

rationalization of the need for parallel and separate systems.

During the 1980s, the process of gradual, evolutionary change in special education practice in Canada was subject to increasing challenge. In this chapter we discuss three factors — law, advocacy, and educational innovation — which, taken together, have created in Canada a unique environment supportive of fundamental change in how students with disabilities are educated. These developments have resulted in the kind of ambiguity and inconsistency in special education practice that has been identified as being necessary for a paradigm shift (Skrtic, 1987). Whether or not this shift will be toward full integration of students with disabilities will only become clear over the next several years. We conclude our review of these three factors with a brief discussion of the crucial role an integrated educational program plays in preparing a student with disabilities for life as an adult in the community.

LAW

The Special Committee on Social Policy Development of the New Brunswick Legislature issued its Report on the Review of School Integration on October 31, 1989. The report was issued following five weeks of public hearings into school integration, during which the twelve-member committee visited sixty-three schools and heard more than 250 briefs presented by parents, teachers, administrators, school boards, and other citizens. The report's recommendations in summary include the following:

- The province should reaffirm its commitment to Bill 85, which mandated the integration of special needs children into the regular school system.
- The education minister should clear up differences over interpretation and implementation of the act and issue "clear directives to all school boards."