Administrative Leadership in the Age of Inclusion: Promoting Best Practices and Teacher Empowerment

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ABSTRACT: This paper presents ways administrative leaders in schools can facilitate inclusive education. It is argued that inclusive teaching models must provide access to the regular curriculum and assessment procedures, but also yield achievement gains in students, which are, at least, as effective as traditional methods. Moreover, these models must also reflect values that are consistent with humanitarian principles and embedded within the concept of inclusive education. Although more research is required, *differentiated instruction* and *co-teaching* appear to represent two such instructional models. However, adopting these models requires effective leadership strategies, which empower teachers.

RESUME: Cet article présente les méthodes que les directeurs administratifs d'écoles peuvent utiliser pour favoriser l'intégration scolaire. Il y est soutenu que les modèles d'enseignement pour l'intégration scolaire doivent permettre aux étudiants, l'accès au programme normal d'études et aux procédures d'évaluation mais, qu'ils doivent aussi apporter des avantages dans la réalisation; avantages qui doivent être, pour le moins, aussi efficaces que les méthodes traditionnelles. De surcroît, ces modèles doivent être aussi l'expression de valeurs compatibles avec les principes humanitaires et doivent faire partie du concept de l'intégration scolaire. Quoique qu'il faille approfondir la recherche, *l'enseignement différentiel* et *le co-enseignement,* semblent représenter deux de ces modèles pédagogiques. Toutefois, pour adopter ces modèles, il faut appliquer des stratégies efficaces de meneur, ce qui renforce l'autonomie des enseignants.

A challenge for school administrators in today's schools is inclusive education. Inclusive education is characterized by the merger of regular

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and special education toward a unified system that respects and supports individual differences and responds to the diverse strengths, challenges, and experiences of all students with fairness and equity (Andrews & Lupart, 2000). This merger presents a number of challenges to administrators, as one highly debatable issue has yet to be resolved: Will blended systems of general and special education provide students with better opportunities to learn, or, will they result in diminished opportunities for students to receive the individually appropriate instruction they need (Boscardin, 2005)? One's perspective in terms of how to interpret the success of innovative inclusive practices hinges on how one defines the concept of *better opportunities to learn.* In this age of inclusion, fostering academic progress within an inclusive educational framework is only half the battle. Equally important, is the requirement to foster and promote values in educators, which are consistent with *humanitarian* principles and that are embedded within the concept inclusive education (e.g., acceptance, respect, support of student diversity). These points considered , the goal is to develop instructional models that meet two criteria: (a) they must be at least as effective as traditional models at yielding academic outcomes for students with exceptionalities, and (b) they must be executed in a manner which is consistent with the concept of inclusion. Two notable models designed to achieve this purpose are differentiated instruction and co-teaching. The present paper aims to outline how administrative leaders in schools (i.e., principals) can promote inclusive education and empower teachers to address the diverse needs of students.

Theoretical/Legislative Framework: Humanitarianism, Normalization, and Inclusion

Humanitarianism is a philosophy, which regards all humans as equal, regardless of demographic representation. As such, all people are worthy of being treated as equals, deserving fair treatment and respect (Winzer, 1993). Those who promote humanitarianism strive to make changes at all levels of society where discrimination occurs. One highly regarded, humanitarian-based, Danish philosophy which came to be particularly influential in North America was normalization (Andrews & Lupart, 1993; Csapo & Goguen, 1989). This philosophy advocated for making life for exceptional people as similar to that of the normal population as possible. In practice, this philosophy has generated unprecedented reform for special education in North America, contributing to a major paradigm shift in regard to how the educational needs of children with

exceptionalities are provided. As such, the delivery of education for students with exceptionalities has evolved from complete segregation to the provision of education within regular classes (i.e., inclusion; Andrews & Lupart, 2000). Stemming from the humanitarian concept of normalization, inclusion broadly refers to a philosophy which supports diversity among people (Vitello & Mithaug, 1998). Those who embrace inclusion aim to minimize the exclusion of people resulting from differences in race, social economic status, culture, faith, gender, physical and cognitive ability. In educational settings, inclusion refers to a reform dedicated to addressing the needs of exceptional learners within a general (regular) class setting (Andrews & Lupart, 2000).

