TRANSITIONS

Setting the Standard for Inclusion in the Classroom

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Acknowledgements

Educational programs for youth with disabilities have had to respond to major changes imposed under the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) amendments of 1997. The two most significant changes required schools to address 1) how students will participate and progress in the general education curriculum based on the learning standards for all students and 2) how the outcomes of the learning for students will be measured and reported in state-and district-level assessments (Kleinert & Kearns, 2001).

The requirement for participation in the general education curriculum for students with disabilities, including students who have severe disabilities, has become the object of academic consternation. An immediate obstacle to educators and other professionals is the seeming lack of available resources necessary to provide each and every student with an individualized assessment process and the subsequent supports required in order to be included in the general education curriculum, This is especially true when considering each of the specific areas that participation in the general education curriculum must address for each student. To begin, the statement of the student's present level of educational performance must include how the student's particular disability affects the student's progress and ability to participate in the general education curriculum. Next, measurable annual goals and short-term objectives related to the student's progress and participation in the general education curriculum must be included in the Individualized Education Program. Then the special education and related services, including supplementary aids, program modifications and supports must be identified for each student and must support the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.

The 1997 Reauthorization of IDEA requires that all students be included in general State and district-wide assessment programs with appropriate accommodations when necessary. Every student must be assessed in a manner that is considered appropriate to that student. The results of the assessment are to be included in the learning results reported for all students at the district and state level. Districts are responsible for making sure that students have learned and can perform what the educational standards say they should have learned and be able to do. Assessments are being developed to serve as the yardstick against which the mastering of the standards has been met (Kleinert & Kearns, 2001). However, built into the 1997 amendments is this: if a student is deemed unable to participate in any part of the state-or district-level assessment, his or her IEP must include a statement as to why the assessment is not appropriate for that particular student and how in fact the student will be assessed. In March 1994 the Goals 2000: Educate America Act was passed. The purpose of this important piece of legislation is to improve the quality of learning and teaching in the classroom for all students through, among other things, the promotion of systemic education reform and to assist in the development and certification of high-quality, assessment measures that reflect the internationally competitive content and student performance standards. The standards in general education have become the foundation on which educational curriculum is being built yet are structured in such a way that students with disabilities continue to be excluded from opportunities to join successfully with their non-disabled

peers in the academic arena. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 serves to further reinforce this.

General education standards are often so narrowly defined by the specific criteria related to the attainment of core content (leading to high stakes testing) that they do not strike a balance between fostering core learning in the general education curriculum and meeting the individually defined educational needs of the student with a disability. This is not to say that educational reform is not necessary. In fact it is an idea whose time has come. The critical question, however, lies in reform *toward what?* Are we structuring educational reform in order to ensure that students are able to pass the standardized tests with flying colors? Or, are we structuring educational reform so that all students, regardless of ability levels, are provided equal opportunity to receive an education that is replete in high quality, internationally competitive academic content?

Does The Principle of the Least Restricted Environment Hold Students Back?

The principle of the least restricted environment (LRE) was, in its day, a very progressive view that provided hopeful options and creative alternatives to individuals with disabilities and their families. Broadly stated, it is intended to offer less restrictive, more normalized environments and programs to people who would otherwise be isolated and segregated from integrated settings (Taylor, 1988). So powerful did the principle become that it has been embedded within the requirements of the development of a student's IEP and has guided the design of services for people with developmental disabilities since the late 1960's.

One of several inherent problems with the principle of the least restricted environment is the built-in assumption that there are circumstances under which a segregated environment might be appropriate, thereby rendering it acceptable for people to be placed in more restrictive environments under *certain conditions*. The qualification for determining the degree of restriction a person ought/ought not to have is left in the hands of professionals who must decide what is "appropriate" based on any number of fixed variables. For many students who have been classified as disabled the "appropriate" least restricted environment means spending almost all of the academic life in classrooms and other school community activities (i.e. lunch) that are distinct from the classrooms and activities in which the student's non-disabled peers participate.

The concept of a least restricted environment gives credence to segregated, self-contained classrooms and serves as the basis for justifying the need for a continuum of services that require students with disabilities to achieve mastery in skill areas, (i.e. "basic skills," or "life skills) before they will be considered "appropriate" for inclusion into general education classrooms, (Kunc, 1992). The result is that students who have mental retardation and/or developmental disabilities may spend 18-21 years preparing for access into the mainstream of general education curricula and failing that, preparing for access into segregated adult day programs that will continue to focus on helping the person to "get ready" for life.

