

# ***CRUCIAL TERMS FINAL REPORT***

## **Finding a Way Through the Maze: Crucial Terms Used in Education Provision for Canadians with Disabilities**

- **RECOMMENDED DEFINITIONS &  
SUPPORTING GROUNDED FINDINGS**

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## **PROJECT PARTNERS**

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**RECOMMENDED DEFINITIONS AND  
SUPPORTING GROUNDED FINDINGS**

## The Crucial Terms Project (CTP) in General

Education for Canadian learners with disabilities has not been marked by success as commonly conceived in education, for all but a few. The approach adopted beginning in the 1850s with major institutions and continuing to the present, has been one based, theoretically, on need to separate these learners from their typical peers for their own good and the good of their peers. Beginning in the early 1900s and burgeoning through the 1950s and 1960s growth in special classes, designated by category of disability, occurred. Through the 1970s to the present, many learners have been integrated in regular classrooms of community schools on a fulltime or part-time basis. This range of possible, or alternate placements from residential institutions to integration in regular classrooms is known as the Special Education Model (SEM).

During the late 1980s, and experiencing significant growth since, the Inclusive Education Model (IEM) has taken a different approach. Under this model the regular classroom in the company of typical peers is the single placement for learners with disabilities. Beginning in Canada and the Scandinavian nations, inclusive education is based on social justice. The argument is that to separate learners with disabilities from the general education community violates the rights of learners with disabilities and their families.

While gaining popularity in many nations, particularly those such as India and Malta where inclusion is national policy, inclusive education has not supplanted special education in the majority of nations. The two models exist side-by-side, mostly with special education as the more dominant, in a state of tension. As advocates argue and discuss the merits of the two approaches, confusion has developed. Much of this confusion centres about the terminology descriptive of the two models. Some terms appear to hold fundamentally similar meanings across special and inclusive education. Other terms are jointly used, but with different meanings. The result has been confusion.

The Crucial Terms Project resulted from a number of calls within Canada for development of clear terminology. Participants in the 2003 national study of sufficiency of Canadian research into inclusive education (Bunch and Persaud) and the recent review of education for learners with disabilities in Nova Scotia both called for action to clarify terminology. The issue was mentioned in the 2003 *International Scan of Issues: Children with Disabilities and Their Families* published by the Roeher Institute. Even more recently (Personal Communication, June 2005) the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ontario Minister of Education publicly suggested it was time for the province to review its definitions. Given this level of interest in the issue and its importance, this project was designed and submitted for funding.

This project, referred to informally as the Crucial Terms Project (CTP), was developed to explore how Canadians use terms across the two models. What terms are employed across inclusive education and special education with the same meaning? What terms have different meaning? The objective of the CTP is to develop recommended definitions for confusing crucial terms, definitions which reflect how Canadians understand and use the terms.

Project staff included Gary Bunch as Project Director, Corrine Humphries and then Kevin Finnegan as Project Assistant, Robert Dore as Advisor for French Canada,

and Louise Dore as Coordinator for French Canada. Local Meeting Coordinators were selected to organize Focus Groups.

Project partners were York University, the Marsha Forest Centre, People First Ontario, the Université d'Québec à Montréal, and the Canadian Abilities Foundation. Funding was contributed by the Department of Social Development of the federal government.

### **Design of the Crucial Terms Project**

The CTP has three data sources for the views of Canadians on what crucial terms mean, what agreements exist, and where differences occur. These data sources were:

- A review of Canadian literature from 1990 to determine how terms descriptive of the Special Education and of Inclusive Education are used by Canadian writers on disability and education.
- Development of a Crucial Terms Questionnaire (CTQ) in French and English. The CTQ was distributed across French and English Canada, with 800 English language and 400 French language.
- A series of regional focus group meetings held in Toronto, Saskatoon, Victoria, Montreal, and Sydney. Focus group participants were provided with analyses of the first two data sets in preparation for their meetings.
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This final report combines the three data sets to develop recommended definitions of crucial terms for Canadian use.

### **Selected Crucial Terms**

An initial brief survey of terms commonly used in Canadian educational literature was conducted. Some 60 terms were found (see Appendix A). A list of these terms was forwarded to 20 Canadians recognized as familiar with both Special Education and Inclusive Education. Parents, people with disabilities, academics, advocates, and practitioners were involved. This group was requested to nominate terms that, in their experience, were causing confusion. From these individual selections, a final list of the terms most frequently chosen was compiled. These terms are:

- Alternate Placement
- Cascade/Continuum of Services
- Collaboration
- Congregated Class
- Curriculum Adaptation/Modification
- Facilitator
- Full Inclusion
- Inclusion
- Inclusive Philosophy
- Integration
- Mainstream

- Peer Tutors
- Remediation
- Resource Room
- Resource Teacher
- Segregation
- Special Class
- Special Education
- Special School

## **Literature Scan**

With few exceptions, the only literature reviewed involved Canadian authors. The exceptions were reference to terms search through Google or Master Mind. Limited use was made of this source. Other literature mentioned in the report is employed to add to discussion and was not used to contribute to development of the list of crucial terms, nor the development of recommended definitions. Some 47 pieces of literature were reviewed. 24 contributed to analysis.

The Project Director, assisted by the Project Assistant, searched the literature, assembled the general list of terms, chose those to whom this list was sent, and then selected the terms most often mentioned as confusing.

Canadian literature consulted was from 1990 onwards for the main part. The literature included texts on education of learners with disabilities, books by parent and other organizations, research reports, and organization position statements. A sense of how governments employed terms was obtained as well, though Ministry of Education definitions were not used as they may have influenced focus group discussions to too great a degree.

The Project Director and the Project Assistant conducted the literature analysis. Advice was contributed by the Advisor for French Canada. Translation of the report into French was undertaken by the Coordinator for French Canada with support from the Advisor for French Canada.

Participants in English language focus groups received the English version of the literature analysis. Those participating in the French language focus group meeting received the French version. Participants were requested to become familiar with the report in preparation for focus group meetings.

## **Crucial Terms Questionnaire**

The CTQ was developed by the Project Director and the Project Assistant. The French version of the questionnaire, based on the English version, was developed by the Advisor for French Canada and the Coordinator for French Canada.

The CTQ focused on the 20 terms noted earlier as most confusing. An early version of the CTQ was piloted by university students and others. Revisions were made and the final CTQ established. Procedures and sample items were inserted in the final version.

As mentioned earlier the French and English language CTQs were distributed across Canada. They were sent to all school systems, faculties of education, Ministries of

Education, and a range of organizations of people with disabilities, parent groups, teacher federations, and advocacy groups. Recipients represented both those who favoured the Special Education Model and those who favoured the newer Inclusive Education Model.

The CTQ also was advertised in Abilities Magazine, a publication of the Canadian Abilities Foundation, a CTP partner. The CTQ was available in hard copy or could be accessed by e mail attachment.

Respondents to the CTQ were requested to:

- State their individual definitions for each term.
- State what they considered their definition to mean.
- Indicate whether they viewed each term as more associated with the Special Education Model, the Inclusive Education Model, or both.
- State why they made this choice.

The CTQ is a challenging questionnaire to complete. The nature of the information required and the number of terms involved meant that considerable time, concentration, and effort had to be expended. It was realized in advance that these requirements forecast a modest return of questionnaires. Nevertheless, the response rate was sufficient to support analysis. CTQ analyses were forwarded to all focus group participants in advance of focus group meetings to support informed participation.

### **Focus Group Meetings**

Focus group meetings were held in Toronto, Saskatoon, Victoria, Montreal, and Sydney. Participants were drawn from organizations of people with disabilities, advocates of inclusive education and of special education, parent groups, school systems with special education and inclusive policies, Ministries of Education, Faculties of Education, First Nations, and youth groups. Effort was made to create a balance between participants favouring the special education approach and those favouring inclusive education. This was in keeping with the objective of the Crucial Terms Project being neutral regarding the two approaches, and in developing recommended definitions. The effort was successful in large part. There were two occasions when members of one particular parent group indicated that they considered the project to be biased. This view was made plain before the project had been described fully and focus group discussions had begun for these meetings. At the end of these meetings, this view seemed revised.

Each focus group meeting lasted a full Saturday. Saturday was chosen as it permitted a wide range of participants to attend. The Project Director and Project Assistant attended each meeting, but did not participate in any focus group at the meetings. To have done so would have resulted in the PD and PA having undue input into project findings.

Each meeting involved 25 to 30 participants, including notetakers and the Local Meeting Coordinator. This larger group was divided into smaller groups of 4 to 6 for discussion, each with a notetaker. Each group was assigned approximately 8 terms for which they were to develop recommended group definitions. To assist in this process all focus group members had received the literature scan report and the CTQ report in advance of their meetings.

Notetakers submitted records of discussions of individual focus groups. The PD and PA undertook analysis of the English language focus group reports. The Advisor for French Canada and the French Language Coordinator undertook analysis of the French language focus group reports. These analyses were blended with the literature scan and CTQ analyses for this final project report.

### **Developing Recommended Definitions from Grounded Data**

The essential objective of the CTP was to develop recommended definitions for terms descriptive of the Special Education and Inclusive Education approaches to education for Canadians with disabilities. Certain crucial terms are causing confusion around how the two approaches intersect or are separate. There is value in clarifying definitions so that discussion and educational decision making may proceed on more productive bases.

Data gathered during the CTP provide a sense of the nature of discussion in Canada. The data also provide opportunity to evaluate the direction of discussion, the differing views held, and points of agreement. The data sources were designed to provide a wide view of Canadian thought on the terms selected for study. They also were designed to bring information from those favouring continuance of the special education approach and those favouring a shift to the inclusive education approach.

Data from the three reports was analyzed using a basic constant comparative method of reading and rereading each report, finding points of interest, finding other points of similar nature, and blending these into categories of interest for development of recommended definitions. This method promotes grounding of findings in the contributions of participants, as represented in the literature, CTQ, and focus groups analyses.

Discussion of each individual term in the following pages begins with whether the term has been deemed more connected to the Special Education Model, or to the newer Inclusive Education Model, or is connected to both. This reading of connectedness comes from the CTQ item which asks for a direct decision in this regard. Discussion is supported by reference to appropriate points in the literature review, and focus groups.

Following this common introductory piece, each category of interest under each term is discussed fully with exemplars of participant comments given. Most categories eventually contributed to the recommended definitions. A few categories did not contribute as they focused on issues and concerns beyond the gambit of a definition. The categories were developed and recorded in this report as they are part of the data and do much to round out the nature of discussion.

***Please note that all quotations are as given by participants. No alterations or corrections to syntax or grammar have been made. Square brackets indicate where the report authors have inserted clarifications in the text.***

## ALTERNATE PLACEMENT

### Associated with Special Education Model<sup>1</sup>

All three data sources, the scan of the Canadian literature, responses to the CTQ, and comments of focus group participants made it clear that Alternate Placement is closely associated with the Special Education Model. Participants (85 %) made this association, while only 5 % and 10 % made an association with the Inclusive Education Model or with both models respectively. Alternate Placements form the underlying structure of the cascade/continuum implementation structure.

