

Preface to the Second Edition

Is it really possible for each student's needs to be met in one school? In one classroom? What is wrong with letting specialists plug the classroom learning holes outside the classroom? What is the problem with establishing separate programs and even separate schools for students who are not successful, who do not fit, where they can receive the help they need?

The purpose of this book is to address these questions by describing practical strategies that educators (we include parents, students, administrators, and policymakers in this term) can use to create and to sustain schools that are successful for all students without adding on expensive, reactive, and ineffective separate programs, classrooms, and schools. We divide these strategies into four major sections of the book: (a) shift from providing separate programs for a few students to providing excellent educational services for all students, (b) channel the standards movement into proactive teaching and assessment to ensure student success, (c) use funding and the law to support excellent services for all, and (d) initiate change toward integrated, socially just schools.

This book can serve as a guide for educators to cocreate and sustain integrated, socially just schools. As such, all educators will find the book quite useful, including parents, administrators, teachers, school board members, and policymakers. This book is not just theory but is based on practice in schools. University faculty will also find the book a breath of practical fresh air grounded in the most recent educational research about leadership, social justice, and equity. University instructors can use the book as a primary text in courses related to school leadership, the principalship, the superintendency, school improvement and educational change, social justice, and courses that focus on diversity, special education, multicultural education, and special services. The book will also be useful for teacher educators as it provides a realistic portrayal of how the school and district can support equity and excellence in teaching and learning.

Throughout the book, we offer lists of steps and practical strategies along with handouts that can easily be copied for use in staff development institute days, faculty meetings, parent organization meetings, or university classrooms for educators to put these ideas into practice in their own schools and districts. We also include at the end of each chapter a self-assessment that individuals can use as tools to begin asking questions about their current practices, assessing their strengths and areas of growth, and determining the next steps to take.

We saw a need for this book from our educational experiences and research. Although we have participated in and witnessed countless examples of student success, we

continue to see too many—far too many—students failing, often at the hands of educational reform.

For example, some schools are designed and function in a way that many educators would call “ideal”: multiage classrooms not dependent on student grade level; thematic integrated instruction; peer mentoring and teaching; cooperative groups; students given time to learn what they need to learn, resulting in no pressure on students or competition between them; academic and social goals individualized for the student and cowritten with the teacher, student, and parent; a classroom and school culture that emphasize belonging and community; and performance-based assessment instead of standardized tests. Importantly, not all students in this setting are successful. Some parents of graduates of these schools are concerned about how well prepared their children are, especially in mathematics and study skills. Other parents are concerned that their children’s reading and writing skills are far below those appropriate for their children’s age/grade level.

In contrast, some students need structure to their day and separation between tasks and subjects. They need someone to teach them directly the skills and knowledge they need to know in addition to observing, interacting, and following their own learning instinct. Their parents need to know how they are progressing and where they need to be at grade level because research is clear: Early intervention for academic skills is essential. These particular schools share these characteristics of what many educators would consider the “ideal”: a small school of one grade per class; small class size; an emphasis on belonging and community; clear expectations for student achievement; a structured, sequential curriculum that is culturally integrated; high expectations for parent involvement that are met; and nightly homework. Even in a school like this, however, not all students are successful.

These examples show that neither school—one taking a holistic, progressive education approach, the other a “back to basics,” high-expectations approach—reached each of its students. Educators have assumed for years that students learn best when the information is presented to them in specific ways (e.g., holistically, or a “core curriculum”).

In these schools, regardless of focus, if students struggle with their learning, to receive help they must be segregated from their peers and receive services from specialized staff, who are trained to only work with students with particular labels. This book argues against this assumption. Further, parents should not have to transfer their children to different schools, hire private tutors, or seek segregated programs to meet the needs of their children.

This proposes that each student’s needs can be met in what we term *integrated educational environments*. As we explain in more detail later in the book, we do not oppose students receiving small-group or individual instruction. We do, however, advocate that each day *each* student should have the opportunity to receive small-group, large-group, or individual instruction. Typically, however, the same individual or group of students leaves the classroom or the school to attend special programs while the rest of the students do not. This book describes not only why this is a problem but also why such integrated educational environments to meet the needs of students of all abilities are crucial and how to create and to sustain these settings.

DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

We agree that educators can meet students’ individual learning needs. Educators must meet them, however, in a way that honors and respects students and does not violate the norms of belonging. We can meet the needs of children without isolating them from their peers. In Chapters 1 and 2, we discuss why this is important and how to begin to make

this happen. We propose proactive, preventive strategies for action, setting the stage for students to succeed before they fail and for not requiring students to fail before they receive appropriate educational services.

Shifting from providing programs for a few students to providing services for all students to meet their individual needs requires a shift in educator roles (Chapter 2). The National Research Council (NRC, Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) argues that “there is little evidence that children experiencing difficulties learning to read, even those with identifiable learning disabilities, need radically different sorts of supports than children at low risk, although they may need much more intensive support” (p. 3). This report and other recent research argue against the assumption that students who struggle in school require specialists in separate programs to teach them. Each student does, however, require excellent teaching to succeed. Indeed, the NRC reports, “Excellent instruction is the best intervention for children who demonstrate problems learning to read” (p. 3). Other research agrees. Citing a large-scale study of student achievement in Texas, Darling-Hammond and Falk (1997) report that “the single most important measurable cause of increased student learning was teacher expertise, including teachers’ preparation and experience levels” (p. 193).

Educators cannot achieve excellent teaching alone, however; they need ongoing support for their efforts. In Chapter 3 we discuss how school principals can ensure student success and include the forms of support and the kinds of assurance that teachers need to be successful. Like students, we cannot expect teachers to practice excellent teaching without providing them the school and district conditions to ensure success. Further, unlike other books, our book shows how some administrative structures of schools might change to prevent academic failure. Specifically, the central office administration must model the changes it seeks in the schools, and in Chapter 3 we delineate strategies for doing so.

Although a standards-based education is not without fault, we have directly experienced how a lack of standards, obscure expectations, and inadequate assessment can thwart academic success and rob a child of his or her self-esteem. In Part II of the book, we show how standards can pave the way for the success of all students. The first priority for standards, however, must be physical and emotional safety (Chapter 4). Although academic standards are crucial for all students, we also need to hold high expectations for student behavior. In Chapter 5 we identify specific standards that educators must hold for themselves and their students that pave the way for many proactive strategies beyond expulsion and suspension. In Chapter 6 we outline six stages that educators need to consider when establishing curriculum standards. Because research is clear that teaching quality is the primary predictor of student success, in this chapter we also discuss standards-based teaching that takes into account student learning diversity. We agree that student assessment is crucial for student success, and also in Chapter 6 we present a multidisciplinary perspective of standards-based assessment.

Often, educators view the law and funding as two primary barriers to educational change. In Part III (Chapter 7) we explain how educators can use the law and funding to leverage an integrated, socially just education.

Given our beliefs about change, we find it ironic (perhaps some would say hypocritical) to have written a “how-to” book. First, we believe that we cannot change anyone. We can only change ourselves (see Part III, Chapter 8). Like a gardener who cannot force a seed to sprout, what we can do is create the conditions for social justice change. We can plant, water, weed. We can encourage, nurture, support. This book is about creating and sustaining the conditions for social justice and equity to thrive. We also believe that anyone can tend the garden of the school. Thus, anyone can take the lead: parents, policymakers, students, principals, superintendents, teachers, and assistant principals, among others.

Second, we also believe that change is neverending. We take seriously that the root word of *education* is *educari*, which means to bring into healing (Remen, 1996). Thus we are constantly in a process of change and, if guided by a greater good, a constant process of healing. Although we consider this book a how-to, we do not consider it a “recipe” for change—that if you follow the directions exactly, you can change your school toward integrated, socially just schools. What we simply offer is our collective experience of more than fifty-two years in education in our roles as general and special education teachers, reading teachers, teachers of students considered “at risk,” principals, directors of special education, university professors and researchers, teachers of students considered gifted, and students ourselves of ongoing learning.

WHY “BEYOND INCLUSION”?

As mentioned, we bring to this book our collective experience in working with students who have struggled in some way, including students with labeled disabilities within a variety of settings: residential institutions, segregated schools, segregated classrooms within schools, alternative schools, schools-within-schools, resource rooms, segregated camp settings, consultation models, and schools and districts that strove to include all students fully.