New York State's Career Development and Occupational Studies learning standards requires the use of career planning for all students. This is consistent with the transition planning process mandated under IDEA in which schools must identify the need for transition services within the section of the IEP that articulates the student's present level of performance. The special education transition programs and services are then designed and delivered in response to the stated need and should be incrementally facilitating the student toward achieving the post-school outcomes.

It is generally agreed that there are universal areas of knowledge and skills that any and all students must master in order to enhance independence and quality of life. The national standards for meeting these universal, or foundation skills are articulated in the Secretary's Commission for Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) (1992) in which the following competency achievement expected of all students prior to being graduated from United States secondary school systems is listed:

All students will achieve competency in the:
- Use of resources – understands how to use time, money, materials, facilities, human resources
- Use of interpersonal skills – listens to others, teaches others new skills, exercises leadership, works as a member of a team, works with diversity, presents facts to support arguments
- Use of information – acquires/evaluates information, organizes/maintains information, uses computers to process information, interprets/communicates information
- Use of systems – understands how systems operate, evaluates & modifies organization systems, understands affect of systems on organizations
- Use of technology - aware of types of technology, applies technology, understands effects of technology on society

All students will have exhibited proficiency in the foundation of:
- Basic skills – reading, writing, listening, communicating clearly, performing math functions
- Thinking skills- makes decisions, uses problem-solving skills, applies logic, evaluates facts, applies skills in new ways
- Personal qualities - plans & monitors progress, exhibits responsible behavior, applies skills, exhibits logic & reasoning skills

Educational reform in New York State responded to the raising of the federal standards, which included an emphasis on preparing students to compete successfully in the world economy, by instituting higher learning standards for all students within the state, including those students who have disabilities. The Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) Learning Standards provide a means through which

students with disabilities can connect to the regular education curriculum. The purpose of the CDOS is to provide all students educational activities across all curricular areas that further career development knowledge, the acquisition of the SCANS (universal foundation skills), and the opportunity to demonstrate the application of academic concepts to work and life settings[1].

There are three standards subsumed within the Career Development and Occupational Studies framework. Standard 1: Career Development requires that students are knowledgeable about the world of work, explore career options and relate personal skills, aptitudes and abilities to future career decisions. Standard 2: Integrated Learning requires that students will demonstrate how academic knowledge and skills are applied in the workplace and in other settings. Standard 3 is subdivided into 3a: Universal Foundation Skills (SCANS skills) through which students are to demonstrate mastery of the foundation skills and competencies essential for success in the workplace and 3b: Career Majors through which students who choose a career major will acquire the career-specific technical knowledge and skills necessary to progress toward gainful employment, career advancement, and success in postsecondary programs.

These standards, if applied across all areas of academic and instructional content as based upon the post-school outcome statements *of each and every student in the school* would serve to unite the "special" education curriculum with the "general" education curriculum through the development and implementation of individualized career planning processes. Through universal career planning all students would be provided access to the same process and documentation for recording progress and development in the areas of:
  ➢ Self-knowledge
  ➢ Career exploration
  ➢ Career and life goals
  ➢ Application of classroom learning
  ➢ The universal foundation skills

The ***career education approach*** is a useful model for incorporating career development into the student's transition planning process. The career education approach is comprised of a sequence of planned educational activities that assist students in determining their career development. It includes the assessment and planning in concert with the student's life experiences across a variety of settings (home, school, community, employment) and social roles (student, family member, citizen, worker, employee)(Wehmeyer and Sands,1998).

Given the important role that evaluation clearly plays in the development of the education program, critical attention must be paid to the processes for assessment. ***Assessment*** refers to the process of determining a student's growth in knowledge, understanding and the application of knowledge in the context of the educational goals. Assessment, if authentically applied, is not intended to teach students how to take a test for the purposes of passing the test (Wehman, 2001).

