

1997

UNLV College of Education Multicultural & Diversity Newsletter

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Repository Citation

McCafferty, S., Filler, J., Gallavan, N. P., Okura, S., Higgins, K., Troutman, P., Zehm, S., Bannatyne, M., McClain, M., Giorgis, C., Nelson-Leaf, J. (1997). UNLV College of Education Multicultural & Diversity Newsletter. In Kyle Higgins, , 1(2), 1-12.

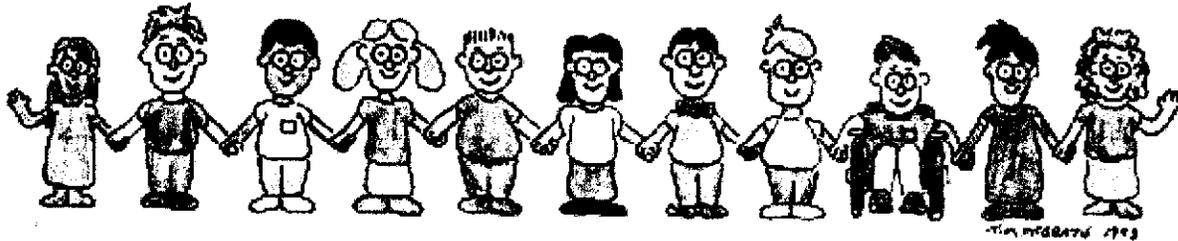
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UNLV COLLEGE OF EDUCATION Multicultural & Diversity Newsletter

Published by the Multicultural & Diversity Committee
Volume 1, Issue Number 2, 1997

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***This newsletter is published twice a semester. All contributions are welcome and should be addressed to Kyle Higgins, 895-1102, email: higgins@nevada.edu. ***

TWO HUNDRED TEACHERS ATTEND THE LAS VEGAS MULTICULTURAL CONFERENCE

The 14th Annual Las Vegas Multicultural Education Conference sponsored by the Las Vegas Alliance of Black School Educators was held March 6, 7, and 8, 1997, at Jackie Gaughn's Plaza Hotel. More than 200 teachers and administrators from the Clark County School District and across the state of Nevada along with many professors and pre-service teachers from UNLV were in attendance. Opportunities to learn about effective teaching strategies, to view the latest videos, to see artwork created by Clark County School District students, and to enjoy a variety of cultural events were abundant. Keynote addresses were made by Dr. David Whitehorse (Director, Professional Programs, Teacher Education, California State University at San Marcos), Mr. Charles E. Pace (Chautauqua Public Humanities School and Doctoral Student, University of Kentucky), Mr. Jim Kubik (Nebraska Teacher of the Year and President of the Nebraska State Chapter of NAME), Dr. Sue Fawn Chung (Professor, University of Nevada, Las Vegas), and Dr. Alba Ortiz (Professor, University of Texas at Austin). Presentations were led by many Clark County School District teachers and administrators including Dr. Linda Young and Ms. Karla McComb. Members of the COE Multicultural and Diversity Committee conducting sessions included: Dr. Nancy Gallavan, Dr. Cyndi Giorgis, Dr. Maria Ramirez, and Dr. Porter Troutman, Jr. This three-day event was an overwhelming success!

Next year Dr. Nancy Gallavan from the UNLV College of Education will co-chair the conference with Dr. Linda Young from the Clark County School District. Be sure to look for further information concerning the conference in next fall's Multicultural and Diversity Newsletter. Dr. Gallavan and Dr. Young are already hard at work on the conference and they indicate that the tradition of excellence established by the first fourteen years of this conference will continue.

INVITED GUEST COLUMN:

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS FROM MULTICULTURAL AND DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

by Sherri Strawser and Janice Rollins

The population of students in the schools of today has become increasingly diverse over the last several decades, which, in turn, has created greater challenges for educators than ever before. One of these challenges involves (a) defining clear and relevant educational goals for students from diverse racial, ethnic, or linguistic backgrounds and (b) determining procedures for evaluating whether students have attained their goals. To be able to set goals for students, educators must have accurate information about each student's unique abilities. Thus, whether a teacher is gathering information to set goals or evaluating goal attainment, the process of assessment is inextricably connected with teaching. As individuals plan their activities around goals consistent with their current levels of performance and aspirations; schools are organized around goals developed from age-appropriate and cultural expectations (Fuchs, 1995). Therein lies the major challenge: Which cultural expectations should be used as the point of comparison (or normative standard) for a specific student?