The United Nations has been promoting worldwide initiatives to accommodate individuals with special needs in educational settings since the mid 1970s (Smith-Davis, 2002). In 1975, the United States passed Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act which was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1990 and has subsequently undergone recent amendments (i.e., PL 105-17: The IDEA Amendments of 1997; PL 108-446: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004). The IDEA mandates that a free and appropriate education be provided to all students with disabilities, affirms that disability "is a natural part of the human experience" and acknowledges the normalization principle that individuals with disabilities have the right to "enjoy full inclusion and integration into the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of society" (Salend, 2008). Although IDEA does not mandate inclusion, it strongly encourages consideration of educational placements of special needs students in general classrooms.

In Canada, administrative and curricular approaches as well as legislative trends in special (inclusive) education have been influenced by the evolution of events and philosophies in the United States. However, unlike the United States, Canada does not have a Federal Office of Education nor is education governed by federal mandates. Hence, the ability to make broad national statements about special (inclusive) education in Canada is difficult due to the difference between each province and territory relative to special education policies, programs, and procedures. Moreover, because reviews of special (inclusive) education as well as policy changes within and across the provinces and territories are constantly and differentially evolving (e.g., Alberta Learning, 2004; Manitoba Department of Education, Training, and Youth, 2001; Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2005) an

overarching Canadian perspective on special (inclusive) education is elusive and virtually non-existent.

The Canadian Constitution, which includes the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, assigns the provinces (10) and territories (3) with legislative responsibility over education. Importantly, all laws in Canada (including provincial and territorial laws related to education) must be consistent with the Charter and the stated equality rights as exemplified in section 15(1): "Every individual is equal before and under the law has a right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical ability" (1982). Hence, each of the ten provinces and three territories has developed its' own school system with respect to federal constitutional (Charter) provisions, provincial legislation, regulation, and policies, school board bylaws and resolutions, and case law (Andrews & Lupart, 2000). Although the basic framework relative to educational matters across the provinces and territories is similar, there is considerable variation with respect to the direction and service provision for special (inclusive) education across the school jurisdictions. Each province and territory has its' own unique formula for the allocation and distribution of education funds (which typically comes from a combination of provincial property taxes and government grants), and special education programs and services are highly dependent on this funding. Hence, even though there is a similar educational framework across the provinces and territories and operational consistency of funding for school jurisdictions within the provinces and territories to ensure fair and equitable provisions for special education assessment, programming, and service delivery, there is also some flexibility to accommodate specific regional student characteristics and local interests. Moreover, it is important to note that special (inclusive) education practices also vary in accordance with provincial and jurisdictional philosophy of special education. For example, some provinces and school districts support inclusive schooling and have made policies and procedures in this regard (e.g., British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2002), whereas others refer to a continuum of services approach (e.g., Prince Edward Island Department of Education, 2001) or follow a more traditional categorical based delivery system, (Ontario, Ministry of Education, 2001). However, the inclusion of students with exceptional needs within regular classrooms is a recommended service delivery policy in most educational

jurisdictions in Canada (McGhie-Richmond, Underwood, & Jordan, 2007).

Inclusive Teaching Models

Differentiated instruction is based on two foundational presumptions: (a) learning styles vary among any random group of students; and, (b) educators should adjust instructional methods to meet diverse student needs (Andrews & Lupart, 2000; Salend, 2008; Tomlinson, 1999, 2001, 2003). According to Andrews and Lupart (2000), differentiated instruction provides students with a variety of ways to interact with the curriculum content, offering meaningful learning experiences where students can practice different learning approaches and demonstrate what they have learned in different ways. General characteristics of differentiated curriculum include instruction that is concept tailored and theory driven, ongoing assessment of student readiness and growth, and flexible grouping of students (e.g., whole group, small group, individual instruction). Essentially, differentiated instruction promotes meaningful learning for all students through the varied use of different teaching approaches. Some examples include direct instruction, cognitive (learning) strategy instruction, and co-operative learning (see Andrews & Lupart 2000; Salend, 2008 for further discussion and practical examples).