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[1]http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/transition/home.html

Tools that are used to assess the student's progress and growth in knowledge should be used for the purposes of discovering the student's unique interests, needs, preferences and capabilities. A wide range of tools should be employed in order to develop a comprehensive profile of the student and allow for the learning to build upon one experience after another. The assessment process should be an on-going culture of learning and growing based on seeking the answers to four simple questions that comprise the "learning wheel" used by Michael Smull (1989): *"What have we tried?"* *"What have we learned about what we have tried?" "What do we need to learn next?" "Given what we need/want to learn next, what do we need to try?"*

Using a Variety of Assessment Approaches

Assessment should begin at an early age. New York State schools can begin to formally look at the vocational interests and associated skills and aptitudes of a student in order to initiate educational services that compliment and/or enhance the identified vocational path. These assessments are called Level I vocational assessments. Ideally Level I assessments are conducted with students age 12 and those referred to special education for the first time who are age 12 and over in New York State. Level I assessment data include a review of school records, teacher assessments, parent and student interviews to determine vocational skills, aptitudes and interests. Currently New York State conducts assessments beginning at 14 years of age, or earlier if appropriate, to explore the broad preferences, interests, skills, needs and capacities of the student. Comprehensive assessments are supposed to take place at different times during the school year and across the educational career[2]. Over each year opportunities and options for formal and informal assessment processes within academic and experiential learning environments need to be expanded in response to the answers generated at each turn of the "learning wheel." Gradually, the student will revise, refine, and define the adult life he or she desires in the realm of learning, earning and living.

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[2] http://www.vesid.nysed.gove/specialed/transition/level1assess.htm

Types of Possible Assessment Approaches:

✓ Portfolio Evaluations ✓ IEP Evaluations ✓ Real-World Problem-Solving ✓ Family Feedback ✓ Performances ✓ Productions ✓ Musical Scores ✓ Artistic Presentation ✓ Work Samples	✓ Observation ✓ Functional Vocational Assessment ✓ Community-Based Situational Assessment ✓ Other Structured Situational Assessment ✓ Environmental Assessment ✓ Structured Interview ✓ Social History ✓ Interest Inventories ✓ Criterion-Referenced Assessment ✓ Curriculum-Based Assessment ✓ Learning Styles Inventory ✓ Person-Centered Planning

Components of Functional Assessment and Community-Based Situational Assessment

Functional Assessment

The purpose of **functional vocational assessment** is twofold:
1. to match the right person to the right job based upon observed and applied assessment across a variety of environments in a variety of situations in
2. relation to the student's interests, skills, learning style, behavior characteristics and;
3. to determine the type and frequency of supports needed to optimize opportunities for success

There are at least 18 areas of relevant information that are contained within a functional assessment.

1. Individual Preferences 2. Individual Strengths 3. Work History 4. Functional Use of Academics 5. Following Directions 6. Behavior 7. Learning Style 8. Social Skills/Interpersonal Interactions 9. Communication Skills	10. Work Endurance/Stamina 11. Medical Status 12. Orientation/Mobility Skills 13. Fine and Gross Motor Coordination 14. Work-Related Skills and Support 15. Transportation Needs 16. Current Financial Information 17. Special Considerations 18. Environmental Adaptations

Functional assessment is most useful when the information obtained guide all aspects of the assessment process including the activities that are conducted, the methods that are used and the way in which the information is interpreted, (Virginia Commonwealth University, 1997). A thorough functional vocational assessment is *individualized and comprehensive.* It offers the opportunity to create a profile of the student through attending to many details that may significantly affect the choices the student is making about work.

A thorough functional assessment is used across *multiple environments.* People act differently in different places, around different people and in relation to other intervening factors. It is important to work with the student across all of the environments at various points in time, altering the hours and days of visits to sites to get an honest "read" on the information that is being collected. The degree of complexity and specificity warranted in an authentic functional assessment makes it critical that they are conducted by qualified professionals.

Community-Based and Situational Assessments

Embedded in the functional assessment model are two methods for conducting assessment activities. ***Situational assessments*** provide the student the opportunity to experience the actual tasks and activities associated with real work environments within the school environment and may incorporate simulations of community environments. ***Community-based assessments*** provide the same opportunity but use community work sites that are found within the local labor market, preferably within the geographic location in which the student has determined s/he wants to work.

Any business can be a potential site for situational assessments and can offer an array of experiential options to students. The information gathered from the situational assessment is collected within the student profile and used for subsequent transition planning.

