacomo and June Downing for a lively discussion on the challenges confronting families working for meaningful inclusion opportunities. All are welcome!



## Free Our People!

**TASH=**  
**Public Policy**  
**in Action**

### TASH Members in Full Force at ADAPT Free- dom Rally

**T**ASH members and staff joined hundreds of advocates in Washington, D.C. in September to welcome freedom marchers from ADAPT and other disability rights organizations who made an historic 144-mile march from Philadelphia to Washington D.C. The purpose of the march was to highlight and publicize the continuing need for passage of the Medicaid Community Attendant Services Act (MiCASSA), and to protest the continuing bias that funnels the largest amount of federal and state service dollars to institutions and nursing homes.



*Dan Dotson (left) and Stefan Ruppmann carry the message from the National Coalition on Self-Determination that parents and self-advocates are marching together for freedom.*



*Disability rights leader and former TASH Board member Bob Kafka inspires and leads advocates who seek full citizenship.*



*Advocates of all ages came from around the country to march on the Capitol.*



*TASH Staff (l-r) Dan Dotson, Jamie Ruppmann, Priscilla Newton and Denise Marshall demonstrate in support of community funding.*



*Rally speakers included Sens. Tom Harkin and Arlene Specter (background).*







## No Child Left Behind - What it Might Mean for Students with Significant Disabilities

BY JAMIE RUPPMANN

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 was signed into law on January 8, 2002. This bill reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which is the Federal government's largest investment in public education.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is based on education reform principles that include provisions requiring schools to make genuine progress in closing the persistent achievement gaps between students who are disadvantaged or disabled and their peers. States now must account for the achievement of all public elementary and secondary school students in a manner that results in continuous and substantial improvement.

The accountability system must be the same for all public schools and agencies in the state, and timelines must be put in place to ensure that all students will meet or exceed the state-determined proficiency level (this is expressed as the percentage of students the state projects will be at or above grade level) no later than the 2013-2014 school year.

What does this mean for students with disabilities who are educated under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and/or 504?

The U. S. Department of Education issued "non-regulatory guidance" to states in March

2003 outlining and clarifying NCLB assessment requirements for students with disabilities.

First, the state's assessment system must be designed to be valid and accessible to students with disabilities under IDEA and 504. Assessment accommodations must be determined by the student's IEP team. Accommodations must be based on individual student needs, and should be in place when students take classroom tests and assessments.

The U. S. Department of Education has defined accommodations as "changes in testing material or procedures that ensure that an assessment measures the student's knowledge and skills rather than the student's disability." This is different and broader than the notion of adapting instruction or the accommodations contained in IDEA. No matter how broad the definition, however, out-of-grade-level testing is not an acceptable means for meeting either the assessment or accountability requirements of NCLB.

For some students, the IEP team may decide that the student cannot participate in all or even part of the general, large-scale state assessments even with accommodations that allow changing the materials or procedures. These students may take an alternate assessment. This is due, in part, to the reference to the 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which calls for states to have alternate assessments in place by July 1, 2000. The alternate assessment must yield results for the grade in which the student is enrolled at least in reading, language arts, math and science (again, out-of-grade-level testing is not permissible).

What about students who have the most significant and complex disabilities?

For students considered to have the "most significant cognitive disabilities," alternate achievement standards (not just an alternate assessment) may be used and assessments may be developed based on those standards. Proposed NCLB regulations limit the use of alternate achievement standards to no more

than one percent of all students in the grades that are assessed. As might be predicted, local districts and states may seek an exception to the one percent limit based on extenuating circumstances.

How are state and local school divisions designing their alternate assessments?

Many states are using "portfolio" type approaches. Assessment data are collected across several months, using a variety of assessment strategies. Other approaches include performance events, teacher completed checklists of student skills and IEP-based reviews.

Are the provisions proposed for students with significant disabilities controversial?

The proposed rule regarding students "with the most significant cognitive disabilities" will have a serious impact on the education of our children and youth with mental retardation. The greatest challenges will be in the details as states and local school districts interpret and implement NCLB.

Our students have often been overlooked and undereducated due to low expectations, lack of up-to-date knowledge of best practices, and lack of access to high quality instruction and technology. This is especially true in the area of school accountability for student achievement.

*The No Child Left Behind Act did not consider the needs of students with significant levels of cognitive, physical and communication disabilities when it was written. It becomes critically important now that the assessment and accountability provisions applied "after the fact" to our students be developed carefully.*

*Continued on page 6*



## What NCLB Might Mean for Students with Significant Disabilities

*Continued from page 5*

Simply asking states to "align" their standard and alternative performance assessments will not ensure that students with significant disabilities will be offered high-quality, age appropriate academic content.

The No Child Left Behind Act did not consider the needs of students with significant levels of cognitive, physical and communication disabilities when it was written. It becomes critically important now that the assessment and accountability provisions applied "after the fact" to our students be developed carefully.

The concern is that increased accountability for "results" could endanger the positive progress we have made in building the capacity of neighborhood schools to provide appropriate curricula and successful supports and services. Over twenty years of research has informed us that access to inclusive school programs, where all children are expected to achieve high standards, is a fundamental component of successful educational outcomes for students with significant disabilities. We want to ensure that the implementation of the NCLB Act does not create disincentives to realizing the goal of inclusive schools where all children belong and are valued as learners.

Even though the alternate assessment provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) were authorized in 1997, a significant number of states have not yet been successful in implementing effective, rigorous alternative assessments. We have some experience, but very little data that would serve to guide states in the development of inclusive standards based on universal

design principles and the development of scientifically based alternative assessments. Without this experience and information, we will not be able to base alternative assessments on a single set of standards that embraces all students and that encompasses supplemental educational needs, including literacy, functional or independent living skills.

Simply asking states to "align" their standard and alternative performance assessments will not ensure that students with significant disabilities will be offered high quality, age appropriate academic content.

TASH is also concerned about making decisions about children and youth which are determined by school professionals based on IQ scores. The proposed rules appear to establish a new "category" of disability, "most significant cognitive disability" and a requirement that under NCLB, "eligibility" for the alternative assessment must be determined by formal testing, yielding results that will discriminate against those students "with intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior three or more standard deviations below the mean." TASH has expressed strong concerns about the adoption of this provision:

❖ History has demonstrated that decisions based on IQ scores one or more standard deviations below the mean have resulted in segregation, isolation, lowered expectations, loss of meaningful curricula, lack of skill development and loss of opportunity to live, work and participate in the school and community environments.

❖ This new term or "category" is not consistent with existing statutory and regulatory terminology and definitions. There is no good reason to inject this complication into a discussion of assessing progress of students with disabilities in NCLB.

❖ The adoption of the new terminology and definition will require an additional and possibly separate evaluation to meet the requirement of the new regulation. Such an evaluation could only be undertaken by qualified professionals; in many states this would require testing by a certified school psychologist.

❖ IDEA requires that each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team make decisions about district and statewide assessments. TASH members believe that this is precisely how decisions should be made, and recommends that the rule should support the individualized decision-making process in IDEA. In this way, educators and families can make decisions based on objective information and advice about the various options and the ramifications of choosing the typical AYP (adequate yearly progress) assessment or an alternative.

❖ However, assessments used for our children must meet the same requirement for methodological rigor as those used for other children. Currently, many districts are totally dependent on the IEP team's definition of progress and what constitutes satisfaction of IEP goals. This is not sufficient. Alternate assessments must be developed that are valid, objective measurements of learning and progress that are free of bias and relevant to students with significant disabilities.

Finally, it is not clear what the outcome of the move to a one percent cap would be if placed on local school districts and states for those students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who would take alternate assessments. TASH has urged the Department of Education to include a provision in their final rules that would trigger an automatic review of the cap, as well as the entire provision related to the development of standards and alternate assessments for students with significant disabilities. We are recommending that this review should take place no later than 2005 (No Child Left Behind, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, will be due for reauthorization in 2007).

At the time of this writing, we are expecting what is being called the "one percent rule" to be revised, with the final rule to be published by the Department of Education sometime in November.

*Continued on page 7*



## What NCLB Might Mean for Students with Significant Disabilities

*Continued from page 6*

### How will parents, educators and citizens know if children are actually making progress?

No Child Left Behind is intended to improve the education of all children. As part of the law, all states are required to release easy-to-read, detailed report cards each year that provide parents and the community with a measure of how schools are doing. This is not extra pressure on children. This is a mandate for schools to provide a better education for students with disabilities, including those with significant needs for services and supports.

States must set annual progress goals for student achievement, so all students can reach a level of proficiency and no child is left behind. Each year, assessment scores will be broken out (disaggregated) by economic background, race and ethnicity, English proficiency and disability.

The expectation is that each school will demonstrate adequate yearly progress (AYP) in improving the achievement of each group in the areas of math, language arts and reading. In this way, teachers and parents will know the academic achievement of each group and will be able to determine if achievement gaps are closing between disadvantaged students and their grade level peers.

If schools do not meet their goals, they will be identified as needing improvement. Schools that do not demonstrate AYP for two consecutive years are identified as needing improvement and subject to immediate interventions -- beginning with technical assistance and then more serious corrective actions if the school continues not to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress for several years.

### What additional important school reform provisions are contained in NCLB?

Among the new provisions of NCLB are the school choice and supplemental services provisions that allow parents whose children attend Title I schools to direct public funds toward transportation costs to a better school or toward supplemental services (tutoring or after-school programs) for their child.

NCLB also includes higher standards that educators must meet to ensure that highly qualified teachers and professionals teach students who need the most help. This includes requirements for increasing training for paraprofessionals who provide instructional support to students in Title I schools.

Parents are also entitled to be notified of the professional background and education of their child's teacher including details about provisional certification or waivers that may have been given by the state or district as a function of their hiring practices.

### Key Areas of Concern

The No Child Left Behind Act is far ranging in its scope, quite uneven in terms of how easy the various provisions are to understand and apply, and subject to an immense backlash from the educational lobby. As this year's school report cards have been published, schools that previously were viewed as good or even "wonderful," have found that they have not made adequate progress in bringing along their students who are disadvantaged or who are receiving special education.

Negative media stories about students with disabilities have been solicited all over the country by districts unhappy with the new requirements. Members of the Senate and the House have been working "privately" with the Education Department to respond to this frustration by providing schools with additional "flexibility" in terms of how they will measure and report progress for students with disabilities in special education.

Parents and advocates have been discouraged that so much attention has been lavished on how good the schools do or do not "look" on

their report cards, and how little opinion or concern has been expressed about the core issue of how schools will use their billions of tax dollars to improve instruction for their students who are most at risk.

*Jamie Ruppman is TASH Director of Governmental Affairs. For more information about No Child Left Behind or other policy issues, e-mail Jamie at [jruppman@tash.org](mailto:jruppman@tash.org)*



## Want to be "in the know?" Join the TASH Update Internet Discussion Group!

Are you looking for a way to communicate with other TASH members from across the country and around the world? Consider joining TASH Update.

TASH Update is an internet discussion group that covers all aspects of progressive disability policy, practice and thought. It is a vehicle for seeing what others are doing, getting ideas and information, and bouncing your thoughts off of others who share your values and concerns.

To participate in TASH Update simply go to [TASHUpdate-subscribe@yahoo.com](http://TASHUpdate-subscribe@yahoo.com) and follow the directions to subscribe.



**R**apid progress in research is helping make inclusive education not only a reality for many students with significant disabilities, but a meaningful and successful endeavor for everyone involved. During the initial development of inclusive education, a primary focus of research and an important rationale for this educational approach was the social benefits that students with significant disabilities would accrue. Given the long history of social isolation experienced by many people with disabilities this was, and certainly still is, an important goal.

Indeed, remarkable progress has been made during the last decade in structuring inclusive education to improve the social lives of students with significant disabilities (e.g., Kennedy, 2004; Salisbury, Gallucci, Palombaro, & Peck, 1995; Schnorr, 1990). With the success that advocates, practitioners, and researchers have had in socially including students with significant disabilities into general education settings, it is not surprising that a second emphasis area would emerge: access to the general education curriculum.

Helping students with disabilities access the same curriculum as other students in a general education classroom is important for several reasons.

- First, it aligns what is being taught so all students in a classroom are working on a common set of themes.
- Second, accessing the general education curriculum promotes belongingness and membership because it emphasizes similarities among students, while minimizing differences.
- Third, this area is challenging how adults think about the capabilities of students with the most significant disabilities.

This latter point is just emerging as an issue and is forcing us to think deeply about literacy, academic content, state testing standards, and what students with significant disabilities can achieve if adults allow them the opportunity.

## Peer Supports and Access to the General Education Curriculum

BY LISA S. CUSHING,  
NITASHA M. CLARK,  
ERIK W. CARTER, AND  
CRAIG H. KENNEDY

These trends are coalescing into an emphasis on how to promote general education participation for students with disabilities so that educators can help maximize social and academic benefits. Because of the intensive support needs of students with disabilities, a primary research focus is the development of assistive strategies in general education settings.

Initially, this marshalling of support strategies has stressed collaboration among general educators, special educators, related-services professionals, and paraprofessionals. However, as we will discuss below, researchers are learning that an over-reliance on adults in inclusive educational settings may have as many limitations as it does benefits. In an attempt to promote even greater success in general education settings, we continue to learn about how to most effectively and respectfully provide support in inclusive settings.

### *An Over-reliance on Paraprofessionals*

In order to provide students with meaningful experiences in general education environments, many schools have come to rely on paraprofessionals to deliver ongoing support to students with significant disabilities. For example, a paraprofessional may accompany a student to an American government class and

assist her by modifying the curriculum, providing behavioral support, and delivering instruction. What might seem at first glance to be an effective resource for supporting inclusive practices, however, may actually turn out to be counterproductive. An over-reliance on paraprofessionals to provide direct support to students with significant disabilities in inclusive settings may inadvertently hinder students' academic and social growth (Giangreco & Doyle, 2004).

An unintended effect of paraprofessionals may be limiting interactions between students and their general education teachers. Seeing that another adult is working with the student with a significant disability, a general education teacher may defer primary responsibility for providing instruction to the paraprofessional.

Unfortunately, most paraprofessionals have not been provided adequate training on curricular modifications or instructional techniques. It may, therefore, be unrealistic to expect paraprofessionals to effectively perform these tasks. As a result, it is not uncommon to find paraprofessionals in many classrooms working with students on completely different instructional activities than the rest of the class. In addition to hindering academic progress, over-reliance on paraprofessionals can have a collateral effect of causing students to be overly dependent on adults for their instructional needs.

General education classrooms also provide important opportunities for students to get to know their peers and develop friendships.