Within the last few decades, empirical evaluation relative to the academic and social development of students exposed to these strategies has yielded positive results. For example, there is considerable evidence that direct instruction can facilitate active student learning and help students get a clearer sense and more complete understanding of basic skills and concepts through extensive guided and independent practice and corrective feedback (Aber, Bachman, Campbell, O'Malley, 1994; Rosenshine, 1976, 1997; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986); cognitive (learning) strategy instruction, a teaching approach that enables students to regulate and control their learning, has been shown to effectively enhance student learning across the curriculum (Deshler, Warner, Schumaker, & Alley,1983; Deshler & Schumaker,1986; Paris & Oka, 1986; Paris & Paris, 2001; Pressley, & Woloshyn,1995; Scruggs & Mastropieri,1989; Palinscar & Brown, 1984, 1988); and co-operative learning (i.e., students participating in group discussion, problem-solving, and decision making) has been shown to positively effect all students in academic achievement, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Importantly, all differentiated

instruction approaches hinge on what is referred to as active planning (Corley, 2005), a process whereby student variables that are known to facilitate learning are considered in the instruction planning phase. Examples include readiness (Vygotsky, 1986), interests (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), and learning profiles (Sternberg, Torff, & Grigorenko, 1998).

According to Vygotsky (1934/1986), it is highly important to consider a student's level of readiness while designing appropriate instructional approaches. In doing so, it is necessary to account for the student's prior knowledge and prior skills related to the instructional goals. Considering this point, Tomlinson (2001, 2003) holds that instructional complexity must vary from student to student. This can be carried out by developing tiered activities, small group activities, peer support, or through coaching. Student interests are also important to consider in differentiating instruction. Drawing upon topics which are intrinsically interesting to students are thought to generate higher levels of enthusiasm and persistence for learning compared to topics that are not intrinsically interesting (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Maslow, 1962; Sousa, 2001; & Wolfe, 2001). The third variable, learning profile, emphasizes the importance of considering how a student learns. Evidence indicates that more students are successful in completing assigned instructional tasks when they are offered choices in regard to how to conduct the assignment (Campbell & Campbell, 1999; Sternberg et al., 1998). As such, instructors take into consideration learning styles, aptitudes, culture, gender, and other such variables. This process requires the development and provision of alternative learning activities, designed to meet teaching goals.

Tomlinson (2001, 2003) refers to these three variables as key to adopting a differentiated instruction approach in heterogeneous classrooms. All of these variables can be viewed as ever changing from student to student and instructional goal to instructional goal. As such, the term "active planning" reflects the requirement of ongoing/active and adaptive considerations that have to be made in order to differentiate instruction appropriately. According to Tomlinson (1999, 2001, 2003), these considerations must be applied in three instructional areas: (a) content (i.e., the subject); (b) process (i.e., how the content is taught); and, (c) product (i.e., items created by students to demonstrate learning). *Content* should be consistent across learners, regardless of student diversity. The manner in which it is learned, however, should be adjusted. Thus, the differentiated instruction approach emphasizes

the importance of adjusting the learning *process* (e.g., complexity, information source). Adjusting *process* hinges on differentiated grouping of students based on readiness, interest, and learning profiles. It is up to the teacher to decide what type of differentiated group is most appropriate to the topic of instruction (e.g., readiness for reading, interest for a hobby). Tomlinson (2003) holds that this approach discourages stigmas and stereotypes of traditional grouping based on slow workers and fast workers. Furthermore, it is thought to teach students to respect and value classroom diversity. Finally, *products* refer to ways students can demonstrate their knowledge of learned concepts. Tomlinson (2001) suggests that this should vary according to readiness, interest, and learning preferences (e.g., solo projects, group projects, written reports, oral presentations). It must be noted, however, that the active planning phase is exceptionally time-consuming (Corley, 2005). Identifying the readiness levels, interests, and learning preferences of all learners and then adjusting instruction according to various levels of content complexity, process approaches, and product alternatives would require an exceptionally high level of commitment on the part of teachers.