Adapted from: Moon,M.S., Inge, K.J., Wehman, P., Brooke, V., & Barcus, M. (1990). Helping persons with severe disabilities get and keep employment: Supported employment issues and outcomes. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

Typical assessment categories include, (but are not limited to):

1. Strength	15. Discrimination skills
2. Endurance	16. Time management
3. Orienting	17. Functional reading
4. Physical mobility	18. Functional math
5. Independent work rate	19. Money skills
6. Appearance	20. Mobility/street crossing
7. Communication	21. Mobility/using public transportation
8. Social interactions	22. Receiving and giving feedback
9. Attention to task/perseverance	23. Asking for assistance
10. Independent sequencing of job duties	24. Tolerance for stress
	25. Physical support needs
11. Initiative/motivation	26. Personal safety skills
12. Flexibility/ability to adapt to change	27. Behavioral communication
13. Reinforcement needs	28. Leisure interests/skills
14. Level of support needed	

A Quick Look at Standards-Based Educational Reform

Standards-based reform is the process through which a change in the educational system is facilitated through the establishment of content or performance outcomes that serve as exemplars of high-quality outcomes of the education process. The intent behind the establishment of such standards and the subsequent development of the curricula is to facilitate the student toward the attainment of the standards. What generally follows is the development of tests to measure the gap that does or does not exist between the student and his or her acquisition of the outcomes identified within the standard, (Wehmeyer, 2002).

There are at least three different models in which standards can be applied or utilized:
1. systemic reform- determine what the content standard needs to be in order to a) define the curriculum and then b) to define what a student should learn in relation to this...a shoot first ask questions later approach and almost always includes high stakes testing.
2. professional reform- focuses on the reformation of standards with the intent of enhancing the professionalism and competency of the teachers and professional staff...this is to guide how to implement assessment, curriculum and instructional practices with students.
3. reform network model- pays attention to the contextual variables associated with learning, including involvement of families, community commitment to support education, and the culture and climate of the school...the school as seen as a unique organization and standards are used to provide direction while leaving room for individualization.

Focusing for a moment on the second example of reform, identified as the *professional* model of reform, Wehman (2001) noted examples of the qualities of professional standards of curriculum that have been recommended in support of inclusive education. The qualities are:
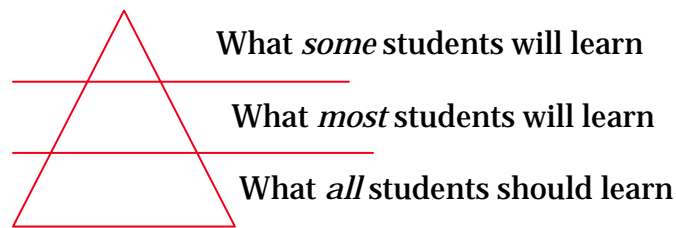
- Authentic and meaningful: connecting to student lives
- Student-centered: based on the student's interests, preferences, concerns and capacities
- Experiential: incorporating activities that are related to authentic, naturally occurring, real-world experiences
- Foster collaboration and positive relationships among students: allow students to develop problem-solving skills, social skills and communication skills from socially valued roles and positions
- Value partial participation: valuing the contributions of all students, even if some students are capable of only carrying out portions of skills or activities independently
- Chronologically and developmentally appropriate: age-appropriate materials and goals that are complementary to the students' cognitive, affective, physical an communicative abilities over time
- Future-oriented: focusing on life beyond the classroom in the areas of living, learning, earning and loving
- Focused on self-determination: bases on student-driven, student-centered practices

It is important to overlay the professional model with some critical components that are designed to ensure student access to the general curriculum. These components include

1. Taking into account the students unique interests, preferences, support and learning needs and incorporates membership from people in the student's life who know and who have a stake in the student's progress and success,

2. The application of materials and curriculum that are part and parcel of the whole school community and which serve to sustain high quality standards and measures,

3. Customizing the instructional activities to meet the student's goals and objectives while simultaneously responding to his or her unique learning style,

4. Access to additional support, service and/or program modifications to ensure that students can progress in the curriculum and,

5. A focus on the personal outcomes identified within the post-school outcome statements to be used as a measure of the programs effectiveness.

Assuming that access to the general curriculum has been attained there will most likely be a need to incorporate modifications in the teaching of the curriculum. These adaptations or modifications should be made by initially evaluating the curriculum against the identified learning objectives for the entire class and then identifying the specific learning objectives for the student. A planning form developed by Schumm,

Vaughn and Leavell, (1994) provides an excellent framework for identifying the materials/resources; instructional strategies/adaptations; and evaluation/products needed for each level of student within a "planning pyramid" (pp 608-615).

