



EUROPEAN NETWORK OF EDUCATION COUNCILS SEMINAR ON 'MAKING  
EDUCATION MORE INCLUSIVE',  
BUCHAREST, 18-19 MAY 2017.

THE SEMINAR IS HOSTED BY:  
THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES –  
BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

# IS SPECIAL EDUCATION SPECIAL?

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FIXING THE BROKEN PROMISE OF EDUCATION FOR ALL, A REPORT PRODUCED BY  
THE UNESCO INSTITUTE FOR STATISTICS AND UNICEF,

EDUCATION REPRESENTS THE HOPES, DREAMS AND  
ASPIRATIONS OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES  
AND NATIONS AROUND THE WORLD—

EDUCATION IS THE MOST RELIABLE ROUTE OUT OF  
POVERTY AND A CRITICAL PATHWAY TOWARDS  
HEALTHIER, MORE PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS AND  
STRONGER SOCIETIES.

# WHAT IS A DISABILITY?

THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

[HTTPS://BOOKS.GOOGLE.COM/BOOKS?ISBN=0521005299](https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0521005299)

MARK RAPLEY - 2004 - PSYCHOLOGY

A disability refers to personal limitations that are of substantial disadvantage to the individual when attempting to function in society.

A disability should be considered within the context of the individual's environmental and personal factors, and the need for individualized supports.

## TO ME INCLUSION IS THE COMMITMENT TO A PROCESS:

- 1) Inclusion expresses a **commitment** to educate all students, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom in the community where all the students attend school.
- 2) **Inclusion brings the support services to the child (rather than moving the child to the services)**
- 3) **With inclusion we think of the student always in the general education environment and be removed only when appropriate services cannot be provided in the general education classroom.**





# FUTURE DEPENDENT ON EDUCATION

While it might not be possible to change 'social factors' in the short run, focus on a path to the future by ensuring: ***desegregation, enrollment in facilities for early childhood education and improvement of learning strategies of socially excluded students.***

Overall, it might be beneficial for a system to refocus ***on learning for all***, as opposed to selectivity and supporting the best students

THIS IS NOT A TEST - JUST A PHENOMENON.  
READ OUT LOUD THE TEXT INSIDE THE TRIANGLE BELOW.



Mark Alter, PhD: EUNEC May 2017

COUNT EVERY ' F ' IN THE FOLLOWING TEXT:

FINISHED FILES ARE THE  
RESULT OF YEARS OF  
SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH  
THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS...

HOW MANY?



# THERE ARE 6 F's.

The brain cannot process 'OF'.

YOU MAY NOT SEE IT AT FIRST, BUT THE WHITE SPACES READ THE WORD OPTICAL,  
THE BLUE LANDSCAPE READS THE WORD ILLUSION. LOOK AGAIN! CAN YOU SEE  
WHY THIS PAINTING IS CALLED AN OPTICAL ILLUSION?



O lny srmat poelpe can raed tihs.

I cdnuolt blveiee taht I cluod aulacnty uesdnatnrd waht I was rdanieg. The phaonmneal pweor of the hmuan mnid, aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mttar in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoatnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rgh it pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh? yaeh and I awlyas tghuhot slpeling was ipmorantt! if you can raed tihs psas it on !!

# Power of the word



Mark Alter, PhD: EUNEC May 2017

# MAJOR POINTS IN THE LAW: 1975 EDUCATION FOR ALL HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

1. **Zero reject**-No child shall be refused an appropriate education by public schools.
2. **Nondiscriminatory evaluation-Evaluations** must be conducted in the child's native language.
3. **Least restrictive environment-Each** child must be mainstreamed whenever possible.
4. **Due process-Fourteenth Amendment rights of the Constitution**, which guarantee privacy, confidentiality of information, and protection of personal rights, are extended to those identified as handicapped or disabled.
5. **Individualized education program (IEP)**-Educators must plan individually tailored educational programs for each exceptional child.
6. **Preschool programs**-Early intervention programs for children from birth through age 3 must be developed and operational.
7. **Individualized transition program (ITP)**-Educators must plan individually tailored transition programs from school to employment and adult life.

