Imagine educational practices in which learners with significant disabilities have the same learner outcomes as students without disabilities.”

Kleinert & Kearns, 2001 p. 21

Policy Shift
McSheehan, Sonnenmeier, Jorgensen, & Turner (2006)

- “In the 1990’s, an increased focus on high educational standards for all students, combined with a growing body of evidence showing that students with significant disabilities were capable of learning at least some of the general education curriculum content (McGregor & Vogelsberg, 1998; Ryndak, Morrison, & Sommerstein, 1999) influenced a movement toward requiring schools to include students with disabilities in local and state accountability systems through their participation in large-scale assessments. Access to and progress in the general curriculum became education policy at the century’s end (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997, 2004; No Child Left Behind, 2001).”

Case Study - Jack

- “Included” in grades 1 - 3
- 4th grade at age 10
- Autism
- Initial communication system:
  - gestures (2 finger pt.)
  - some signs, vocalizations
  - Go-Talk (9 messages)
  - No reliable yes/no
- Home - 3 sibs, active, interpret needs

- Described by team:
  “Jack functions at the 2 yr. level”

CASTS - AAC 9 Items
**Educating Students with Autism in General Education Classes**

McSheehan, M.

Bluegrass Autism Symposium
Lexington, KY
February 24, 2007

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### Jack 4th Grade: Membership and Participation

- **General Education Classroom:**
- **Jack’s Desk:**

#### Membership:

**Our goal is to get to the top**

- Student is full time member of a general education class with all symbols of belonging
- Student is part-time member of a general education class
- Student is visitor in a general education class
- Student is member of a special education class

#### Participation:

**Our goal is to get to the top**

- In class - participate in all typical routines
- In class - participate in some typical routines
- In and out of class - participate in different routines
- Out of class - limited participation with classmates

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### Jack 4th Grade Video

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### Membership:

- **Our goal is to get to the top**

### Participation:

- **Our goal is to get to the top**

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### Learning:

- **Our goal is to get to the top**

  Grade Level Curriculum (or Enduring Understandings and Essential Content) in Typical Routines
  
  - “Lower Level” Curriculum in Typical Routines
  - Functional Skills in Typical Routines
  - Functional Skills in Atypical Routines
  - Developmental Curriculum

### Team Collaboration:

- **Our goal is to get to the top**

  - Whole team meets regularly to plan curriculum and review progress
  - Special education staff meet regularly to plan curriculum
  - Team meets whenever there is a problem
  - Team meets quarterly to review progress
  - Team meets yearly to develop IEP
4th Grade: Membership and Participation

*Jack with Assistant*

Home, Passions, & Engagement

Considering a child’s unique preferences, needs and learning characteristics, along with the family’s preferences, is a component that has demonstrated effectiveness through numerous investigations.

**Incorporating a child’s idiosyncratic interests (passions) into instructional activities has proven to be an effective method to enhance engagement in activities.**

Iovannone, Dunlap, Huber, Kincaid (2003)

A Guiding Principle

"LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION"

*(Anne Donnellan, 1984)*

“The criterion of LDA holds that in the absence of conclusive data, educational decisions ought to be based on assumptions which, if incorrect, will have the least dangerous effect on the likelihood that students will be able to functional independently as adults."

*Furthermore,* “we should assume that poor performance is due to instructional inadequacy rather than to student deficits.”

How Might We Operationalize Donnellan’s Least Dangerous Assumption Principle?

The Least Dangerous Assumption is to presume competence to learn general education curriculum.

Then design educational programs and provide supports based on that assumption.

Enhancing Participation by Supporting Routines

*Go Talk with 9 messages for Social Studies*

Instructional Routines Planning

- **All students are...** *(e.g., reading books)*
- **Students do...** *(e.g., look at books, answer questions)*
- **Alternate form of “do...”** *(e.g., point to answers)*
- **What (support) would it take for Jay to DO...?*
Student & Team Outcomes

- **Student**
  - Accurate & consistent YES/NO (2 mo)
  - Display of 9 --> 49 messages per display
  - 80-100 curriculum related messages
- **Team**
  - Weekly meetings for planning & management
  - Family involvement
  - LDA
  - Consensus on features of supports
  - Acquisition of device

CASTS - AAC 9 Items

Family Involvement

- Family members are the most stable, influential, and valuable people in the child's environment.
- Teaching parents to implement strategies
- Using family characteristics and context to develop appropriate levels of support
- Educational practices and strategies have a better chance of being effective if they are implemented across all settings…

Systematic Instruction

Carefully PLANNING for instruction by identifying valid educational goals, carefully outlining instructional procedures for teaching, implementing the instructional procedures, evaluating the effectiveness of the teaching procedures, and adjusting instruction based on data.

A key aspect of individualization for students with ASD involves approaches for supporting high rates of engagement.

Engagement, the amount of time that the student is attending to and actively interacting in his or her social and nonsocial environments, has been cited as one of the best predictors of positive student outcomes.

Iovannone, Dunlap, Huber, Kincaid (2003)
Engagement can occur in various (instructional routines) including:

- One-to-one instruction with an adult
- Independent work time with specific planned activities and materials
- Group instruction spent with a peer tutor or an adult
- General instruction that occurs throughout a student’s day

Ioannone, Dunlap, Huber, Kincaid (2003)

Jack: 5th Grade
What are all students doing?

Adapted Grade level novel
Rewritten by team members to late 1st - early 2nd grade level, maintaining essential content for general education quizzes/test.

Classmate Paired Reading
During paired reading, literate peers read aloud and silently with modified text.

Independent Silent Reading
Jack with modified text. Began showing more emergent reading skills, including vocalizing while pointing individual words.
Imagine educational practices in which learners with significant disabilities have the same learner outcomes as students without disabilities.”

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References


Additional Citations: