The Road to Systems Change: Inclusive Practices

What did we start with?

- 38 schools, K-12
- 37,000 students with over 4,000 students with special needs
- District covers 367 square miles

Old model

- Interventions
- Evaluation
- Placement in a program

Boxes

- Students placed by program, not by individualized needs
- "Hotel California" effect

Types of models

- CCB - cross cat behavioral
- CCA - cross cat academic - all academics
- Resource - typically pullout
- CD1 - communication disorder

- CDII - communication & behavior
- MI/MO - mild to moderate retardation
- MD - multiple disabilities/severe/ profound

Inequity

- CCB - teacher ratio 1-13, 1 para
- CCA-teacher ratio 1-13, 1 para
- MIMO/MOMR-teacher ratio 1-13, 1 para
- CDI- teacher ratio 1-8, 1 para
- CDII –teacher ratio 1-8, 2 paras
- MD teacher ratio 1-8, 2 paras

Resource

- 1-17 K-6 teacher ratio
- 1- 21 K-8, high school teacher ratio
- No paraprofessionals

- Result: Some teachers had a service provider list of 21students, some 4, no paraprofessionals to support in general education classrooms.

Frequent requests

- Out of district placement
- Move to a different campus with the "program"

Frequent requests for paraprofessionals

- Special education teachers not experienced in working with students that were not their "specialties".

- General education culture was lack of ownership of special education students - someone else's responsibility to educate.

Teachers & support staff

- Elitism: Teach only their kind of students
- Instructional assistants - only work in particular classrooms to assist the teacher
- Campus instructional assistants glued to a student and not expected to assist others
- Inequity in numbers of students on teacher's workload
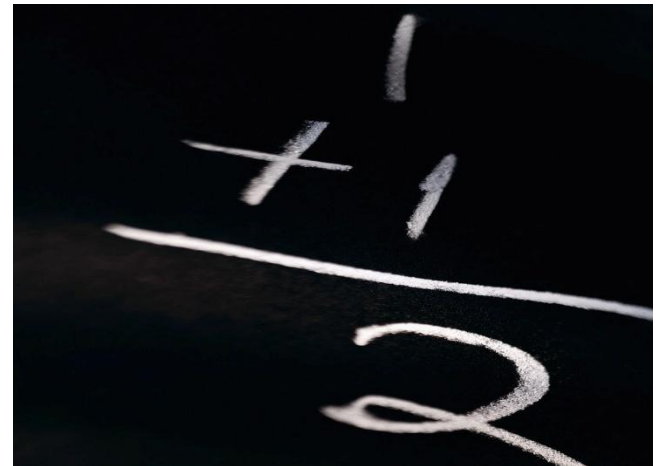
The Intent of IDEA 2004

- General education first
- Pull out only as a last resort
- NCLB means ALL students
- Academic exposure to general education teachers and peers raises esteem and scores

Impact of Highly Qualified

- Teacher of record must be highly qualified
- Special Education teachers must be special education and content certified
- Leads to more inclusive practices

New Practices: Special Education

- Is not a place - it's a service

Inclusive Education is an Attitude

- It means the doors to schools, classrooms and school activities are open to every child and they are afforded every opportunity to be included with their peers who are non-disabled.

- The focus is giving every child the help she/he needs to learn.

Inclusive Practice is a full menu

- General Education
- Special Classes
- Team Taught
- Learning Centers & labs
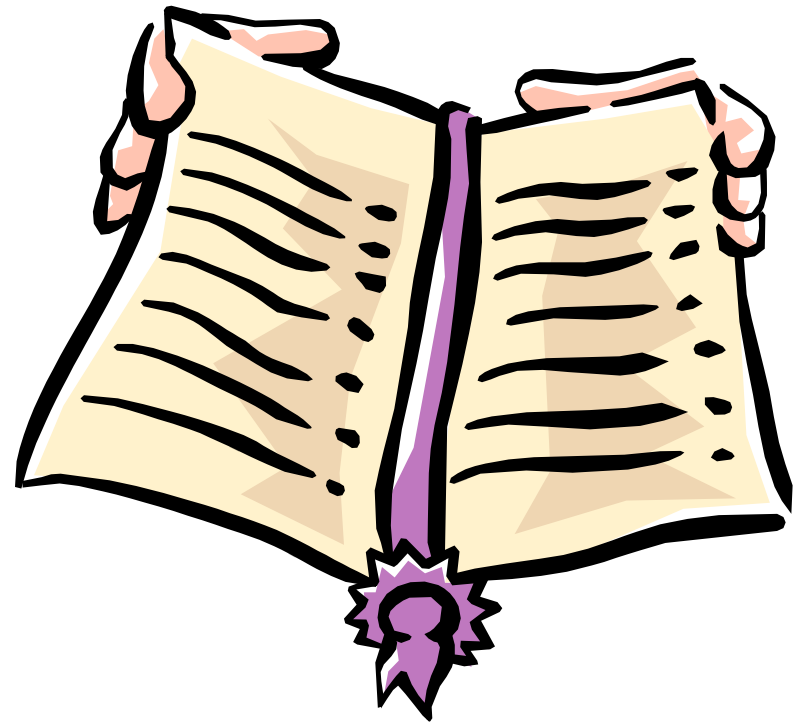
What is a Learning Center?

- Fluid classrooms, where children come and go, depending upon their IEP needs
- A service delivery model for ALL students

Change of thought process

- From "Where do I put them"?

- To: "How do I deliver their services in a more inclusive setting"??

What are the steps to changing delivery models?

- Develop a district multi year plan
- Move students back to home schools at their natural transition time - 6th grade to 7th for K-6, 8th grade to 9th for K-8, middle school
- Hold transition meetings for high need students
- Ensure buildings are prepared

Information, Information, Information!

- School Board
- Parents
- Administrators
- District Office
- Teachers and Support Staff
- Students
- State Department
- Community

Inventory Buildings
IEP for each school

- Accessibility
- Equipment needed
- Certification of teachers
- Current programs
- Curriculum and materials
- Staffing patterns
- Student numbers/disabilities

Inventory Continued

- Trainings needed
- Schedules and meetings - when to access
- Other data for building - AIMs scores, graduation, suspensions, referrals, etc.
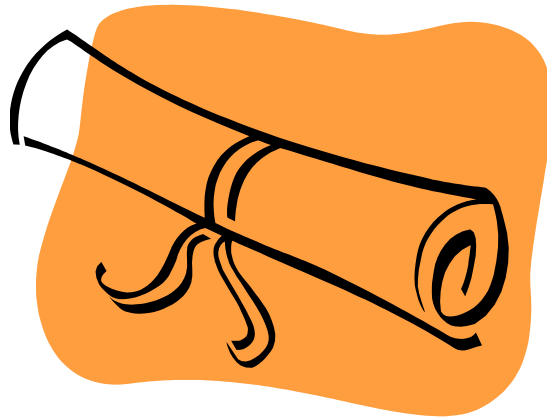
Meetings and more meetings

- Parents - done regionally
- Meetings with educators, special and general education
- School board presentations
- Presentation on the website
- Each campus visited, met with all staff

Tools developed

- 5 year plan
- Modules for staff development
- Toolkit for Schools
- Disability Awareness Packet
- Questions and Answer Packets
- Mapping Process
- District Definitions
- Language List
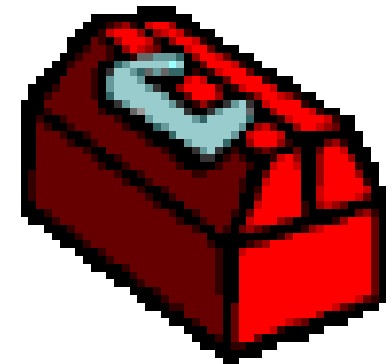
Learn your district's culture and value systems

- Visit the campuses
- View the classrooms
- Read the certified manual
- Meet and talk to teachers and paraprofessionals

New systems

Develop committees to look at issues such as process, staffing, professional development needs

Systems change affects EVERYONE

- Curriculum and Assessment
- Transportation
- Facilities
- Technology
- Professional Development
- Human Resources - hiring, evals
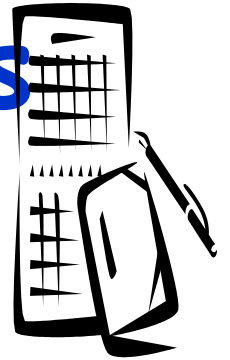- Public Relations

Parent organization

- Develop a parent organization
- Hired a parent liaison

Student mapping

Have all staff schedules

- Meet and discuss
- The needs of the child, throughout each part of the school day
- Decide when the student needs support -

Which class? Before school or after? Between classes? Lunch? Look at your use of related service personnel also.
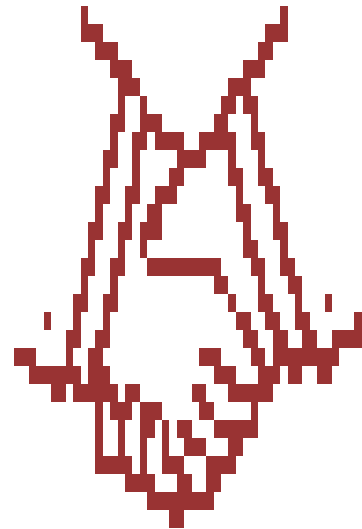
How to support teachers?

Consultant roles created to support classroom teachers:

- Teacher Consultants
- Behavioral Consultants
- Transition Consultant
- Autism Consultants
- Assistive Technology Consultants
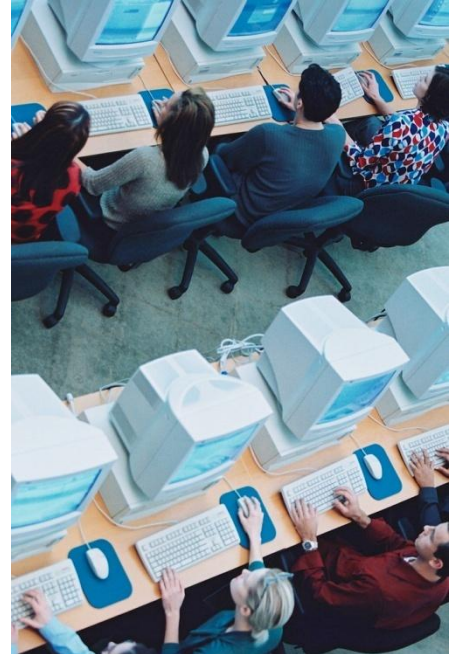- Regional Coordinators
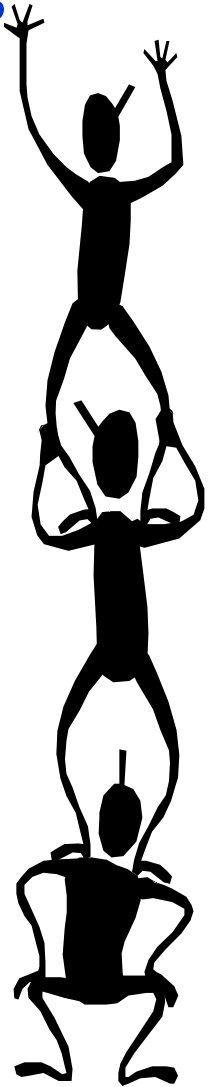
More support

- Mental Health Consultant
- Compliance Consultant
- Intervention Specialists at each building

Trainings you will want to do:

- Differentiated instruction
- Accommodations & modifications
- Mapping
- What are Inclusive Practices?
- Systems Change

Crisis teams

- Team for each campus, trained in non-violent crisis intervention
- Train all paraprofessionals in CPR and nonviolent crisis intervention

"Intervention" Teams

- Team of consultants
- Provide hand-over-hand supports to school staff for a new walk-in student with multiple needs
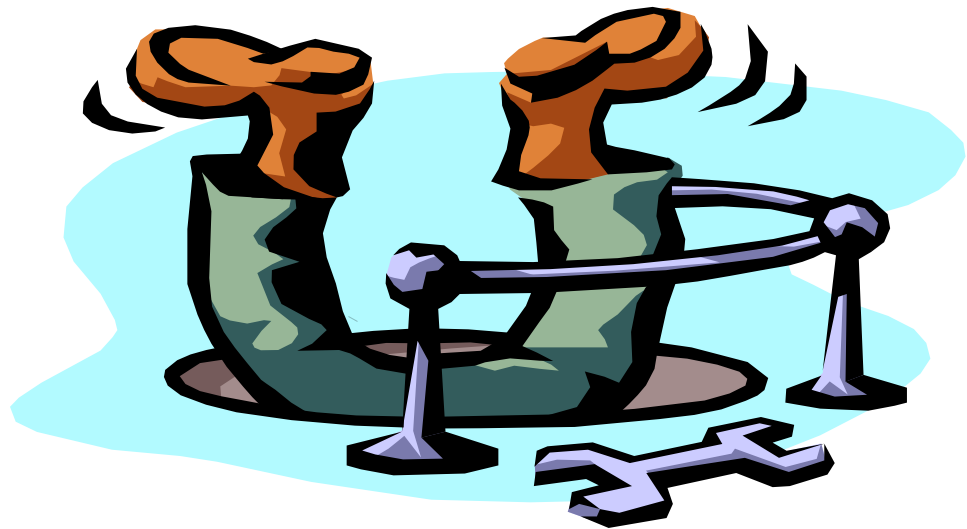
Meet with the principals

- Train regarding the requirements as NCLB links with IDEA 2004
- Discuss philosophical issues openly
- Have an open door policy
- Dispel rumors

Anticipate Bumpy Road

- Change is difficult - Parents, administrators, teachers and support staff will be reluctant and some will try and sabotage the process.