Examples of Key Changes:

- 1) **Changed term from handicap to disability**
- 2) **New eligibility category for "autistic condition"**
- 3) **New category for traumatic brain injury**
- 4) **ADD and ADHD have been listed as conditions that could render a child eligible under the "other health impaired" (OHI) category**
- 5) **The term "limited strength, vitality, or alertness" in the definition of OHI, when applied to children with ADD/ADHD, includes a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment.**
- 6) **Transition services: "coordinated set of activities which promotes movement from school to post school activities"**



## THE 1997 REAUTHORIZATION REQUIRED THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) High expectations**
- 2) Access to the general education curriculum**
- 3) Participation in general education assessments**
- 4) Partnerships between parents and schools**
- 5) Special education aligned with school improvement**
- 6) Whole school approaches**
- 7) Resources focused on teaching and learning**
- 8) High-quality, intensive professional development**

# DISABILITY CATEGORIES

- 1) Autism
- 2) Deaf-blindness
- 3) Deafness
- 4) Developmental delay
- 5) Emotional disturbance
- 6) Hearing impairment
- 7) Intellectual disability
- 8) Multiple disabilities
- 9) Orthopedic impairment
- 10) Other health impairment
- 11) Specific learning disability
- 12) Speech or language impairment
- 13) Traumatic brain injury
- 14) Visual impairment, including blindness

**Table 2.5****Definitions of Educational Settings Serving School-Age Students with Disabilities**

Regular Class	Students who receive the majority of their education in a regular classroom and receive special education and related services outside the regular classroom for less than 21% of the school day. This placement option also includes individuals who are provided with specialized instruction or services within the regular classroom setting.
Resource Room	Students who receive special education and related services outside the regular classroom for at least 21% but less than 60% of the school day. Students are “pulled out” of the regular classroom and receive specialized instruction or services in a separate classroom for limited periods of time. Services may be individualized or offered in small groups. A common placement option for children with less severe disabilities.
Separate Class	Students who receive special education and related services outside the regular class for more than 60% of the school day. Commonly known as a self-contained classroom wherein pupils, usually those with more severe disabilities, receive full-time instruction or, in a modified version, participate in nonacademic aspects of school activities. Classroom is located in regular school building.
Separate School	Students who receive special education and related services in a public or private separate day school for students with disabilities, at public expense, for more than 50% of the school day.
Residential Facility	Students who receive a special education in a public or private residential facility, at public expense, 24 hours a day.
Homebound/Hospital	Students placed in and receiving a special education in a hospital or homebound program.

**SOURCE:** Adapted from U.S. Department of Education. (2000). *Twenty-second Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office), p. II-14.

# SOME FACTS:

**THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 67,529,839  
STUDENTS AGES 6 TO 21.**

OF THESE STUDENTS AGES 6 TO  
21, 5,693,441 OR 8.4 PERCENT  
RECEIVED SPECIAL EDUCATION  
SERVICES UNDER INDIVIDUALS  
WITH DISABILITIES

- Of the 6,364,555 youth ages 3 to 21 who received **special education** services under **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**:

- 1) 729,703 (or **11.5 percent**) were 3 to 5 years old;
- 2) 2,568,920 (or **40.4 percent**) were 6 to 11 years old;
- 3) 2,713,584 (or **42.6 percent**) were 12 to 17 years old; and
- 4) 352,348 (or **5.5 percent**) were 18 to 21 years old.