As Sattler (1992) noted, every test contains some elements of a particular culture, or is "culturally loaded" to a degree. Even if test items are translated into a student's native language, the construct the item assesses may not be familiar to students of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Because we all live and interact within a society or cultural environment, the development of an appropriate assessment instrument that is touted to be independent of any "culture" would be difficult to imagine. The search for a "culture-free" assessment is akin to the search for non-fatal death. Therefore, when assessing students from any background, it is important to consider assessments that are more "culturally reduced" than traditional standardized tests. Examples of culturally reduced tests are those that use nonverbal response modes, utilize perceptual and problem-solving abilities, or employ a "test-teach-test" paradigm within a contextualized setting. Tests or assessments that have the greatest potential of cultural bias rely heavily on verbal communication skills, prior exposure to vocabulary, and experiences or skills that are valued by Anglo-American societal norms (e.g., speed on timed items, a persistent approach to difficult items, sharing personal information, etc.).

In an attempt to deal with the issue of bias in the assessment of ethnically diverse students, one may argue that national norms are inappropriate standards to which students' performances should be compared. It would seem beneficial for a student's performance to be compared to other within his or her own racial, ethnic, or cultural group. Although this sounds like a wonderful solution, it would necessitate the development of pluralistic norms. These have been cautioned against because they may further comparisons among ethnic groups and may have little relevance outside a specific geographic area (Sattler, 1992). In addition, as there is no monolithic African-American, Hispanic-American, or Asian-American culture, we cannot assume that every ethnically diverse student experiences his or her ethnicity in the same manner.

Another strategy that has been recommended to deal with the issue of bias in the assessment of ethnically diverse students is to use non-standardized, informal assessment procedures in lieu of normed instruments (Lopez, 1995). These procedures include criterion-referenced tests (CRTs) and curriculum-based assessments (CBAs), and may be referred to as performance-based assessments, authentic assessments, and alternative assessments. Although these assessments may be considered fair because a student's performance is evaluated with reference to progress toward "mastery" of the criterion skill rather than national normative standards, the potential for bias still exists. There are several cautions related to this type of assessment that must be considered when using informal assessments with ethnically diverse students:

1. Substituting "level of mastery" for "percentile rank" may be simply a cosmetic act. All informal assessments require the assessment be scored in some manner, and the way that score is

reported may rank a student in the same way as a standard score on a formal test.

2. As the view of "average" student performance varies across districts, schools, and classrooms, the level at which mastery is achieved also is not uniformly agreed upon. One district, local school, or instructor may consider mastery to be any performance greater than 80% correct performance, but another may set the level of mastery at 100%.

3. A curriculum-based assessment is only as good as the curriculum on which it's based. If there is a mismatch between the curriculum and the student's individual background, strengths, and weaknesses, any testing strategy that uses the curriculum as the basis for decision making will be biased for that particular student.

4. In spite of less-than-favorable information about the technical adequacy (i.e., reliability and validity) of standardized tests with ethnically diverse students, there is no information available about the technical adequacy of informal assessments.

5. Although informal CRTs can be quite useful for the assessment of academic skills, their applicability to the assessment of cognitive ability and social-emotional functioning is questionable.

Until we can do away with every assessment or test that is biased and make education a "kinder and gentler" place for students from diverse ethnic backgrounds, we must follow current best practices for assessing students of diverse ethnic backgrounds. It is vital to remember that all individuals in an assessment situation come to that setting with their own attitudes, ideas, and views of the situation and the persons with whom they must interact. Both the student and the examiner may hold ideas and biases that may interfere with the performance of the student and potentially affect the outcome of a test. Within any assessment situation, we also must recognize that tests are simply tools that can provide educators with bits of information about a student in a specific situation. Alone, they cannot give a complete picture of a human being, but used as part of a collaborative process that collects data with multiple measures from multiple sources and across multiple environments, they can facilitate the process of data collection that is critical to the planning and implementation of appropriate interventions.