Co-teaching (sometimes referred to as team teaching) requires that a general and special educator share responsibility for planning, teaching, and skills/knowledge assessment for a wide range of students, including students with exceptionalities (Andrews & Lupart, 2000). This approach allows the regular teacher to interpret and teach the content of the curriculum at a regular pace to all students, while students with exceptionalities get the support required to be successful in the regular classroom. In theory, co-teaching is designed to broaden the choices students have in regard to instruction, increase participation, and enhance skills/knowledge development for students with exceptionalities. There are a number of ideas and interpretations pertaining to how co-teaching should work. The method chosen depends upon the specific goals and activities required to meet curriculum outcomes. Some of the most popular co-teaching models include one teaching/one assisting, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching, and team teaching (Friend & Cook, 1992).

One teaching/one assisting is a method whereby one teacher provides the instruction, while the other performs more of a supportive function (e.g., observing, monitoring, & tutoring). This is often used by teachers in the early training phase as a way to get used to working in one class with another teacher and to allow special educators to become

comfortable with the pace and content of the regular curriculum. The station teaching method requires that instruction be divided into three learning stations, each with three different learning goals (i.e., two for teacher instruction and one for independent work). The students are divided into three groups (i.e., heterogeneous or homogeneous). Each teacher provides instruction while the groups rotate through the stations, thereby providing higher levels of one-to-one support than would be possible in a large group. Parallel teaching simply refers to dividing the class into two equal groups and each teacher taking responsibility for the instruction of one group. Both teachers, however, develop the lessons and units. This method allows teachers to exercise their personal teaching styles (e.g., use of examples, supportive devices), while delivering the same lesson to both groups. Teachers applying this method, however, are challenged by the requirement to maintain an equal learning pace between both groups. The alternative teaching approach requires the division of the class into two unequal groups, one large group that requires enrichment of previously taught concepts and one small group that requires further clarification and consolidation of concepts. Finally, the team-teaching approach is a method whereby both teachers teach the same lesson at the same time. The approach taken by both teachers is similar, allowing them to switch back and forth as they desire. Those who adopt co-teaching as a service delivery model for inclusive education face a number of challenges. As is the case with differentiated instruction, there is the issue of planning time. Additionally, the challenge is to find coordinated time slots, when both teachers can plan together.

An empirical review (Zigmond, 2001) was conducted on the effectiveness of co-teaching, drawing upon 20 years of research studies that applied statistical procedures and a control group. Only four studies were identified using these criteria (Bear & Proctor, 1990; Boudah, Schumacher, & Deshler, 1997; Schulte, Osborne & McKinney, 1990; Marston, 1996). Although there was some evidence that co-teaching yields superior performance for elementary level students with learning difficulties in math (Bear & Proctor, 1990), more generally, co-teaching appears to be as effective for elementary students in all subjects compared to resource and non-co-teaching classes (Bear & Proctor, 1990; Schulte, Osborne & McKinney, 1990; Marston, 1996; Murawski, 2006).

Although more research is required at all grade levels to identify the circumstances whereby co-teaching and differentiated instruction can be applied most effectively it appears that they represent good

instructional models in this age of inclusion because they have some theoretical and empirical grounding.