What are some of the benefits of inclusive practices?

- Higher test scores - students are exposed to the general, grade level curriculum
- Higher self esteem - a sense of belonging and not being segregated and "different"
- Positive peer role models
- Kids are more independent

More benefits

- Increased tolerance to diversity - Students who were previously "hidden away" are now being accompanied and assisted by peers.

- Less behavioral issues in the classroom - Students who used to "act up" when grouped behave more appropriately.
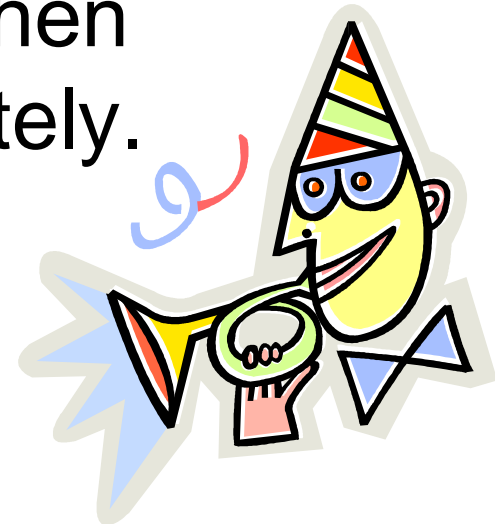
What is the greatest impact of inclusive practices?

Community!!!!!!

- Everyone is accepted.
- Kids make friends and have fun with each other.
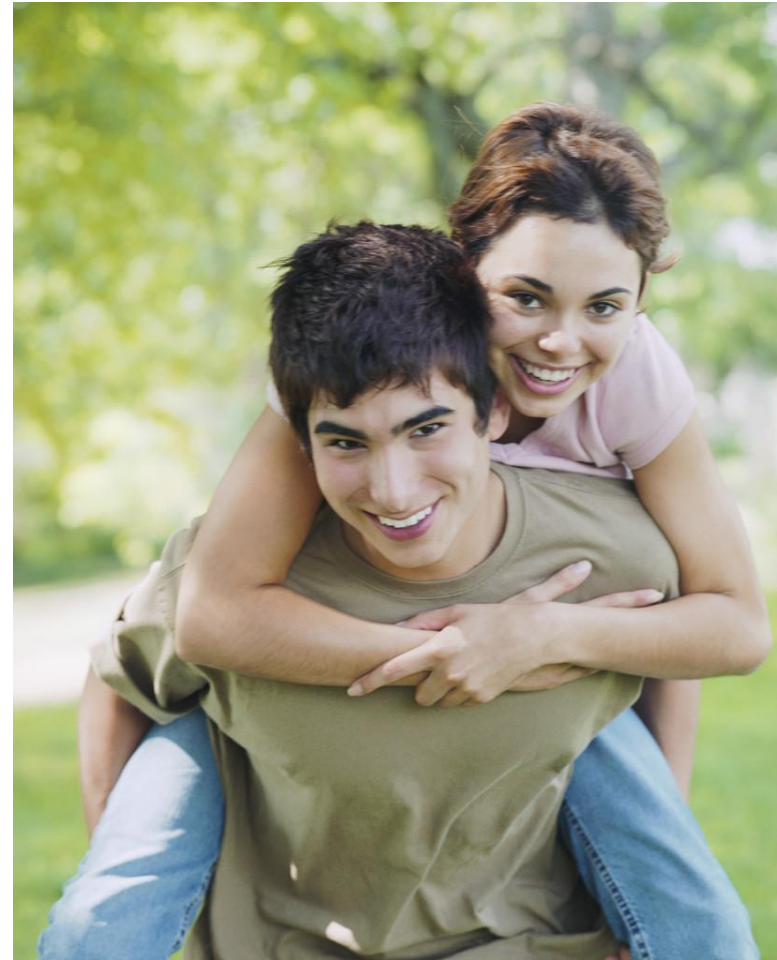
The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing!! - Steven Covey

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