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FURTHER DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN BILINGUAL AND ESL PROGRAMS

by Steve McCafferty and
Maria Ramirez

The first column explained some basic differences between bilingual and ESL programs. This column further elaborates on these differences and discusses related elements with regard to second language acquisition and/or learning as well.

Essentially, bilingual programs consist of a transitional or maintenance curriculum. A major feature affecting the student's attainment of academic achievement and English language proficiency rests with the use of the student's primary language for instruction and concept development. Because transitional programs increase instruction in English each year while diminishing use of L1, students gradually lose their first language generally resulting in subtractive bilingualism. Although this might appear desirable, it does not necessarily lead to English language proficiency or grade-equivalent academic achievement since reaching the threshold of primary language skills is essential for similar proficiency in English.

A second major distinction between transitional and maintenance programs deals with the length of time second language students spend receiving instruction in the first language. In the U.S., most second language students are exited from transitional programs within one to three years. Further, and of equal relevance, most bilingual programs in the U.S. are of a transitional type. Students who are exited are placed in mainstream classes with native-English speakers where instruction is provided only in English. The English language learners, even after three years of bilingual instruction, are not ready to receive instruction solely in English. Even though their English sounds like that of their native-English speaking peers, they do not possess the same level or type of English language proficiency.

Consider a student who has studied a foreign language for three years. Does the student have sufficient proficiency in the new language to function socially or compete academically with native-speakers after three years of foreign language study? Those who have studied a foreign language know the

answer and while the analogy appears equivalent, it is not.

By comparison, maintenance programs use the student's primary language and English whether by differentiation or equalization for instruction. These programs do not exit second language students until the end of elementary, typically fifth or sixth grade. The benefits of attaining the threshold in the primary language permit similar proficiency in English while the literacy developed in the first language transfers to English. There is no academic or English language proficiency cost in the development of bilingualism in students as a result of participating in a maintenance program.

It is also important to continue to further distinguish between bilingual and ESL programs as these two do overlap in ways but there are also critical distinctions between them. One of the most salient of these, and what will be the subject of the remainder of this column, relates to the age of students. ESL programs by and large apply to older children and adults. Younger children essentially develop two first languages simultaneously, relying on a largely biological predisposition to "pick up" the underlying structure. Older children and adults, on the other hand, rely to an increasingly greater extent on knowledge of the first language and other cognitive systems in their approach to learning English as the biological predisposition for language acquisition in general diminishes over time.

This is not to say that instructional practices with regard to the English language component of bilingual programs are largely different from ESL classrooms. However in general, younger children are not explicitly taught linguistic form as this element is, for the most part, relegated to the underlying processes of language acquisition that are biologically based. In the case of older children and adults, linguistic structure can be a valuable tool for gaining proficiency.

Because of the interaction of age and language learning, a real danger lies in the mainstreaming of young children, as they may

ultimately end up as older children and adults with no established language system - either in the first language or English. Considering the extent to which our ability to conceptualize the world relies on language, this road can lead to truly disastrous consequences. It is certainly these children, whether they are in elementary school or at a later stage in the system, that are most at risk among students in second language programs, and as a consequence, they need whatever attention we can provide.

WHAT TEACHER EDUCATORS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TEACHING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

by Stanley Zehm

In the first issue of our Newsletter, we shared with you the mission statement drafted by the College of Education Multicultural and Diversity Committee. We again invite each of you, our UNLV, COE, and CCSD colleagues to share your suggestions for revision of this work in progress so that it may fully emerge into a common vision that directs our attitudes, decisions and practices for preparing teachers for our nation's schools. Central to this drafted mission statement is the belief of the members of our Committee that excellence at any level in education, be it elementary or secondary, undergraduate or postgraduate, cannot be achieved unless educational access and equity are available to everyone who enters our schools.

This belief statement is then followed by a short list intended to suggest a few of those who we believe must not only have the doors opened to them, but be invited to become full members of our schools. As you review this list, you may want to suggest that others be included whom we may have inadvertently left uninvited. This was the intention of our parenthetical (*but not limited to*) statement.