What *some* students will learn

What *most* students will learn

What *all* students should learn

Modifications, adaptation and/or accommodations may then be selected and tailored to the student based upon the student's specific strengths, interests and needs. This allows teachers to set different goals and objectives for the student while allowing the student to participate in the same academic activity with her or his classmates (Wehmeyer, 2002).

Finally, educational learning standards must be open enough to allow the inclusion of career planning and development for *all* students. It is through the opening of the standards via professional education reform and an acceptance of both traditional and alternative (i.e. performance-based) outcome measures that a high level of inclusive learning can take place.

Broadening Curriculum Standards Increases the Likelihood for Success for All Students

Educators are faced with the challenge of helping students who have disabilities identify long-term adult outcomes and then assessing progress made toward achieving the stated outcomes, all the while struggling to find the connection between this and the general education curriculum/learning standards. Transition assessment, if done as IDEA intended and explicitly expressed, with an emphasis on career planning and development and coupled with person-centered approaches may serve as the fulcrum upon which the balance between meeting the learning standards of general education and the development of individualized educational programs might be made. The learning standards within the core curriculum however, must be expanded in order to include all of the school's students. The development of alternate assessment formats was established in order to facilitate this process.

If the purpose of any good assessment is to look at the student's growth in knowledge, understanding and ability to apply that knowledge within specifically identified educational goals, (rather than teaching students how to pass a test), then including students with disabilities in the general curriculum does not mean that there is a need to lower the learning standards. In fact, it quite optimistically looks at raising the academic "bar" for *all* students. This so-called bar raising would require a move away from the high stakes testing educational reform toward a different approach to educational reform. The professional model of educational reform (Wehmeyer, 2002) is

an alternative approach that guides the learning process across a series of quality standards within broadly defined frameworks that are closely aligned with the fundamental values of person-centered practices and which when combined may increase the likelihood of creating successful, inclusive classrooms.

Providing Modifications, Adaptations and/or Accommodations within the General Education Curriculum

Adaptations to teaching within the general education curriculum to students with cognitive disabilities need to be a considerate, expected and accepted part of the teaching process. When developing adaptations and modifications it is important to frame the adaptations, modifications and accommodations within the context of developing useful and essential skills all the while preserving the dignity and positive reputation of the student for whom the adaptation is being made. Does the adaptation allow the student to use the same materials that the other students are using? Does it build upon an existing skill exhibited by the student? Does it introduce and/or reinforce the learning of a new and relevant skill? Does the adaptation allow the student to work with an increased level of independence or does it rely primarily on the efforts of someone other than the student? Will the adaptation be effective across environments? Is the adaptation easy for the student to learn and use?

There are at least four ways that access to the general curriculum standards can be achieved. Through demonstrating the actual explicit standard without any modification; through utilizing an alternate response format to demonstrate acquisition of the standard; through the determination of the critical function of the standard so that modifications can be made to meet the same outcome intended within the original standard and; through critical access skills (Kearns, 2001) in which the student works on very basic skills that are embedded in the standards-based activities. Determining which approach will increase the likelihood of success for any given student relies on knowing and understanding each student from a person-centered or student-driven perspective.

The key to accessing general curriculum standards for any student regardless of ability level is to design activities that provide the instructional foundation upon which real life can be built (Kearns, 2001). Instruction has to have value and meaning for the student in order for learning to take place. This means creatively incorporating the goals and objectives stated in the student's IEP to align as closely as possible to the instructional activities occurring within the general education classroom during those times when a student may not be able to do these activities, even with adaptations so that the learning has value and meaning and can be applied in present and future settings. It means developing academic content that supports the same outcome standard (i.e. career development) for all students.

Career education programs typically found in general education have the potential for being synonymous with the transition programs typically found in special education if the instructional methods are customized to each and every student in the school. This requires a commitment to building a learning environment that is inclusive of all students, with and without disabilities in a collaborative approach to the education process.

The main goal of cooperative learning, as described in the Next S.T.E.P. guidebook (1997), is to create an environment in which students who have divergent learning abilities work along side one another to achieve group goals. Groups are structured in ways that support active participation of all members and to accommodate the personalities and learning style preferences of the students.

Elements embedded in inclusive classrooms include: *peer tutoring, focus on areas of interest, complementary group composition, meaningful content of assignment, and a focus on student abilities and gifts.* Meaningful tasks and activities can and should be successfully developed and implemented to support inclusive learning environments for all students.