- *This term represented a continuum.*
- *A continuum.*
- *A range of different settings.*
- *A continuum of services.*
- *The Special Education Model.*
- *Various types of special class settings.*

Following is analysis of participant responses. Characteristics which serve as the underlying structure of a recommended definition of Alternate Placement.

### Settings Away From the Regular Classroom

A broad definition of Alternate Placement was offered by a number of focus group participants.

- *Any and all educational settings other than the regular classroom.*

A larger group of CTQ and other focus group participants was more specific in describing what constituted an alternate setting.

- *A special setting.*
- *Somewhere outside the regular classroom or school and away from the peer population.*
- *A special school, a resource room setting.*
- *Special needs class.*
- *A resource room.*

Both the broader definition and the more specific statements emphasize that Alternate Placements are set apart from regular classes, and even regular schools. Removal of one group of students from the regular classroom settings has the effect of social and academic separation of learners with disabilities from their peers.

## Removal from Peers

Separation of learners with disabilities from their typical peers is a characteristic of Alternate Placement. The length of separation was a topic both in the Canadian literature and among focus group participants. Some considered it short-term and connected to integrated placements.

- *A short-term placement with the goal of re-integrating the student.*
- *Alternative Placements [should] always be regarded as temporary ... most systems have integration as the underpinning of their philosophy.*

Not all agreed with the view that Alternate Placement is a temporary educational measure. The opposite view was suggested or clearly stated in the literature or by focus group participants.

- *Students do their schooling away from the regular classroom.*
- *A gifted child may be placed in a conglomerate class 4 days a week and a regular classroom one day a week.*
- *Cascade is a range of settings available on a formal, more or less permanent basis.*

That agreement on the length of placement in an Alternate Placement has not been reached is obvious through such findings. What are more obvious, as previously noted, are the types of alternate settings in which learners with disabilities may be placed.

- *A conglomerate class.*
- *Special needs classes.*
- *A special school, a resource room setting.*
- *A resource room.*
- *A special setting.*

The above discussion indicates that one characteristic of an Alternate Placement is that learners with disabilities are separated or removed from contact with their typical peers for periods of time ranging up to permanent. This much is clear from the data obtained.

## Response to Student Needs

Many responses made the point that placement in an Alternate Placement was in response to perceived student needs. This view was related to the belief that some needs were so distinct that individual goals could be met only in the Alternate Placement.

- *Selected on the basis of meeting needs of individual students with disabilities.*

- *Requires program other than regular and different supports.*
- *Placement allowing students to better achieve goals.*
- *Learner has needs the regular classroom cannot meet.*
- *Individualized placement optimizes potential for success.*
- *Alternate placement promised more success for students with disabilities.*
- *Not about value, ethic – about responding to students needs.*
- *Meets needs of children whose needs are not being met.*

The number and directness of such comments makes it clear that a significant number of participants believe that the flexibility of the Special Education Model empowers educators and students in meeting individual needs which cannot be met for learners with disabilities in the company of their typical peers, and in supporting learners with disabilities to achieve educational goals.

### **Response to Failure of Regular Classroom in Meeting Needs**

An opposite interpretation was offered by another sizeable group of participants. This view suggested that Alternate Placement is response to lack of success by regular classroom teachers in meeting individual needs, and the setting of expectations which learners with disabilities could not meet.

- *Learners with disabilities were unable to meet the demands of the curriculum.*
- *Not able to function in the regular classroom.*
- *Not wanted in the regular classroom.*
- *Student is viewed as academically weak or being behaviourally inappropriate and a special setting is required.*
- *For one reason or another, the regular education system had rejected students with disabilities as part of its responsibility.*
- *The regular classroom lacks time and resources.*
- *The regular classroom does not wish to adapt or modify.*

These views are in opposition to those of participants who see learners with disabilities as intrinsically requiring an Alternate Placement. This latter group holds the view that Alternate Placement is required due to academic need. The second group suggests that Alternate Placement is seen as needed because of inappropriate demands put on students, unresponsiveness in adapting and modifying programs, and rejection of responsibility to do so on the basis of lack of resources and lack of student progress.

### **The Place of Curriculum**

Thus, two views of why students may require Alternate Placement emerge. Two views also emerged from analysis of data related to curriculum. One is that special curricula are required to meet needs of individual learners with disability.

- *Special curriculum [is needed] to meet needs.*
- *Something [a curriculum] entirely different.*

- *Differences in curriculum.*
- *Requires program other than regular.*
- *Abandon academic expectations.*
- *The curriculum of the alternate setting.*

Another group of participants is not as certain of need for a special curriculum. Whereas the first group seems to accept that learners with disabilities cannot meet the demands of the regular curriculum, even to the extent that academic expectations must be abandoned, a lesser number believe the curriculum need not be different.

- *Curriculum may/may not be different.*
- *Same curriculum [as regular class].*

Nevertheless, on the whole, majority opinion is that Alternate Placement is necessary for some learners with disabilities as they are unable to deal with regular curriculum. A special curriculum, designed to meet perceived needs, is believed to be available in Alternate Placements.

### **Recommended Definition**

Obvious differences of opinion exist with regard to Alternate Placement. Whereas most understand that Alternate Placement means placement in special settings, sharp disagreement exists on need for special settings for learners with disabilities. Based on majority opinion as reflected in project data, the following definition is recommended.

*Alternate Placement, associated with the Special Education Model, refers to placement of learners with disabilities in one of the special settings of the continuum of services model. Such settings are considered required by learners with disabilities who are seen as needing specialized teachers and specially designed curricula on a full-time or part-time basis to meet their needs.*

<sup>1</sup> Association percentages are taken from responses to the DTQ item requesting participants to state whether a term is more associated with the Inclusive Education Model, the Special Education Model, or is associated with both.

## CASCADE/CONTINUUM MODEL

### Associated with Both Models

Reynolds, in the 1960s, first suggested picturing the Special Education Model as a series of steps ranging from institutional to regular classroom placement of learners with disabilities. His schematic diagram was referred to as a continuum of services. Deno came forth with Deno's Cascade, a similar suggestion, in the early 1970s. Both versions were designed laid out the possible range of special education placements for learners with disabilities. In 1999 Winzer relabelled the top two steps, the integration levels, of the continuum as "inclusion". Winzer thus equated inclusion with integration, a placement always associated with the special education model. Weber and Bennett referred to the Special Education Model as a range of services, another term commonly used. Weber and Bennett also equate integration with inclusion, using the term total integration.

This review of the history of the Cascade or Continuum or Range of Services Model is provided here as background for the following summary of discussion during the Crucial Terms Project on the Cascade/Continuum Model. Considerable confusion was apparent in CTQ responses and focus group responses for this term. Overall, approximately half of respondents (38 %) associated the Cascade or Continuum Model with Special Education while 45 % associated it with Inclusion, and 17 % with both.

### The Continuum of Services as a Spectrum of Placements

Apparent from all three data sources was that the Cascade of Continuum Model of educational services took the form of a spectrum. The spectrum ranged from placement of learners with disabilities in totally segregated settings such as residential institutions to full-time integration in regular classrooms. As services moved further from the regular classroom, services were increasingly specialized and contrived and fewer learners with disabilities were involved.

- *A spectrum of services from regular education to segregation.*
- *A range of placement options starting with the regular classroom up to the special school/hospital.*
- *Alternate placements ranging from the regular classroom to segregated settings.*
- *A series of options that move from contrived to more natural arrangements.*
- *The settings or learning environments are progressively more specialized.*
- *Increasingly restrictive environments with the point of the triangle [formed by the triangular schematic diagram of the Cascade or Continuum] generally considered to be the most restrictive because it denotes children in home-bound instruction, who have little opportunity for social interaction with their peers.*

The picture becomes confused when two other terms, Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and Most Enabling Environment (MEE), are inserted into the discussion. Both terms originated in the United States and both refer to placement along the Special

Education Cascade/Continuum. Both refer to placement of some learners with disabilities in fully segregated settings and to others in regular classrooms.

- *Services from LRE and narrowing for fewer students.*
- *Like Least Restrictive Environment.*
- *Important philosophical principles of the model are that students always be placed in the most enabling environment.*
- *Students always [should] be placed in the most enabling environment, and that no restricted placement ever be considered as permanent.*

This point brings up a principle of the Continuum. Full-time regular classroom placement with regular teacher support is the first choice. Second choice is regular classroom with specialist support. Third choice is regular classroom part-time and special class part-time. Under the Continuum Model the term “Integration” applies to all three.

Apparent in some participant responses is that Integration, as associated with the Special Education Model, subsumes Inclusion.

- *The special education range of placements includes inclusion.*
- *[The LRE] program can be designed to focus on the most inclusive environment.*
- *[LRE signifies] students in most inclusive environment.*

Terms such as “most inclusive environment” introduce confusion into the discussion as do Least Restricted Environment and Most Enabling Environment. All carry within them acknowledgement that some learners with disabilities may be placed on a full-time or part-time basis in segregated settings. Such placement is placement within the Special Education Model.

### **Driven by Student Needs**

The three data sources contain many statements indicating that the Continuum is a response to differing student needs. Beneath this is the belief that some needs are progressively so different that a range of more and more specialized and more and more segregated settings are required to meet those needs.

- *Needs could be matched to services.*
- *A series of alternate placements to meet the needs of students with disabilities.*
- *A range of options, options driven by needs of students.*
- *Varying location and level dependent on individual needs.*
- *Students are placed along the continuum according to perceived needs.*
- *Driven by the needs of students.*

### **A Process of Placement and Movement**

The Cascade/Continuum is founded on two practices responding to student needs. One is placement along the continuum of services in keeping with perceived needs.

- *May be “administratively” placed in these alternate settings.*
- *A series of alternate placements to meet the needs of students with disabilities.*
- *A place to start recognizing problems and working from that understanding.*

The second practice orients on changing placement in keeping with changing needs. Though the schematic diagram used to picture the Continuum consists of a series of lines dividing placements, these lines are not to be seen as walls preventing movement to other educational settings. Students may be moved toward or away from regular classroom placement as continuing assessment of needs indicates.

- *No restricted placement [should] ever be considered as permanent.*
- *The first choice is the regular classroom and the student is moved as needs are identified.*
- *Usually thought of as a place or label, but should be thought of also as a process.*
- *Move kids out of the regular classroom to later move them back.*
- *Focus on the process. Diminish the notion of places.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Responses to Continuum concept and practice provided evidence of the need to clarify terminology and to reduce confusion. Not only was confusion obvious around terms such as Least Restrictive Environment, Most Enabling Environment, Integration, and Inclusion, but also around Cascade and Continuum. One focus group deliberated at length on whether these terms are synonymous or not. In the end, this group decided they were not synonymous, though they originally were meant to be, and proceeded to define them differently. However, no other group or individual did so and different definitions for these two terms are not suggested. They are treated as one and the same.

The recommended definition takes into consideration various characteristics of the Cascade/Continuum concept as laid out by participants. It also takes into consideration and attempts to clarify various confusions around terminology, which emerged.