There is one group of individuals on this list who are the focus of my present column, people with disabilities. When I first began serving as a superintendent of a suburban school district in Washington State, I spent time each week observing in all of our elementary and secondary schools. On several occasions, I noticed a small group of students walking in the

halls. They were not being disruptive, but they were not in class either. Several hours later, I saw many of these same students exit one classroom and begin again to wander the halls to another destination unknown. This time I took the occasion to inquire of the teacher whose room these nomads had just departed, "where are your students going who just left your classroom?"

"Those are not my students!", this fourth grade teacher responded emphatically.

"Well," I asked, trying to understand what was going on here, "whose students are they and what were they doing in your classroom?" She then let me know that these students had learning disabilities. They belonged to special education, she told me, and were being mainstreamed into her classroom against her will. Subsequently, I discovered that these students were labeled with a plethora of derisive names such as "short bus kids", "bottom stanine students", and "sub-zero learners". It became clear to me that many people with disabilities in our schools do not enjoy educational equity nor access to excellence in education.

Now that I have resumed my career as a teacher educator, I am convinced that those of us who prepare general education classroom teachers, into whose classrooms many students with disabilities will be mainstreamed, must update our knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The purpose of this needed faculty updating should be aimed at assisting all teacher educators to provide preservice and inservice teachers with the preparation and support they will need to make their classrooms places where students with disabilities are invited to excel, learn, and find their true potentials.

To help us begin this process of faculty development, I have asked our colleague, Tom Pierce, to share with us a few recommendations of what he feels teacher educators need to be aware of in order to be more successful in

providing educational equity to people with disabilities.

His clear and specific recommendations follow:

1.) Avoid viewing students with disabilities as separate group.

2.) Don't prevent students from receiving meaningful opportunities to participate in their homes, communities, and schools just because they may need to be treated in some "special" way.

3.) Know that educational equity can never be accomplished if we do not understand that the inequity is a direct result of attitudes based on ignorance.

4.) Require our students and ourselves to know the laws surrounding special education. Knowledge is power and with this power we can support the learning of ALL our children.

5.) Dialogue with your students about the strengths those people with different abilities bring to our lives, rather than what difficulties they present.

6.) Finally, understand that special education is not a search for a "cure" for people with disabilities. It is a complex set of strategies, accommodations, and services delivered to people in our schools or communities. Our job is to learn and discover appropriate support systems so those with varying ability levels can enjoy a meaningful life.

Thanks, Tom!

INCLUSION ISSUES: FREQUENT QUESTIONS

by John Filler

I would like to begin my column by thanking those of you in the College of Education who submitted questions to me concerning the inclusion of students with disabilities. I will answer three of them in this issue. Please keep asking questions!

QUESTION ONE: What is the appropriate general education class for, say a 12 year old student with mental retardation who is "functioning" at a third

grade level? A 6th grade class or a 3rd grade class?

This is a frequent question. It really strikes at our notions of what we mean by the term "peer". To answer it we need to examine what the purpose of having a student like the one described in the question in a general education classroom. From her (or his) perspective one primary goal is to acquire skills and learn behaviors that are closer to those expected of a 12 year old. Since typical 12 year old students are more likely to be found in a 6th grade class than in a 3rd grade class then it would appear obvious that the 6th grade class is the one in which to include our student. The term "peer" refers to chronological age not developmental level.

QUESTION TWO: Wait a minute! Doesn't "developmentally appropriate" at least imply that we should place students with their "developmental" peers?

No. The developmentally appropriate model is a 12 year old. The "models" provided by typically developing 9 year old students are not "appropriate" for a 12 year old and the fact that the 12 year old in question has mental retardation makes the behaviors that they are likely to present even less appropriate. The phrase "developmentally appropriate" should, according to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, be a matter of "individual" interpretation. To surround a 12 year old with peers who function at her developmental level will, in all likelihood, actually reinforce skills and behaviors that are the very targets for remediation.

QUESTION THREE: What is the most difficult student to "include".

That's easy. The one who doesn't want to be included. Odds are that he is not the one who is eligible for special education.

