Week 6

**The** **Real**

Behavioural issues and how to deal with them is something as a pre-service teacher, I often ponder. With an expectation that this may be the most challenging part of my job. Thinking back to my own time as a student, the notion of simply removing naughty or distracting students was commonplace followed with punishments like yard duty or detention, etc. I never remember shifting in teaching styles or the way we learn material. The problem seemed to lie entirely with us the students.

**The** **Ideal**

Although I realised as a student, I may have not been privy to the extra work put in by teachers regarding behaviour management. I feel there is much stronger focus today around the responsibility of teachers to foster inclusive education environments and diverse lesson plans to better help engage the diversities present in the classrooms of today. While there still needs to be a focus on why students are behaving the way they are. Ideally, through effective lesson planning and usage of ICT to engage students, teachers may have mitigated much of the behavioural challenges before they arise. Technology has given teachers greater opportunity to engage students with differing needs as part of the regular classroom activity. As Florian & Black-Hawkins (2011) state, a shift in teaching from a style from one that serves the majority with edited materials for students with learning difficulties to a more inclusive community, one where the learning environment offers opportunities for all to take part and engage is what's required.

## Week 5

**The Real**

Considering my schooling, I struggled to think of any students who I would recognise as gifted, or any program or adjustments made for students from my year. Not because there weren’t any, but that they were not necessarily noticed. This was thinking about the classroom setting once I broadened my thought, I could picture several students who were exceptional athletes who had modified classes for their training or abilities. Australian culture has a strong focus on sport, and people notice students who stand out in different athletic capacities as we have grown accustomed to look for and appreciate these skills. Why not the same with in the classroom. This was in the 90s and perhaps the focus on identifying gifted students was not as evident as today.

**The Ideal**

Taking this same approach to students whom are gifted in different fields within the classroom. Identifying gifted students and fostering appropriate learning environments that develop student’s specific talents (Baum et al., 2001). In the same way we do for physically gifted individuals. We need to build a culture in the broader public that identifies and celebrates gifted people across all fields while providing an environment best suited for them to learn and push themselves.

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## Week 4

**The Real**

Make no mistake while the education system may have an image of the “Ideal student”. There really is no student that fits this mould, everyone is different and has their own challenges in life. Some kids have allergies, others cognitive or physical challenges, while some students may face their biggest challenges in the home through distractions, malnutrition or lack of support.

**The Ideal**

While some of these students challenges or differences from the “Ideal Student” are easy to accommodate, many are not. With this in mind it’s clear that we will never all be the same “Ideal Student” therefore the change needs to be to the system. As Wilson (2017) points out the Individuals with Disability Education Act sees the Education system as the problem not the students. As a society we need to be making efforts to achieve an equitable education for all members of society. Creating an education system that is “Ideal” rather than trying to change people to be the ideal student. Create a system that caters to all as they are, where there are opportunities to improve a student’s learning capacity make active efforts to make this a reality. For some access to materials, for others maybe its 3 consistent meals or extra supports.

## Week 3

**The Real**

As I work in an outdoor setting with students for the most part. Working out ways to be inclusive to all can be a real challenge and often requires significant flexibility, communication and patience on all sides. Historically individuals with significant physical disabilities were excluded from school camps or if they did attend, they had very limited inclusion in the days proceedings.

**The Ideal** While I can’t see that this is necessarily the ideal scenario it is a step in the right direction. One major challenge in recent times I have seen was working out how we could adjust living arrangements and activities to include a teacher actually. The year 9 teacher was actually wheelchair bound and his entire class was on camp and he wanted to be there with his students. Through significant consultation we worked out a suitable accommodation in a cabin close to our camp. A makeshift ramp and doorway access were built to ensure the teacher had access without the need for assistance. They brought a trailer and small 4wheeler from home to allow them to move around the rest of camp and still be involved. While there were still activities and parts of the experience, we were unable to accommodate him on this time, I see that each year our ability to include him and further improve our access and opportunity will improve. A step towards the ideal. Modifying an environment for a short-term purpose may not always be achievable but for school settings where usage will be ongoing, creating equal access is essential.

## Week 2

**The Real**

The school I've worked with closely over the past decade while running school camps is in the process of dismantling their link classes. Essentially classes for special needs students. These students will be distributed throughout the various other classrooms. This is in line with the (Salamanca Statement, 1994). However over 25years later this change is still in process and feelings amongst teachers is still mixed around how this will affect their workload and class functionality. While the majority of teaches work towards ensuring a smooth as possible transition there are a few that seemed reluctant to welcome these students.

**The Ideal**

In a perfect world all teachers would be accepting an encouraging of special needs students joining regular classes. As the (Salamanca Statement, 1994) states “Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes.” While teachers should be role modelling the acceptance and inclusion of the new students and any additional changes associated.

## Week 1

**The** **Real**

Working on school camps a lot I regularly have students participating who have a wide spectrum of different disabilities. While this environment can be adapted, and equipment sourced to better cater for the experience of all, it rarely is usually for financial reasons. For example, a student with visual impairment was unable to bike with their group due to safety concerns around them being on the road. Although they can see a little it was not suitable to have them riding this particular day.

**The Ideal**

Ideally the school would have sourced a tandem bicycle so that this student could participate with their classmates. Or potentially amend the ride so that they may participate.

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