*The Continuum (Cascade, Range) of Services Model is fundamental to the Special Education Model. It is based on a series of possible educational placements based on extent of student needs. Placement options begin with full-time regular classroom and move to increasingly specialized and segregated settings. The Continuum connotes a process within which student placement changes as needs change.*

## COLLABORATION

### Associated with Inclusive Education Model

The Collaborative Model has become common across education. It has had particular effect in education of learners with disabilities. The majority of respondents to the CTQ (71 %) saw Collaboration as associated with the Inclusive Model. Twenty four % believed it to be related to either model. Five % believed it to be more connected to the Special Education Model. Comments in the Canadian literature and from focus group participants supported close association with the Inclusive Model.

- *Collaborative problem-solving to promote inclusive education.*
- *Consultation and collaboration are vehicles for the educational reform and renewal process underway in inclusive schools and school systems.*
- *Central to success of inclusive program.*
- *Collaboration is essential to inclusion.*
- *Can work in both, but most associated with inclusion.*

Discussion across data sources suggested characteristics of the Collaborative Model. To place the Collaborative Model in the context seen by participants in the Crucial Terms Project, however, we begin with what the Collaborative Model is not.

### Differentiation from Expert Model

Through direct comment and inference participants differentiated between what some referred to as the expert model and Collaboration.

- *Inclusion is more a sharing and special education is top down.*
- *Collaboration cannot be limited to expert knowledge.*
- *Collaborative knowledge – not imposed or expected from above.*
- *Not just professionals, needs to be anyone involved in student plans.*
- *Imposed knowledge sharing would be leading back to the expert model.*
- *The expert model brought individuals together to be told what to do.*

### Working Together Toward a Common Goal

All three data sources emphasized that Collaboration signifies working together toward a common goal or goals. The idea of shared commitment permeated discussion.

- *To accomplish a goal they share.*
- *Based on mutually defined goals and a common framework.*
- *Mutual goals.*
- *The group working toward a common goal.*
- *Working with others toward a common goal.*
- *Shared commitment needs to be added to the definition.*

- *Need a purpose for the collaboration, therefore, needs to mean you have a common goal.*
- *Presupposes the same goal for all.*

A number of participants pointed out that working together toward a common goal did not preclude disagreement. Putting different ideas on the table is a part of the Collaborative process. *“If you disagree, are you not collaborating?”*

### **A Voluntary Coming Together**

The point that Collaboration is a voluntary process was made a number of times. As noted earlier, participants discerned a difference between Collaboration and the expert model, which is related to a top down approach.

- *Collaboration is voluntary.*
- *Interaction style needs to be voluntary.*
- *Collaboration needs to be voluntary.*
- *Voluntary participation.*

### **Shared Responsibility/Accountability**

Though a voluntary process, participants emphasized that Collaboration is not without responsibility and accountability for those involved.

- *Shared responsibility for key decisions.*
- *Shared accountability for outcomes.*
- *Sharing responsibilities.*
- *Shared accountability.*

### **Parity Among Group Members**

Participants viewed parity among Collaborative group members as a central characteristic. This, again, is part of what differentiates the Collaborative Model from the expert model. Collaboration was viewed as founded on every voice being heard.

- *Collaboration is based on parity.*
- *Utilizing the individual strengths of each person.*
- *Involves shared authority for idea generation.*
- *Each member is free to have input and contribute.*
- *Needs to emphasize each team member is key to different points.*
- *A team of equal partners with equal voice.*
- *All parties have input.*

### **A Team Approach**

Closely related to equal voice is the team nature of a collaborative group in the eyes of many participants. This quality may be considered as assumed by many. However, focus group participants believed it needed to be emphasized.

- *And “knowledge” could not simply be imposed from above or should it always be expected from above, but it should be generated from within a team approach.*
- *Groups need to focus on team work and not conjure the expert model and the notion that experts have the answers and do things.*
- *The process of true teamwork.*
- *Working together as a team. That is, individuals bring their thoughts and needs to a discussion and work out the solution together.*

### **A Diverse Team**

Collaboration, as described by participants in the Crucial Terms Project, involves assembling a diverse group of individuals knowledgeable about the learner with disability being supported. This group includes professionals, whose jobs extend to planning a student’s program complete with stated goals, implementation strategies, and evaluation processes, interacting in their professional capacities.

- *A style of interaction professionals use in order to accomplish a goal they share.*
- *Collaboration and consultation must occur in a professional climate.*
- *Must occur in a professional climate.*

Participants went on to state that involvement of professionals only is not sufficient in a Collaborative team. They extended the team to inclusion of parents, volunteers, and even students. It was clear that many participants believed such individuals were not invited to join Collaborative teams.

- *Working with families, professionals, and volunteers to plan how to best include students in all ways.*
- *True collaboration involves the parents.*
- *Parents often perceive they are not part of the collaboration.*
- *Parent’s involvement is a missing element.*
- *Student outcomes for a variety of members of a team, parents and others.*
- *Students, parents, and their knowledge are seen as an important element that for the most part was absent from collaborative efforts.*
- *[The definition] needs to mention parents.*
- *The group also felt this allowed people who previously were deemed as peripheral to be involved, such as daily care workers and parents.*

### **Not Just Problem-Solving**

Participants spent time considering the breadth of a Collaborative team’s concern. The message was that problem-solving draws too great a focus and that other dynamics slipped off the table.

- *Typically carried out between teachers and other support professionals who get together to solve specific problems.*
- *The relationship is collaborative problem-solving.*
- *Problem-solving approach involving all involved with a student's program.*
- *Mutual problem-solving.*

Participants indicated problem-solving is a powerful need, but it is only a part of what is required. In their view, the “collaborative process” includes problem-solving, “but too great an emphasis on that single aspect might limit the goal of designing effective and efficient learning environments”. They wished other aspects included.

- *Not only find out what the problem is, but find out what students are successful at.*
- *Another area the group felt was missing was when people discuss student concerns, [the topic] is usually in terms of problems, ignoring what success the particular student may be achieving.*
- *Needs to focus on collaborative planning and not problem-solving. A style of interacting used not only for problems, but all to discuss student's successes and strengths, to design instruction rather than to problem solves.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Discussion of Collaboration was wide-ranging. It considered the relationship of Collaboration to the Inclusive Model, the nature and task of a Collaborative team, and the necessary involvement of professionals. However, discussion went beyond these aspects to involvement of parents and others and to need for a wide base for consideration of the educational program of a learner with disability.

*Collaboration refers to a voluntary planning team of diverse membership whose primary members are educators and parents, but with the capacity to include others as appropriate. The mandate of the team is to develop and monitor program goals for learners with disabilities, expanding past problem solving to the whole person. The team is characterized by shared responsibility, and accountability and parity among members. Associated primarily with the Inclusive Model, collaborative planning may be used in support of the educational program of any learner with disability.*

## CONGREGATED CLASS

### Associated with Both Models

Congregated Class is a newer term. It is used in only a few jurisdictions and primarily as an administrative tool, as are most terms describing class make-up for learners with disabilities. Where used, in our experience, it means the same as special class, segregated class, or self-contained class, another newer term. Proliferation of terms as parts of society seek more accurate and appropriate terminology for description of education for learners with disabilities adds to confusion in the area.

Six of ten CTQ participants associated Congregated Class with the Special Education model. Discussion among focus group participants made a strong connection between the term and Special Education. The one Canadian literature reference to the term connected it to Special Education. Three of ten CTQ participants felt Congregated Class referred to Inclusion or to either Model (7 %). Association of the term with Inclusion did not occur during focus group discussion.

### A Separate Environment

A characteristic of Congregated Classes, based on all three data sources, is that learners with disabilities are set apart from typical learners for educational purposes. Though a set of CTQ participants suggested the term Congregated Class could refer to Inclusion, this point was not developed further in any data source.

- *Totally separated environment.*
- *Segregated from mainstream.*
- *Classes for students with behavioural problems are another example of accepted division [between students] in schools.*
- *Students are not exposed to typically developing peers.*
- *Grouped together forever.*
- *There is no inclusion in a Learning Centre because everyone is the same.*

### Synonymous with Special Class, Segregated, & Self-Contained Class

Participants definitely viewed the terms Segregated Class and Congregated Class as synonymous with Special Class, and to the newer term Self-Contained Class. All terms used to define Congregated Class carried the idea of separation of learners with disabilities from typical learners, and all were synonymous with Special Class.

- *A segregated class.*
- *A segregated class.*
- *Self-contained class.*
- *Segregated classes.*
- *A self-contained classroom.*
- *Special class/self-contained class.*

## **Driven by Student Needs**

Two conjoined concepts, similar needs and similar abilities, were advanced with frequency as a rationale for Congregated Classes. It was apparent in discussion among participants that a strong characteristic of Congregated Class was grouping to meet educational needs of learners with similar needs and similar levels of ability.

- *Challenged by interchange with others like themselves.*
- *Students with similar needs.*
- *Similar students in abilities, handicaps, and behaviours.*
- *Grouped according to physical, psychological, or intellectual needs.*
- *Assumes likeness due to shared disabilities and that needs can be met.*
- *Group with similar needs.*
- *Common need.*
- *Perceived to have similar needs.*
- *Place where people of similar needs/disabilities come together in order that their needs can be met.*

## **Grouping of Dissimilar Needs and Abilities**

Not all participants agreed that grouping of learners with disabilities with similar needs and abilities was a characteristic of Congregated Classes. A strong theme among responses was that, though similar need and ability may be an objective, frequently the opposite occurred in practice.

- *The students in a Congregated Class might well not all share the same condition of needs.*
- *A class where students with varying disabilities are brought together.*
- *Attention Deficit Disorder kids lumped with learning disability kids.*
- *Congregated classes were being used as a 'catch-all' for a variety of students with dissimilar strengths and concerns.*
- *When grouping occurs with a variety of disabilities, the purpose is lost.*
- *They do not all have the same likes/dislikes, interests, or abilities.*

## **Recommended Definition**

A degree of confusion around whether Congregated Class referred to the Special Education or the Inclusive Model emerged during discussion. However, the larger discussion tied Congregated Classes firmly to Special Education and as synonymous with Special Class, Segregated Class, and Self-Contained Class. A Congregated Class is a class for learners with disabilities separated from classes for typical learners.

A clear rationale for Congregated Classes as being based on response to similar needs and abilities was developed through analysis of a large group of participant comments. Another group, however, challenged whether the rationale was carried out in practice. However, it is the intent behind establishment of a Congregated Class that

should appear in a definition of the term. That some practitioners experience difficulty in carrying through an intent is not an appropriate point for inclusion in a definition.

*Congregated Class refers to a segregated class based on similar needs and abilities of learners with disabilities. Programs of instruction appropriate to meeting these needs are offered. The term is synonymous with Special Class, Segregated Class, and Self-Contained Class. It is associated with the Special Education Model.*

## CURRICULUM ADAPTATION, ACCOMMODATION, MODIFICATION

### Associated with Inclusive Education Model

Though the Crucial Terms Project focused on the terms Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation, a third term, Curriculum Modification, emerged in the literature scan, responses to the CTQ, and in focus group discussion. All three terms will be discussed here.