CONNECTING CULTURES THROUGH STORIES: THE UNION OF POETRY AND ART

by Cyndi Giorgis

There are many parallels between poetry and art. The meaning of a piece of poetry or art is communicated by suggestion, by indirection, by what is not said. Both poetry and art tug at the emotions and each "reader" uses their past experiences as a basis for interpretation. Many critics in the world of both art and literature indicate that it is difficult to articulate the emotional impact that the work has had on an individual. The books presented below have built upon this idea by taking a poem or selection of poetry and coupling it with exquisite expressions of art.

The universal theme of love crosses all cultures. *Love Letters* by Arnold Adoff makes creative use of word arrangements to keep readers' interest. The poetry itself ranges from the surprising and energetic to poignant reminiscence of love. Lisa Desimini imaginatively and delightfully illustrates each poem through mixed media that includes such collage as a teacher wearing a crown, floating above the classroom. Perhaps the most striking illustration is the one on the jacket front featuring a white-feathered bird against a brilliant blue sky.

The single illustrated poem format being published is an excellent way to introduce students to poetry in a less threatening manner. *Harlem* by Walter Dean Myers calls to life the deep, rich, and hope-filled history of this community. Artist Christopher Myers' collage art resonates with feeling while telling a tale all its own. Words and pictures together connect readers of all ages to the spirit of Harlem and its music, art, literature and everyday life. An excellent book to accompany this would be Langston Hughes', *The Block*. This elegantly designed compilation of poetry contains bold graphics and arresting color and is as vibrant as its subject. Romare Bearden's six-panel collage tribute to Harlem offers new insights and awakens an awareness of the roots from which the inspiration of poetry and art flows. An introduction by Bill Cosby provides a personal perspective of Bearden and his art.

Illustrated with color reproductions of

paintings by various artists, *The Tree is Older Than You Are: A Bilingual Gathering of Poems and Stories from Mexico with Paintings by Mexican Artists* is an extensive anthology compiled by Naomi Shihab Nye. The vibrant words and pictures convey the buoyancy of the Mexican spirit while dealing with topics such as people, earth, and animals. The collection also includes a number of brief prose segments and stories, some of which originated with the Mayan peoples of the country. The writing appears first in Spanish and then in their English translations. Many full and half-page paintings, all rendered by Mexican artists, are interspersed throughout the text. Executed in a variety of media, they are a powerful reflection of the fanciful and light-filled imagery so prevalent in the writing. This bountiful and joyous collection offers much to appreciate. Notes about contributing artists, authors and translators are found in the back of the book.

Younger children will enjoy the poetry found in *Confetti: Poems for Children* by Pat Mora. This joyful and spirited collection of poems celebrates the vivid landscape of the Southwest as seen through the eyes of a young Mexican-American girl who lives there. The language of the poetry resounds with the harmony of both English and Spanish and illustrates the power of a child's imagination and pride. The colorful, acrylic paintings by Enrique O. Sanchez extend the magic and meaning of each poem. A glossary of Spanish words is included. A wonderful book that will capture young readers attention through the poetic language and fluid illustrations.

Minfong Ho explains in her introduction to *Maples in the Mist* that she selected and translated poems traditionally taught to Chinese-speaking children because she wished to teach them to her own American children: "My mother recited these poems when she was a child, as had her parents and grandparents before her for more than a thousand years." This result is an illustrated collection of sixteen short poems written in China during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 A.D.). Illustrators Jean and Mou-sien Tseng explain in another note that

"readers of all cultures will find the beauty in these poems that we feel each time we read them." The paintings they have created are strikingly attentive to the poems. The basic elements of traditional Chinese landscape painting also appear in the artwork--mountains, rivers, houses, boats, travelers, and so on--and the brushwork and perspective derive from a long tradition. This volume of poems is a successful example of contemporary picture book design and the clarity and brightness of the watercolor paintings gives them an appealing vigor.

Many American Indian authors are writing about the struggles of living in two cultures. Shonto Begay addresses the issues of balance and harmony through his art and poetry in *Navajo: Visions and Voices Across the Mesa*. Stories of ancient people, people's relationships with nature, and descriptions of lands and lifestyles are heard in Begay's poetry through not only his voice but the voices of those who have taught him through the years. Drawing from the past, Begay acknowledges the oneness of all that is within nature. These teachings conveyed through voices and visions, help maintain harmony for American Indians who live in our contemporary technological society. Begay's evocative acrylic paintings are done in a series of small brush strokes. The use of warm contrasting colors extends the expressive nature of his poetry.