# DIAGNOSTIC CATEGORIES

- 1) 2,188,413 (or 38.6 percent) in specific learning disability,
- 2) 1,080,790 (or 19.1 percent) in speech or language impairment,
- 3) 958,751 (or 16.9 percent) in other health impairments,
- 4) 476,058 (or 8.4 percent) in autism,
- 5) 411,048 (or 7.3 percent) in intellectual disabilities
- 6) 350,870 (or 6.2 percent) in emotional disturbance,
- 7) 140,209 (or 2.5 percent) in multiple disabilities,
- 8) 65,502 (or 1.2 percent) in hearing impairments,
- 9) 49,909 (or 0.9 percent) in orthopedic impairments,
- 10) 24,988 (or 0.4 percent) in visual impairments,
- 11) 1,269 (or 0.02 percent) in deaf-blindness,
- 12) 25,266 (or 0.4 percent) in traumatic brain injury, and
- 13) 133,698 (or 2.4 percent) in developmental delay.



# SOME FACTS!

1. THERE WERE 339,071 INFANTS AND TODDLERS BIRTH THROUGH AGE 2;
2. 88.7 PERCENT OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS SERVED UNDER PART C RECEIVED THEIR EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES PRIMARILY IN THE HOME
3. 96.6 PERCENT OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS RECEIVED THEIR EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES PRIMARILY IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS, WHICH ARE DEFINED AS THE HOME OR A COMMUNITY-BASED SETTING
4. 66.7 PERCENT OF CHILDREN WHO REACHED AGE 3 WERE FOUND TO BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE CONTINUED SERVICES
5. 745,336 CHILDREN AGES 3 THROUGH 5 WERE SERVED
6. THE MOST PREVALENT DISABILITY CATEGORY OF CHILDREN AGES 3 THROUGH 5 SERVED WAS SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENTS (44.2 PERCENT). THE NEXT MOST COMMON DISABILITY CATEGORY WAS DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY (37.1 PERCENT), FOLLOWED BY AUTISM (8.4 PERCENT). THE CHILDREN AGES 3 THROUGH 5 REPRESENTED BY THE CATEGORY "OTHER DISABILITIES COMBINED" ACCOUNTED FOR THE REMAINING 10.3 PERCENT OF CHILDREN.
7. A TOTAL OF 65.9 PERCENT OF CHILDREN AGES 3 THROUGH 5 SERVED WERE IN A REGULAR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM FOR SOME AMOUNT OF THEIR TIME IN SCHOOLING
8. A TOTAL OF 38,691, OR 96.2 PERCENT, OF THE 40,231 FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS WHO WERE EMPLOYED TO PROVIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 THROUGH 5 UNDER IDEA, PART B, WERE HIGHLY QUALIFIED
9. A TOTAL OF 43,476, OR 96.3 PERCENT, OF THE 45,133 FTE SPECIAL EDUCATION PARAPROFESSIONALS WHO WERE EMPLOYED TO PROVIDE SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AGES 3 THROUGH 5 WERE QUALIFIED

- 1) a total of 95 percent of students ages 6 through 21 were educated in regular classrooms for at least some portion of the school day
- 2) Of the seven exit reason categories, graduated with a regular high school diploma accounted for the largest percentage of students ages 14 through 21 who exited special education in 2012–13 (41.8 percent), followed by moved, known to be continuing in education (26.4 percent) and dropped out (12.1 percent)
- 3) a total of 336,656, or 95.2 percent, of the 353,655 FTE special education teachers who provided special education and related services for students ages 6 through 21 under IDEA, Part B, were highly qualified.
- 4) a total of 407,978, or 97.1 percent, of the 420,016 FTE special education paraprofessionals who provided special education and related services for students ages 6 through 21 under IDEA, Part B, were qualified.

A KEY FACTOR IN ECONOMIC GROWTH IS THE QUALITY OF THE WORKFORCE.

**Children who attend quality pre-kindergarten are more likely to be employed and have higher earnings, thus positively contributing to the tax base.**

**BROADER COMPETENCIES.** STUDENTS WHO DEVELOP AN EVEN BROADER SET OF COMPETENCIES WILL BE AT AN INCREASING ADVANTAGE IN WORK AND LIFE. BASED ON EMPLOYER SURVEYS AND OTHER EVIDENCE, THE MOST IMPORTANT SEEM TO BE:

- ① The ability **solve new problems and think critically**;
- ② Strong **interpersonal skills** necessary for communication and collaboration;
- ③ **Creativity and intellectual flexibility**;  
and
- ④ **Self sufficiency**, including the ability to learn new things when necessary.