The majority, 80 %, of CTQ respondents associated the terms with Inclusive Education, while a further 15 % associated it with both Inclusive Education and Special Education Models. Few associations were made with the Special Education Model.

First, a discussion of the relationships with the regular curriculum.

### Relationship With Regular Curriculum

Discussion on this point emerged strongly from CTQ participants. Two relationships were made; the regular curriculum is the basis of instruction for all learners; all learners should learn from the regular curriculum in regular classrooms.

- *Working with the curriculum of the regular class and treating it in various ways to include learners with disabilities.*
- *Working from regular curriculum for all and fitting it to individual needs.*
- *Work from the regular curriculum.*
- *Following the regular curriculum.*
- *Support the student with disabilities in completing curriculum-based work.*
- *Students with disabilities were not to follow a different curriculum.*
- *Allowed students with disabilities to remain in the mainstream.*
- *Allows students to participate in the curriculum and remain in the regular class.*
- *To participate in the general life of the classroom.*
- *They allow all to participate in the mainstream curricula.*
- *Allows students to remain with peers.*

Participants recognized that some learners would not be at a level to master exactly the same curriculum as typical students. They described situations in which changes to the curriculum were required and also commented on specific types of changes. The comments below are given in a general sense and are not tied directly to any one of the three terms. They are tied to meeting individual needs and promoting success.

- *Altering curriculum content to meet individual needs.*
- *Changing curriculum expectations so that students with disabilities can succeed.*
- *Changing curriculum to meet student needs by different materials, pace, and amount.*
- *These are based on the idea that all are unique and should be taught in that manner.*
- *This usually will happen when it is clear that the child is having a lot of difficulty that cannot be dealt with in other ways.*

- *Allowing for creative ways to gain knowledge and express knowledge gained.*

## **Curriculum Adaptation**

Curriculum Adaptation was treated in two manners. General comments describing adaptive instruction were made. These included mention of essential dynamics such as evaluation, specific goals, and addressing individual needs.

- *Adapted education program: For an exceptional student, a program based on ongoing assessment with specific goals and approaches that meet a student's needs.*
- *Adapted program: Education program for a child with special needs means a program based on the results of ongoing assessment and evaluation, and includes an individual program plan (IPP) with specific goals and objectives and recommendations for educational services that meet student needs.*
- *Adaptive instruction requires regular and special teachers to respond and adapt innovatively and collaboratively to the unique learning needs of all students. Adaptive instruction assumes that each teacher will identify and provide a wide range of instructional supports to effectively master the learning and behavioural objectives.*
- *Regular learning outcomes, adapted to student needs.*
- *Adapting curriculum/environment or instruction to meet student learning needs.*
- *Adapting program or curriculum to meet individual needs.*
- *Adaptation is changing the learning environment so that all kids can access learning.*
- *Adaptation refers to providing students with particular strategies so they can be successful in their learning.*
- *Adaptation involves devising strategies for all learners in all grade levels so that students are more successful.*
- *Valuable as such generalities are in setting essential elements of a tactical approach to educating learners with disabilities, More specific strategic methods used in actual instruction also were noted.*
- *Good teachers adapt materials, teaching techniques, and activities to the particular needs of their students. They build curricula, use concrete techniques, generalize skills, apply learning data at the appropriate level. They provide individual and small group learning instruction, evaluate programs carefully by means of various evaluative techniques, and keep careful records.*
- *Adaptation: A change in what students do or a reshaping of the materials students use. Enlarging the print on a worksheet and audiotaping a book are examples.*
- *Changing method without changing learning objective (e.g. need extra time for the test, but not change test),*
- *Curriculum adaptation involves adjusting methods where curriculum objectives are not altered.*

## **Curriculum Accommodations**

Participants responded to Curriculum Accommodation in a pattern similar to that for Curriculum Adaptation. Comments ranged from quite general to specific.

- *An accommodation is a minor change that assists a child's functioning in the environment.*
- *Accommodation: An adjustment made to an environment, situation, or supplies for individual differences.*
- *Changes made to accommodate the student in meeting objectives of the curriculum.*
- *Accommodation is to enable access to the curriculum. This refers to fully understanding and also expressing.*
- *Accommodation refers to resources, services, devices, that allow the child to access curriculum.*
- *Curriculum accommodation includes the teaching and assessment strategies, human supports, individualized equipment, and environmental changes or supports required by the student in order to learn and to demonstrate learning.*

These comments suggest Curriculum Accommodation is either some type of adjustment involving the learning environment, or it is the set of “resources, services, and devices that allow the child to access curricula”. This either/or possibility injects confusion into the discussion through their differences.

Examples of more specific aspects often were noted.

- *For example, an FM system for a child with hearing impairment; seating close to the teacher for a child with a behavioural disorder.*
- *Moving desks to make wider spaces between them is an accommodation that could be made for a student in a wheelchair.*
- *Could include accommodations such as more time to write the full test or writing the test in a separate room.*
- *Accommodation (ex. Have notes taken for you, calculator used).*
- *Includes giving child additional time, taping notes as opposed to writing them, and the use of a computer.*

Considerable overlap appears to characterize participant perceptions of what constitutes Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation. In some instances, the same instructional strategy was nominated as both an Adaptation and an Accommodation. Further elements of confusion emerged from participants' thoughts on Curriculum Adaptation and Accommodation.

- *Accommodations and adaptations consider environmental adjustments and provide valuable lessons for typical students.*
- *Adaptations and accommodations considered all students equal.*
- *Adaptations and accommodations provide equal opportunity for students with disabilities.*
- *Adaptation and accommodation for foundational objectives stay the same.*

- *Three of three focus group members agree that adaptation is a form of accommodation.*
- *Further, curriculum accommodation is the implementation of the adaptations in the teaching-learning process to make the curriculum more accessible to students and to allow for an accurate reflection of student learning.*
- *One member [of a focus group] felt that if you are adapting, you are accommodating.*
- *Adapt/accommodate should not be treated as synonymous.*

Obviously, the meaning of the terms Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation is uncertain for at least some of CTP participants. There are questions of whether or not the terms are synonymous and, if not, in what ways do they make different contributions to development of an instructional plan for learners with disabilities.

### **Curriculum Modification**

This is the third term under this discussion of a tactical approach to instruction of learners with disabilities. Again, information on this term was found in all three data sets. Many comments suggested, in general fashion that Modification involved altering the regular curriculum in some way.

- *Modifying curriculum means that the content and concepts of the program or course have been simplified to allow for student success.*
- *Modified Curricular Expectations: Individualized expectations different from those of other students, set for exceptional students on the basis of goals and objectives summarized in the IEP.*
- *Modifications occur only when the subject content is changed and simplified.*
- *Modification: A change in what students do or a reshaping of the materials students use.*
- *Making modifications based on individual abilities to allow completion of work.*
- *Modification: Foundational change, can have a different curriculum.*
- *Modifications occur when one changes aspects of the curriculum.*
- *Modification indicates a change in curriculum for specific students with special needs.*
- *The modified curriculum does not meet Provincial requirements and usually takes the form of an individualized educational plan.*
- *This is a crucial issue in Saskatchewan since students who complete Modified Grade 12 do not meet entrance requirements to postsecondary college.*
- *There were concerns that students who were a problem to teachers were put in modified programs, thereby preventing them from completing graduation requirements because it was perceived to be easier than adapting curriculum*

These comments reinforce the idea that Modification means altering the curriculum in some way. The reason for alteration is the promotion of success in school. An issue which arises is whether a modified curriculum meets provincial requirements or acts as a barrier to further education. In addition to the final comments raising this issue, we know

that some school systems in Ontario avoid use of the term Modification in the area of hearing impairment on student records as it is seen as a barrier to success.

Various comments provided examples of how Modifications look in practice.

- *Reducing the number of questions students must answer at the end of a textbook chapter, allowing a student to answer aloud instead of writing an answer, and allowing a student to do an activity that is different from what other students are doing are all examples of modifications.*
- *Modification: ex. Extra time to write the test.*
- *In addition, modification often involves learning less material altogether.*
- *Need to know only ½ the material for the test.*
- *Modification refers to providing material that is not as intense; providing less material to be learned; and somewhat of a “watering down” of content to be learned.*
- *The overall intent is to maximize learning. Only some of the curriculum can be modified, and the student may not be able to participate in some activities.*

The strongest message to come through in these more specific examples is that Modification calls for alteration to the curriculum, most particularly in the amount of content learned. Connecting this to preceding discussion, the impact is that addressing student needs and abilities through Modification raises a barrier to further education. Also connected to this is the unsettling suggestion that some teachers may use the term Modification as it is seen as permitting less teacher effort. A degree of confusion enters the picture in that the specific Modifications mentioned do not differ significantly from examples under Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation.

### **General Discussion**

This is the only area of the Crucial Terms Project where more than one term is dealt with simultaneously. Our rationale for doing so is that the terms are closely associated. There is considerable confusion regarding whether some are synonymous, and regarding what instructional strategies might flow from specific terms. The degree of confusion warrants this general discussion before a recommended definition is offered.

It is obvious that participants, in the main, were familiar with the terms, though one or another might not be used in any particular province or territory. Beyond that, we do not see it as appropriate to state that any term was understood clearly across participants. Evidence for such an analysis may be found in the fact that specific examples under each term frequently could be used under one or both of the other terms. It may be recalled that earlier discussion suggested that the terms Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation might, indeed, be synonymous.

Review of participant comments under Adaptation and Accommodation reveals additional confusion. Some believed these terms to incorporate changes to the curriculum, a dynamic claimed by others to be central to Curriculum Modification.

- *Adaptations are changes to the regular curriculum that retain the same outcomes as those for normally developing children. Adaptations refer to how*

*teachers modify planned instruction beyond their routine adaptations in light of difficulty.*

- *[Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation mean] altering curriculum content to meet individual needs.*
- *[Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation mean] changing curriculum expectations so that the student with disabilities can succeed.*
- *[Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation mean] changing curriculum to meet student needs by different materials, pace, and amount.*
- *The curriculum does not meet student needs, so it is thrown out.*
- *[Accommodation means] changes in the curriculum (content or syllabus).*

Additionally, there is the uncomfortable suggestion that some teachers choose one term over another believing the selected term requires less teacher effort. As seen, certain terms hold great significance for the future of learners with disabilities. This alone is cause to consider use of confusing and overlapping terms.

Lastly, a number of focus groups included in their notes that the terms in question indeed may have no essential meaning to teachers or others involved in the delivery of education to learners with disabilities.

- *The group was concerned that the terms “adaptation” and “modification” not be seen as the same in that they meant very different things that teachers NEEDED to understand more thoroughly the distinction between the two and also the definition to the term accommodation. (Wording from group notes.)*
- *This group (not the same group as above) decided these were bureaucratic term*

Recommended Definition Information drawn from the three data sets presents a picture more of confusion around meaning of terms, than of clarity and agreement. There is evidence that Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation, in particular, may be regarded as synonymous terms. There is evidence, as well, that, though Curriculum Modification is generally understood to theoretically indicate alteration of the regular curriculum, teachers turn to actual instructional strategies much the same as those used under Curriculum Adaptation and Curriculum Accommodation. Further, two draconic possibilities arise around Curriculum Modification. One is that student records indicating a modified program, may function as a barrier to further education. The second is that some teachers may prefer to term an instructional program “modified” in the belief that a modified program requires less teacher effort.