*...paraprofessional support should be carefully coupled with other sources of support. In particular, the use of peer supports offers a promising alternative for creating meaningful inclusive educational experiences for all students.*

*Continued on page 9*



## Peer Supports and Access to the General Education Curriculum

*Continued from page 8*

The close presence of paraprofessionals, however, may restrict students' access to these benefits. It is not unusual to see paraprofessionals "attached at the hip" to the students they are supporting. Despite good intentions, the constant presence of an adult can stifle peer interaction, causing undue attention to students with disabilities.

Peers are often reluctant to approach their classmates with significant disabilities if they must always "go through" the paraprofessional. Moreover, this arrangement can be embarrassing for the students who are receiving paraprofessional support, particularly as students approach adolescence, a time when hanging out with adults becomes less "cool." It seems unlikely that the first choice of most students, with or without significant disabilities, would be to eat lunch, spend breaks, and sit in class with adults such as paraprofessionals.

Although paraprofessionals can play a valuable role in supporting general education participation, it seems that paraprofessionals may not represent either the most natural or the most effective source of support available. Instead, paraprofessional support should be carefully coupled with other sources of support. In particular, the use of peer supports offers a promising alternative for creating meaningful inclusive educational experiences for all students.

### *Peer Support Strategies as an Alternative to Paraprofessionals*

Stemming from class-wide peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and other peer-mediated techniques, peer support strategies involve one or more peers without disabilities working alongside a student with disabilities to provide academic and social support (Cushing & Kennedy, 1997). Students without disabilities may assist in adapting in-class materials in ways that are meaningful and motivating to student with disabilities. Additionally, peer

supports serve as the primary social facilitator, engaging in social interactions with the student with disabilities, as well as encouraging interaction with other peers within the class.

Peer supports are not intended to wholly replace adults in providing educational assistance to students with disabilities. Rather, peer support strategies operate under the ongoing supervision of general educators and paraprofessionals. General educators continue to assume responsibility for teaching the course curricula and standards to the entire class. The paraprofessional makes sure that the curricula and standards are accessible to the student with disabilities in a way that allows him or her to be academically and socially successful.

The primary responsibilities of paraprofessionals in peer support strategies include:

- (a) Teaching the peer supports how to interact with the student with disabilities and adapt in-class materials;
- (b) adapting the course curricula, assignments and projects (under the guidance of the special educator); and
- (c) supervising and monitoring the peer group to ensure that the student with disabilities is fully participating as an active member of the general education class.

Peer support approaches are proving to be an effective strategy for supporting the inclusive general education experience. What might such an approach look like in a general education classroom? Consider the following

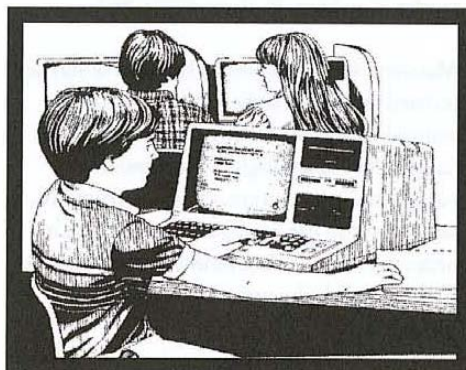
example of how peer supports can promote both social and academic success.

Eli is a seventh grader at Roberts Middle School. He uses a dynamic display communication device to communicate basic wants and needs. Due to the severity of his cerebral palsy, he also uses a motorized wheelchair.

In order to promote his social and academic participation in general education classrooms, Eli is paired with several peer supports throughout the school day. He works with Sarah in English, Matthew in science, and Terry in social studies. All of his peers have been taught by the paraprofessional to make adaptations and modifications to class activities/assignments, provide instruction, and promote positive social interactions for Eli.

Once the peers demonstrated their ability to support Eli academically and socially, the paraprofessional took on a more supervisory role, checking on the peer support group a few times each class period, rather than hovering over the students for the entire class period. Sarah, Matthew, and Terry understand that if they have a question regarding supporting Eli, the paraprofessional is close by and ready to assist. This way, the peer supports are assured that they always have access to any help that they may need. At the same time, the paraprofessional is able to assist other classmates who may need extra support, as well as provide support to the general educator.

In English, Sarah assists him to complete in-class work, take notes, and record homework assignments. In addition, Sarah actively involves other peers in the class in modeling appropriate social interactions with Eli. She encourages Eli to use his communication device to ask for assistance or attention rather than screaming to make requests or comments. When transitioning to his next class (science), Sarah and her friends walk with Eli to the science classroom, introducing him to peers in the hallway, talking about the upcoming weekend, and assisting him with carrying his books and materials.



*Continued on page 10*



## Peer Supports and Access to the General Education Curriculum

*Continued from page 9*

### *Increasing Success for All Students*

The appeal of peer support approaches for facilitating general education access is clear -- benefits accrue for everyone. Research findings indicate that peer support strategies:

- (a) promote the general education participation of students with disabilities;
- (b) maximize the social and academic benefits of all students; and
- (c) are relatively easy to implement and integrate into general education classrooms.

The previous description of Eli's peer support system demonstrates just how the social and academic participation of students with severe disabilities in general education classrooms can be maximized.

As a result of increased peer interaction with and modeling by his classmates, Eli has become more socially competent. He is currently learning how to communicate his wants and needs in a manner that is socially acceptable.

For example, Eli's peers remind him to use his communication device as an alternative to screaming. Throughout his school day, he has numerous opportunities to practice newly acquired communication skills. Moreover, Eli's friendship network is expanding with the help of his peer supports. The peer supports serve as liaisons between Eli and other students. They model for other peers how to interact with Eli. Sarah encourages other peers to assist and socialize with Eli. Currently, some of Sarah's friends have begun to hang out with Eli and new relationships are beginning to develop. Most importantly, Eli is a full-fledged member of his seventh grade classes.

With the combined effort of the paraprofessional and peer supports, Eli is also able to

access the general education curriculum in a manner that allows him to be academically successful. Adaptations and modifications are made prior to class through a collaborative effort between the special and general educators and paraprofessional. The materials are then provided to the peers who are instructed in how to use them with Eli. Ultimately, the peers directly support Eli in daily class activities. Such activities may include, reading sections aloud to Eli, asking him comprehension questions to test for understanding of the material, clarifying instructions on in-class assignments, and paraphrasing lectures in a way that is geared to Eli's learning abilities.

Eli is not the only one who benefits from peer support arrangements. In fact, social and academic benefits also accrue for his classmates who serve as peer supports. Peer supports are provided with opportunities to interact with and get to know an individual with significant disabilities whom they might not otherwise meet. Sarah, Matthew, and Terry have found that although Eli may talk, act and learn differently, he is still a seventh grader who likes to hang out and laugh and do things other seventh graders do.

As a result of their support role, peers without disabilities also receive extra attention from the paraprofessional and general educator. Academically, the peers have found that their grades have either maintained or actually improved as a result of working with Eli. Sarah, who is a straight "A" student, continued to perform strongly on her school work (Shukla, Kennedy, & Cushing, 1999). But for Matthew, who is a "C" student, and Terry, who is at risk for school failure, the experience of serving as a peer support has raised their grades (Cushing, & Kennedy, 1997).

Matthew and Terry found that the skills they learned as a result of being a peer support assisted them with their own learning. The paraprofessional taught them how to paraphrase information, clarify instructions, and attend to the academic task at hand in order to assist Eli. As a result, the peers' access to the general education curriculum has increased.

*Peer supports are not intended to wholly replace adults in providing educational assistance to students with disabilities. ...Rather, we are concerned that an over-reliance on adults may limit the benefits associated with general education participation for students with significant disabilities. The use of more natural supports seems to encourage belongingness and membership within the general education classroom.*

Teachers and paraprofessionals also benefit from peer support strategies. Peer support strategies are easy to implement and naturally fit into general education classrooms. Students within the class volunteer to serve as peer supports. The paraprofessional, who already accompanies a student to class and assists her by modifying the curriculum, providing behavioral support, and delivering instruction, now takes on the role of supporting the peer group.

As the peer support learns how to communicate and adapt in-class materials, the paraprofessional is able to use her time to support other students who are failing or at risk for school failure. The general educator assumes the role of teaching everyone. The use of peer supports does not take time away from other peers or require the educator to directly work with the student with disabilities. Rather, the general educator is encouraged to support the peer group and actively engage the student with significant disabilities while teaching the entire class.

For example, in Eli's English class, the general educator makes sure to ask Eli at least one "yes/no" question concerning the daily lecture. Peer support strategies have been implemented successfully across age groups and course content (Dugan et al., 1995; Salisbury et al., 1995; Shukla et al., 1999).

Peer support strategies can be used in elementary, middle, and high school class-

*Continued on page 11*



## Peer Supports and Access to the General Education Curriculum

*Continued from page 10*

rooms and are appropriate for a wide range of academic (e.g., mathematics or ecology) and nonacademic classes (e.g., music or art). In addition, using peers as supports for students with disabilities is far less intrusive than the use of paraprofessionals. As discussed earlier, paraprofessionals can isolate the student with disabilities from his peers and from the general educator. The use of more natural supports seems to encourage belongingness and membership within the general education classroom.

### Conclusion

A primary focus of current research efforts is the development of effective, practical strategies that will assist all students in general education classrooms. Currently, paraprofessionals are used almost exclusively to support students with significant disabilities in general education classrooms. We are not suggesting that paraprofessionals should not be used to provide support to students. Rather, we are concerned that an over-reliance on adults may limit the benefits associated with general education participation for students with significant disabilities.

In this article, we described the use of peer supports as a promising strategy for supporting inclusive educational experiences for students with significant disabilities. Still, there remains much more to learn about how to most effectively and respectfully implement such approaches in inclusive classrooms. For this reason, we are currently involved in Project ACCESS, a three-year project funded by the U. S. Department of Education, designed to evaluate the academic and social impact of peer support arrangements on students with significant disabilities, their peers serving as supports, and the educators who serve them. We hope that with the accumulation of this new knowledge, that we

*Lisa Cushing is a research assistant professor, Natasba Clark and Erik Carter are doctoral students, and Craig Kennedy is an associate professor. All are at Vanderbilt University, and study peer support strategies.*

*Comments about this article may be directed to Craig Kennedy at [craig.kennedy@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:craig.kennedy@vanderbilt.edu)*

can add to the research base and demystify strategies that support students academically and socially in inclusive education.

### References

- Cushing, L. S., & Kennedy, C. H. (1997). Academic effects of providing peer support in general education classrooms on students without disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 30, 139-152.
- Dugan, E., Kamps, D., Leonard, S., Watkins, N., Rheinberger, A., & Stackhaus, J. (1995). Effects of cooperative learning groups during social studies for students with autism and fourth-grade peers. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 28, 175-188.
- Giangreco, M., & Doyle, M. B. (2004). Directing paraprofessional work. In C. H. Kennedy & E. M. Horn (Eds.), *Including students with severe disabilities* (pp. 185-206). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Kennedy, C. H. (2004). Social relationships. In C. H. Kennedy & E. M. Horn (Eds.), *Including students with severe disabilities* (pp. 100-119). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Ryndak, D. L., & Billingsley, F. (2004). Accessing the general education curriculum. In C. H. Kennedy & E. M. Horn (Eds.), *Including students with severe disabilities* (pp. 33-53). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Salisbury, C. L., Gallucci, C. L., Palombaro, M. M., & Peck, C. A. (1995). Strategies that promote social relations among elementary students with and without severe disabilities in inclusive schools. *Exceptional Children*, 62, 125-137.

Schnorr, R. E. (1990). "Peter? He comes and goes...": First graders' perspectives on a part-time mainstream student. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps*, 15, 231-240.

Shulda, S., Kennedy, C., & Cushing, L. (1999). Intermediate school students with severe disabilities. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 1, 130-140.

### Author Note:

*This research was supported, in part, by grants from the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (H326C990016, H3234D020009, and H325D000026).*



**Now Available!**

**Positive Behavior Support: Critical Articles on Improving Practice for Individuals with Severe Disabilities**

*Edited by Linda M. Bambara, Glen Dunlap, and Ilene S. Schwartz*

This reference work, a cooperative venture between TASH and PRO-ED, is essential for anyone concerned with fundamental issues related to positive behavior support.

Discounts available to TASH and APBS members! For ordering information, visit [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org)



## Potential Benefits of the Adequate Yearly Progress Provision of NCLB for Students with Significant Disabilities

BY DIANE M. BROWDER and FRED SPOONER

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is the reauthorizing legislation for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In general, NCLB will increase accountability for states, school districts, and schools; provide greater choice for parents and students, especially those attending low-performing schools; offer more flexibility for states, and local education agencies (LEAs) in the use of federal money; and place an emphasis on reading.

### The Potential Impact of NCLB

From our perspective, the major impact of NCLB for students with significant disabilities will be the focus on accountability and academic standards for all students, including those with significant disabilities. NCLB has the potential to benefit students with significant disabilities by creating higher expectations for academic learning, promoting access to general curriculum, and ensuring that all students count in school accountability.

In contrast, NCLB could simply promote instructional time lost on assessment paperwork, IEPs that target meaningless skills to comply minimally with the need for measures of language art/reading and math, and the stigmatization of students with disabilities when schools fail to meet adequate yearly progress. The potential benefits of NCLB are not guaranteed unless educators work towards

responding to this legal mandate in ways that achieve access to the general curriculum.

### How Is Adequate Yearly Progress Defined?

NCLB currently requires states and local school systems to assess student achievement of academic content standards in reading/language arts and math, with the provision that science will also be assessed in the 2007-2008 school year. States and schools must also show adequate yearly progress (AYP) for all students.

To achieve AYP, a school must have at least 95% participation of students in the assessment and show that annual targets are met for all students, specific racial groups, economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and students with limited English proficiency. The school also must apply a second criteria such as graduation rates or attendance to the AYP formula.

States have defined a minimum group size for these subgroup analyses to protect the confidentiality of individual results and to produce valid and reliable results for accountability. For example, if a state says the minimum subgroup for a school is 30, a school with only 10 students with disabilities would not report this subgroup score. However, the scores of students with disabilities would still count in the overall school

*We still consider functional, life skills instruction to be essential, but no longer think mastering these skills should be prerequisite to academic (i.e. reading/ language arts, math, science, etc.) instruction. Students who do not have disabilities are not expected to master cleaning their rooms or washing their hands before they receive instruction in reading.*

score. Schools which do not meet their targets for Adequate Yearly Progress must follow school improvement plans.

### How Will AYP Impact Students with Significant Disabilities?

To understand how the AYP requirement of NCLB may impact students with significant disabilities, it is important to understand three concepts:

- academic content standards
- alternate assessment
- alternate achievement standards

#### *Academic Content Standards*

Academic content standards are state standards set for each academic content area like reading, math, science, and social studies. NCLB focuses on three of these content areas -- reading/language arts, math, and science. One potential benefit of NCLB for students with significant disabilities is increased access to general curriculum. Ideally, the students' curriculum, assessment, and state standards will all be in alignment. For students to make progress in the academic content standards that form the framework for the general curriculum, they also need instruction in these curricular areas.