- ① Grades Pre k-12
- ② Schools 1,700
- ③ Budget US \$24 billion
- ④ Students 1,100,000
- ⑤ Students With Disabilities: 250,000
- ⑥ Teachers 75,000

# NYC BUDGET

① New York spends \$19,076 each year per student, more than any other state compared to the national average of \$10,560.

② 3 billion dollars of the budget goes to Non City schools. This includes \$1.09 billion to pre-school special education services and;

③ \$725.3 million for School-Age non DOE contract special education.

④ Another \$71 million goes to non public schools such as yeshivas and parochial schools and

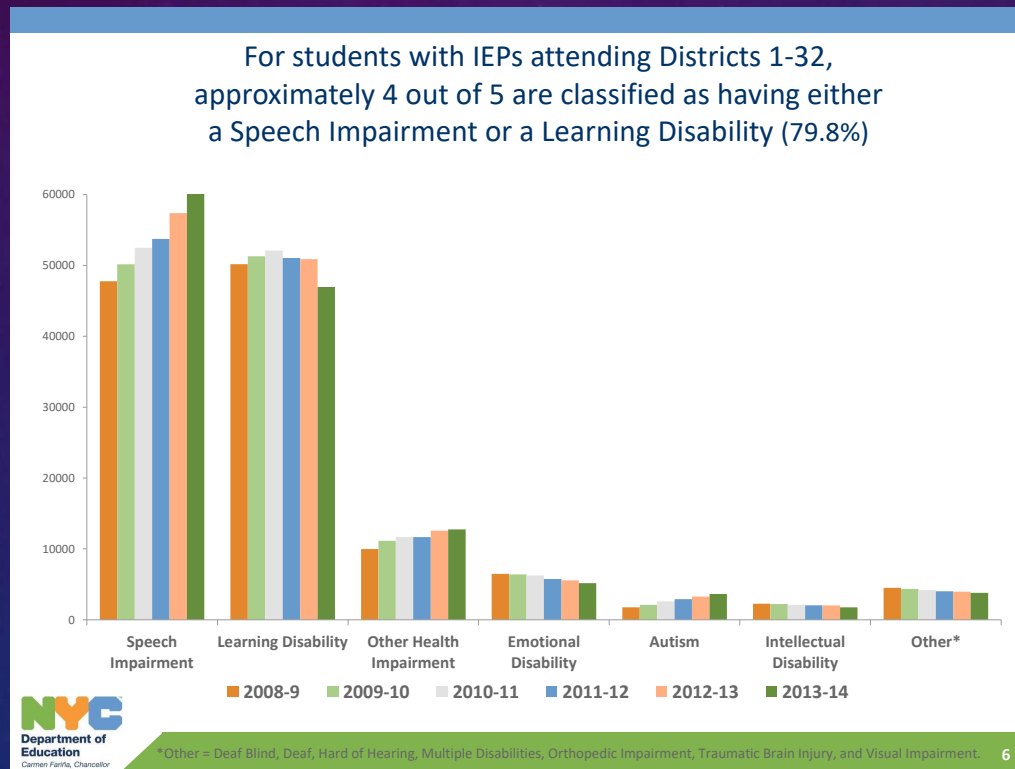
⑤ \$1.04 billion is paid for the 70 thousand students[19] attending charter schools.

• 4.6 billion of the budget pays for pensions and interest on Capital Plan debt.