This analysis leads us to recommend that a new term, Enabling Adjustments<sup>2</sup>, be used. This term would cover the meanings of the three existing terms. It would include a full range of adjustments necessary for a strong individualized program. It would avoid the less acceptable consequences associated with Curriculum Modification. It would have clearer meaning for teachers and others.

*Enabling Adjustment refers to development of individualized educational programs for any student requiring such an instructional approach. Adjustments may be made to any aspect of the manner in which instruction is delivered in the regular classroom, and to the form and content of instruction. Adjustments are made in such a manner as to*

*maintain the closest possible connection to the regular classroom curriculum. A necessary element is ongoing assessment and evaluation. The intent is to maximize learning. Closely associated with Inclusive Education, but valuable for any learner in any setting.*

<sup>2</sup> This term is based on the title *Enabling Education*, a publication of the Enabling Education Network of the University of Manchester, England, and on the *Reasonable Adjustments Project* conducted by Disability Equality in Education group of London, England.

## **FACILITATOR**

### **Associated with Inclusive Education Model**

Facilitator is a newer term in education of learners with disabilities. Some 70 % of responses to the CTQ associated it only with the Inclusive Model, with a further 28 % associating it with both the Inclusive and the Special Education Models. Many focus group participants were unfamiliar with the term. As one focus group report commented, *“The majority of the group was not sure if the position existed in Saskatchewan”*, whereas mention was made that B. C. has such a position. The three data sources outlined a number of functions a Facilitator could assume.

### **Program Coordination**

Discussion described a Facilitator as holding responsibility for coordinating various aspects of a student’s regular school program. The Facilitator consults with teachers regarding the program and also consults with parents and related service providers. The Facilitator plays a role in developing and reaching individual goals, including the possibility of direct instruction.

- *Coordinating the services the student receives.*
- *Collaboratively consulting with all teachers, related service providers, and parents.*
- *A facilitator, in terms of students with disabilities, was a person who could support access to the regular class, support inclusion, access curriculum resources, coordinate a student’s program, and support progress toward goals.*
- *Fits into the collaborative model.*

### **Works with Regular Classroom Teachers**

It is obvious that the role of Facilitator calls for a professional with a wide range of experience and skills. Participants in the Crucial Terms Project suggested that a person with the background to become a Special Education Resource Teacher might fill the role. However, emphasis was placed on the fact that a Facilitator was not the same as a Special Education Resource Teacher. The role is new.

- *Quite simply, this new role is to provide and coordinate the supports that enable the successful inclusion of students with disabilities.*
- *In the Inclusive model, the new role of the former resource teacher is to function in inclusive education.*
- *Not simply another role to be added onto the resource teacher.*
- *The person often has a background in special education.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Three aspects related to being a Facilitator stand out in discussion. One is that the role is new and related to the Inclusive Model. The second is that the position is wide-ranging and may take varying responsibilities from school to school and even student to student. The third is that the role calls for someone who can work with people, and who understands that a Facilitator is not simply a special education resource teacher in the traditional sense of the term, the role extends past that in its focus on Inclusion.

*A Facilitator is a resource role focussed on support of inclusion of learners with disabilities. The responsibilities are various, but may orient on individual programs or school-wide support of inclusion, or both. Duties may be carried out in the regular classroom, or at a distance from the regular classroom, or both. The core of the role is coordinating people and resources. Closely associated with Inclusive Education.*

## FULL INCLUSION

### Associated with Inclusive Education Model

Some 90 % of CTQ respondents associated the term Full Inclusion with the Inclusive approach. The balance associated it with Special Education, leaving little confusion regarding the nature of the term. Two themes developed in CTQ responses. One was that learners with disabilities attend regular classes on a routine basis, while the second was that degree of disability was not a placement factor. The other two data sources contributed to these two themes, and led in developing additional themes. One of significance was that Full Inclusion means the same as Inclusion. Therefore, it is a redundant term. Focus group discussants, in particular, made this point.

### Routinely in Regular Classrooms

Many Crucial Terms Project participants made the point that Full Inclusion calls for placement of learners with disabilities in regular classrooms. Most responses indicated that Full Inclusion carries the idea that learners with disabilities are not placed in any other setting.

- *The students are educated for all or most of the day in ordinary classrooms.*
- *Full Inclusion is the integration of students with disabilities in the general education classroom at all times.*
- *Students with disabilities receive all programming with the peer group in neighbourhood school.*
- *Students with disabilities receive support in the regular classroom for 100 % of the day.*
- *Age appropriate class for the entire school day.*
- *Full Inclusion means a full-time presence of a child in a classroom where the child participates in learning activities.*
- *Full Inclusion refers to placing a student with special needs into the regular classroom.*
- *A child included in every activity.*
- *Full participation and citizenship within the educational setting.*
- *Students with disabilities attend (age appropriate) regular education classes with appropriate support.*

Various of the above responses suggest that Full Inclusion calls for appropriate support, acceptance, and age appropriate peers. These points will be extended further under other themes.

### Choice and Respect

A sub-set of responses noted that learners with disabilities would attend the same school any student without disabilities would attend.

- *To attend the same school as their brothers or sisters.*
- *The schools and classrooms they would attend if not disabled.*
- *A student's choice to attend any school he/she wishes.*

Other responses suggested that over-riding issues of belonging, acceptance, and respect applied.

- *Everyone is welcomed and valued in their neighbourhood school.*
- *Not withdrawn or stigmatized in any way.*
- *Everyone belongs.*
- *The premise of belonging.*
- *Every human being has the right to live in and belong to a community.*
- *Complete and total acceptance and belonging of the child within the educational setting.*
- *Full citizenship within the educational setting.*

### **Without Regard to Degree or Type of Disability**

A number of responses emphasized that Full Inclusion involved learners with disabilities having mild to profound levels of challenge. There was no restriction in this regard. No Crucial Terms participant suggested that restrictions applied when the term Full Inclusion was used.

- *Regardless of the nature or severity of the disability.*
- *The education of all students with identified disabilities.*
- *Regardless of degree or type of disability.*
- *Degree of need was not a placement factor.*
- *Regardless of their disabilities.*
- *If the child has an exceptional need, they are still included in full inclusion.*

### **Appropriate Supports are Provided**

Participants stressed that Full Inclusion involves appropriate supports for included learners. A variety of terms discussed elsewhere in this report were employed in making this point. Not providing supports means that Full Inclusion is not happening.

- *The educational program is adapted for their social and academic needs.*
- *Full Inclusion never means placing a student with challenging needs in an ordinary classroom without adaptations or supports.*
- *Both regular students and those with some type of challenge receive appropriate educational programs that are geared to their capabilities and needs.*
- *Instructional practices and technical supports are presently available to accommodate students.*
- *Can Full Inclusion mean that students in the classroom are receiving a modified curriculum? Probably yes.*
- *Everybody working in an adapted environment.*

- *Support should be there so the children can make progress. Finding ways for the children to participate in what they want to do.*
- *Any supports and assistance they and/or their teachers need to be successful in the mainstream.*

### **Same Opportunity**

Responses listed under Choice and Respect are extended by other responses which suggest that Full Inclusion is about having the same opportunities as other learners. If the other students have learning opportunities in keeping with their needs and abilities, the same should be occurring for learners with disabilities.

- *You have the same opportunities as every other child in the school.*
- *All students must have the opportunity to be enrolled in the regular classroom.*
- *The belief that as family members all students should have equal access to regular classrooms.*
- *The child participates in learning activities comparable to those of same age peers.*
- *Treated like every other student within the classroom.*

### **Value of the Term Full Inclusion**

A number of focus group members questioned whether there was value to the term Full Inclusion. They believed Full Inclusion to be synonymous with Inclusion.

- *How can you have full inclusion when inclusion is already **full inclusion**?*
- *Full Inclusion brought up comments such as “Can’t have inclusion unless it’s full” and the term is “in itself something which is redundant”.*
- *My group felt Full Inclusion and Inclusion had the same meaning.*
- *Please note: This group of women felt that “Full Inclusion” was the same as “Inclusion”.*
- *Again there was complete agreement within the group for the final definition. They all agreed that the term “full” should be removed. “Full” does not belong, as something either is or is not inclusive.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Qualities of what Full Inclusion means were developed across the three data sources by participants. These qualities yielded the following definition.

*Full Inclusion is closely associated with the Inclusive Model. It is characterized by routine placement of learners with disabilities, regardless of type or degree of challenge to learning, in regular classrooms of community schools alongside age appropriate typical peers. In fully inclusive regular classrooms learners with disabilities receive acceptance and respect as would any other learner.*

Though qualities sufficient to develop a definition of Full Inclusion could be found in discussion, the question of whether Full Inclusion and Inclusion were synonymous arose. The argument that the two were synonymous was accepted. Therefore, the phrase “*Full Inclusion is synonymous with Inclusion*” should be added to complete the definition. Not to do so would constitute unnecessary confusion among terms.

# INCLUSION

## Associated with Inclusive Education Model

Inclusion is a new term as applied to education of learners with disabilities. Its first usage in this regard by a group of Canadian advocates for inclusion of all persons with disabilities in all facets of community life occurred in 1988. Since that time usage has spread around the globe. The implications of the term as understood by those who coined it were that all persons with disabilities had the right to be included in society, including the education society, as were any other persons (Jack Pearpoint, Personal Communication, 2003). Some 90 % of participants connected inclusion directly to the Inclusive Education Model while 7 % connected it to both models.

All three data sources agreed substantially on central characteristics of inclusion as it applies to educational environments. Winzer (1997, 1998) provided an overview of these characteristics as forming “*subtle but real differences between inclusion and the older terms that it displaced, mainstreaming, least restrictive environment, integration*”.

## As Being a Philosophy of Education

Inclusive education was spoken of as a belief or philosophy and as an educational philosophy aimed at “normalizing” special services, an apparent reference to Wolfenberger’s Principle of Normalization.

Mentions in the literature scan described inclusion as an educational philosophy focused on placement of learners with disabilities in regular classrooms. One reference stated that regular education placement was preferred to “*pulling out students for isolated instruction*”. Inclusion was characterized as a “*philosophy or movement*” and as a “value” and a “positive philosophy”. Participation in regular classrooms was “not something that must be earned”.

However, it was in discussion among focus group participants that the concept of inclusion as a philosophy was most emphasized.

- *Inclusion is a philosophical debate. It is the belief that everybody belongs.*
- *Everybody in the group agreed that inclusion is a good philosophy.*
- *Inclusion is a source of philosophical debate. It also is like the pregnant/little pregnant distinction in that realistically, it exists or it doesn't.*
- *Inclusion was defined as a philosophy, a way of thinking about the world and life that extends past classrooms to school.*
- *Belief that everybody belongs.*

Embedded in a number of such statements, also is that inclusion is noted as being a “right” of students.

