

tivity to the question of school integration for students with disabilities.

In 1986, a Nova Scotia couple, Rick and Maureen Elwood, obtained a court injunction to keep their son Luke, who had been labelled mentally handicapped since birth, in a regular class in their neighbourhood school. They concluded that their only chance of prevailing in their dispute over his placement with the Halifax County School Board was to go to trial. School officials firmly maintained Luke would be better served in a segregated program. Their position that a range of placement options was necessary depending on the student's level of disability was consistent with the concept of least restrictive environment and the Cascade model, both typical of traditional special education practice (Little, 1985). The department of education did not intervene on their behalf.

The Elwoods did not take this action lightly. They knew they would face the tension and unease of challenging one of the most established vested authorities in their community, the educational system. As Jack Batten (1988) explains, they also knew that inactivity on their part would mean a life of isolation for their son:

*Luke took gym and music classes with normal kids, but, effectively, he was shut away in a ghetto of disabled children. And as far as Maureen could make out, he might pass the rest of his life in different corners of the same ghetto. He'd never escape. He'd never grow. If Luke was disabled, then the system seemed constructed to keep him disabled.*

The dispute went on throughout the 1986-87 school year as the school board refused to accept the principle of integration. However, just hours before the case was to open before the Queen's Bench division of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, the board initiated discussions that led to a settlement of the dispute (Batten, 1988). The school board agreed to the parents'