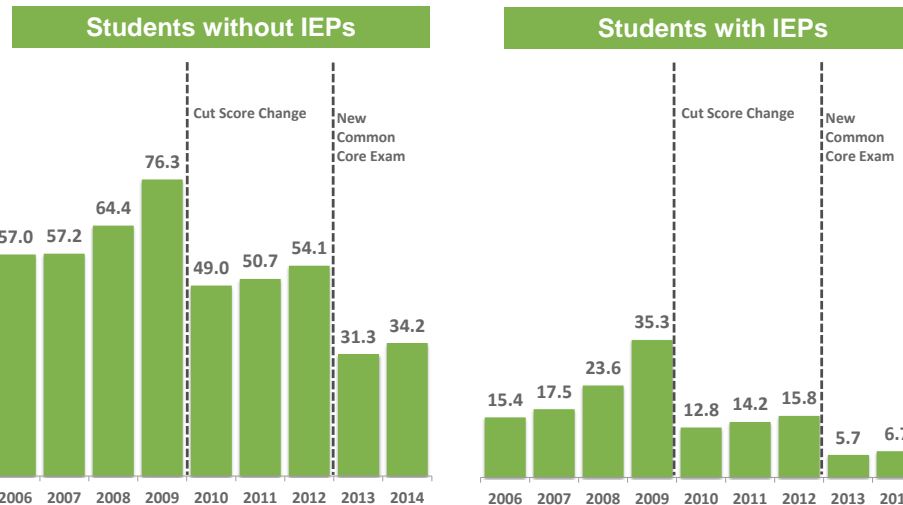
- About 40% of students in the city's public school system live in households where a language other than English is spoken, and
- One-third of all New Yorkers were born in another country.
- The city's Department of Education translates report cards, registration forms, system-wide alerts, and documents on health and policy initiatives for parents into Spanish, French, German, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, Persian, Arabic, and Haitian Creole.

FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPs ATTENDING DISTRICTS 1-32, APPROXIMATELY 4 OUT OF 5 ARE CLASSIFIED AS HAVING EITHER A SPEECH IMPAIRMENT OR A LEARNING DISABILITY (79.8%)



# INCREASED CUT SCORES FOR PROFICIENCY AND INCREASED RIGOR OF STATE TESTING HAS BEEN CHALLENGING FOR BOTH STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT IEPs IN NY CITY.

Increased cut scores for proficiency and increased rigor of State testing has been challenging for both students with and without IEPs in NY City.



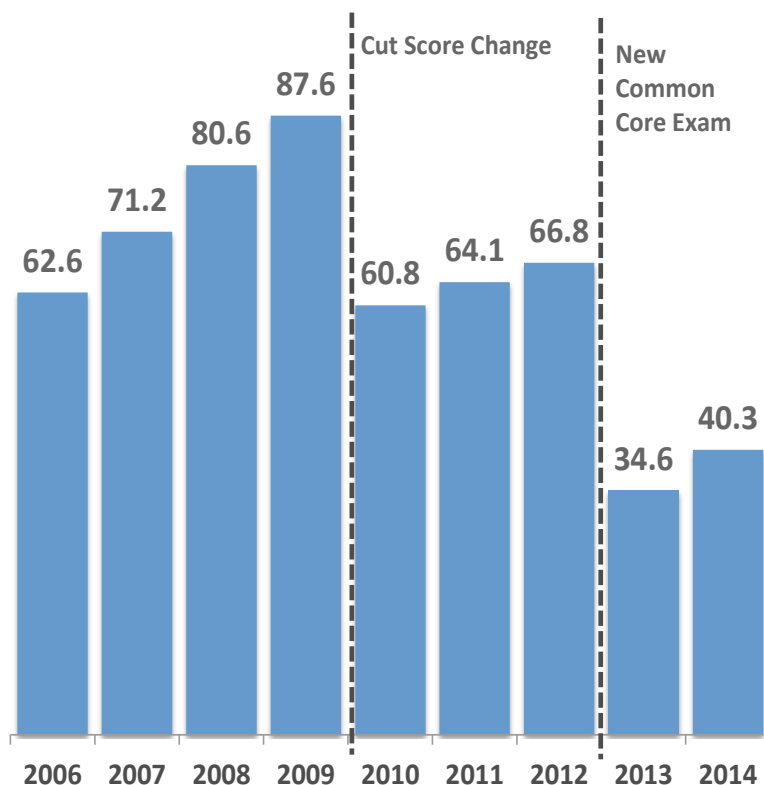
Percent of NYC Students at or above Proficiency (Levels 3 and 4) on NYS Grade 3-8 ELA Assessments