## As Having Social Objectives

A significant number of references were made to social objectives of inclusion. Among these were being “*what happens when we consider the needs and dignity of an*

*individual with disabilities” and as enabling “self-confidence, a positive self-image, social behaviours, ... and to feel valued as persons, and to be accepted by society”.* This latter concept that “all children have value” was mentioned more than once in the Canadian literature on inclusion. Responses to the CTQ picked up on the further social objective of learners with disabilities being seen as “*part of the larger community of learners*”, and in the sense that “*We all belong to a common humanity. Each of us needs to feel appreciated and understood. We all belong*”.

Discussion among focus group participants once again echoed findings in the literature scan and in CTQ analysis.

- *The long-range outcomes are citizenship, membership, and self-determination.*
- *It is about community, relationships, and interdependence.*
- *Interdependence, rather than independence.*

### **As Having Academic Objectives**

The cognitive curriculum was recognized as a primary support of inclusive education, as being a base for all students in regular classrooms. It was accepted that some students might not meet the academic standards of the typical students in a classroom. In such instances, Canadian literature suggested, learners with disabilities “should be full members of those classrooms whether or not they can meet traditional curriculum standards”. The view was that “*expectations*” set for typical students “*should be changed*” and that the class teacher and others should tailor instruction “*to the needs of the individual child*”.

This idea of treating academic expectations at the level of the individual rather than of the group was echoed in focus group discussion. It was noted that “*creative problem solving*” might be necessary, that “*flexibility to meet varied needs*” was intrinsic to inclusion, and that “*instruction is differentiated to support curriculum*”. Academic growth was not be neglected, but it was to be expected to occur at the level of the individual’s place on a flexible curriculum.

### **As Peer Centred**

The importance of routine interaction with typical, age-appropriate peers in regular classrooms was noted in all three data sources, particularly in the scan of Canadian literature. Winzer (1998, 1997) summed up the general position neatly. Inclusion “means that all children will be placed in the classrooms they would attend if they did not have a disability”. Winzer emphasized that it was the regular classroom, which provided “*opportunity for maximum interaction with normally developing peers*” (1999). The New Brunswick Association for Community Living ( ) reinforced the rationale for a peer centred focus by stressing that such a focus called for learning “*alongside children their own age*”.

Responses to the CTQ re-emphasized that inclusion “*involves age-appropriate regular classrooms*” and “*interaction with peers*”.

Lastly, focus group participants noted that the regular classroom environment facilitated peer learning, with and from each other, and that such learning occurs only within regular classrooms where all students were together.

### **As Founded on Collaboration**

Collaboration among all those concerned with education of learners with disabilities was viewed as a cornerstone of inclusive practice. Professional collaboration was spoken of as intrinsic to inclusive education both in the literature scan and during focus group discussion. Focus group participants made the point that it was the “*teacher and other adults within the school*” who facilitated learning for all students.

However, it was primarily in the literature scan that this characteristic emerged most vividly. Inclusion was defined as “*a professional belief*” that learners with disabilities could be included. Within this view, the following points were made:

- *The class teacher also works with a number of professionals.*
- *Inclusion involves shared responsibility, problem-solving, and mutual support among all staff members.*

Further, it was the general view that the regular classroom teacher was the person responsible for the overall program of any student.

- *The regular teacher holds primary responsibility for the child and must ensure that appropriate programming and curriculum modifications are made.*

### **As Regular Class Placement for All Learners**

Almost every participant in the Crucial Terms Project agreed that regular class placement was of benefit to learners with disabilities. However, some, as will be seen later, qualified their comments.

The idea that learners with disabilities “*should be integrated into regular education classrooms*” was noted throughout the literature. The additional point that “*all children have value and can learn best in regular classrooms alongside children their own age*” was made as well. It was further noted in many CTQ responses that inclusion moved learners from marginalized settings to interaction with their regular peers in regular classrooms and schools, “*seeing them as part of the larger community of learners, and benefiting through inclusion*”.

Focus group discussion picked up on these points most powerfully.

- *All agree that [inclusion] means all children placed in the regular classroom.*
- *Everyone belongs in the school environment.*
- *It means children attend their neighbourhood schools with their age peers.*
- *It means you belong in that classroom.*
- *All students have the right to receive an education with appropriate supports such that the students can achieve their full potentials at their local school in a regular classroom with their typical, same-aged peers.*

- *In practice, it means children attend their neighbourhood schools with their age peers. However, it is more than just physically being in the classroom. It means that you belong in that classroom and your individual needs are being met in that classroom.*

Though the appropriate educational setting for all children was the regular classroom, a number of focus group participants clarified that full-time attendance in a regular classroom “does not mean that students never leave that classroom, if their needs require that from time to time they are served outside the regular classroom (e.g. O. T. or Counselling).

### **Divergent Views**

A number of divergent views also emerged from discussion. These formed a minority viewpoint and were put forth during focus group discussion. Among these views were:

- *That learners with disabilities could be educated inclusively in settings other than the regular classroom.*
- *That inclusion was a value system, which did not necessarily indicate regular classroom placement.*
- *That the needs of some learners could be met best in settings other than the regular classroom.*

### **Recommended Definition**

The following definition is based on characteristics of inclusion as they emerged from analysis of the three data sources. It should be noted that a number of minority views also were expressed.

*Inclusive education refers to educational practice based on the philosophical belief that all learners, those with and without disabilities, have the right to be educated together in age-appropriate class groups, and that all will benefit from education in the regular classrooms of community schools. Within these settings teachers, parents, and others work collaboratively using appropriate and sufficient resources to interpret and enact the regular curriculum in flexible manner in accordance with the individual abilities and needs of all learners.*

## INCLUSIVE PHILOSOPHY

### Associated with the Inclusive Education Model

Inclusive Philosophy was associated solely with the Inclusive Education Model by 90 % of CTQ respondents. Only 3 % associated it solely with the Special Education Model, though 7 % associated it with both. Despite this preponderance in favour of the Inclusive Education Model, considerable confusion around the term has arisen in Canada due to the manner in which the term is used in practice in various parts of Canada.

### As a Belief and Value System

A view of Inclusive Philosophy as meaning a beliefs and values system crossed all three data sources; the literature scan, CTQ responses, and focus group discussions.

- *A framework based on a set of beliefs or values.*
- *A value system. Strong belief in inclusion. Values guide everything we do and why we do it.*
- *Belief that inclusion is best for all and can be put in place, coupled with rejection of any level of segregation.*
- *A belief that full inclusion can happen.*

Participants went on to describe how belief/values appear in educational practice.

- *Incorporates basic values that promote participation, friendship, and social interaction.*
- *Belief that everyone belongs in the community, and have a unique place in it.*
- *Belief that all students will participate to the fullest extent in all aspects of neighbourhood school communities.*
- *People in society are able to see people with disabilities as vital, contributing members of their communities.*
- *Included in everything and equal to all children in learning centres.*
- *All students with or without disabilities participate and learn together in the same class and activities, on their own terms.*

### Limits to Inclusive Philosophy

Though the majority of CTQ and focus group participants believe Inclusive Philosophy applies to all learners with disabilities, a number believe that limits exist. This belief emerged in all three data sets. At times this belief is indirectly suggested.

- *All students should be interacting together as much as it is in their best interests.*
- *A belief in meeting the needs of children in the most inclusive setting possible.*
- *Based on individual ability, the opportunity to participate should be available.*
- *The expectations of parents may be inflated by their children's placement into inclusive school settings. This approach fails the children.*

Careful reading of the above yields the ideas that a learner with disabilities' "best interests" may limit interaction with typical students and that settings need not be inclusive, a position similar to the LRE and MEE concepts, that some settings would not be age appropriate, that inclusion depends on individual ability, and that inclusion may promise more than it can deliver. Such concerns were real for some project participants, but were not mentioned by many others. The concerns also point out the confusing nature of the discussion generated by Inclusive Philosophy.

Other views stating limits to application of Inclusive Philosophy were more direct. These emerged from the administrative literature of provincial or school system documents, statements from associations, and statements drawn from a report on Canadian research into inclusive education. A number of such statements are noted below.

- *Manitoba educators have adopted a philosophy of inclusion as the foundation for delivery of special education. The most common model is grounded in inclusive philosophy with a continuum of programming and supports. First choice programming for students with exceptionalities is in regular classrooms in neighbourhood public schools with their same age peers.*
- *The Durham Public School Board believes in the integration of exceptional students in the regular classroom wherever appropriate and in accord with parents' wishes. A range of placements or settings to meet the needs of students should be provided.*
- *The Department of Education for Nova Scotia recognizes education as a matter of citizenship and human rights and expresses belief in the philosophy of inclusion ....An alternative setting on a full or part time basis for a limited period may be necessary to meet the needs of the exceptional student.*
- *The Canadian Council for Exceptional Children holds a continuum of services position. Inclusion is one service on the continuum.*
- *An inclusive school is a supportive, caring and responsive learning community in which diversity is honoured and students are provided with a continuum of services within the regular classroom, the school, and community. (Saskatchewan Education)*

Such statements argue that maintaining a continuum of service options is consistent with maintaining a philosophy of inclusion and recognition of human rights for students. Without entering into the merits of either view espoused regarding the term Inclusive Philosophy, divergence in views obviously are a source of confusion.

### **Recommended Definition**

As noted, confusion in the meaning of Inclusive Philosophy centres, not on the quality of education which needs to be available to a learner with disabilities, or even on whether citizenship and rights are involved. Confusion centres on whether Inclusive Philosophy covers all learners or whether, under this philosophy, the needs of some learners may be met through maintenance of a continuum model. This is not a definitional matter, but one of to whom a definition applies, in other words, one of policy.

As the majority position and the minority position agree on qualities of an inclusive setting, the recommended definitions reflect these qualities. Whether a Philosophy of Inclusion can involve placements that are not inclusive in nature is a separate discussion.

*Inclusive Philosophy refers to a belief or value system focused on education of learners with disabilities. As such, it involves recognition of the need to support development of full citizenship and recognition of rights of learners with disabilities. When translated to practice Inclusive Philosophy emphasizes full participation in classroom activities by all learners, social interaction across levels of abilities, appropriate supports, development of friendships across levels of abilities, and development of a diverse community of individually contributing learners.*

## INTEGRATION

### Associated with Both Models

Integration is a term contributing heavily to confusion between the Special Education and the Inclusive Education Models of education for learners with disabilities. CTQ respondents divided association of Integration with these two models evenly at 45 % and 45 %. The possibility that Integration is associated with both models was suggested by 10 % of respondents. This is one of few terms contributing significantly to confusion in contemporary discussion of education for learners with disabilities.

### In Regular Classrooms

Crucial Terms Project participants associated regular classroom placement of learners with disabilities with Integration. Mention of this association was made across all 3 data sources.