The inclusion movement in the past decade has asked the classroom teacher to be successful with all students in his or her room, including students labeled with a disability. Opponents argue, however, that it is better to let teachers do well what they do well. If a child is not successful, send the child out of the classroom to a teacher who can meet that child’s needs. Likewise, inclusion proponents have expected all schools to meet all their students’ needs in their attendance areas. Others assert, however, that maybe we should let particular schools do well what schools do well (e.g., college prep, arts magnet schools), and for those students who are not successful, allow them to attend other schools (e.g., in other districts, magnet schools, charter schools, alternative schools). As one principal of an alternative high school told us, “Students and parents need options, and the typical school cannot provide all the options.”

This book addresses the concerns of those who do not favor integrated education. We have been disappointed, however, in the inclusion literature and practice. Although the inclusion literature sometimes mentions student needs other than disabilities, the main focus is students with disabilities. Even though this literature has made significant contributions to the field, it can perpetuate the very phenomena the authors wish to dissolve—that is, separating students, current practices, and school change into “general education” and “special education,” and what each must do differently can serve to reinforce and maintain the separate practices. Moreover, inclusion advocates sometimes dissolve into debates among themselves about whether each student should be “fully” included or included just part of the time. To lead beyond inclusion, we must move beyond these debates to learn how curriculum and instruction, leadership practices, and school structure might need to change to meet the needs of students of all abilities.

Handout 0.1 illustrates what we mean by “leading beyond inclusion,” as we contrast that practice with traditional and inclusive perspectives. Some educators argue that their “programs” are integrated. That is, that students from these programs spend part of their day with their general education peers. Other educators speak of “push-in” services, where services are offered in the general education setting. We agree with the practice, but rather than educators, students, or services being “pushed in,” in integrated, socially

just schools and districts, leaders do not establish programs in the first place. We also believe in a classroom that is established as an integrated, socially just learning community, education and support are proactively provided and the “push in” term distracts from these communities. Instead, in integrated, socially just classrooms and schools, educators seek to transform the core curriculum, instruction, and structure of the school.

Leaders who lead beyond inclusion focus their efforts on the range of students who struggle in school because of racism, poverty, gender, sexual orientation, high aptitude, low self-esteem, or other characteristics. Ultimately, we agree with the NRC et al. (1998) that “prevention efforts must reach *all* children” (p. 16, italics added). The authors argue,

To wait to initiate treatment until the child has been diagnosed with a specific disability is too late. . . . Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone’s reading skill at the end of grade 3. . . . A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by the end of third grade is quite unlikely to graduate from high school. (pp. 16, 21)

We must not wait until students experience failure before meeting their needs. Our research and experiences tell us that we cannot afford to wait. This book explains what to do and how to take action instead of waiting for students to fail.

WHAT IS NEW IN THE SECOND EDITION?

Much has changed in the educational landscape since the publication of the first edition of this volume in 2000. The federal No Child Left Behind Act was signed into law in 2002, launching a new precedent in standards and accountability. In addition, since that time, studies have been conducted on schools and districts that have made significant gains in student achievement for low-income students, students of color, students with disabilities, and students for whom English is not their first language (Chenoweth, 2007; Childress, Elmore, Grossman, & Johnson, 2007; Maynes & Sarbit, 2000; Oakes, Quartz, Ryan, & Lipton, 2000; Perry, 1997; Riester, Pursch, & Skrla, 2002; Scheurich, 1998; Scheurich & Skrla, 2003; Theoharis, 2004, 2008; Touchton & Acker-Hocevar, 2001; Vibert & Portelli, 2000). Some of these studies have focused on schools that have not only raised student achievement, but have done so by eliminating pull-out, segregated programs and eliminating tracking (Capper & Young, 2007; Theoharis, 2004, 2008). It is these schools that are the focus of this book. We describe these schools as integrated, socially just schools. That is, in these schools, students with disabilities, students of color, low-income students, and students for whom English is not their first language have made significant achievement gains, and these students are educated in heterogeneous schools and classrooms.