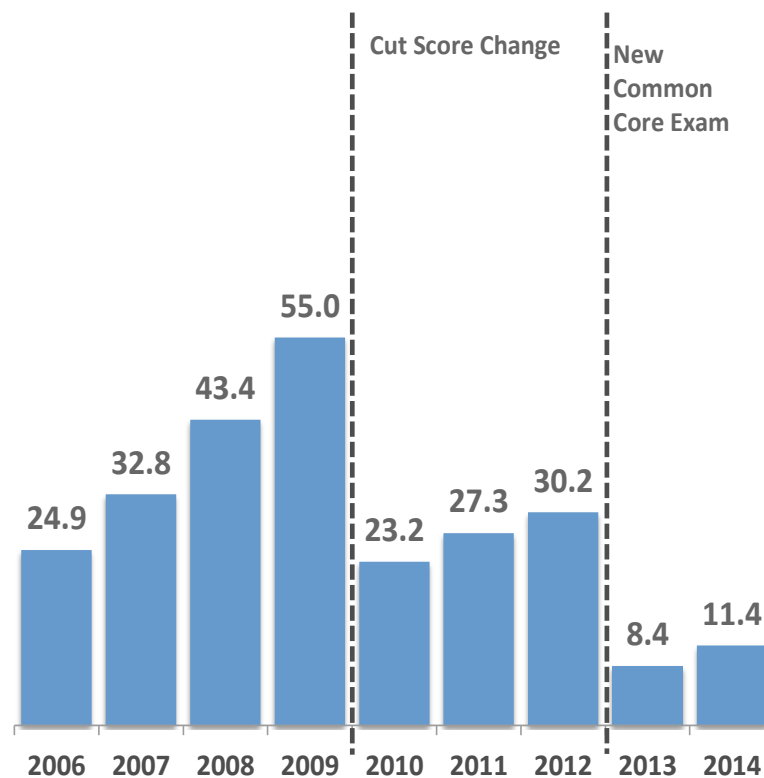
In 2010, NYSED increased the scale score required to meet each of the proficiency levels. In addition, since 2011, NYSED has lengthened the exams by increasing the number of test questions.

Although the scores in mathematics have been slightly higher than those on the ELA exams, increased cut scores for proficiency and rigor has also been challenging for both students with and without IEPs in NY City.

### Students without IEPs



### Students with IEPs



Percent of NYC Students at or above Proficiency (Levels 3 and 4) on NYS Grade 3-8 Math Assessments

# LEARNING AND LEARNING

- ① **HOW DO PEOPLE LEARN?**
- ② **DO ALL PEOPLE LEARN THE SAME WAY?**
- ③ **HOW DO WE KNOW LEARNING HAS OCCURRED?**
- ④ **HOW DO *WE* ASSESS LEARNING?**
- ⑤ **WHO IS THE 'W' IN THIS QUESTION?**
- ⑥ **WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING AND TEACHING?**

# KNOWLEDGE AND KNOWING

- 1) How is knowledge defined and constructed in different cultures?**
- 2) What is worth knowing?**
- 3) How is that decided and by whom?**
- 4) What is the link between knowledge and action?**
- 5) What do teachers need to know?**
- 6) How is knowledge assessed?**



# SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLING

- 1) What are schools for?
- 2) What do schools value?
- 3) Whose values do schools represent?
- 4) How do schools relate to their communities?
- 5) What are the power relationships among people in schools?
- 6) If schools are not what they might be how can they be changed?