Challenges Teachers Face While Executing Inclusive/Merging Practices

In the United States, the percentage of students with disabilities receiving their education in predominantly inclusive classrooms (i.e., more than 79% per day) rose from 31.46% in the 1989/1990 school years to 45.35% in 1995/1996 (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). In Canada, 12 to 15% of the Canadian school aged population is considered to be exceptional (Winzer, 2008). Moreover, these numbers are on the rise. For example, from 1998 to 2004, the proportion of students with special needs in Ontario schools more then doubled (Urquhart, 2005) and in Alberta there was a 64 percent increase in the identification of students with severe disabilities and a 140 percent increase in students with mild/moderate disabilities compared to a general increase in the school population of five percent from 1998 to 2003 (Pyryt, 2003). Consequently, teachers charged with the responsibility of addressing diverse student needs are often overburdened with multiple and sometimes competing responsibilities (Wisniewski & Gargiulo, 1997). Compounding this challenge are recent government initiatives, especially in the United States (e.g., the No Child Left Behind Act), to generate significant and continued academic gains among the general population of students (Browder & Cooper-Duffy, 2003). Not only are teachers charged with the responsibility of generating higher than ever academic outcomes, they must do so within classes containing unprecedented levels of student need (Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999).

One issue pertains to the importance of teacher attitudes on the success of an inclusive classroom (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002). Research suggests that teachers are uncertain of, or simply disagree, with the proposed benefits of inclusion (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003). Even teachers that support the entitlement to inclusive settings for students with disabilities feel that the academic gains fail to substantiate the effort required to make it happen (Monahan, Marino, & Miller, 1996). Monahan et al. underscore the significance of such attitudes in their belief that the success of inclusion hinges on its acceptance and collaboration from teachers, parents, and administrators. Teachers with positive attitudes are found to be those who have the most training and experience with special needs students (Jobe, Rust & Brissie, 1996). Teachers of students express positive

attitudes more readily with intellectual disabilities as opposed to other disabilities. Even the most positive and experienced of teachers express less enthusiasm for inclusion of students with behavioral and emotional problems. Researchers agree that teachers often lack the knowledge and support to meet the diverse needs of students in inclusive settings and this contributes to negative attitudes about inclusion (Burke & Sutherland, 2004). Studies have also demonstrated that general education teachers often feel they do not possess the collaborative skills required to teach special needs children in the regular class (Schuum, Vaughn, Gordon, & Rothlein, 1994).

Another issue is job satisfaction, which is inversely linked to teacher mobility and attrition (Gersten, Keaton, Yovanoff, & Harniss, 2001; Shreeve, et al., 1988; Singh & Billingsley, 1996). Contributing to one's level of satisfaction is stress due to heavy workloads and time pressure to achieve goals (Weiskopf, 1980). The Centre for Education Statistics Canada (McKleskie, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004) projects teacher shortages in many provinces across Canada between 1998 and 2010. The increasing demands placed on teachers in inclusive classes can only serve to compound the problem of attrition and, ultimately, teacher shortages. This is very concerning because research clearly supports the possibility that teacher expectations impact student achievement, behavior, and self-esteem (Brophy & Good, 1986; Conway, 1989; Fuchs, Fuchs, & Norris, 1994; Kornblau & Keogh, 1980), thus undermining the goals inclusion sets out to achieve. Research suggests that teachers who feel insufficiently prepared, overwhelmed, and frustrated fail to report having a sense of occupational empowerment (Bolin, 1989; Melenyzer, 1990; Katzenmayer & Moller, 2001; Martin & Crossland, 2000; Short, 1992), a construct associated with the ability of an employee to be motivated to achieve occupational goals in the face of tremendous challenges.

Teacher Empowerment

Bolin (1989) outlines a number of important points, which, together, define empowerment among educators. For one, teachers must perceive that they have the opportunity, should they desire, to partake in school goal setting and policy development. They also must perceive that they have the freedom to apply their own professional judgment choices in relation to interpretation of curriculum and instructional practices. Studies indicate that empowerment is linked to enhanced teacher leadership, professionalism, quality of work, and a sense of teaching

effectiveness (Katzenmayer & Moller, 2001). Furthermore, empowered teachers are thought to more readily adopt proposed school reforms and foster higher levels of student achievement (Martin & Crossland, 2000; Short, 1992). As such, achieving a sense of empowerment among teachers is crucial to effective implementation of inclusive instructional practices. Unfortunately, research suggests that educational settings fail to generate a sense of empowerment among teachers (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988). Factors contributing to this problem include excessive routine and repetition, isolation from colleagues, time pressure, and under-staffing (Hallinger & Richardson, 1988). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of educational administrators to address these problems and empower teachers with the skills and motivation necessary to embrace inclusion, as well as be effective, comfortable, and content in inclusive classrooms.