The following table was developed to show one example of how educational activities can be developed and effectively implemented with a group of diverse learners. The exercises consisted of a series of activities that were conducted during a professional development seminar for professional education staff that were interested in learning more about person-centered transition planning. Each activity included a set of instructions and the appropriate tools to complete the activity. For example, the exercise called "interview" required members to work in dyads and use a structured format for extracting information related to each other's preferences, abilities and interests. The partners then took turns introducing one another to the larger learning community highlighting the positive characteristics and traits represented by the person.

Each activity the group engaged in throughout the seminar was correlated to one or more of the New York State learning standards. Each activity could easily be conducted as a classroom activity. All of the activities convert to assessment tools effective in gathering information that reflects the individual interests, skills, abilities and support needs of each participant.

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Example: Professional Development Exercises and New York State Learning Standards

Exercise	Related Skill	Standard Detail	Performance Indicator
Profile Activities: Interview	ELA4 Language for Social Interaction	Reading and Writing written communication using written messages	Use a variety of print and electronic forms for social communication with peers and adults
Interview	CDOS 3a Universal Foundation Skills	Basic Skills	Use a combination of techniques read or listen to complex info. and analyze what is heard/read. Convey info confidently & coherently in written or oral form
Interview & Placemat	ELA4 Language for Social Interaction	Listening & Speaking oral communication in formal/informal settings. Adapt presentations to different audiences based upon age, gender, cultural differences	Engage in conversation & discuss academic, technical & community subjects.
Morning Ritual	ELA 4 Language for Social Interaction	Listening and Speaking S/A	S/A
Placemat	Arts 1 Create, Perform Participate in the Arts	Visual Arts-make works of art that explore varied subject matter, topics, themes & metaphors	Create a collection of art work to explore perceptions ideas and viewpoints
Positive Reputation	ELA 1 Language for Information & Understanding	Speaking & Writing acquire & transmit info & apply from one context to another, present info comprehensively & clearly	Use a variety or organizational patterns i.e. chronological, logical, cause & effect, and contract & comparison
Community Connection	CDOS 1 Career Development	Learn about the connection between personal interests and community work places	Analyze skills and abilities between interests and community options
That 70's	Social Studies 1 U.S. History	Speaking & Writing Convey major turning points in the history of the U.S. human service system and its impact in N.Y. State	Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate awareness and understanding of major themes and their causes in the service delivery field.

On January 8, 2002, President George W. Bush signed into law H.R.1, the *No Child Left Behind Act* (www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/esea). The intent of the law is to raise the standard for academic achievement for all students and to improve public schools. Schools across the nation are now being asked to use annual statewide assessments and show the progress that is being made toward narrowing the achievement gap and schools across the nation have responded through widespread education reform.

The law reflects four key components of education reform: accountability and testing, flexibility and local control, funding for what works, and expanded parent options (Committee on Education and the Workforce, 2002). Schools are required to "raise the bar" slowly but surely and to provide measurable objectives for all children and for specific groups. Many schools have risen to the challenge by adopting practices of education reform that lead to high stakes testing and narrowly defined education standards. This threatens to deepen the achievement gap that already exists between students who are classified as disabled and/or students who economically disadvantaged and their non-disabled or more affluent peers. Traditional segregated learning environments continue to be utilized as "least restrictive" in light of the increased demands on students to achieve higher academic test scores.

Standard-based reform is certainly one option that has proven effective in raising the academic scores of students, but it is potentially limited in its ability to increase the likelihood of success for students beyond the walls of the elementary and secondary educational settings.   Professional-based reform focuses on improving the academic and skill-based performance of all students in relationship to their post-school aspirations while concentrating on building on the skills of the teaching professionals. Professional and reform network models of reform may assist in building a stronger national workforce by building upon the skills, interests and potential of each and every student.

It is important to know what a student is interested in and hopes to achieve in life. Varied and creative approaches to assessing the student's interests and needs are critical to building a solid educational and experiential foundation upon which students can make educated and informed decisions, build competency and meet high standards of achievement. Studies must be undertaken and research must be conducted that focuses on the effects of including all students in school curriculum and experiences that integrate person-centered principles while meeting high academic learning standards. Educational learning standards must be broad enough to allow every child into the mainstream of learning, earning and living so that every child has the same opportunity to enter adulthood as contributing citizens within the communities of our nation.

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