Is it possible for all students to learn reading and math? Truthfully, we do not know yet because many students with significant cognitive disabilities have not received academic instruction. Until recently, we recommended making decisions about who should receive academic instruction based on other criteria like a students' life skills needs. We still consider functional, life skills instruction to be essential, but no longer think mastering these skills should be prerequisite to academic instruction. Students who are nondisabled are not expected to master cleaning their rooms and washing their hands before they receive instruction in reading. Also, if students who are nondisabled fail to make progress in academics, the educational decision is not typically to discontinue academic instruction as it sometimes is for students with significant disabilities.

*Continued on page 13*



## Potential Benefits of the Adequate Yearly Progress Provision of No Child Left Behind

*Continued from page 12*

There are substantial challenges ahead for teaching all students academic content. Creativity and collaboration are needed to find ways to adapt materials and instruction for students with complex disability challenges. Much more research is needed to document how to teach academic skills to this population. Some states have provided curriculum frameworks or defined the critical essence of their states' academic content standards to help educational teams pinpoint skills for instruction for students with significant disabilities. Examples of these can be found on most states' web sites. These can be accessed through the National Center for Education Outcomes' website under the heading of alternate assessment, <<http://education.umn.edu/NCEO>>.

### *Alternate Assessment*

The second concept to understand is alternate assessment. IDEA (1997) first required alternate assessment for students unable to participate in state or district's large scale assessments with accommodations. States use a variety of formats for alternate assessments (e.g., checklists, portfolios, performance assessments), but most focus on the students' performance of skills that link to the state's standards.

Alternate assessments have been evolving as educators understand more about how to align these assessments with their academic content standards. NCLB allows alternate assessments to be used for determining adequate yearly progress in language arts/reading and math for students with disabilities who are not able to participate in large scale state assessments with accommodations. For questions to use to understand your states' alternate assessment, see Browder and Spooner (2003).

Alternate assessments can also promote access to general curriculum when they provide a format for documenting academic standards

in ways that are responsive to the unique needs of students with significant disabilities. In contrast, this benefit is less likely to be achieved when the skills selected for alternate assessment are not well aligned to the state's academic content standards, and do not document that students have achieved new skills.

For example, just listing a skill under the domain of reading/language arts does not ensure that it is either reading or related to a state's content standards in reading. In some states, these skills are chosen for all students in the alternate assessment (e.g., checklist). In others, the educational team selects the skills for the assessment (e.g., portfolio). In either format, validation is needed that the skills in the assessment are aligned with the state's academic content standards (that a skill called "reading" really is reading).

It is also important to ensure that students are achieving new skills. Unlike large scale assessments, alternate assessments do not always differentiate skills by grade levels. They also may not document that a student has achieved a skill that was not known for the last several years. This creates the risk that the student will perform the same skills for several years in a row on the alternate assessment.

### *Aligning Alternate Assessments to Academic Content Standards*

In our research at UNC Charlotte, we found that states have encountered challenges in aligning alternate assessment to academic content standards. We will use two studies to illustrate the focus of our work in alternate assessment, and how states are aligning alternate assessment to academic content standards.

In the first study, (Browder, Flowers, et al., in press), we examined the curricular focus of alternate assessments using performance indicators in math, language arts, and functional skills from 31 states. Experts in math education, language arts, and significant disabilities, and a group of stakeholders (i.e., teachers and administrators) examined the performance indicators to assess the degree of their alignment to national standards and curricula.

*The provision of alternate achievement standards also has the potential to promote access to the general curriculum in that students can achieve some subset of the content presented and still "count" in their schools equation for Adequate Yearly Progress. Using student scores to make decisions about school achievement as well as student achievement is part of "high stakes" accountability.*

A performance indicator is defined as a specific skill used to document progress towards meeting state content standard. An example of a performance indicator would be the use of a picture communication board, which would be the specific skill used to address state standard in reading. Our stakeholders identified states whose alternate assessment performance indicators were clearly aligned to math and/or language arts, and those that were not, as well those indicators that were functional.

We found that these "clear link" states used a predominance of academic tasks in their performance indicators for math and reading. Overall, the "clear link" states also used more academic contexts than the "weak link" or "mixed" state. The outcomes also suggest alternate assessments of these 31 states have a strong focus on academic skills, but also reflect an additive curricular approach linking academic and functional skills.

In a second study, (Browder, Spooner, et al., in press), we examined the five curricular philosophies (i.e., developmental, functional, social inclusion, self-determination, and academic) that have been dominant in the work that has been done across the decades for students with significant disabilities and analyzed how these curricular philosophies are reflected in the performance indicators of six states that had been identified in the Browder,

*Continued on page 14*



## Potential Benefits of the Adequate Yearly Progress Provision of No Child Left Behind

*Continued from page 13*

Flowers, et al. study as having clear or weak links to reading and math content. In general, these states reflected a blend of academic and functional philosophies in defining reading and math performance indicators with a few examples of social inclusion, self-determination, or developmental philosophies. The predominance of an academic philosophy was especially evident in states that experts and stakeholders identified as having performance indicators with clear links to language arts and math.

### *Alternate Achievement Standards*

The third important concept is alternate achievement standards. Alternate achievement standards are set by the state and allow for students with significant disabilities to show adequate yearly progress in some way other than meeting the performance standards of the large scale assessment. This term is sometimes confused with academic content standards, resulting in the assumption that alternate assessments can address different content standards. All students, including those in alternate assessments, should be assessed on the same academic content standards (language arts/reading, math, and in the future, science).

In the March 20, 2003 *Federal Register*, proposed rulemaking for NCLB would allow the use of alternate achievement standards for students with significant cognitive disabilities. States could define what would be adequate progress for up to one percent of students with significant disabilities who participate in alternate assessment. Without this provision, students with significant disabilities in alternate assessments will probably be counted as not proficient (not making adequate yearly progress) because their performance does not match that expected for students in the large scale assessment. The time for comments on this proposed rulemaking to allow alternate achievement standards ended in May 2003,

and a decision is expected by the end of 2003. Educators are encouraged to follow up with their state coordinator for alternate assessment to determine the method that will be used to determine if students with significant disabilities have made adequate yearly progress using an alternate achievement standard.

The provision of alternate achievement standards also has the potential to promote access to the general curriculum in that students can achieve some subset of the content presented and still "count" in their schools equation for AYP. Using student scores to make decisions about school achievement as well as student achievement is part of "high stakes" accountability.

In high stakes accountability, student scores may be used to make decisions about student promotion and graduation (student accountability) or school accountability. Alternate assessment scores are entered into the school's accountability equation that determines whether the school is exemplary. Exemplary schools' teachers receive bonus pay. In some high stakes states like North Carolina and Kentucky, alternate achievement standards have already been in place for alternate assessments. Although a school may only have a few students who participate in alternate assessment, their scores can impact a school's outcome.

In one small school in a rural county in North Carolina, the scores from a class of students with significant disabilities were all proficient or distinguished, which tipped the overall school to become a School of Excellence in the state accountability system. In contrast, in another school where alternate assessments were not taken as seriously, students did poorly on alternate assessment and the opposite outcome occurred.

### NCLB Can Promote General Education Curriculum Opportunities for All Students

Ideally, the provisions of NCLB will promote opportunities for students to learn skills from the general curriculum in typical classes. As teachers focus on state standards in reading/language arts, math, and science, they may find it more efficient and effective to collabo-

rate with general educators to address these skills. Hopefully, this will give further impetus to inclusion efforts. NCLB does not let any program for students with significant disabilities ignore the need to create access to general curriculum. Even self-contained schools for students with significant cognitive disabilities must address their states' academic content standards and complete alternate assessments.

Last year, Diane Browder visited a self-contained school in Australia that had decided to follow their state's general curriculum for students with significant disabilities. The teachers' use of computers and other technology to teach academic content was impressive. These students' curriculum would be further enriched if these activities were supports to general education instruction, rather than comprising the students' entire educational program.

### What About Life Skills Instruction?

A concern many teachers have is, "What about the priority of life skills instruction?" Students need for instruction in functional, life skills has not disappeared just because of the new focus on academics. The best way to address these two priorities for instruction may be to find ways to incorporate the two where possible. Academic skills will often be learned more readily when they relate to real life activities.

### Potential Positive Effects of NCLB

NCLB has the potential to positively impact students with significant disabilities by encouraging access to general curriculum, enhancing expectations for academic learning, and ensuring that all students count in school accountability. When all students count in overall school accountability, and the assessment process that is used for students with significant disabilities is a portfolio process that is tied to the student's IEP, achievement of state standards is based not on standardized tests, but rather on individual student learning.

This individual student learning is documented through the operational definition of

*Continued on page 17*



# *It's the 2003 TASH Town Meeting!*

*Friday, December 12  
12:00 Noon*

*TASH Annual  
Conference*

Join **Greg Smith**, Host of *"On A Roll - Talk Radio on Life & Disability"* for a rousing "Open Microphone" Discussion of Critical Issues

**With invited guests:**

**Martin Gerry**, SSA, Office of Disability and Income Security Programs

**Pat Morrissey**, Administration on Developmental Disabilities

**Troy Justesen**, White House Liaison for The New Freedom Initiative

**And TASH leaders in the areas of**

- Governmental Relations
- Health Care
- Self-Determination and Rights

## *TASH: The Action Starts Here ...*

**W**hile it's true that TASH doesn't really stand for "*The Action Starts Here*," TASH members know that it is TASH's clarity of vision and willingness to take action that distinguishes us from many other groups.

If TASH is one of the organizations nearest to your heart, please consider a contribution or a plan for giving to secure the future of TASH's commitment to progressive supports and included lives of value and meaning for all people with disabilities.

Your gift can guarantee that TASH will continue beyond our almost 30 years of leading the way to assure that:

- \* the rights of people with disabilities are protected;
- \* progressive research is assured the support and audience it deserves; and,
- \* individual and legislative advocacy is available whenever needed.

You are important to TASH's future. Please consider a gift by check or credit card. No amount is too small or will go unappreciated.

Do also consider:

- \* Contributions of stocks or securities
- \* Remembering TASH through your will or living trust
- \* Beneficiary designations of life insurance or pension plan proceeds
- \* Designating TASH as a "write-in" on your United Way form
- \* Gifts with retained income for you or others

Gifts to TASH are tax deductible. You can drop your gift in the mail today or call us to make a credit card contribution or to discuss your options for making a donation to TASH by calling Nancy Weiss at 410-828-8274, ext. 101.





# RPSD-Connections

**R**PSD-Connections is focused on bringing the latest research from TASH's journal, Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities, to Connections readers. Our goal is to summarize some of the articles that are newly published in RPSD to help keep you abreast of the latest available research and information.

The following article summary was prepared by a graduate student at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education. If you would be interested in summarizing an article for publication in this column, please contact the RPSD office at 718-997-5315, or send an e-mail to <fbrownuncny@aol.com>

Fredda Brown, Editor, and June Downing, Associate Editor, RPSD

Borgioli, J.A., & Kennedy, C.H. (2003). Transitions between school and hospital for students with multiple disabilities: A survey of causes, educational continuity, and parental perceptions. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 28, 1-6.

Summary prepared by: Cynthia Connor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

## Background

For students with multiple disabilities, frequent absences from school due to hospitalizations may lead to regression of skills. According to Borgioli and Kennedy, research indicates that students with multiple disabilities have higher rates of illness and hospitalizations than other students and, therefore, are more likely to be absent more often and for longer periods of time. In addition, past research also indicates a link between regression of skills and lack of needed educational services when students have extended absences from school.

## Purpose

In this article, Borgioli and Kennedy explored the causes of hospitalization of students with multiple disabilities and the types of educational services provided during those hospitalizations. The researchers also provide

suggestions that may assist in reducing educational regression that occurs for some students during extended hospital stays.

## Method

Parents of students who had been hospitalized in the past 5 years were interviewed on the reasons for their child's hospitalizations, services provided during the hospital stay, and their perception of the experience. The interview consisted of demographic information, questions about the students, close-ended questions about the hospitalization experiences, and open-ended questions about each family's perception regarding the transition between school and the hospital.

## Results

Of the 19 students whose families participated in the study, there were a total of 46 hospitalizations. Of these hospitalizations, 61% were emergency hospitalizations (with infection being the most common reason), and 39% were planned hospitalizations (with orthopedic surgery being the most common reason).

School absences averaged 28.9 days, with 6.7 days in the hospital and 22.2 days at home. None of the emergency hospitalizations and only one planned hospitalization had a transition plan, thus suggesting that continued delivery of the IEP while students were

away from school occurred only 2% of the time.

Approximately half of the parents indicated that there was no communication between the school and the hospital during the time of their child's absence. According to the researchers, some parents were concerned about the lack of educational services, and thus more likely to suggest improvements for this challenging transition. However, 42.1% of the parents perceived hospitalization as having little or no effect on their child's education, and were not concerned about the regression of skills. A majority of parents perceived school and hospital as separate issues and had little expectation for educational services to be provided during or following hospitalization.

## Practical Implications

Findings from the study indicate that students with multiple disabilities were absent from school due to health needs, but did not receive the same educational services as they would receive at school during this time. Borgioli and Kennedy suggest that elementary and secondary schools develop transition plans for these students prior to an emergency illness or planned absence. These transition plans would include information about the

Continued on page 17



# RPSD Article Review:

## Transitions Between School and Hospital for Students with Multiple Disabilities

Continued from page 16

educational services to be provided, amount and type of services, where services will be provided and by whom, and the person responsible for coordinating the services.

Borgioli and Kennedy acknowledge that their study had several limitations, such as a small sample size drawn from only one geographical region, concentration on only students with multiple disabilities, and lack of assessment of students while they were hospitalized.

However, their findings clearly reveal a dramatic reduction of educational services for these students when they are hospitalized. The researchers encourage systematic replication of these findings in other regions and with larger samples to extend their results.



## Potential Benefits of the Adequate Yearly Progress Provision of No Child Left Behind

Continued from page 14

target behavior, permanent products (portfolio assessment), measuring individual student behavior change, and socially valid target behaviors, all of which have been identified as hallmarks of good instructional programs for students with significant disabilities. This process of ongoing data collection will not only contribute to the alternate assessment process, but continue to inform ongoing instruction.

On the other hand, NCLB could simply target meaningless IEP goals that comply minimally with the need for measures of reading/language art and math and could further stigmatize students with disabilities when schools fail to meet adequate yearly progress. The potential advantages of NCLB are not assured. Educators must work towards responding to this legal mandate in ways that not only promote but also achieve access to the general curriculum.