Poetry should be shared with children and adolescents on a daily basis. Students will gain an appreciation of poetry and art by experiencing both in an environment that supports the emotional appeal and impact felt by the reader and/or listener who is free to respond on a personal level.

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SUGGESTED MULTICULTURAL INFUSION ACTIVITIES

by Nancy Gallavan, Sandra Okura,
and Porter Troutman, Jr.

Effective classroom teaching requires teachers to relate course content to the cultural backgrounds of their students. Likewise, teaching strategies that consider the behavioral and communication norms held by individual students will prompt greater student involvement and achievement. Respecting the diverse cultural integrity of their students helps teachers to unify the learning by integrating disciplines and cultures while motivating their students by engaging them in a variety of relevant and meaningful learning experiences.

Awareness of course content and attention to one's teaching strategies describe culturally responsive pedagogy. Four steps promoting culturally responsive pedagogy include: (1) adjusting the teacher's attitude; (2) developing and practicing positive relationships; (3) enhancing understanding of content; and (4) assuring learning and achievement through alternative and authentic assessments.

The first step toward inclusion or culturally responsive pedagogy involves

adjusting the teacher's attitude. Teachers must shift or realign their thinking in regard to their course content and their teaching strategies to emphasize the human experience related to what is to be learned and how it is being communicated. Teachers must consider the relationship of the course content to the prior knowledge, various experiences, and multiple perspectives brought by their students. All students must be treated equitably; everyone must be offered the invitation for identifying curriculum and practices that succeed and/or discriminate. All must work together to overcome barriers. Some effective approaches include cooperative learning, writing groups, peer teaching, focus groups, and openly reframing the knowledge.

A second step toward effective inclusion focuses upon developing and practicing positive relationships. Teachers should encourage students to make choices in content and assessment methods based on each student's personal experiences, values, needs, and strengths. Only the teacher who has established an inclusive attitude with an open, cooperative approach will find this second step comfortable when interacting as well as advising culturally diverse students effectively.

The third step helps teachers to enhance a student's understanding of the course content. Teachers must provide challenging and valuable learning experiences involving higher order thinking and critical inquiry while connecting the learning and providing relevance to real-world issues. Cultural awareness and knowledge including current events, language, and traditions can promote greater pedagogical success. Additional activities include critical questioning asked of all students equitably, equal delving and wait time modeled and reinforced by all adults, whole group investigations of definitions and processes, guided reciprocal peer questioning techniques, group decision-making, simulations, experiments, and case studies methods of investigation.

The fourth step asks teachers to assure increased student achievement and competence. Teachers must link the assessment processes to each student's world by checking the student's frame of reference and individual values. Teachers are encouraged to seek multiple ways

for students to represent their knowledge and skills while exploring alternative and authentic assessment tasks such as portfolios and self-assessment. Checking progress at different points of time rather than waiting until the final completion of a course or project promotes more opportunities for feedback, improvement, and success. When the learning relates to the students' real-world experiences, the results generate genuine social action outcomes. Students will feel that they have ownership and responsibility in their schools and communities, and that they *do* make a difference.

Culturally responsive pedagogy relies upon engaging students in relevant, meaningful, and valued learning experiences that build upon an individual's knowledge and experiences. Students are more likely to be intrinsically motivated and successful through challenging yet rewarding events that allow them opportunities to design their own learning, ask their own questions, take responsibility for their progress and development, and be assessed in ways that demonstrate their individual accomplishments.

SUCCESSFUL INCLUSION BEGINS WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN

by John Filler

Individualizing is a "fact of life" for today's teachers, whether or not they teach special education students. Yet one of the most prevalent misconceptions regarding inclusion is that all special education students who are in general education classrooms, even the student with severe mental retardation, will have to learn the same content as their peers. Placing students who may be eligible for special education and related services in the general education classroom does not mean that they are, necessarily, expected to master the same content as their peers. Quite often teachers will have to adapt the existing curriculum to fit the

developmental level, learning style, sensory-motor abilities and/or behavioral characteristics of students with disabilities.