- *Full participation of exceptional students in regular education classes.*
- *The education of students with exceptionalities in regular classrooms.*
- *Including students with age-appropriate peers in a regular class setting.*
- *Integration refers to the action of placing a child with disabilities into the regular classroom/workplace/greater society with proper supports in place.*
- *The act or practice of setting up a necessary support system for individuals with all levels of functioning to participate in the classroom, community, or society (e.g. wheelchair ramps, teacher assistant for phys ed class).*

Evidence of confusion around the term Integration may be found in such responses. Though discussing Integration, respondents often use phrases such as: “including, full participation” and “*individuals with all levels of functioning*”, phrases which easily could be associated with the inclusive model.

A number of responses across the 3 data sources connected Integration with the Special Education Model. For instance, Weber and Bennett in their popular publication *Special Education in Ontario* rejected the term Inclusion, opting for Total Integration and placement within their Range of Settings Model. This argument suggests that some learners with disabilities would spend full-time in the regular classroom under Integration, but others would move between the regular class and special settings. Others respondents, particularly during focus group discussions, made similar connections.

- *The group felt that integration was more associated with the special education philosophy.*
- *The idea is cascade in nature, to build skills.*
- *A congregated classroom is sometimes preferable and other times not.*
- *Confusion about whether integration was more like mainstreaming or inclusion.*

Similarly, various comments reflected connection to the Inclusive Model. A number of comments almost define the Model.

- *Working and participating with people of varying ability levels forges strong communities. Integration would eliminate past practices of segregation, institutionalization, and places that amount to ghettos.*
- *Emphasis is placed on placement with age-appropriate groups.*
- *Every individual possesses strengths to share and all students will grow and develop more effectively and completely in a community.*
- *It is an inclusive approach.*
- *Students are included rather than excluded.*
- *The idea is to get every student in the mainstream.*
- *Can we agree that integration is a part of the inclusion philosophy? Probably yes.*
- *One participant noted “Many people interchange integration and inclusion”.*

### **Integration as Part-Time**

Participants recognized that Integration carried the possibility of part-time as well as full-time placement of learners with disabilities in regular classrooms.

- *Integration generally refers to placement of students with disabilities in regular classrooms. This can mean full-time in the regular classroom with various levels of support, including withdrawal assistance, to variable shared time between a regular class and a self-contained class.*
- *When students in segregated settings attend partial programming in regular settings.*
- *May have individualized, segregated or special program components that are part of a pull-out program.*
- *A child being placed for short periods of time with peers – but not true integration.*
- *Students have home base which is not regular classroom and go to regular classrooms for selected subjects.*
- *Primarily a physical placement for the student for a specified period of time.*
- *Placement with typical students for all or part of the day.*
- *Traditionally, this has entailed a child joining the regular class for art, music, or physical education as a full participant, but perhaps returning to a special class for other subjects.*

Such responses indicate association of Integration with the Special Education Model with its various placement options for learners with disabilities. Though some students may be placed full-time in regular classes, others spend time in both regular and special education settings. The foundation of the Inclusive Model is full-time placement in the regular classroom for all students.

### **Limitations of Integration**

A variety of responses suggested that learners with disabilities in integrated settings were not accepted in the same manner as were typical students. Such suggestions referred to the role of the classroom teacher in setting the instructional program, degree

of integrated student participation in the classroom, perceptions of typical students, and need for the learner with disability to “fit” into the regular classroom.

- *Support special needs students in regular settings, but their programs are still built in isolation from the regular classroom.*
- *Students are simply included with the group, not taught as part of the group.*
- *Tokenism. Although typical learners see students with disabilities, they learn that we should have them with us when it is convenient.*
- *Promotes a “grace and favour” approach; charity approach; academic elitism; teaches that students with disabilities are incapable of learning and dangerously tells them that thinking this is ok – even kind – because the students are with them sometimes.*
- *Student does not necessarily play an active role in the classroom. May be allowed in, but isn’t part of the class.*
- *There was talk about integration as being a negative term, where someone from the outside is forced to fit into school.*
- *In integration, students may be included but not involved.*
- *For some parents and teachers, integration means the student must adapt to the environment rather than the environment being adapted to the student.*
- *Limitations were being in a regular classroom, but not part of the regular learning group; continuing to receive special education services outside the regular classroom, and integration being seen as a special allowance.*

### **Must Meet Regular Class Expectations**

A quality some respondents associated with integration was that integration carried the condition that existing expectations, academic and social, of the regular classroom must be met, or were considered irrelevant for the integrated student. Further, there were suggestions that integrated students were not expected to participate.

- *[Integration] can be thought of as placing children with disabilities in regular classrooms only when they can meet traditional academic expectations, or where the expectations are not relevant.*
- *It usually applied only to some children, most especially those with mild disabilities.*
- *Based on present achievement student is placed in a regular classroom for some or all of the day.*
- *The student need not be included in any lesson in terms of teaching outcomes, just presence.*
- *It implies that someone did not belong and we have to work to get you to fit in. There were conditions attached; only when minimum competency criteria were met, then access was permitted.*

### **A Process**

References were made to Integration being part of a process. A student might begin in a special setting, but opportunity existed for change and movement within the

educational structures. A process of moving up or down the continuum was underway. In the instance of Integration, references referred to upward movement toward full-time or part-time presence in a regular class.

- *The target population generally consisted of students identified as needing special education services and often moving from special classes into regular classes.*
- *When students in special settings attend partial programs in regular settings.*
- *A process, most enabling environment, based on strengths, needs, like cascade model, it is not a special placement, but rather to function best in society.*
- *Implies a background of segregation or exclusion. Individuals who were previously segregated or congregated with others of similar disability were re-entered into the regular classroom.*
- *The group members agreed that integration was a step in a process, with the ultimate goal being full inclusion.*
- *Done when someone is not part of the core group.*

### **Recommended Definition**

A clear message from the three data sets is that Integration refers to regular class attendance by learners with disabilities. It is a process which determines amount of integration and development of an instructional program for the regular classroom.

Participants were almost evenly divided on whether Integration is associated with the Special Education or with the Inclusive Education Model. Almost none suggested association with both. Analysis of the total focus group data indicated confusion among participants regarding whether Integration meant full-time and part-time regular class attendance possibilities. A significant number of participants believed both possibilities were present. Previous discussion of the term Inclusive Education noted that Inclusion calls for full-time attendance only. A number of participants referred to Integration only as a full-time possibility. Thus, it seems that Integration, involving both full-time and part-time possibilities, appears more closely associated with the Special Education Model. Supporting this view is the fact pointed to in the data that Integration was related to the Special Education Model long before the term Inclusive Education was in use.

Discussions developed around limitations of Integration in terms of setting up a “two distinct groups” scenario, typical students and integrated students. Discussion on high expectations for integrated students also developed. Most points made, while unfortunate if true, have no place in a definition of the term. However, some points made reinforce association of Integration with the Special Education Model.

*Integration refers to attendance of learners with disabilities in regular classes on a full-time or part-time basis in the company of typical peers. It involves a process involving determination of the amount of inclusion and development of a supportive regular class instructional program, and of supportive special education instruction in or out of the regular classroom. Integration, primarily, is associated with the Special Education Model.*

## **MAINSTREAM**

## **Associated with Both Models**

Mainstream is another term fraught with confusion when applied to education of learners with disabilities. The split between those participants associating it with the Inclusive Model and with the Special Education Model was 32 % and 56 % respectively. Additionally, it was apparent in discussions by focus groups that some associated Mainstream with the history of segregation and eventual integration of minority groups into dominant group education.

## **As Meaning Integration and Disability**

Mention was made to the Mainstream as being synonymous with, or closely associated with, Integration. Reference was made to the origins of the term at a time well before the term Inclusive Education was coined. In general, association with the Special Education Model was made as well.

- *Mainstreaming, often used as a synonym for integration, emerged in special education in the 1970s.*
- *Mainstreaming refers to the practice of teaching exceptional pupils in the regular classroom more than 50 % of the school day. For this chapter, the terms mainstreamed and integration will be used interchangeably.*
- *Mainstreaming or integration implies delivery of sufficient resource support based on recognized educational needs.*
- *Analogous to the Least Restrictive Environment and integration.*
- *When students spend time in regular classes for music, PE, etc., they're in the mainstream.*
- *Students are integrated into mainstream classes.*
- *No difference between mainstreaming and integration.*
- *Educational systems within which integrated students go to be with same age peers.*

## **As Associated with the Special Education Model**

Association of Mainstream and Special Education was strengthened by references to the continuum of services strategy. A number of comments made in this regard were direct. Placements along the continuum were selective and based on disability level.

- *As a process mainstreaming provided services along a continuum so that a range of variable services allowed pupils to be integrated in the best manner suited to their individual needs.*
- *Selective placement of exceptional students in regular classrooms.*
- *A necessary and important step away from segregation although they felt that some will never be able to be a part of the "mainstream".*
- *The basic goal of mainstreaming was the provision of free, appropriate education in the most suitable setting for all youngsters with exceptionalities.*

## **As Associated with Inclusion**

Not all participants made a connection to Special Education. As noted, half associated Mainstreaming with the Inclusive Education Model. These respondents saw the mainstream as one system for all on a full-time basis.

- *Part of the regular education program and set-up.*
- *The regular society and regular education support and serve all members of the community.*
- *Students are educated in the regular classroom for all of their program.*
- *Regular education.*
- *Students with exceptional needs are placed in regular class full-time.*
- *In an inclusive environment, there is only one stream.*
- *Uses inclusive method.*
- *An opposing view equated the mainstream with community which made every attempt to include everyone.*

A number of participants went on to describe the inclusive nature of a mainstream setting.

- *To be part of an age-appropriate regular class and to follow that class throughout school.*
- *Everyone together in regular class regardless of disability.*
- *An education system within which all integrated students go to receive their instruction or education and are with peers of the same age.*

## **A Group Apart**

A point brought forth by CTQ and focus group participants was that Mainstream placement of learners with disabilities reinforced separateness. Those placed in the Mainstream were there through a type of allowance and were not seen to fit comfortably.

- *Divided class and privilege.*
- *Student groupings determined by ability.*
- *The general system for students making acceptable progress or separate from the special education group.*
- *Placing students with disabilities in the traditional system.*
- *Although you would think that mainstreaming kids is positive, it exists because of the segregation mentality.*
- *The implicit idea of a norm or MAINstream into which ‘others’ are placed.*

Such comments may be seen as emanating from perceptions of the Special Education Model and Mainstreaming as setting up a two group, us and them, scenario. It is our position that, while having the task of reporting all Crucial Terms Project findings, this

particular finding, while disturbing, does not have a place within a definition of Mainstreaming.

### **No Support in Mainstream**

A similar statement may be put forward with regard to a belief among some focus groups that Mainstreaming occurs without support for learners with disabilities. This view did not emerge from the literature scan or CTQ responses.

- *Mainstream did not include any support in class. We just throw you in a regular class.*
- *In fact mainstream means the kid does not have any extra support.*
- *Mainstream are the programs which were not adapted or modified.*
- *Mainstreaming refers to the placement of students with special needs into the regular classroom setting, without modifications made to the curriculum.*

### **An Older and Perhaps Out-Dated Term**

Suggestions were made across data sources that Mainstream, with its roots in the 1970s, may have been replaced, or at least, is now out-dated.