## References

Browder, D. M., Flowers, C., Ahlgrim-Delzell, L., Karvonen, M., Spooner, F., & Algozzine, R. (in press). The alignment of alternate assessment content to academic and functional curricula. *Journal of Special Education*.

Browder, D. M., & Spooner, F. (2003). Understanding the purpose and process of alternate assessment. In D. Ryndak & S. Alper (Eds.), *Curriculum and instruction for students with significant disabilities in inclusive settings* (2nd ed., pp. 51-72). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Browder, D. M., Spooner, F., Ahlgrim-Delzell, L., Flowers, C., Algozzine, B., & Karvonen, M. (in press). A content analysis of the curricular philosophies reflected in states' alternate assessment performance indicators. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*.

For information on the Charlotte Alternate Assessment Project, see [www.uncc.edu/aap](http://www.uncc.edu/aap). Diane M. Browder and Fred Spooner are professors at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.



The **Bible** on audio cassette is available completely **FREE** to **STUDENTS** who cannot read regular printed material because of visual impairment or physical limitation.

- 63 Languages are available
- Bible Studies & Messages
- Verification of impairment required
- Service is *Worldwide*

For information, write or call:

*Aurora Ministries*

P.O. Box 621

Bradenton, FL 34206 USA

[www.auroraministries.org](http://www.auroraministries.org)

(941) 748-3031 FAX (941) 748-2625

Nonprofit

Nondenominational



## YOU ARE INVITED

### TO A FOCUS GROUP ON THE IMPACT OF ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

2003 Chicago TASH Conference

Thursday, December 11

1:30-3:00 p.m. in Room 4H

We are interested in your opinion. Please come tell us what you think about alternate assessment. This focus group is funded in part by Grant No. H324C010040 from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, awarded to the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Focus group leaders include Dr. Diane Browder, Dr. Fred Spooner, and Lynn Ahlgrim-Delzell.

Open to all teachers and school administrators who have experience conducting alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities.





## 2003 TASH Conference, "Possibilities"

Hilton Chicago • December 10-13

If you have not yet registered for the TASH Conference, we invite you to do so today! In this issue you will find a sampling of the many sessions focusing on issues in inclusive education.

*Featured Session, Inclusion Roundtable, Thursday 3:15-5:30 pm*  
**Inclusion at Risk: What will it take for real system reform?**

Ten years from now, where will the inclusive education movement be? As local communities attempt to move forward in educating greater numbers of children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, they are still being met with opposition from school systems, non-public placements, and others. We are at a critical juncture in the fight for inclusive education. While in many places the right to an inclusive education is gaining full acceptance, just as many states are reverting to segregated services and even building new segregated schools.

The Inclusion Roundtable has a history of being one of the liveliest and most compelling events at the TASH conference. This year's roundtable will include the voices of some of the most progressive activists, researchers, and practitioners in the field -- as well as your voice. Join us for this lively discussion of the most critical issues facing the inclusion movement today.

**Pre-Conference TASH TECH Workshops • Wednesday, December 10th • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm**

TASH Techs are full-day workshops held on the pre-conference day. These in-depth, practical, and participatory sessions provide a wealth of information on cutting edge topics. Registration for these sessions is separate from the full TASH Conference registration fee. If you plan on attending the full TASH Conference, where there will be over 400 1- or 2- hour breakout sessions to choose from over the course of the three-day event, why not add on a day for one of these focused sessions? If you are local, join us for just the day!

### **T-2 Stories, Voices, and Inclusive Schooling: Educating Students with Autism**

*Facilitated by: Paula Kluth, Janna Woods, Tyler Fihe, and Stephen Hinkle*

Come and discuss ways to make schooling more respectful and successful for students with autism (and for all learners). We will discuss how the stories and voices of those with autism can impact the development of sensitive, challenging, and meaningful curriculum, instruction, and supports. We will also share practical ideas for supporting learners with autism in inclusive classrooms.

### **T-3 Creating and Maintaining Academic Inclusive Momentum in Middle School**

*Facilitated by: Mary Lasater and Marlene Johnson*

Join us in this interactive workshop to examine processes used at five middle schools involved in the Texas Middle School Inclusion Project funded by the Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities. The "how-to's" of conducting a student matrix for staffing patterns and developing parallel curriculum will be targeted so that you can go back to your campus ready to facilitate successful inclusive education in the middle school environment.

### **T-4 Inclusive School Renewal: Creating Effective Schools for ALL Students**

*Facilitated by: Michael Peterson, Thomas Newville, Lynne Tamor, Janice Colliton, Carl Lashley, Tim Loreman, Laura McClure, Mark Morawski, Diane Ryndak, and Heather Raymond*

A good school is an inclusive school and more! If we are to be effective advocates for inclusive education, we must address all issues of effective schooling and teaching practice, responding to the expectations for higher standards for all students. In this session, we will share research-based practices for effective schooling in which inclusive education is at the center. We will discuss how these practices form the basis for school improvement and invite participants to join an international network using these strategies. Participants will develop a collaborative plan for their own communities.

### **T-5 If Everyone Agrees This Is So Important, Why Do So Few Kids Have Friends?**

*Facilitated by: Carol Tashie and Zach Rossetti*

Most people agree -- friendship and relationships truly do make the world go 'round! However, many parents of children with disabilities report that their sons and daughters are lonely and lack meaningful relationships with classmates and friends. This workshop is designed to identify some of the real barriers to friendship and spark discussion on the strategies to support meaningful relationships for all children and youth.

For a complete list of TASH TECH Pre-Conference sessions or to register, visit [www.tash.org](http://www.tash.org). A tentative listing of TASH Conference Sessions on Issues in Inclusive Quality Education Across the Lifespan can be found beginning on page 19 in this issue of *Connections*.

## Issues in Inclusive Quality Education Across the Lifespan

TASH members are the key developers of successful support strategies that today define inclusive education. TASH values and supports diversity and recognizes both the legal right to, and the reciprocal benefits of, inclusive education. Inclusive education, or education of students with disabilities in regular education settings, implies more than just physical presence. It includes access to the curriculum that is taught in the regular education classroom; a vision of high expectations for students with and without disabilities; and a commitment to a set of learning goals or standards that are strong, clear, understood, and put into practice for all students. TASH's expectation is that every school community shall provide a quality, inclusive education for all students pre-school through college.

Consult the Sessions Schedule section on TASH's web site <[www.tash.org/2003conference/program/index.htm](http://www.tash.org/2003conference/program/index.htm)> for tentative session dates and times.

### Early Childhood

Sessions listed below are not organized into the early childhood strand. They are scheduled as either a poster session, a one-hour or two-hour breakout session, a pre-conference TASH Tech (extra cost) or a 3 hour Saturday Institute.

#### Child Find and Tracking Program for Young Children with Special Needs

*Kwang-Sun Cho, Yoo-Soon Back, Jin-Ho Kim, Bogseon Hwang, Jung-Jin Kim, Mi-Ok Kim, Min-Suk Choi, Se-Chul Oh, Kyung-Ja June, Kyu-Yoon Hwang*

#### Language Enhancement: Getting an Early Start with Computers

*George H.S. Singer, Tracy Gershwin Mueller, Debbie Grant, Elizabeth Grace, Lisa Draper, Hannah Montague, Vickie Yancy, Nicolette Nefelt*

#### A District-Wide Model for using Computers to Teach Infants with Disabilities: Efficacy and Social Construction

*George H.S. Singer, Elizabeth Grace, Tracy Gershwin Mueller, Lisa Draper, Jason Raley*

#### Teaching Functional Counting Skills to Children with Multiple Disabilities

*Joy Xin, Pamela W. Holmsted*

#### Family-Centered Care in Early Childhood Intervention Programs: A Review of Recent Research

*Yeo-jin Lee*

#### Comparing Inclusion in Child Care and School Age Care Programs

*Ellen Fennick, Margaret Inman Linn*

### Partnership with Families in Early Childhood Strand

**Strand Coordinator:** *Elizabeth Erwin*

Grounded in research and recommended practices, this strand will frame current issues, challenges and opportunities that are affecting the lives of young children and their families. Each session is linked together by the common theme of working in partnership with families to provide high quality early childhood education and meaningful support for all children.

#### The Inclusion of Children with Special Needs in Childcare Programs

*Laraye Lynn Stansberry-Brusnahan, Maureen Keyes*

#### The Possibilities of Citizenship for All in the Early Childhood Literate Community

*Christopher Kliever, Linda Fitzgerald, Jodi Meyer-Mork*

#### Early Intervention as an Influence on Parent Choices for Inclusion or Segregation in Preschool and Beyond

*Lynne Tamor*

#### Language Enhancement: Getting an Early Start with Computers

*George H.S. Singer, Debbie Grant, Elizabeth Grace, Lisa Draper, Hannah Montague, Vickie Yancy, Tracy Gershwin Mueller, Nicolette Nefelt*

#### Self-determination in Early Childhood: Exploring Home, School and Play Environments

*Mary Jane Brotherson, Elizabeth Erwin*

#### Peace Through Play Nursery School: A Preschool with a Consciousness

*Alan Berger, Susan Peterson, Sharon Jameson, Sharon Proscia, Cellis Mills*

#### Legislative Updates on Issues Relevant to Early Childhood

*Jamie Ruppman*

#### Early Childhood Crackerbarrel

*Elizabeth Erwin*

### Facilitating Friendships: Making it Happen Strand

**Strand Coordinators:** *Zach Rossetti and Carol Tashie*

Inclusion's roots in mainstreaming and integration began with a focus on social goals. Now that we know all kids can learn and become valuable, literate members of their school communities, it is time to revisit these social goals. Many students with disabilities still do not have friends. This strand will explode barriers, challenge participants, and identify specific strategies to facilitate meaningful and reciprocal friendships for all students.

#### TASH TECH Pre-Conference Session: If Everyone Agrees This Is So Important, Why Do So Few Kids Have Friends?

*Carol Tashie, Zach Rossetti*

#### Friendships-What Works, What Doesn't

*Michael Scambati, Janie Burke, Katie Basford, Todd Rossetti*

#### Circles of Support

*Derek Wilson, Colin Newton*

#### Where Are We Now?

*Jeffrey L. Strully*

#### Challenging the Barriers to Friendships

*Zachary Rossetti, Carol Tashie*

#### Strategy Session-Making it Work

*Carol Tashie, Zachary Rossetti*

### Friendship

Sessions listed below are not organized into the friendship strand. They are scheduled as either a poster session, a one-hour or two-hour breakout session, a pre-conference TASH Tech (extra cost) or a 3 hour Saturday Institute.

#### Facilitating Relationships and Building a Network of Influence

*Jerry Petroff, Patricia Cregan*

### High School Inclusion

Sessions in this topic area are not organized into a strand. They are scheduled as either a poster session, a one-hour or two-hour breakout session, a pre-conference TASH Tech (extra cost) or a 3 hour Saturday Institute.

#### When and How I Learn: Students with Cognitive Disabilities Describe their Education

*Continued on page 20*



## Issues in Inclusive Quality Education Across the Lifespan

*Continued from page 19*

*Jean Whitney-Thomas*

### Accessing the General Curriculum in Inclusive School and Community Settings

*Adelle Renzaglia, Stacy Dymond*

### Why is He in General Education Classes? A Qualitative Study Examines High School Inclusion for a Student with Significant Disabilities

*Ann McKee, Susan M. Hamre-Nietupski*

### Promoting Peer Interaction and Friendships in High School: Recommendations from the Research

*Erik Carter, Susan Copeland*

### Inclusion in Community Service

*Mary Wolf*

## Inclusive Education

Sessions in this topic area are now organized into a strand. They are scheduled as either a poster session, a one-hour or two-hour breakout session, a pre-conference TASH Tech (extra cost) or a 3 hour Saturday Institute.

### Collaboration Between and Inner City Urban Elementary School and a Rural Teacher Education Program - It's All About Building Relationships

*Janet Duncan, Sue Lehr*

### Partner Learning: Power Sources from the Field

*Antonette Hood, Mary E. McNeil*

### Multisensory Approaches to Literacy Instruction for Students with Special Needs

*Robert Kellogg*

### Inclusive Education-What We Know About the Effects on Students with Significant Disabilities and Their Non-disabled Peers

*Brian A. Boyd, Seonjin Seo, Douglas Fisher, Diane Ryndak, Penny Church-Pupke*

### Building Inclusive Learning Communities: A Systems Change Approach

*Vicki Barnitt, Cathy Dorfka, Joseph Clifford, Diane Ryndak*

### The Transition from Elementary School to Junior High School

*Terri-Anne Southern*

### Using an Attentional Cue/Response System to Decrease the Task Initiation Latency Periods of Students with Disabilities in Inclusive Educational Settings

*Maureen E. Angell, Young-Gyoung Kim*

### Learning Together: Innovation in Inclusive Conference and Training Events

*Duncan McNelly*

### "We Didn't Have Special Education." One-Room School Teacher's Experience with Students with Disabilities

*Diana Lawrence-Brown*

### Looking at Inclusion Through the Eyes of a Principal: A Qualitative Study of Successful Inclusive Programs

*Eric Landers, Diane Ryndak, Ric Reardon*

### Practice Inclusion, Forget Exclusion

*Amy S. Savoie, Martha Daigle, Lynnette Johnson*

### Accessing the General Curriculum: The Effects of Student-Directed Learning

*Martin Agran, Michael Wehner, Mike Gavin*

### Access to Mathematics for Students with Down Syndrome

*Pat English-Sand, Alexandria Currin, Katherine Glover*

### Peer Supports to Facilitate Inclusion

*Lisa Cushing, Nitasha M. Clark, Craig Kennedy*

### Middle School Inclusion: It's Not a Program

*Christine Ashby, Zachary Rossetti, Pat English-Sand, Michele C. Paetow*

### Alex's Gift: A Way to Belong Inclusion from First Grade to Graduation and Beyond

*Cheryl Fisher-Polites, Alex Nickels, Tara Anne Noftle*

### Moving Beyond "Inclusive" Education

*Carolyn Das, Lauri Stein*

### Enabling Students with Severe Multiple Disabilities to Contribute in Meaningful ways to Classmates' Learning and Activities

*Yoshihisa Ohtake*

### Using Children's Literature to Support Inclusion and Social Justice

*Mara Sapon-Shevin*

### High Academic Standards, Access to the General Education Curriculum, and Students with Severe Disabilities

*Douna Lehr, Jill Greene, Nancy Harayama, Tom Keane*

### Fusion Inclusion Round Two

*Edith Sirmon, Laurel Horton, Rosalie Hawk, Wendy Cortozzo, Hope Thieges, Gerry Gieseler*

### Paving the Way to Kindergarten for Young Children with Significant Disabilities: Collaborative Steps for the Successful Transition to School