# TEACHERS AND TEACHING

- ① **What does it mean to teach?**
- ② **Who is teaching for?**
- ③ **What is a teacher's responsibility to self, to others, to school, to community?**
- ④ **What are the relationships between teaching a subject and teaching students?**
- ⑤ **What values and strategies must teachers possess to transform schools?**

# TEACHERS NEED :TRANSFERABLE SKILLS (ESPECIALLY SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS!)

- 1) Communicating
- 2) Making Decisions
- 3) Showing Commitment
- 4) Flexibility
- 5) Time Management
- 6) Self Direction
- 7) Curiosity, Creativity & Problem Solving
- 8) Being a Team Player
- 9) Ability To Work Under Pressure

## RECOMMENDATION 1:

- **Create standards-based professional development programs and incentivize principals, assistant principals and teachers to develop additional skills in and knowledge of special education practices and content.**

## RECOMMENDATION 2:

- Conduct research and collect data on special education programs, services, initiatives and outcomes. By collecting data and conducting research, the system can:
- 1) focus on improving special education instruction and developing curricula and instruction that take into account students of different ages and varying needs;
- 2) focus on outcomes instead of simply compliance;
- 3) develop greater transparency, sharing of information, and comprehension of the implementation and ultimate success/failure of Special Education initiatives



### RECOMMENDATION 3:

- **Develop early childhood interventions and parent outreach pilots in target schools.**
- **Evaluate them and, if they are successful, implement them country wide.**

## RECOMMENDATION 4:

- **Encourage effective and accountable parent-school collaborations to enhance students' academic and social performance**

## RECOMMENDATION 5:

- **Each School system should establish small research units (e.g. early childhood, primary, secondary form one Unit) to conduct proactive investigations into best school-based practices.**

## SETTING A SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH AGENDA:

What are some questions that should be asked? The list of a dozen questions is grouped in the sequence and aligned with a special education.. From pre-referral to placement. There are countless others that could have been raised, basic questions that have a direct impact on educational practice.

**I do not believe we know the answers to the questions. If schools could obtain answers to the questions, not only may the performance of students with disabilities and at risk students be improved, but all children would benefit!**

# PRE-REFERRAL INTERVENTIONS: IN GENERAL EDUCATION!!!

1. Do pre-referral interventions reduce referrals for special education? If yes, which services/programs are effective and under what conditions in terms of personnel, frequency, intensity and duration?
2. Are direct pre-referral services, where a certified professional delivers instruction, more effective for student performance than indirect prereferral service where suggestions are made for the referring teacher to implement?
3. If students do not benefit from pre-referral instruction in general education, what is learned from the pre-referral intervention or service that will increase the chance that the student will benefit from special education?
4. If a student receives behavior management interventions, what are the effects of improved behavior management practices on academic achievement? Are the effects more or less powerful in classes where teachers are inexperienced?



# REFERRAL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

1. Other than low IQ score and poor achievement, what are the operational defining characteristics of the high-incidence disability classifications. For example, how does a learning disabled youngster or child with autism differ from an emotionally disturbed child? Or, what clinical or observations assessments are employed to rule out social maladjustment as a diagnosis?
2. Other than it being a general education classroom, why is a particular class placement the least restrictive for an individual student with disabilities? What are the defining objective characteristics of a classroom that renders it least restrictive for an individual student?
3. How do teams use assessment data to generate goals and objectives and their corresponding mastery levels?
4. What specific written decertification criteria exist to decertify a student from special education, or for moving him/her to more --or less-- restrictive environments Are these the correct criteria as determined by teachers, parents, and supervisors?

## SPECIAL CLASS SERVICES

1. What specific assessment data are used to determine placement in a class and/or a school?
2. What impact do students with disabilities have on the academic performance of their classmates?
3. Are push in special education services more effective than pull out services for students' academic and social performance?
4. To what extent, if any, do testing accommodations help students with disabilities?