Importantly, at the time we wrote the first book, when we taught students in our classes and worked with educators in the field, we talked about educating students in heterogeneous settings and offered suggestions for ways that educators could transform schools toward this end. At that time, we were familiar with heterogeneous classrooms in a few schools. In the past five years, however, we and others have conducted research where educators have transformed entire schools (Capper & Young, 2007; Theoharis, 2004, 2008) and in a few places entire school districts into integrated, socially just schools and districts. Thus, at this point in time, we are not just saying that integrated, socially just schools are a good idea, but that these schools and districts actually exist.

What is important about these integrated, socially just schools and districts is that these districts and schools function under the same financial constraints as all schools. All these schools and districts must adhere to the latest federal and state education policies. All of these schools and districts have parents and families that are involved in traditional ways and families that are not. All of these schools and districts are in communities that are also challenged. Yet, the educators in these schools and districts have significantly raised the achievement of students who are low income, students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, or students who are of color, and they have done so via heterogeneous schooling. What we can learn from these schools and districts is that, if they can do it operating under the same constraints as all other schools and districts, then there is no reason that every single school and district in the United States of America cannot become an integrated, socially just school. The purpose of this book is to help educators know where to start and to move ahead toward this end.

These changes in the education landscape and the fact that we now know so much more than we did in the past about how to educate students to the highest possible standards in heterogeneous learning communities resulted in us making important revisions in this second edition. We appreciate the time the external reviewers took to read our first edition and to make suggestions for changes. We also appreciate the students in our courses who offered their feedback. We especially appreciate our continued work with educators who have invited us to their schools and districts to help them move forward in the process. We have learned much from how the educators are thinking about this process and where they see the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. New additions and changes to this second edition include the following:

1. In the opening chapter, we deleted a planning process we had suggested earlier and replaced that with characteristics of integrated, socially just schools. These schools and districts can serve as a benchmark from which educators can measure their current status and provide a goal and vision of where they are headed.
2. In Part I, we combined Chapters 2 and 3 from the first edition into a new Chapter 2. We revised the questions necessary to move the process along to questions that reflect an integrated, socially just vision. In this same chapter, we also revised some of the steps educators can take to shift from programs to services. We also provide several graphic examples of current and future service delivery models and discuss how educators can use these models to inform their planning process.
3. Also in Part I, we combined Chapters 4, 5, and 6 into a new Chapter 3. We completely rewrote the entire section on the principal's role to reflect the new knowledge and practice about leading for social justice.
4. In Part II, in addition to editing changes, we moved the Standards for Student Behavior to be the second chapter following the chapter on Standards for Physical and Emotional Safety.
5. Also in Part II, we combined the chapters that focused on teaching and assessment into one chapter. Though the assessment section received editing changes, we significantly revised the teaching and learning section to reflect what we have learned from our research and experience in integrated, socially just schools.
6. In Part III, we changed the focus to how to leverage law and policy toward integrated, socially just ends and combined the previous two chapters into one chapter.

7. Also in Part III, we significantly revised the last chapter to be more specific on how to make further changes toward an integrated, socially just school/district.
8. We completely revised all end-of-chapter self-evaluations to reflect the new content of each chapter.
9. In the Resource section of the book, we deleted the Assets handout. In addition, we replaced the Demographic Data Questionnaire, Resource B, with a revised, improved, and more powerful Equity Audit Questionnaire.

Since the publication of the first edition of this book, we have also published a new book, *Leading for Social Justice: Transforming Schools for All Learners* (Frattura & Capper, 2007). We view this revised edition as laying the conceptual groundwork and first steps toward creating and sustaining integrated, socially just schools. Our 2007 book goes into much greater detail about topics germane to this change process, such as using data and changing the school structure, including the best use of teacher teams, high-quality teaching for English language learners, and reallocating resources.

LEADING BEYOND THE “LOTTERY” SYSTEM

One of our graduate students completed her PhD study on first-generation students of color and their experiences as students in highly selective majors at a major research university (Chonwerawong, 2006). Her study included examining their educational histories and how they came to be accepted and enrolled in the university. One African American student grew up in the projects of Los Angeles with a drug-addicted mother who was jailed when he was a teen. His father was not present. He helped his grandmother raise his younger siblings. As an elementary student, a guidance counselor suggested that he attend a particular, academically challenging middle school. Toward the end of his middle school, a teacher suggested he attend a particular high school that would prepare him for college. He said he had never considered college. At the high school, a guidance counselor helped him with college applications. This same counselor made a call to this research university on behalf of this student. The student was then accepted to this university and, as of this writing, is nearing the completion of his engineering degree.