*Amanda Fenlon*

### Helping Visual-Experiential Learners with Multiple Challenges Succeed

*Mark Halpert, Mira Halpert, Julie Halpert*

### Models of Inclusive Service Delivery that Facilitate the Inclusion Support Teacher's TEACHING Role

*Ann T. Halvorsen, Linda Lee, Kristen Lombardo, Maria E. Camorongan*

### Kid City Vs. Kid-By-Kid City: An Inclusion Task Force's Long-Term Systems Change Impact in San Francisco

*Linda Lee, Ann T. Halvorsen, Mary Hamilton, Alycia Chu*

### "Don't Say the 'A' Word": Using Liberatory Teaching to Educate Students about their Autism

*Michele Dimon-Borowski, Paula M. Kluth*

### A New Look at Assessment: Using a Needs Assessment Approach in Designing Supports for Students with the Most Significant Disabilities

*Rae Sonnenmeier, Cheryl M. Jorgensen, Michael McSheehan*

### Social Relationships Within the Context of Literacy Instruction: Creating Space for ALL Students

*Mary Fisher, Sara McGregor*

### Analysis of Inclusive Elementary School Contexts and Instructional Practices

*Christine Salisbury, Jeffri Brookfield*

### A Comparison of Special Day Class versus General Education Placement for Four Lower Elementary Students with Profound Mental Retardation/Multiple Disabilities

*Continued on page 21*

## Issues in Inclusive Quality Education Across the Lifespan

*Continued from page 20*

*Diane Ryndak, Ric Reardon, Susan Benner, Penny Church-Pupke*

**Access to the General Curriculum: Instructional Tools to Help Students with Cognitive Disabilities Participate in the Learning**  
*Thomas J. Simmons, Debra Bauder, Michael Abell*

**Instructional Media and Access to the General Curriculum: A Project to Connect Students with Cognitive Disabilities**  
*Jean Isaacs, Michael Abell, Debbie Sharon*

**A Study of Inclusive Practices in Pennsylvania Secondary Schools**  
*Steven R. Lyon, Becky Knickelbein, Paula Wolf*

**The ACCESS Project: Adapted Collaborative Strategies for Evaluating Students' Strengths**  
*Allison Rolter, Linda Potter, Marie Van Tubbergen, Heidi Lengyel, Seth Warschausky*

**Teaching Standards Based Curriculum - What Teachers Need to Know**  
*Jean Clayton, Sarah Kennedy, Christy Gunn*

**Inclusive Teaching: Teaching the Inclusive Teacher**  
*J. Michael Peterson*

**Designing an Individual Student Website for Effective Inclusive Education Service Delivery**  
*Patrick Schwarz, Ken Staal, Lydia Kusper, Steve Noel, Stanley Kusper, Nicole Kusper*

**Connecting Community - Referenced Learning to Content Lessons**  
*Michele Flasch Ziegler*

**A Plethora of Multi-Leveled Strategies for Developing Student Phonological Awareness**  
*Sheri L. Keel*

**Collaborative Teaming to Support Preschoolers in Inclusive Settings and in Their Transition to Kindergarten**  
*Pamela Hunt, Gloria Soto, Julie Maier*

**A Certificate of Inclusion - An Intriguing Option for all Undergraduate and Graduate**

**Students to Build Understanding and Acceptance**

*Sue Lehr, Janet Duncan*

**Making the Inclusion MOVE: Mobility Opportunities Via Education in Inclusive Settings**

*Jennifer Herschbein, Debra Huntsman Lumom*

**Creating and Maintaining Academic Inclusive Momentum in Middle School**  
*Mary Lasater, Marlene Johnson*

**Inclusive School Renewal: Creating Effective Schools for ALL Students**

*J. Michael Peterson, Thomas Neville, Lynne Tamor, Janice Colliton, Carl Lasbley, Drue Miles, Sigamoney Naicker, Mark Morawski, Heather Raymond, Diane Ryndak*

**Meaningful Educational Program Design for Students with Severe Multiple Disabilities: Targeting Outcomes of Significance**  
*Jan Writer*

**Are We There Yet?**  
*Todd Justice, Candee Basford, Jennifer Parrett*

**Practitioner Awareness and Utilization of Behavior State Pattern Information of Individuals with Profound Disabilities**  
*Harry Mattie, Lori Jean Scheiffla*

**Community Building in Your Diverse Classroom: Creating Healthy, Inclusive Environments in Elementary Schools**  
*Kristen Goldmansour, Beth Lakretz, Diane Ripple, Denise L. Ferrara*

**Where the Rubber Hits the Road: Problem Solving for Inclusive Education**  
*Rae Sonnenmeier, Michael McSheehan, Cheryl M. Jorgensen*

**Eliminating Miscommunication and Conflict Through Process**  
*Jacqueline Thorsand, Ann Nevin*

**It IS Possible - and Worth It!**  
*Becky Skagen*

**Holding On To The IDEA Reauthorization Train**  
*Shari Krishnan, Debi Lewis, Calvin Luker, Tricia Luker, Sandra Strassman-Alperstein*

## International Inclusion Strand

**One-Size Doesn't Fit All: How Do We Best Support International Inclusion?**  
*Hyun-Sook Park, Anne C. Smith, Luanna Meyer*

**A Successful Educational Program in Peru**  
*Lori Noto*

**Challenges and Possibilities: Education for Students with Severe Disabilities in Ireland**  
*Deborah P. Gaessling*

**Teaching Others Inclusive Values**  
*Emma Hupponen, Sara-Jane Neid*

**Reach for the Rainbow-Seeing Beyond Disabilities since 1983**  
*David Neal, Sara-Jane Neid*

**Developing International Partnerships**  
*Jerrie Ueberle*

**From Protection to Inclusion: Children with Disabilities and Child Welfare**  
*Zuby Sayeed, Wendy McDonald, Bruce Uditsky*

**Moving Knowledge into Practice: The Building Inclusive Futures Initiative Inclusion International**  
*Zuby Sayeed, Connie Lauren-Bowie*

**Including Children with Disabilities in the United Nations Study of Violence Against Children**  
*Richard Sobsey*

## International Inclusion

Sessions listed below are not organized into the international inclusion strand. They are scheduled as either a poster session, a one-hour or two-hour breakout session, a pre-conference TASH Tech (extra cost) or a 3 hour Saturday Institute.

**Mothers of Children with Mental Retardation in Korea**  
*Jin Yong Shin*

**Inclusive Education for Persons with Mild Mental Retardation in Nigerian Schools: Special and Regular Teacher's Views**  
*Tolu Eni-Olorunda*

*Continued on page 22*



## Issues in Inclusive Quality Education Across the Lifespan

*Continued from page 21*

### The Least Dangerous Assumption in Practice: Translating High Expectations into Day to Day Realities for Students with Significant Disabilities Strand

Strand Coordinator: *Cheryl Jorgensen*

When the principle of the "Least Dangerous Assumption" (LDA) guides the development of students' inclusive educational programs, they are afforded the opportunity to experience fuller academic and social lives. This strand will feature the perspectives of self-advocates, parents, and professionals regarding how the LDA principle can be operationalized in day to day schooling for students with significant disabilities.

**Always Assume that She Understands: One Parent's Story of an Inclusive Life's Journey**  
*Jeffrey L. Strully*

**Low Expectations and the Myth of Mental Retardation**  
*Cheryl M. Jorgensen*

**Communication Supports Based on the Least Dangerous Assumption**  
*Michael McSheehan*

**Regular Lives for All Students: Stories of Least Dangerous Assumption and Inclusive Education**  
*Carol Tashie*

**Interacting with Others from a Capacity Perspective**  
*Katie Basford*

### Literacy Strand

Strand Coordinator: *Amy Staples*

Literacy is a critical life skill. The past decade has marked a shift in research, practice, and learning. This strand will offer participants the opportunity to become familiar with current research, best practices, and outcomes related to literacy instruction for all learners.

**Teams that Work: With Literacy and Justice for All**  
*Roberta F. Selmorr, Linda Davern*

**Using Technology Enhanced Case Studies to Prepare Teachers to Include Students with Severe Disabilities in Literate**  
*Denise Clark, Amy Cox*

**Making Reading and Writing Available to All: Supporting Literacy Education for Adults with Disabilities**  
*Pascal Cravedi-Cheng, Linda Mulvey*

**Let's Read Together - Using AAC to Develop Literacy in Children and Adults with Communication Difficulties**  
*Dolly Bhargava*

**Writing and Technology: The Best of Regular and Special Education**  
*Amy Staples, Beth Foley*

### Paraeducator Strand

Strand Coordinator: *Deborah Peters Goessling*

Join this interactive strand as we discuss current and future issues related to paraeducators (instructional assistants) and how they can most effectively support students with intensive disabilities. Specifically, presentations will include NCLB requirements, guidelines for administrators, and various strategies to facilitate social skills.

**Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Over-reliance on Paraprofessionals: Process Steps and Initial Data**  
*Michael F. Giangreco*

**Student Outcomes as a Result of Instructional Team Training**  
*Patricia Devlin, Diane Witt*

**Choosing the Discussion: Building a Community of Learners Among Paraeducators in Urban and Suburban/Rural Settings**  
*Stacia Pleasants, Mary Fisher*

**Rhode Island's Response to NCLB Requirements for Paraeducators**  
*Peggy Hayden, Charlotte Diffendale*

**"Who's in charge, anyway?" Responsibility Clarification for Classroom Teachers**  
*Mary Beth Doyle, Deborah P. Goessling*

### Personnel Preparation

Sessions in this topic area are not organized into a strand. They are scheduled as either a poster session, a one-hour or two-hour breakout session, a pre-conference TASH Tech (extra cost) or a 3 hour Saturday Institute.

**Teaching About Best Practices in Teacher Preparation Programs**  
*Keith Storey, Margaret Hutchins, Craig Miner, Levan Lim, Martin Agran*

**"I See Your Abilities": Transformations Experienced by Pre-service Teachers through Virtual Encounters with Children with Special Needs**  
*Kathryn Scorgie, Lorraine Wilgosh*

**Possibilities: Empowering Families by Creating Reliable Alliances**  
*Randy Seever*

**A Transition Endorsement for Teachers Serving Students with Severe Disabilities**  
*Robert W. Flexer, Robert Baer*

**The Evolution of Inclusion in Poland**  
*Diane Ryndak, Jadwiga Bogucka, Dorota Zyru, Anna Firkowski, Sylvia Martin*

**Ok, So I Have Autism, Now What?**  
*Dena Gassner*

**When...What...How?! Challenges and Solutions for Quality Staff Development**  
*Hollie G. Filke*

**What Does Support Look Like for New Teachers? Descriptions of the First Years in the Classroom and the Ideal Support**  
*Chris Hagie*

**Developing Advocates and Leaders for Inclusion through Service-Learning in Pre-service and In-service Education**  
*Jean A. Gonsier-Gerdin, Joanna Royce-Davis, Rose Marie Ewen, Marian Ferguson*

**Preparing Creative and Critical Thinkers: Exploring Problem-based Learning in the Teaching of Positive Behavior Support Practices to Pre-service Teachers and Practitioners**  
*Sarah Johnston-Rodriguez*

**"HELP, I've Got An Idea, But It Isn't Working": Teacher Preparation Faculty Helping One Another**  
*Mary Beth Doyle, Amanda Feiloun, Roberta F. Selmorr*

**Supporting Teachers who Educate Children with Autism with the Teacher Support Program**

*Continued on page 23*

## Issues in Inclusive Quality Education Across the Lifespan

*Continued from page 22*

*Karena Cooper-Driffy, David L. Westling, Laurie McDaniel*

## Challenges in Teacher Preparation: Reducing Shortages! Meeting Standards! Ensuring Quality! Strand

**Strand Coordinator:** *Lewis Jackson*

The sessions in this strand focus on quality teacher preparation for special and general educators. Among the topics are meeting teacher preparation standards, developing practicums, incorporating research-based practices into the curriculum, and teacher education in the age of inclusion.

### Preparing Teachers to Teach Everyone: Implications for Students with Severe Disabilities

*Janis Chadsey*

### Preparing Teachers to Work in Inclusive Settings

*Mary A. Falvey, Jennifer Symon*

### Changing from within: Pennsylvania's Higher Education Initiative on Inclusion

*Brian Berry, Patricia Creegan, Geraldyn Anderson Arango*

### Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs: The TEAC Option

*Beverly Rainforth*

### Using Field Based Performance Assessment to Prepare Personnel in Severe Disabilities

*Heather C. Young*

### Guiding Novice Teacher Field Experience through a Demonstration Teacher Network

*Jennifer J. Coats, Kristin Stout*

### An Innovative Model for Providing Rigorous Practicum Experiences in Special Education Teacher Training Programs

*Susan Bashinski, Kathleen Stremel, Bruce Passman*

### Using State Standards to Assess Students and Develop Appropriate Individualized Education Program (IEPs) and Instruction for Students with Disabilities

*Toni Stricker, Kent R. Logan, Virginia Roach*

### Preparing for CEC/NCA/TE: Tips, Steps, Procedures, and Experiences

*Lewis B. Jackson, Fred Spooner, Valerie Owen*

## Inclusive Postsecondary Education: Research, Practice, and Advocacy Strand

**Strand Coordinator:** *Caren Sax*

The enrollment of students with significant disabilities, including those with cognitive disabilities, in postsecondary education is increasing. This strand will offer presentations that address the latest questions and challenges regarding students who want to continue their education in inclusive environments beyond grade 12. Presenters will share success stories, support models, enrollment strategies, policy and curriculum considerations, research, advocacy, and potential dangers of developing "special programs" for students with disabilities. Perspectives from students, families, and educators will be featured - come join the discussion.

### Students with Cognitive Disabilities in Higher Education: Models of Support

*Elizabeth Evans Gerzel, Colleen Thomas*

### Person Centered and Collaborative Supports for College Success

*Cate Weir*

### Outreaching A Leadership and Systems Change Model for Students with Disabilities in Postsecondary Settings

*Tom Hoza, Penny Griffith, Michelle Ratycz*

### Special Education's Indigenous Voices: Outlook of Successful College Students with Disabilities

*Stephen Hofmann, Karin Brockelman, Christie Gilson*

### Students Speak Stories of Students with Significant Disabilities in Postsecondary Education

*Teresa Whalley*

### Voices of On Campus: Postsecondary Education, Disability, and Inclusion

*Valerie M. Smith*

## Quality Education in General Education: Being There is NOT Enough Strand

**Strand Coordinator:** *June Downing*

This strand focuses on the critical need to provide a high quality and effective education for

all students in general education classrooms. While social relationships are certainly goals of inclusive education, ensuring that students with severe disabilities are learning and have access to the core curriculum is equally essential. This strand addresses strategies to support this learning from preschool through high school aged students.

### Creating an Inclusive Elementary Charter School: The First Year

*June Downing, Julie Fabrocini*

### Supporting Students in the General Education Curriculum and General Education Classes Using Embedded Instruction

*John J. McDonnell, John Matt Jameson, Jesse W. Johnson*

### Building Blocks for Including and Teaching Young Children with Special Needs

*Gail Joseph, Susan Sandall*

### Is Access Enough - Inclusion at the Secondary Level

*Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey*

### Linking the IEP and Daily Instruction to Standards in Elementary Classrooms

*Joanne Eichinger*

## Special Health Care

Sessions listed below are not organized into a strand. They are scheduled as either a poster session, a one-hour or two-hour breakout session, a pre-conference TASH Tech (extra cost) or a 3-hour Saturday Institute.

### Teaching Women with Developmental Disabilities how to Perform Breast Self-Exams: Effects of a Constant Time Delay/Video Instructional Package

*Kullaya Kosuwon, Maureen E. Angell*

### Making Sense of Menopause: Plain Language Information for Women with Developmental Disabilities

*Nilima Sonpal-Valias*

### Smoke-Talk: A Smoking Awareness Educational Kit and Peer-Training Workshop

*Jeanette Coombe*

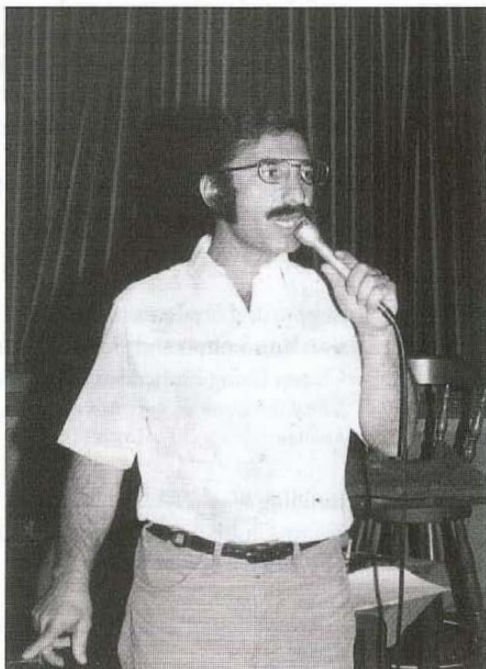
## Statewide Alternate Assessment Strand

**Strand Coordinator:** *Michael Burdige*

This strand deals with alternate assessment topics such as development, implementation, scoring,

*Continued on page 31*





Marc Gold

## Announcing the First Annual Legacy Symposium

Honoring the People who Shaped the  
Future of TASH and People with Significant  
Disabilities

*This Year's Symposium Celebrates  
the Work, Memory, and Influence of Marc Gold*

Marc was a founder of TASH and a visionary whose "power of expectations" changed the course of history for people with significant disabilities. Through his groundbreaking work *"Try Another Way,"* Marc taught us that when a person was not progressing, it was our challenge to try creative approaches to teaching skills and supporting change. He was a person who touched the lives and changed the thinking of many.

Whether Marc's radical ideas shaped your own thinking as a young professional, you've only heard of his work in passing, or you've never heard of Marc Gold, come take part in this exciting, participatory, multi-media event celebrating the impact that Marc's thinking had, and continues to have, on the disability field.

Presenters will include Doug Biklen, Bill Bronston, Lou Brown, Michael Callahan, Beth Mount, John O'Brien, Bob Perske, Paul Wehman, Steve Zider and a host of other family members, friends and colleagues whose lives and work were shaped by Marc's visionary ideas.

This multi-session symposium will include a two 2-hour session celebrating Marc's contributions and describing the breadth and importance of his impact and an evening festival at which you can catch some of Marc's best films. Join us for any or all of this exciting tribute to one of the century's greats.



**Thursday, December 11**  
10:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

**Continental Ballroom C  
Hilton Chicago & Towers**



# Educational Psychology

Department chair to provide academic and professional leadership within the department; manage departmental resources effectively and efficiently; advocate effectively for the department within and outside the university; be able to provide effective teaching and advising at the graduate and undergraduate level; maintain an active and continuous scholarship record; provide service to the university and profession.

**Requirements:** Earned doctorate in Educational Psychology, School Psychology, Special Education or a related field; three years of public/private school teaching or the equivalent; eligibility for rank of Professor or Associate Professor with tenure.

**Desired qualifications:** Understanding of all the fields represented by department programs; experience in academic administration; evidence of program leadership; demonstrated teaching effectiveness; experience in securing external funding.

Send letter of application detailing interest and qualifications, curriculum vitae, and names and contact information for three references to: Dr. James Shiveley, Miami University, 279 McGuffey Hall, Oxford, OH 45056. Contact phone number is 513-529-6443 and email is shiveljm@muohio.edu. Screening of applications begins December 1, 2003.



The University of Maine

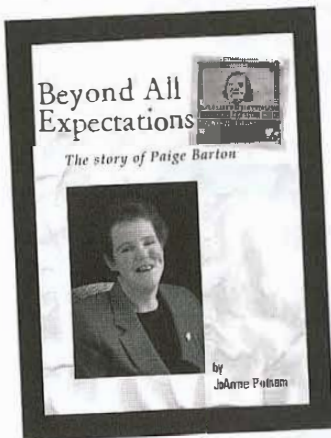
Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

Maine's University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service

presents

## Beyond All Expectations: *The Story of Paige Barton*

by Dr. JoAnne Putnam



Paige Barton's life embodies the spirit, intent and desires of all we do to promote equity, opportunity and inclusion for people with disabilities.

Paige's journey from institutionalization to University graduate and advocate inspires and educates.



### Order Information:

Single copies: \$15.00 Multiple copies (25 or more) \$12.00/copy  
S&H: \$4.00 Maine Sales Tax (in-state orders only) 5%

To order, please call: 1-800-203-6957 (v/tty) or e-mail: ccimail@umit.maine.edu  
www.ume.maine.edu/ccf/dissemination/beyond



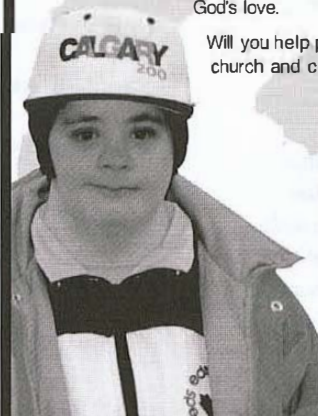
Is there  
a place for **ME**  
in God's Family?

Or do you sometimes forget that I am part of God's family too?  
Do you know that I love God and I want to be part of God's family?

My Friendship friends see me as a child of God. I like going to Friendship class. We sing songs together. My mentor and I learn about God together. I am going to heaven someday, and so are the friends in my class.

There are lots of people who have disabilities and do not know about God. Friendship groups help them learn about God and God's love.

Will you help people with disabilities in your church and community learn about God's love?



At Friendship, we believe everyone is created in God's image and can relate to God. We also believe salvation is a gift that is not dependent on a certain level of ability. Our mission is to share God's love with people who have disabilities and to enable them to become an active part of God's family.

For a free information packet contact  
Friendship Ministries  
1-800-333-8300  
www.friendship.org

Friendship Ministries is a nonprofit organization affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church through CRC Publications.



## Who's There? Students in Inclusive Education Settings

BY BARBARA LeROY and  
NOEL KULIK

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is intended to close the achievement gap between typical students and students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, students who have disabilities, and minority students. Among other provisions, the Act requires that assessment results and state progress objectives be broken apart by various student characteristics, including poverty, race and ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency. Such disaggregation is intended to assure that no group of students is left behind, or not making progress in the school system.

Although the Act focuses primarily on assessment and outcomes, a strong argument can be made that such end-game measures cannot be achieved independent of the location and quality of instruction. For students with disabilities, access to and inclusion in the culture and instruction of the regular education classroom is an essential prerequisite to achieving the academic outcomes that the No Child Left Behind Act demands.

As required by the Act, this article examines the demography of inclusive education for students with disabilities. In accordance with the reporting requirements of the Federal Office of Education, regular class placement is based on the percent of time that the student received services outside the regular class. Therefore, inclusive education is defined as 80% or more of the time spent inside the regular classroom (or <21 % of the time outside the regular classroom).

### Big Picture Overview of Inclusive Education

In examining placement for special education students as a group, placement in the regular education class has consistently increased over the past 10 years. However, this global statistic belies the fact that for disaggregated sectors of the population, inclusive education is a diminishing reality. When placement data is disaggregated by the students' race/ethnicity, type of disability, family income, and combinations of these demographic characteristics, a very different picture begins to emerge.

### Race and Ethnicity

White students with disabilities are placed more frequently in regular education classrooms than any other racial or ethnic group of special education students. In examining the most recent national special education placement data, Figure 1 shows that white students are more likely to be placed in regular education classrooms, while Black, Hispanic, and Asian students are less likely to be placed in such classrooms. Only American Indian students with disabilities are placed at a rate that is consistent with their proportion in the special education population overall.

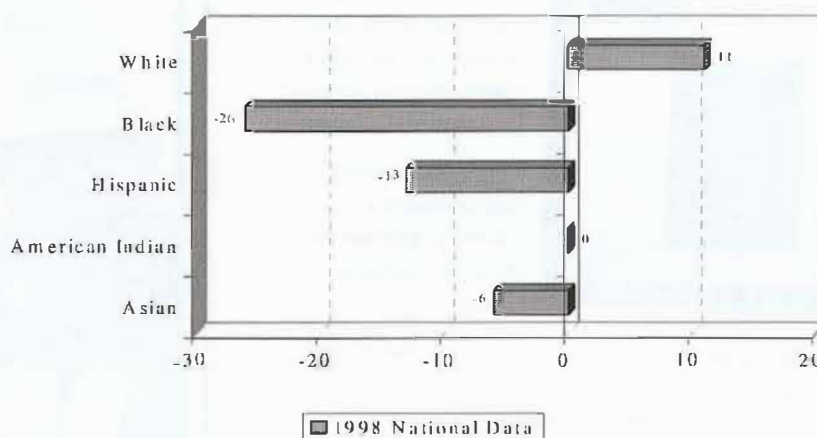
In examining placement at a state level (Michigan), we found that both Black students (2.5 times) and Hispanic students (1.8 times) were more likely to be placed in segregated settings than White students with disabilities. We also found these odds to remain consistent at the local school district level. At that level, we were able to distinguish high and low income districts.

While we found higher levels of inclusive education placement for all students who resided in wealthy districts, White students had higher rates of inclusive placements in both types of districts. In higher income districts, Hispanic (3.5 times) and Black (2.1 times) students were more likely to be placed in segregated programs. In low income districts, we found similar effects for Hispanic students (2 times), but not for Black students. (It should be noted that low income districts are disproportionately composed of black students).

### Type of Disability

In reviewing national placement by disability data over the past ten years, inclusive education placement has increased for every disability category. In examining that same national data for which types of disability are in inclusive education placements, students with learning disabilities and speech or

Figure 1: Percentage Points Above or Below the Expected Inclusive Education Placement Rate by Ethnicity



Continued on page 27

## Who's There? Students in Inclusive Education Settings

Continued from page 26

language disabilities dominate, representing 50% and 37%, respectively, of inclusive education placement. Each of the other ten categories of disabilities that are documented by the federal education department represents less than 5% of the students in inclusive education.

Figure 2 shows that only students with speech or language disabilities are placed in inclusive education classrooms at a rate that is significantly disproportionate to their numbers within the total special education population. This one category of students is driving the entire increase in the rate of inclusive education placement for all special education students. Figure 2 further illustrates that students with visual impairments are placed in regular classrooms at rates that are consistent with their percentage in the special education population.

Students with special learning disabilities and those with orthopedic and/or health impairments are placed in inclusive education placements that are nearly proportional to their rates within the special education population. Students in the remaining categories of disabilities each have very low rates of placement in inclusive education settings. One could argue that these students are clearly being 'left behind.'

The national category of Mental Retardation does not allow for distinguishing the degree of intellectual disability in examining educational placement. Until recently, state level data still maintained data by degree of disability. In examining inclusive education placement by degree of intellectual disability in Michigan, we found that students with moderate and severe levels of intellectual disability were least likely to be placed in inclusive education compared with students with mild levels of intellectual disability. In further examining the placement of students with more severe levels of intellectual disability over time, we found a decrease in placement for these students over time. The 'golden years' of inclusive education place-

ment for these students was at the midpoint of the federally-funded systems change project in Michigan. Since that time, placement in inclusive education classrooms has decreased, while placement in segregated classrooms and buildings has increased.

### Family Income

Family poverty and disability are highly correlated, with local district rates falling between 60-85% of all families living in poverty reporting to have a child with a disability. However, does family income impact placement and outcomes for students with disabilities?

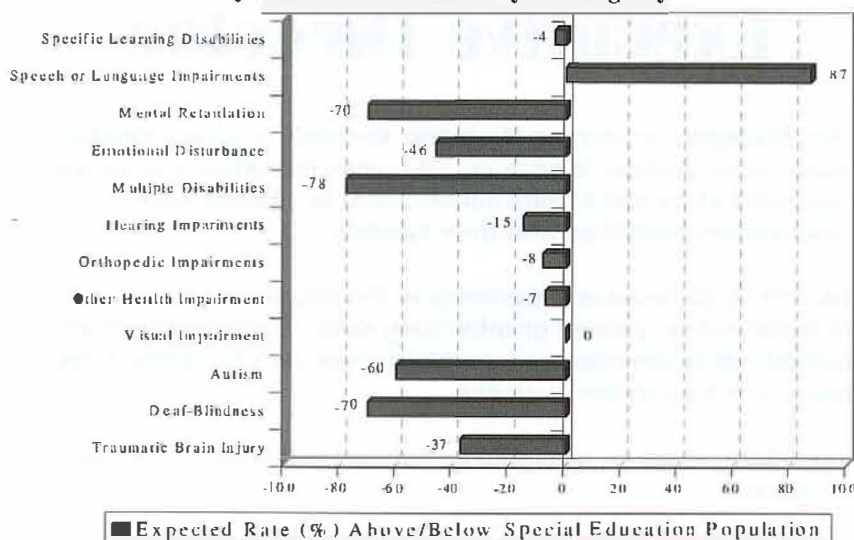
In examining family income by placement, we found that special education students who reside in families with higher incomes are much more likely to be placed in regular classrooms than students who reside in families with lower incomes. We also found that students from higher income families are more likely to have parents who are involved in their education, more likely to be involved in assessments and to graduate than their peers from lower income families.