The process of adapting to meet the needs of a student with disabilities *begins* with a clear understanding of exactly what the goals are for each aspect of the general education curriculum. We need to have at least a general appreciation for the range of opportunities for learning inherent in each activity. It is helpful to begin by constructing a simple schedule of what occurs throughout the day, from start to finish. For example, in a kindergarten class, students might arrive at, say 8:50 in the morning, they then remove their coats etc. and put their "things" away in the appropriate place. At 9:00 am Opening Group begins and lasts until approximately 9:15 am and so on until the students leave.

You can use the schedule of activities to construct what has been referred to as an "Activity Matrix" (Fox & Williams, 1991). Begin by taking a sheet of paper 8 1/2" by 11" and turning it lengthwise. Write the daily activities across the top and then, by drawing vertical lines, make a series of columns, one for each activity. Now down the left side of the paper write the instructional objectives for the child with disabilities. How do you know what they are? They are in the child's IEP (Individualized Educational Program), a written document that describes the needs of the child including his or her educational goals and objectives. Ask the child's Special Education teacher or parent to share them if you have not already been given a copy of the IEP. Draw horizontal lines across the paper to make a row for each objective in the IEP. The effect will be to have created a series of boxes, formed by the intersecting lines, out from each objective and under each activity.

Assume, again since I my area is Early Childhood, that we are dealing with a typical kindergarten class. Now read the first objective for the student and look at the first activity (Arrival). Ask yourself, "Does Arrival present an opportunity to address this objective?". Let's say, just for the purpose of discussion, that the first objective is from the "Social Skills/Self-Help" domain and it is "Tommy will hang up his clothes." Does "Arrival" (i.e., coming into the room, hanging up coat, putting backpack in

cubby and going to table) present any opportunities for Tommy to practice hanging up his clothes? Of course, that is a natural sub-activity involved in "arrival" so place an "X" in the box out from it and under "Arrival" to indicate that there is a naturally occurring opportunity to practice the skills involved in "hanging up" during this activity. What about the next activity? Does "Opening Group" provide an opportunity to work on hanging up clothes? No, probably not, so leave that box blank and look across the page, still on the row for the first objective, to the next activity. Does it present any natural opportunities to practice hanging up clothes, and so on for all activities. Then drop down and do the same thing for the next objective, and the next until you have examined each activity in terms of it's potential for each of Tommy's objectives. Those with high potential will have Xs in the boxes under them, those with little or no potential will have either none or very few. Now scanning the form and looking at all of the boxes with Xs will give you an idea of how many opportunities there actually are to address the needs of the special education student. It will also provide you with a sense of when it is important to have the student in class and when it may be less important that he be there (a good time to schedule a service that needs to be provided in a different setting).

Of course to turn an opportunity for learning into reality may require adaptation. In the future we will examine specific strategies for adapting activities to make them more relevant to the needs of children with disabilities. In the meantime, you might try developing an Activity Matrix or ask some of the students in one of your classes to develop one for one of their students. It need not be for a student that has an IEP. It can be very useful (and revealing) to construct one for any student. The only requirement is that you have a good understanding of her/his educational needs and you know the class activity schedule.

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

by Joyce Nelson-Leaf

I was playing the role of the teacher in a mock classroom to model the interaction of higher level questioning on one of my recent GESA training treks North of here. The topic of my mini-teach was sexual harassment which related to an in-service I knew that these rural teachers had received a few weeks before. Varying the questioning techniques, I queried, "What is *quid pro quo* sexual harassment?" "Can you explain in your own words hostile environment sexual harassment?" "Describe the apparent contradictions between *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools* and *Rowinsky v. Bryan Independent School District*." They responded in disbelief, "We didn't learn anything about *quid pro quo*." "He didn't tell us anything about court cases." "All he told us about was our district policy." "It was a real waste of time."