Leadership and Teacher Empowerment

Dee, Henkin, and Duemer (2003) refer to two theoretical models of leadership, which are developed to facilitate occupational empowerment: (a) structural, and (b) psychological. The structural model adopts a top-down procedure, whereby managerial power (i.e., organizational authority and control) is shared with employees who hold less power (Hollander & Offerman, 1990; Osburn, Moran, Musselwhite, & Zenger, 1990). In other words, selected employees are provided empowerment (i.e., more autonomy, more decision making power, organizational control, and authority) by others in authority positions. The structural model of empowerment, however, presents the risk of loss of power and control by the administrators who share their responsibilities (Mills & Ungson, 2003). Furthermore, employees may not be intrinsically motivated to exercise power because the power is granted from an external source. Psychological empowerment, on the other hand, relies on intrinsic motivation, attained by inspiring employees with a real sense of duty. Dee et al. (2003) emphasize the need to generate psychological empowerment among educators. In order for administrators to effectively convince educators to adopt and implement innovative inclusive instructional strategies, it is essential that they instill a genuine sense of purpose in teachers. Otherwise, there would be very little incentive to stray from traditional educational practices and routines, thereby impeding the evolution of educational practice (e.g., adoption of inclusive practices).

Similarly, Glasser (1969, 1988, 1993, 1998, 1999) draws upon evolving leadership strategies in the business sector for application in educational settings. Glasser points out that traditional boss management must be replaced with an approach which proves empowering to all stakeholders (e.g., administrators, parents, teachers, students). Glasser uses the term "Quality Schools" to describe educational settings that have managed to achieve global empowerment within their school ecologies. There are a number of ways leaders can generate empowerment among teachers who work in schools that mandate inclusive service delivery to students.

Generating empowerment in inclusive educational settings requires a flexible management style that allows educators freedom to make important decisions regarding the development and implementation of newly learned skills and knowledge (Dee, et al., 2003). Dee and colleagues demonstrated that this practice facilitates higher levels of employee commitment (i.e., accepting organizational goals, higher effort, & low attrition). As such, generating employee empowerment in relation to professional development should be an important goal for educational administrators. Research outlines several key management strategies which promote teacher empowerment.

Self-Managed Teams

The development and facilitation of self-managed teams is considered one way to generate a sense of empowerment among teachers (Dee, et al., 2003). Educational research outlines four important team mandates in schools including those designed to achieve professional development, curriculum review, development of policies and procedures, and developing school-community relations (Buckley, 2000; Donaldson & Sanderson, 1996; Ellis & Fouts, 1994; Maeroff, 1993). Dee, et al. (2003) demonstrated that the development of such team structures was positively linked to teacher empowerment. Specifically, team teaching for the purpose of professional development had the most significant impact. Although to a lesser extent, teams developed for the purpose of fostering school-community relationships, as well as developing policies and procedures also had an impact on teacher empowerment. Teams developed for the purpose of curriculum review and development had no impact on teacher empowerment. It was suggested that curriculum review was perceived as a process whereby duties were imposed and input limited by predetermined government parameters.

Based on these findings, Dee, et al. (2003) suggest that administrators must serve to facilitate the development of professional development teams (e.g., identify priorities, allow time for meeting), but once developed, must trust them to self-govern (e.g., do research, make important decisions), and tolerate minor imperfections. Furthermore, the administrator must continually praise and demonstrate genuine appreciation for team efforts. It is believed that empowerment, then, hinges on teachers' perceptions of freedom to self-govern within a structured framework, as well as receiving acclaim for accomplishments by administration. Such findings have implications for administrative efforts to inspire teachers to embrace educational reforms and initiatives, such as the adoption of differentiated instruction and co-teaching. According to this study, the administrator would define the purpose/priority (e.g., learn about differentiated instruction and/or co-teaching), facilitate the development of teams, provide the materials, time, and other supports (e.g., consultants, funds for professional development), allow the educators to take charge of skills development and implementation through their teams, and demonstrate ongoing appreciation (e.g., praising and rewarding) of individual and team efforts. Importantly, this approach is consistent with the changing leadership styles of principals over the past decade: from administrative management to combining management with the role of instructional leader (Idol, 2006).