### Additive Effects of Student Demography

Particularly devastating is the additive effects of multiple negative demographic characteristics on inclusive education placement. At the state level, we found that being Black and female reduced one's chances for an inclusive education placement. In terms of racial and ethnic minority status and type of disability, being a minority student negatively influenced inclusive education placements in relation to all disability categories, except for moderate and severe intellectual disability. For those two categories, placement decisions were without regard to race or ethnic background. However, less than 4% of all students in these categories were in inclusive settings, period.

Finally, we found that minority students who reside in low-income families are much less likely to have access to the regular education classroom than White, higher income

**Figure 2: Percentage Points Above or Below the Expected Inclusive Education Placement Rate\* by Student Disability Category**



Continued on page 28



## Who's There? Students in Inclusive Education Settings

*Continued from page 27*

students, (17% v. 47%, respectively, among a Michigan special education sample). This same effect held true at a national level, where we found that low family income, combined with race (non-White) and type of disability (intellectual) resulted in the lowest rate of inclusive education placements.

### Conclusion

Student demography does make a difference. While the rate of inclusive education placement continues to grow each year, specific segments of the special education population are not experiencing the same opportunities. Contrary to the expectations and claims of the No Child Left Behind Act, some students with disabilities are being left in segregated settings, with no chance to access the regular education class or curriculum.

*This research is partially funded under a federal grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, #H3324C000029.*

Barbara LeRoy, Ph.D., is the director of the Developmental Disabilities Institute at Wayne State University in Detroit. She has coordinated numerous inclusive education projects in Michigan, including the Federal systems change grant. Her current research is focusing on the demography of inclusive education.

Noel Kulik, M.A., is a research assistant at the Developmental Disabilities Institute at Wayne State University. Her area of interest is the sociology of education, with a focus on race/ethnicity, class, gender and disability issues.

Questions and comments about this article may be directed to Dr. LeRoy at [b\\_le\\_roy@wayne.edu](mailto:b_le_roy@wayne.edu)

## Honoring TASH's Legacy and Leaders:

### Seeking Nominees for Next Year's Legacy Series

TASH has established a Legacy Series, an annual event held at the TASH conference, honoring the people who have shaped TASH and have had important impact on current thinking.

This year's legacy sessions honor the work, memory, and influence of Marc Gold.

We are seeking nominations for the person to recognize as next year's Legacy Honoree. The Legacy Series honors the work and impact of an important figure in our organization's history and assures that the roots of TASH's mission are not lost in the passage of time.

Nominees should be people who:

- ❖ Have contributed importantly to new ways of thinking — a contribution that continues to have impact today;
- ❖ Opened our minds through their passion;
- ❖ Played an important role in the history of TASH as an organization;
- ❖ Have had a charismatic connection and personal impact on people;
- ❖ Have had national or international impact; and,
- ❖ Have had meaningful effect on people with disabilities and families.

To nominate a person please send an e-mail describing the ways the person has met the criteria above and why you think he/she should be selected. Send the e-mail to Nancy Weiss at: [nweiss@tash.org](mailto:nweiss@tash.org)

Please submit nominations by **December 10, 2003.**

## Executive Director

The Arc Michigan, in Lansing Michigan, the state's largest disability advocacy organization, is seeking a dynamic individual with proven management skills and a deep commitment to citizens with developmental disabilities and their families.

Applicants must possess experience at the executive level of a non-profit organization, proven grant writing skills, fiscal management including budget development, and a minimum of a bachelor's degree in human services and/or business.

Representatives will be available to answer questions at the TASH Conference.

Please e-mail resume, salary requirements and list of references to:

[Arcmsearch@aol.com](mailto:Arcmsearch@aol.com)



# The Foundations of Inclusive Education:

*A Compendium of Articles on Effective Strategies to Achieve Inclusive Education (Second Edition)*

**New  
Edition**

Edited by Diane Lea Ryndak and Douglas Fisher  
foreword by Steve Taylor

**T**his second edition now available! A must-have book of readings from *JASH* and *RPSD*, this compendium includes the most important articles about inclusive education that have been published in recent years and includes the following subjects:

LRE and School Inclusion: Concepts, Advocacy, and Personnel Preparation  
Strategies for Teaching and Learning in Inclusive Classes: Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Instruction  
Strategies for Providing Supports in Inclusive Classes: Engaging Peers and Paraprofessionals  
Outcomes of School Inclusion: Short and Long Term Effects

*"These articles have helped shape my world view about the nature and nuance of inclusion; they illustrate important dimensions in the dynamic evolution of LRE policy and practice."*  
~ Anne Smith, U. S. Department of Education

*"Finally, a collection of seminal readings university instructors can use to provide both contemporary and historical readings for any number of classes in special education!"*  
~ Jacqueline Thousand, California State University, San Marcos

| Number of Copies | TASH Member Rate | TASH Non Member Rate |
|------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1-25 copies      | \$24.95          | \$31.95              |
| 26-50 copies     | \$22.95          | \$28.95              |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Postal code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Payment must be in U.S. Funds: ☐ Check enclosed ☐ MC ☐ VISA ☐ Discover

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Quantity ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Add 3.00 per order up to \$30.00 for S&H within U.S. \*6.00 outside the U.S.

\*Add 6.00 per order \$30.01 - \$50.00 for S&H within U.S. \*12.00 outside the U.S. **Total Enclosed:**



Mail order to: TASH, 29 W. Susquehanna Ave, Suite 210, Baltimore, MD 21204 FAX Order to: 410-828-6706. Visit <www.tash.org> to order online, or call (410) 828-8274 ext."0" for information about volume discounts.



## We must be the catalyst for creating inclusive schools

In Maryland, as in many other states, the debate about inclusive education not only continues, it has, in fact, grown in opposition from parents who feel pressured by us "inclusion advocates." In thinking about how to address the situation, Dan Dotson takes a slightly different angle on the same theme as Carolyn Das with his Martha Stewart analogy (page 31).



### Inclusion is not a real option, and I'll tell you why...

BY CAROLYN DAS

I wish more parents who do not choose inclusion for their own children would support those of us who do. I am frustrated by those who wish inclusion advocates would basically be quiet and not disturb the status quo. Why? Because, the status quo supports the continued separation, segregation, and devaluation of our children with disabilities. In the status quo, it is a myth that "inclusion is an option." Here is the truth for 2003: the only real options are varying degrees of segregation.

While you truly can select the option of complete segregation (one extreme), you don't really have the ability to elect for what I will call "complete reverse segregation."

Here is an example which uses food (always one of my favorite subjects).

**Really An Option:** You are at a buffet. You prefer apple pie among the several choices available. You ask the server for the slice of apple pie and receive it. You have made a choice among options.

**Not Really an Option:** You are at a buffet. You prefer apple pie among the several choices available. You ask the server for a slice of apple pie. He tells you why it's not a good idea for you to have the apple pie. The other customers agree that you are making a bad choice; apple pie is fattening, it's expensive. Even the buffet manager comes out to help convince you not to choose the apple pie.

At this point, you have asked for the pie; you had justified your reasons for wanting the pie; you may have even begged for the pie. However, it is clear that no one is giving you the pie. You realize that the only way to get the pie is to hurdle the service counter, wrestle the server to the ground, seize the pie in your teeth, and elbow your way out through the thronging mass of people who disagree with your dessert selection.

The bummer is, after you chew on that pie for a while, you realize it's a plastic pie. It's a fake pie! Oh, the pie isn't really meant to be eaten...it's just an example of what you COULD have. It was just there to make the dessert tray look more fabulous, not really to be eaten! And that is when you realize that if you want apple pie, you have to make it yourself.

That's what "inclusion as an option" is: a plastic pie on a dessert tray. It's not really an option, they just say it is. And the fact is, unless you are willing to learn to make it yourself, and to find people who are willing to learn along with you, you will never, ever have apple pie. To get the pie, you must work your butt off and MAKE it happen. That is the truth.

*Carolyn Das is the mother of two children, Stephen and Michael, a member of TASH, and a graduate of Michigan Partners in Policymaking. She is one of two parent coordinators for the "Everyone Together" project in Michigan. Everyone Together is building parent networks across Michigan into a single coalition to advocate for Universal Education: All Children, All Together, All the Time. Ms. Das can be reached at carolyn.das@tvmi.org*



## Inclusion: Easy As Pie

BY DAN DOTSON

We, the advocacy organizations, are like the Martha Stewarts of the Special Education world. Martha tells everyone that the best method to baking pies is to make them with fresh fruit that they pick from their own trees, which they planted from imported exotic seeds, using their fancy garden tools that have pretty, homemade bows on them. Ah, it is a wonderful thing! We tell people that the best method to educating kids with disabilities is to practice inclusion, and that all kids will attend their neighborhood schools, and be educated alongside typical peers, and have measurable outcomes that will prepare the student for the real world. It is, indeed, a wonderful thing!

The problem is, most people don't cook like Martha or have her resources, skills, or fancy kitchen. Most don't have the time or desire to bake a big, fancy pie even though Martha says that it is the best way. They are just happy and content to buy a frozen pie, or even a \$.99 Tastykake to satisfy their need for a pie, or substitute some cookies to satisfy their need for something sweet.

Similarly, most families don't have the advocacy skills to bring about inclusion for their kids, or the schools don't have the educational know-how, technology or motivation to fully include students with their peers. Most families don't have the time to wait for systems change to occur. There are some that are completely satisfied with a separate placement or school, and are happy that their kid is just getting some sort of education, even though we say -- and they might even believe -- that inclusion is best.

I don't think we should use up our valuable resources and time trying to convince parents to give up their Tastykakes and try our fancy pie. If fighting the pie fight isn't worth it to them, there is no way we will be able to get them to get out their rolling pins. Giving them more training -- say, by watching Martha on late night TV -- on how to cook fancy pies won't work if they still don't have the time or motivation.

We inclusion advocates have to keep our focus on systems change, building capacity, paradigm shifts, and thinking outside of the box. We need to be the ones baking the pies. We need to give out free tastes so that even Tastykake eaters might say, "Hey, you know, this pie seems good and natural. Maybe this is the way it's supposed to be." We need to make sure the schools install the kitchens and tools needed to improve pie making. We need to have enough fancy pie ready and available to all who want it, and to start letting the Tastykake eaters sample it. Watching others who like to eat fancy pie isn't enough. We need to make sure that the fancy pies are worth the extra effort, and we need to satisfy the needs of those who eat it. If we make good, fancy pies more easily available -- and the natural choice -- who would want Tastykakes?

*Dan Dotson is the Information Services Coordinator for TASH, and the father of two sons, Matt and Tim.*

### Issues in Inclusive Quality Education Across the Lifespan

*Continued from page 23*

and instructional influence. As alternate assessment continues to be refined to reflect not only federal regulations but instructional significance, as well as the data begin to inform as to the instructional impact as a result of assessment, these issues and the presentations that will address them are important for those who wish to improve educational outcomes for students with severe disabilities.

**Using Multiple Measures to Access Students with Disabilities (Alternate Assessment Can Be A RIOT!)**

*Steven A. Maurer, Michael Burdge, Jean Clayton, Porter W. Palmer*

**IEPs and No Child Left Behind: Are We Writing Meaningful Academic Goals?**  
*Ginevra Costade-Little, Diane Browder*

**Are We Getting the Change We Want?: A Multi-State Examination of the Consequential Validity of Alternate Assessments**  
*Michael Burdge, Brent Garrett, Elizabeth A. Towles-Reeves*

**Using Alternate Assessment to Increase Best-Practice**  
*Terry Long, Terry Wallis, Craig Kennedy*

**Piloting a Computer-Based Scoring System for the Delaware Alternate Portfolio Assessment**

*Shaunna Crossen, Pat Tressell, Brian Touchette*

**Curricular Philosophies Reflected in States' Alternate Assessment**

*Fred Spooner, Diane Browder, Lynn Ahlgrim-Delzell*

**Standardized, Performance-Based Assessment for Success in Transition**

*Andrea Dolney, Allison Pickering*



*Literacy by Design:  
Creating a Universally  
Designed Reading  
Environment for  
Students with Cognitive  
Disabilities*

BY PEGGY COYNE and  
LU ZEPH

The passage of the major federal education law "No Child Left Behind," is fraught with both potential and pitfalls. The potential is that schools will be held accountable to educate all children, including those from low socioeconomic areas, children of color, and those with disabilities.

In the case of children with disabilities, No Child Left Behind assumes that schools will provide access to the general education curriculum to all students, as these students will be assessed to assure that they are making "Adequate Yearly Progress" (AYP). From the most optimistic perspective, schools will make every effort to assure that all children succeed to the highest standards. Isn't this what we always wanted? True access to the general education curriculum, the implementation of IDEA 1997 – as exciting and reinforcing as all this sounds, the fact remains that the law is just words unless we meet the challenge and actually figure out how to provide this access in meaningful ways to students with disabilities.

Of particular challenge is how to provide meaningful access to the general education curriculum to students with significant cognitive disabilities. The pitfalls for those of us engaged in the education of students with significant cognitive disabilities are that we

will either ignore the opportunity, or that we will allow others to "exempt" our students, and us, from the challenge of meeting high standards.

In an effort to support educators grappling with the challenge of providing access to the general education curriculum, in 2002, the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), solicited applications from researchers to develop evidence-

based practices to assure access to the general education curriculum for students with significant cognitive disabilities. In response to this request for proposals, CAST (Center for Applied Special Technology) and the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion (CCI) University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Research, Education, and Service (UCEDD) teamed up to address this issue. We chose to address the literacy curriculum, since literacy is the building block upon which other learning is built. It is our hope that by assuming the challenge is "how" to support such learning, we will avoid the pitfalls of "quiet ignorance" or of exempting students that are assumed to be unable to learn.

With three years of funding from OSEP, CAST and CCI are investigating how technology can support the literacy development of early elementary students with significant cognitive disabilities. "Literacy by Design: Creating a Universally Designed Reading Environment for Students with Cognitive Disabilities" includes professional development supports for teachers, as well as supports to help parents use CAST's Thinking Reader software in assisting their children's literacy development at home. The Thinking Reader -- an innovative, technology-based instructional approach that shows great promise for improving literacy in students

with disabilities -- includes curriculum that exemplifies Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Originated at CAST, UDL draws on multimedia computer technology and recent advances in neuroscience to create core learning materials that are flexible and customizable enough to support students with a wide range of individual differences. UDL reduces many of the barriers found in inflexible print-based literacy materials. By providing a framework for transforming these print-based materials into accessible, digital format, UDL guides the design of embedded platforms that support learning on an individual basis. CAST calls these supported digital learning environments "Thinking Readers."

After early research on the efficacy of the Thinking Reader approach with students with learning disabilities, CAST extended the approach to students with significant cognitive disabilities. With funding from the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, CAST developed four CD-ROM-based picture books to support the acquisition of beginning reading skills and comprehension strategies in students with cognitive disabilities and refined the digital books with input from the students and their teachers and

The project will involve conducting a study of the impact of a universally designed literacy instructional approach versus traditional literacy instruction on students' reading achievement and access to the general curriculum. It will also look at the impact of the approach on teachers' instructional practices in teaching students with cognitive disabilities.

