

3. What will be expected of each teacher?

One teacher summed it up: "It was helpful this year when I was told by others that it was alright to have different expectations for my special needs students. Then I finally felt the pressure was off."

Prepare All Teachers

Many principals and teachers indicated that, in retrospect, it was the special education teacher who had the most difficulty changing roles to accommodate integration. The special education teacher in one school needed to "let go" of the special education students and the self-contained classroom. One teacher, who had an exceptional student in her special education class for eleven years, said she "needed preparation and time to learn how to 'let go' and to trust other educators with her exceptional students." There was an obvious need for support in overcoming these apprehensions and it was recommended that the principal be responsible for preparing school staff including the special education teacher.

One of the most effective and beneficial ways to prepare staff is by providing school-based training, which can be used to assess and address the needs of individual teachers. It is also helpful to have articles, books and video tapes available for staff to read and view. Sharing, problem-solving sessions, and school and class visitations were also identified as useful means to teach about integration and inclusion.

Expand Resources

The educators recommended that the use of school resources be expanded when integrating exceptional students and that school administrators be flexible and creative in using school resources. For example, a teacher who uses cooperative learning strategies may lend a hand in integration along with the methods and resource teacher. When integration is being initiated, a student may be placed in a Grade 8 class instead