Induction Programs

Another way administrators can empower teachers is through the implementation of induction programs, designed to support teachers as they attempt to apply newly learned skills. This is more commonly applied for new teachers, but can also be used to support teachers who are required to adopt new practices. Good quality induction programs are found to have several characteristics in common. These include clear goals for improving teaching, trained mentors, extensive and pertinent professional development, adequate fiscal and political support, and maintenance of strong partnerships with schools (Billingsley, 2002). One such program in California has developed an induction program that retained 95% of new teachers over an eleven year period (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). In order for inclusion to be successful, it must be fully embraced by teachers. Induction programs, and the constructs that make them work, appear worthy of further study and widespread implementation.

There is no reason why this framework should be limited to new teachers. It is likely that experienced teachers feel the same sense of disempowerment while taking on increasing demands in the regular class setting. For example, Boyer and Lee (2001) advocate for induction programs for teachers attempting to accommodate students with autism for the first time. All too often, teachers are expected to take on duties for which they lack the skills and resources to execute successfully. Regardless of experience, when teachers are treading new ground, it is likely that supports such as mentoring and provision of pertinent professional development could serve to reduce stress, increase positive attitudes and, ultimately, empower the educators.

Promoting a Sense of Value for Inclusive Principles and Practices

It is of paramount importance that educational leaders make every effort to generate and maintain the values of inclusive education and humanitarian philosophy in teachers. The attitudes administrators present are critical to the success of inclusive classrooms. Positive administrator attitudes are associated with higher levels of enthusiasm for educational procedures among various stakeholders (Ayers & Meyers, 1992; Gameros, 1995). As such, it is very important that an administrator enthusiastically present a positive attitude toward inclusive principles and the associated practices. According to the results of a study conducted by Ross and Gray (2006), principals who motivate teachers to embrace organizational goals and values (e.g., inclusive education) can positively impact teacher's beliefs about their collective capacity as well as their commitment to organizational goals and values.

One way to motivate teachers to embrace humanitarian principles is through modeling. DiPaola, Tschannen-Moran, and Walther-Thomas, (2004) note how school principals must behave in accordance with a philosophical orientation, which drives them toward the goal of achieving academic success for all students in an inclusive setting. Their values and personal characteristics should be demonstrated in such a manner that others are inspired to partake in this goal. Believing, from this perspective, is not enough. Educational leaders must behave in a manner, which is not only consistent with the values of inclusion, but must also be reflective of genuine enthusiasm for these practices (DiPaola, et al., 2004). Another way of achieving this is when principals adopt a transformational leadership style (Ross & Gray, 2006) where teachers are provided opportunities to participate in developing school

goals and improvement plans (e.g., related to inclusive education) and also have access to suitable professional learning opportunities (e.g., inclusive teaching practices). Fostering a sense of value for inclusive education among teachers is essential to generating teacher empowerment, as efforts to incorporate inclusive practices would come from an intrinsic sense of humanitarian principle rather than an extrinsic sense of duty.

Conclusion

This paper purports that well-trained and knowledgeable leaders who are capable of empowering teachers to adopt new instructional methods can overcome the challenges of inclusive education. This can be achieved by leaders who foster self-managed and co-operative professional development among staff, implement induction programs to support the adoption of new inclusion-based teaching strategies, and promote and model inclusive education and humanitarian principles. Clearly, effective educational leadership represents a very significant factor in the successful implementation of inclusive practices in schools. A tremendous burden of responsibility rests on the shoulders of these leaders to ensure that inclusive practices are upheld in a manner, which is empowering to teachers and students.

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