*Continued on page 33*



## Literacy by Design: Creating a Universally Designed Reading Environment for Students with Cognitive Disabilities

Continued from page 32

parents (see Figure 1). This two-year effort resulted in positive gains in literacy development and engagement for the students involved and an enthusiastic response from the teachers and parents using the approach.

In the larger, quasi-experimental "Literacy by Design" study now underway, CAST and CCI are investigating the *Thinking Reader's* potential to support the literacy development of early elementary students with significant cognitive disabilities through the use of research-based, balanced instructional approaches. These approaches include the five core components identified by the National Reading Panel Report (2000) as essential elements in an effective beginning reading program: phonemic awareness,

phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategy instruction.

CAST and CCI are implementing the project with 20 students with significant cognitive disabilities and 10 typically achieving students in both resource rooms and inclusive classrooms in Maine and Massachusetts over the next three years.

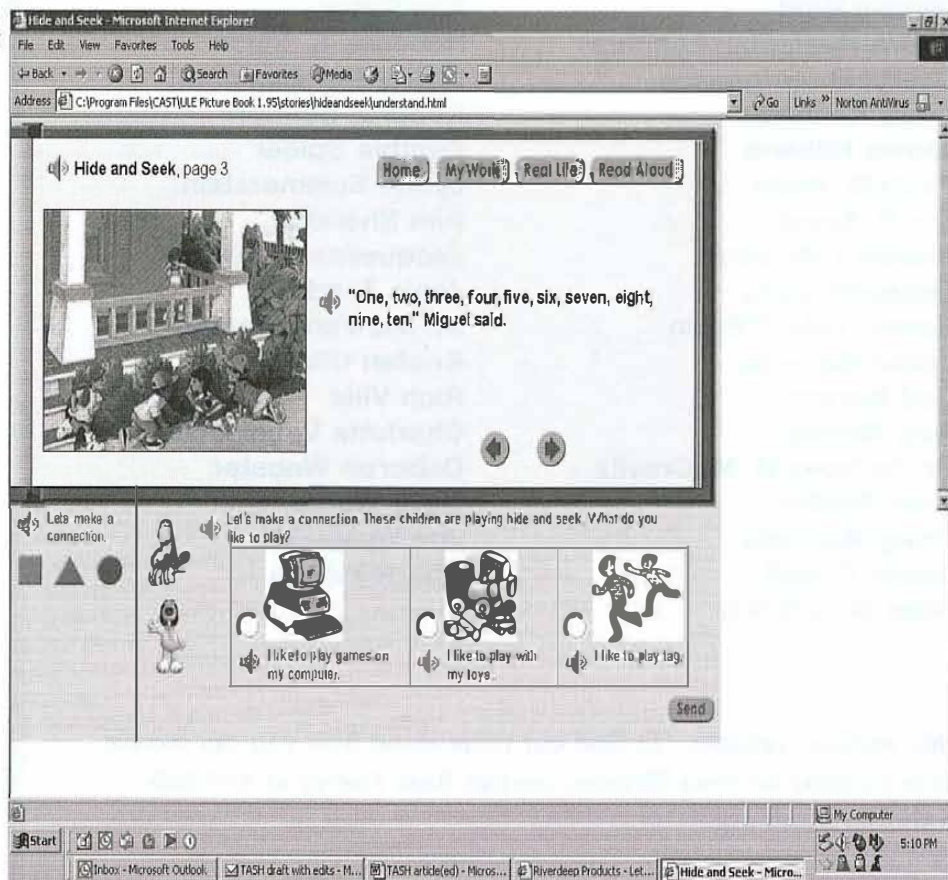
During Year 1, begun in January 2003, our teams are analyzing barriers to access to the general education literacy curriculum, selecting sites and students, and developing student case histories to guide the intervention in Year 2. We are also refining the training and support materials that teachers and parents will use in Year 2. In Year 2, the CAST/CCI researchers will conduct the first phase of an experimental study of the impact of a universally designed literacy instructional approach versus traditional literacy instruction on students' reading achievement and access to the general curriculum. We will also look at the impact of the approach on teachers' instructional practices in teaching students

with cognitive disabilities.

In Year 3, we will conduct the second phase of the experimental study as we follow Year 2 students into their next year of schooling. At the conclusion of the second phase, study results will be analyzed and disseminated.

For the duration of this project, students will receive context-based instruction in each of the five core areas using the *Thinking Reader* software and instructional framework developed under the Kennedy grant. The use of additional software, such as *WiggleWorks*<sup>®</sup> (Scholastic, Inc.) and *Let's Go Read!*<sup>®</sup> 1: An Island Adventure (Riverdeep) will ensure that students have access to a selection of materials.

We are grateful to the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation and to OSEP for their generous funding of this important endeavor to develop and evaluate a technology-based instructional approach to support the development of beginning reading skills and comprehension strategies in elementary school-aged children with significant cognitive disabilities. We are also grateful to Scholastic Inc. for permission to use two of their titles on the CD-ROM. We hope that these collaborations will assist in realizing the potential of "No Child Left Behind" for students with significant cognitive disabilities.



*Peggy Coyne is a Research Scientist with CAST. As the director of CAST's Family and Community Literacy project, Ms. Coyne developed an innovative model that uses technology to support literacy development for at-risk families and led the program's demonstration phase in schools, education and social service organizations, libraries and technology centers throughout the country.*

*Dr. Lucille Zeph, Associate Professor of Education, College of Education and Director, Center for Community Inclusion, has extensive professional experience in disability studies, administration, teaching, and dissemination, with particular emphasis in the areas of significant disabilities, public policy, and systems change.*

*Comments about this article may be directed to Ms. Coyne at [pcoyne@cast.org](mailto:pcoyne@cast.org)*

Figure 1



# Thank you!

TASH's work is dependent on the financial assistance of our donors and members. We wish to acknowledge the generous donations of the following individuals:

Martin Agran  
Jacki L. Anderson  
Dr. Richard Auletta  
Rebecca Barbieri  
Christine Bevilacqua  
Rebecca H. Clark  
Adelaide Comegys  
Kate Comegys  
Allen C. Crocker  
Yoshiko Dart  
Karen L. Davis  
Susan Davis-Killian  
Larry Douglass  
Charles Dukes  
Pat Edwards  
Joanne Eichinger  
Sandra Elling  
Beverly P. Ellman  
Leslie Farlow  
Beatrice B. Fink  
Douglas Fisher  
Julie M. Flanagan  
Paula M. Gardner  
Kathleen Gee  
Michael F. Giangreco  
Deborah Gilmer  
Bobbie Glass

Gail Godwin  
Marquita Grenot-Scheyer  
Sherry Handsman Schwartz  
Elisabeth Healey  
Sue Henshaw  
Heather Hook  
Eva Horn  
Galen Howard  
Pamela Hunt  
Debra Huntsman Lannom  
Cheryl M. Jorgensen  
Craig Kennedy  
James Kilbane  
Paula M. Kluth  
Tim P. Knoster  
Sharon Lohrmann  
Elizabeth Lurie  
Connie Lyle O'Brien  
Leslie Margolis  
Gail Marino  
Amy Marlatt  
Dr. Anthony M. McCrovitz  
Joan Medlen  
Craig Michaels  
Joann E. Noll  
John W. O'Brien

Linda O'Day-Cushing  
Liz Obermayer  
Kathryn D. Peckham-Hardin  
David Pitonyak  
Tammy Powers  
Pamela Roberts  
Giovanna Rose  
Rita Rubin  
Sue Rubin  
Rebecca S. Salon  
Laura San Giacomo  
Roberta Schnorr  
Cynthia Spicer  
Lynne Sommerstein  
Kim Sheridan  
Jacqueline Thousand  
Janis Tondora  
Dr. Mai-Feng Tsuang  
Kristen Ulland  
Rich Villa  
Charlotte Vogelsang  
Deborah Webster  
Mark Wurzbacher  
Joe Wykowski  
Charles Zeph

TASH also has a lifetime membership option available. To find out more about how you can receive full international and chapter member benefits for your lifetime, contact Rose Holsey at 410-828-8274, ext. 100 or send an e-mail to [rholshey@tash.org](mailto:rholshey@tash.org)

## The University of Maryland Department of Special Education

Invites applicants interested in pursuing a master's degree in special education with an emphasis in severe disabilities. The department is nationally ranked as one of the top five programs in special education.

Excellent opportunity for competitive funding (tuition/stipends/book reimbursement) for full and part-time students is available.

Applications are accepted on a continuous basis.

For more information please contact Dr. Francey Kohl, Project Director Low Incidence Personnel Preparation Grant, Department of Special Education, 1308 Benjamin Bldg. College Park, MD 20742; Phone: (301) 405-6490 or (301) 405-6514; E-mail: [fk4@umail.umd.edu](mailto:fk4@umail.umd.edu).

The University of Maryland has a strong commitment to diversity and actively seeks applicants from underrepresented groups including individuals with disabilities.

Thank you to the  
following Official  
Sponsors and  
Strand Partners for  
their support of the  
2003 TASH  
Annual Conference!

The Institute on  
Disability, University of  
New Hampshire

The Center for  
Community Inclusion,  
Maine's University  
Center for Excellence in  
Developmental  
Disabilities, Education,  
Research and Service

Brookes Publishing

Autism National  
Committee

The Center on Disability  
Studies, University of  
Hawaii

Kansas University Center  
on Developmental  
Disabilities

The Oregon Institute on  
Disability & Development



## Early Childhood Special Education

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, College of Education and Human Services, has an open position in Early Childhood Special Education (Position 111b, Assistant/Associate Professor, tenure-track, academic year).

Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in a collaborative program for early childhood special education and early childhood elementary education, supervision of related field experiences, professional development, research, scholarly activities, and service.

A doctorate in Special Education or a related area (dissertation written prior to September 7, 2004, with a defense scheduled no later than December, 2004) is required. Prior experience teaching young children with disabilities is essential. Review of applications will begin on January 12, 2004 and continue until position is filled. Flexible start date -- September 7, 2004 or January 31, 2005.

Applicants should submit a letter of application specifying position number, resume, statement of teaching philosophy, transcripts, and three current letters of recommendation to:

Dr. Michael Ford, Associate Dean  
College of Education and Human  
Services, University of Wisconsin  
Oshkosh, Oshkosh, WI 54901

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is an  
Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity  
Institution



## TASH NEWSLETTER

Priscilla Newton, *Editor*

### Policy Statement

It is TASH's mission to eliminate physical and social obstacles that prevent equity, diversity and quality of life for children and adults with disabilities.

Items in this Newsletter do not necessarily reflect attitudes held by individual members or the Association as a whole. TASH reserves the right to exercise editorial judgement in selection of materials.

All contributors and advertisers are asked to abide by the TASH policy on the use of people-first language that emphasizes the humanity of people with disabilities. Terms such as "the mentally retarded," "autistic children," and "disabled individuals" refer to characteristics of individuals, not to individuals themselves. Terms such as "people with mental retardation," "children with autism," and "individuals who have disabilities" should be used. The appearance of an advertisement for a product or service does not imply TASH endorsement. For a copy of TASH's publishing and advertising policy, please call 410-828-8274, ext. 102.

### Executive Board

Donna Gilles, *President*  
Kathy Gec, *President Elect*  
Wanda Blanchett, *Vice President-Development*  
Patrick Schwarz, *Vice President-Committee Oversight*  
Jacki Anderson, *Chair, Executive Committee*  
Lucille Zeph, *Secretary*  
Jeffrey L. Strully, *Treasurer*  
Nancy Weiss, *Executive Director*  
Fredda Brown, *Ex-Officio*

June Downing  
Beverly Fields  
Tracy Knight-Lackey  
Ming-Gon John Lian  
Leslie Seid Margolis  
Liz Obermayer, *Ex-Officio*  
Barbara Ransom, *Ex-Officio*  
Sue Rubin  
Scott Shepard  
Richard Sobsey

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the above your ☐ work address ☐ home address ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Please Check Appropriate Categories

(not more than three):

- ☐ Administrator/Adult Services
- ☐ Administrator/Education
- ☐ Administrator/Other
- ☐ Adult Service Provider/Staff
- ☐ Advocate/Friend
- ☐ Behavioral Specialist
- ☐ Case Manager
- ☐ Early Childhood Services

- ☐ Educator/Teacher (K-12)
- ☐ Government Personnel
- ☐ Legal Services Provider
- ☐ Occupational/Physical Therapist
- ☐ Parent/Family Member
- ☐ Personal Assistant
- ☐ Professional/Public Policy Advocate
- ☐ Professor/Instructor-College/University
- ☐ Psychologist
- ☐ Regular Education Teacher/Administrator

- ☐ Related Services Provider
- ☐ Self-Advocate/Person w/ Disability
- ☐ Social Worker
- ☐ Speech/Language Pathologist
- ☐ Special Education Teacher
- ☐ Special Education/Support Specialist
- ☐ Staff Development/Trainer
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Supported Employment
- ☐ Other

### Moving? Please notify TASH of your new address.

General Membership (individual) ..... \$103\*.

Organization/Subscription (all organizations, schools, libraries, universities, etc. must use this category) ..... \$230\*.

Associate Membership (for people having an annual household income of \$25,000 or less, and for whom payment of the full fee would present a financial hardship) ..... \$60\*.

Lifetime Member ..... \$1300.

Add \$10 for postage costs for members in Canada and \$25 for members outside the U.S. and Canada.

Group Discount Rate (When three or more individuals from the same organization join as International/Chapter or International Only members at the same time -- Save \$20 per membership!)

Funds must be submitted in U.S. dollars and checks must be drawn on a U.S. bank. Add a \$20 processing fee if check is not drawn on a U.S. bank. If you would like to charge your membership, please fill in the necessary information in the next column. For a list of membership benefits, please call 410-828-8274, ext. 107.

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Discover

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would like to spread my payments out. Enclose 1/3 and you will receive 2 additional invoices at monthly intervals.

Please make check payable to: TASH

Address: 29 W. Susquehanna Avenue, Suite 210

Baltimore, MD 21204

Telephone: 410/828-8274 Fax: 410/828-6706

\*These prices are for both International and Chapter memberships. For International-Only or Chapter-Only rates, please call us at 1-800-482-8274.



29 West Susquehanna Avenue  
Suite 210  
Baltimore, MD 21204  
Phone: 410/828-8274  
FAX: 410/828-6706  
TDD: 410/828-1306  
Web site: www.tash.org

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
paid  
HAGERSTOWN, MD  
PERMIT NO. 187