

**Meeting the Needs of Exceptional Learners – Exceptional learners are “learners who have characteristics that differentiate them from typical school learners?” (2 identified groups)  
Focus on Exceptional Students**

Outline

## **I. Learners with Disabilities**

### **Federal Legislation – Education for All Handicapped Children Act 1975 (Public Law 94-142); Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 1990, 1997 (IDEA)**

1. zero rejects
2. nondiscriminatory testing
3. appropriate education (IEP)
4. least-restrictive environment
5. due process
6. parent/guardian participation
7. inclusion (more than mainstreaming) “disabled students are WANTED class members

#### **Varieties of Educational Settings are possible**

1. Complete Inclusion in regular classroom
2. \*Pull-Out (regular class part of day; spec class part)
3. \*Put-In (spec class most; regular class some)
4. In special class all day in public school building
5. In separate public or private school facility
6. live in residential setting
7. In homebound or hospital setting

Preparation of Individualized Education Programs – IEP is jointly created; the leader is the intervention specialist but required to be present are a) the child’s regular teacher, b) the guardian – with an advocate if they choose , c) a school district representative other than the teacher (counselor)

Altering Instruction – the IEP will specify accommodations to be provided (assists to accomplish a task common with the rest of the class) or modifications (substitute tasks). Assistive Technology

Public Reporting of Learner Performance

Inclusion Issues – regardless of what you personally feel, there will be “inclusive” students in your class . . . the parents want them there and most research shows positive benefits for both the special and regular students.

Examples of Learners with Specific Disabilities - Speech, Visual, Orthopedic, and Hearing Impairments; Attention Deficit Disorder and Other Specific Learning Disabilities; Emotional Disturbance; Mental Retardation. **Overrepresentation of males and certain minorities?**

## II. Gifted Learners

### **The Selection Issue**

1. use more than just academic ability . . . psychomotor ability, creativity;
2. is there gender bias?

**Pressures Facing Gifted Learners** – to whom much is given; much is expected . . . the curse of being gifted and talented.

1. parents have high expectations
2. teachers expect them to be a star in everything
3. may therefore set unreasonable standards for themselves
4. may be made fun of by peers
5. may have low opinion of less able peers
6. may challenge and enrage some teachers, become bored even and stop studying . . . realize they can get by without trying hard
7. fragile self image

### **Moving and Special Programs for the Gifted**

1. Enrichment Programs (pull outs)
2. Acceleration Programs – (subjects or grade levels) moving gifted students through the same curriculum but moving them faster (Piaget called this the American question . . . “can we get our children to learn faster”) acceleration is not one of my favorite approaches

### **Developing Gifted Learners' Potential within your own class**

1. challenge the gifted students to engage in responsible risk taking
2. send positive signals when student responds creatively and unexpectedly
3. create assignment extensions that will involve and challenge gifted students . . . but not anger them in doing “extra” work . . .
4. think about ways that gifted students can be used as an asset in class so that peers will value them.