At least they have a district policy. At least they were in-serviced on it. So many other schools and districts around the nation may have an employee policy with accompanying video/in-service but when it comes to the issue of student to student sexual harassment, they refer to the ostrich for guidance. This is a big mistake. It will not go away and it could cost them money. Students who suffer from sexual harassment in schools may collect damages thanks to the *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*, 503 U.S. 60 (1992) case. The school/district could be held liable if they knew or should have known about the harassment (*Rosa H. v. San Elizario Independent School District*, 887F. Supp. 140 [1995] and Office of Civil Rights Draft Guidance (Thompson Group, 1966). It is due to this liability, a couple of major studies, and the media that this issue is at the forefront for schools today. In 1993, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women through a *Seventeen Magazine* survey found that 96% of harassment is student on student. Only 4% of the harassment was by their adult educators. The report added that a shocking 94% of sexual harassment in schools happens in the classroom with others present (*Stein, Marshall and Tropp*, 1993). In a 1993

report of a study funded by the American Association for University Women, it was found that 83% of all females and 60% of all males reported having been sexually harassed in school (*American Association for University Women*, 1993). Furthermore, the results of a study reported in *American Education Research Journal* (1996) showed that students who have been harassed have also harassed others at school. These statistics alone indicate a need for giving sexual harassment some serious attention at all grade levels and especially early in a student's educational career. The bullying and inappropriate behaviors that may be excused in early education may lead to harassment and other forms of violence later.

It is critical to educate the total school community about sexual harassment and the school's grievance procedures. There are now some outstanding curricula to use with upper elementary through high school students; *Flirting or Hurting?* (1994) and *Bullyproof* (1996) are two examples. Assertiveness training should also be included. There is curricula currently being developed to use with young children.

If a school educates everyone on the issue of sexual harassment, they have a policy (or grievance procedures) written in language understandable to those it addresses, they have disseminated information about it through fliers or posters and shown that they have done everything they can to prevent it, it is very unlikely that they will be found liable in the event that it occurs. This is addressed in *Gary v. Long*, 59 F.3d 1391 (D.C. Cir. 1995). The Office of Civil Rights Guidance applies this same ruling to schools (Thompson Publishing Group, 1996).

The Office of Civil Rights ultimately handles complaints. With more proactive measures in schools, they may see fewer cases. Schools can save money from costly out-of-court settlements and court cases. By including basic information and curricula about sexual harassment in schools in pre-service education, forthcoming teachers will not be in such a quandary as to what they should do to handle the problem or in understanding their rights. After all, they can be sexually harassed by their students too. Sexual harassment can be male to male, female to female, male to female, female to

male, adult to student and student to adult. It is the person who is the target who determines whether it is sexual harassment or not. It is unwelcome behavior based upon sex that interferes with someone's education or work. Sexual harassment is against the law.

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*****Joyce Nelson-Leaf has been director of the Educational Equity Resource Center for twelve years. She has in-serviced educators about the issue of sexual harassment in schools since 1990 and has a co-authored article with Lonnie Rowell and Martha McBride in the January 1996 issue of the *School Counselor Journal*. For more information or resources, please contact her at 895-1380 or e-mail: equity@nevada.edu*****

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by Mark Bannatyne and Kyle Higgins

We offer more food for our professional and personal souls. Happy reading!

HIGGINS' SUGGESTIONS:

A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America (1993). By Ronald Takaki

Published by Little, Brown, & Company, ISBN 0-316-83112-3.

Ronald Takaki is a well known historian. In *A Different Mirror* he has written an inclusive history of America,---one that explores the contributions of ALL who have gone before us. He begins his journey through the history of multicultural America with a quote by Adrienne Rich (1986, pp 199*): "What happens when someone with the authority of a teacher describes our society, and you are not in it? Such an experience can be disorienting---a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing."

Indeed, what does occur when we, as educators, talk about the settlement of California and do not mention Ah Bing, when we discuss the westward movement and we do not mention the letters of criticism written by Chief John Ross to President Andrew Jackson, when we do not discuss the reflections of Harriet Jacobs concerning slavery and the victimization she felt at the hands of her "master", and when we ignore the contributions of the Mexican miners during the 1849 California Gold Rush? Takaki believes that when we ignore teaching the historical diversity that is America we begin to create a picture of America that excludes a significant portion of the American population. He believes that the narrow historical perspective currently taught in schools denies the important contributions made by people from diverse backgrounds to the very fabric of America.

A Different Mirror presents a history of America that is different than most students are taught in American schools. It is a history of America that is not always just or law abiding. Takaki challenges the reader to see the reality of American history which means discarding stereotypes, heroes, and points of view. He asks