This story shows the power that educators can make in the lives of students. If it were not for a particular guidance counselor or teacher looking out for and advocating for this student, he would have never attended college. At the same time, however, we could say this student was “lucky.” He essentially had “won” the educational lottery by happening to connect with these particular staff members. His story does not account for all the other students who may have also been qualified for and deserving of college admittance who were not so lucky.

Leading beyond inclusion means leading beyond this educational lottery system. In integrated, socially just schools and districts, leaders create integrated structures, ensure their schools are safe and that all students feel valued and feel a sense of belonging, and make high achievement of every single student in the school their highest priority. They ensure that every single student succeeds—not because a student just happened to have an excellent reading teacher in second grade, or just happened to attend a middle or high school where all students had access to a highly rigorous curriculum beyond tracking. Students attain the highest achievement possible in these schools and districts because of the leadership and the design of the school, not by chance.

AN INVITATION: NOT THE DEFINITIVE ANSWER, ALWAYS MORE QUESTIONS

Much appreciation goes to the students in our university classes and for our conversations with educators in the field for all their creative ideas, for challenging us, and for being honest with their struggles and triumphs in their day-to-day work in schools. Not all the ideas in this book are new, but we hope that putting the ideas together in one place will be helpful. The perspectives we share here present our current thinking and practice. We do not pretend to have all the answers. Our promise is to continue asking ourselves and others equity-oriented, social justice questions, and from those questions new ideas or a reframing of previous ideas in this book will emerge. We welcome you to join us in the conversation by contacting us and sharing your experiences with meeting the needs of students of all abilities in integrated, socially just schools.

HANDOUT 0.1 Leading Beyond Inclusion

<i>Traditional Perspective of Including Students</i>	<i>Inclusive Perspective</i>	<i>Beyond Inclusive Perspective</i>
The problem is within students.	We use terms such as <i>students with disabilities</i> and <i>students without disabilities</i> .	All students are considered gifted and challenged in varying ways.
Programs must fix students, and after students are fixed, they can return to the school or classroom.	We still rely on an “expert” model of building teams to make decisions, although at times parents and students are included more.	Curriculum and instruction are restructured to the benefit of all students.
Programs should be made more efficient and coordinated.	We search for positive problem alternatives based on student strengths.	All students are prepared to make a difference in their communities.
Educators do not take responsibility for all students in the neighborhood/building.	We advocate for students of all abilities in the classroom.	Students do not need a label to receive an education that matches their gifts and learning styles.
Students are referred and labeled to receive help.	Students with labels seldom assist students without labels.	Students do not need to fail before learning needs are addressed.
We rely on “expert” building teams to make decisions.	Labels remain intact: a definite distinction between “general” and “special” education.	All educators take ownership of all students.
The focus is on student deficits.	For students to receive services, they need a label.	Emphasis is on early instruction and intervention.
We slot students into programs.	We emphasize cooperation, collaboration, and accommodation, but the overall curriculum remains unchanged.	We limit our use of language that separates students (e.g., general, special, with disability, without disability).
Students belong as long as they do not disrupt the flow of education.	Lots of time and resources are spent on who is and who is not included and to what extent.	All students receive small-group or individual help at some point in the day to maximize their learning potential.

(Continued)

HANDOUT 0.1 (Continued)

<i>Traditional Perspective of Including Students</i>	<i>Inclusive Perspective</i>	<i>Beyond Inclusive Perspective</i>
Students have to “jump hoops” to be accepted in the school or classroom (achieve, behave, appear and act like other students).	We generally ignore issues of race, ethnicity, at-risk, gender, sexual orientation, and other student differences and their intersection.	
Lots of time and resources are spent on who does and who does not attend special programs.	The focus is on how students “fit in.”	
When teachers are frustrated or unsuccessful, they blame students but do not look at the overall education for all students.		
The extent to which students are included is based on student deficits, not on how to change education in general.		
Students do not attend the school they would attend if they did not have a label.		
Administrative structures perpetuate segregation (e.g., a “special” technology committee, rather than one technology committee for all students that also addresses special technology).		