- *Mainstreaming ... emerged in the 1970s.*
- *Inclusive education is a relatively new term, replacing such terms as mainstreaming from the 1970s and integration from the 1980s.*
- *Mainstream is a **historical term** that refers to the majority of the people that make up the characteristics of the regular classroom.*
- *There was general consensus that this was an outmoded term which carried with it too much baggage.*
- *Term is not reflective of present education and practice.*
- *Mainstream is an old term and refers to “where included students go”.*

### **Recommended Definition**

The central points applicable to development of a recommended definition for Mainstreaming are that learners with disabilities are integrated into the regular education system on a full-time or a part-time basis. In terms of the full-time aspect, Mainstreaming may be seen initially as associated with both the Special Education and Inclusive Models. However, the part-time attendance aspect does not fit with Inclusion as defined previously. Both Mainstreaming and Integration were jointly in use much prior to the introduction of Inclusive Education. Lastly, the term is not in wide use at present.

Participants discussed the concept of learners with disabilities being “placed” in the Mainstream as suggesting that they somehow had to “win” or be “given” their place. Additionally, a number of participants stated that learners with disabilities were placed in Mainstream settings without support. Both possibilities are unfortunate, if true. However, to mention either in a definition would be inappropriate.

*Mainstreaming is an older term originally closely associated with the Special Education Model. It refers to the integration of learners with disabilities into regular classes on a full-time or part-time basis for their instructional programs. Recently, the term has not seen wide use.*

## PEER TUTORS

### Associated with the Inclusive Education Model

Three quarters (76 %) of CTQ respondents associated Peer Tutors with Inclusive Education while 12 % associated the term with Special Education and 14 % with both models. Combining those associating Peer Tutors with both models and those associating the term only with Inclusive Education results in a total of some 9 in 10 respondents making that association.

### Value of Peer Tutors

Comments on the value of Peer Tutors working with other students came from the literature scan, CTQ responses, and focus groups. Many comments did not restrict the value of peer tutoring to the Inclusive Model and/or to the Special Education Model, but extended it to education in general. A number pointed out that peer tutoring works both ways. The experience has value both for tutors and tutees.

- *Peer tutoring and cross-age tutoring are powerful, flexible tools which have been found to have significant positive effects on both tutors and tutees.*
- *In addition, structured peer tutoring programs appeared to have stronger effect than did unstructured, but shorter programs were as effective as longer.*
- *One final component in the rationale for peer tutoring concerns its efficiency and cost effectiveness. In tutoring programs, more students are able to participate actively in meaningful activities longer than can be arranged in a traditional classroom. This alone makes it a worthwhile instructional approach.*
- *Approach encourages teamwork and enhances communication skills, communication building, and life long social skills.*
- *Enhances communication of students and meets disability related needs.*
- *Moves away from stigmatizing adult intervention model. Promotes communication and positive relationships. A natural way of learning.*
- *A tutor gives a child someone to look up to; someone that would be influential in their lives.*
- *One on one support in social context, being supportive.*
- *When working with peer tutors, the balance of power in the relationship becomes stable because often the age gap is reduced.*
- *Advantage of peer tutor; a tutor can answer questions that students may be embarrassed to ask [of an adult].*

### Who Can Be a Peer Tutor?

Respondents saw Peer Tutors as other students in the school. The implication was that often they would be in the same classroom as the person being tutored. Peer Tutors and those being tutored would be close in age. An interesting point made was that Peer Tutors could be drawn from students with all levels of ability.

- *Every school has a wealth of capable, enthusiastic volunteers just waiting to be asked. This is one of the magnificent things about children. They love to help. They love to do something different. They love to feel needed.*
- *Peer counselling is a strategy in which individuals are encouraged to help other individuals of approximately the same age group.*
- *Probably the most natural source of natural supports within the school and classrooms is the other children.*
- *In regards to persons with disabilities, they too can act as a peer tutor. They too have learned natural skills and abilities to share with others.*
- *The best peer tutors are often those getting grades of C and D; the best tutors are not always the A students. The students who receive C and D grades might have greater compassion.*
- *Furthermore, there did not appear to be a relationship between the tutor's intellectual abilities and her/his effectiveness as a tutor.*
- *Student volunteers who help out other students in class.*

### **Focus On Disability**

Whereas many participants recognized the broad application of the peer tutoring strategy, they maintained a focus on learners with disabilities.

- *Students volunteer to assist students with disabilities.*
- *Students volunteer time to work with students of lesser ability.*
- *Regular student helping peers access the curriculum.*
- *Enhances communication of students and meets disability related needs.*
- *One student offering to help another student in need of academic assistance.*

### **What Occurs in Peer Tutoring?**

Peer tutoring, according to Crucial Terms Project data sources, is a process in which students, including those with disabilities, with higher expertise in an area help other students struggling in that area. It is a form of collaborative learning with one student supporting another to achieve learning goals. It is a form of trust.

- *Peer students who support students to achieve goals within their program.*
- *A system of student collaboration in regular classrooms where students help other students based on what one knows.*
- *One student taking the lead in a subject such as math tutors other students rather than being dependent on teacher intervention.*
- *Students helping other students with course work.*
- *Peers helping peers access the curriculum*
- *Entrusting students to impart/gain knowledge from each other giving all a valid role.*
- *Students helping students achieve goals.*
- *Kids helping kids to enhance communication and learning.*
- *Reciprocal teaching and learning between two students of the same age.*

- *Shared experience in supporting shared interest.*
- *The role of a peer tutor is to assist the student, not to do their work.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Participant discussion suggested central characteristics of the Peer Tutor support structure. There was general agreement on the value of Peer Tutors. Likewise, the view that a wide range of peers could serve as tutor was advanced. Peer Tutors were seen as being in the age range of those being supported in most cases. A useful discussion of what might occur during peer tutoring sessions was developed.

*A Peer Tutor is a fellow student who voluntarily supports another student in learning, understanding, and mastering cognitive and social information in order to attain educational goals. The Tutor commonly is of the age range of the person assisted and may be drawn from the full range of peers. The Tutor's support is guided by the regular class teacher. Closely associated with Inclusive Education, but can be used in support of any learner in a regular classroom setting.*

## REMEDICATION

### Associated with the Special Education Model

The great majority of CTQ respondents associated Remediation with the Special Education Model (67 %), or with both Models (15 %). A goodly number of comments contributed to clarification of the rationale for this association.

- *Teaching techniques used in schools and classes that specialize in children with learning disabilities.*
- *Presumption is that the person cannot exist in a mainstream classroom.*
- *Support could be individual instruction in a special class, resource room, or learning centre.*
- *Students need help outside the regular classroom to address weakness.*
- *Implies that this is a fix to student's problems that can only occur in a pull-out situation.*
- *Often not in regular classroom.*
- *Remediation is done outside regular class setting with resource personnel.*
- *It can lead to exclusion.*
- *Based on belief that students need specialist instruction and a curriculum different from the regular curriculum to fix faults. This service is best offered outside the regular classroom.*
- *Historical term invoking image of special education.*
- *Definitely the opposite of inclusion.*

A variety of points begin to emerge in these comments. Among them are that faults exist in learners with disabilities, the faults cannot be fixed in a regular classroom setting, and that specialist assistance is required.

### To Fix a Problem

There was general agreement that Remediation was needed to address a learning problem of some depth. The learning problem to be addressed often was described in terms of being a specific area of skill which the learner had not developed.

- *Some students do need exercises that relate specifically to their chronic grammatical problems and that help them appreciate appropriate usage.*
- *Fixing a learning problem.*
- *Correcting something that's wrong.*
- *Implies working on skills that have not been mastered, but are needed for success in school.*
- *Students' needs are assessed, areas of need indicated, and programs developed to address specific skill acquisition.*
- *Giving short term help to learn a particular skill or concept.*
- *"Fixing" the student weakness in a particular area.*

- *To improve certain areas. To re-teach a specific skill or concept for a need that has been diagnosed. A process to work on activities for specific areas.*

The comments suggest a process of assessing students to identify particular areas of student weakness. Once the area of weakness has been identified, teaching is focussed on the problem area with the intent of reaching mastery.

### **Deficit Lodged in the Learner**

The problem or weakness is considered a deficit in the individual's learning and development. The deficit is to be eliminated, the weakness fixed. The deficit is related to the learner.

- *Remediation: helping a child to overcome, or compensate for specific deficits in learning or development.*
- *Instruction offered to a learner deficient in a skill or subject.*
- *Refers to deficits in a learner's learning.*
- *To focus on what is wrong.*
- *Deficit-based.*
- *Considers student with disabilities to have the fault.*
- *The term in and of itself focuses on what is wrong.*
- *Re-teach, re-do, learner deficit are negative terms in connection with remediation.*

These comments, taken together, present a critique of the remedial approach, rather than being points within a definition. They do not contribute to development of a definition, important as they are.

### **To Result in Catching Up**

A number of comments suggested that Remediation would be successful in attaining mastery of the deficient skill or area. The result would be that the learner with disability would catch up and attain the level of the average student.

- *Re-teach a concept that has not yet been mastered.*
- *Catching up. Intense focused teaching/learning designed to catch up students.*
- *To teach/learn a skill over again.*
- *Assumption that pull-out resources would help bring skill levels up to average level.*

### **Change to Individually Appropriate Program**

Lastly, a number of participants questioned the strategy of Remediation as negative. The deficit view was seen as inappropriately blaming the learner when it was the instructional program which was at fault.

- *If the program were appropriate, there would be no need for remediation. Change the program and stop blaming the student.*
- *Remediation is a negative term.*
- *“Tutoring” would be better; resource teacher would also be better.*
- *This is not an inclusive term. Remediation is a negative term. Change the teaching program and do not blame the child.*

These latter statements do not fit into a definition of the term Remediation, but rather are a commentary on the appropriateness of a Remedial approach.

### **Recommended Definition**

Discussion of Remediation suggests close association with the Special Education Model and a problem focused view. An important aspect for those finding value in Remediation is that the strategy which will result in a learner with disability catching up to average learners.

*Remediation is a skill focused teaching strategy based on evaluation and diagnosis of deficit areas. Remediation is designed to permit a learner with disability to catch up to typical peers in the skill area of interest. Traditionally, the strategy is associated with the Special Education Model.*

## RESOURCE ROOM

### Associated with Both Models

Though 59 % of responses associated Resource Room with the Special Education Model, 26 % associated it with the Inclusive Education Model, while 18 % associated it with both. As the following quotes indicate, the difference appeared to be a) whether Resource Room staff focused on special curriculum, or b) whether the focus was on support of learning the curriculum of the regular classroom. As one participant said, *“Depends on whether instruction is supportive of the regular curriculum or is focused on special curriculum/drill. The purpose of the resource room changes”*.

#### a) Special Curriculum Focus

- *Classroom to which students come for less than 50 % of the day to receive special education.*
- *Research indicates that such skills taught in pull-out programs often do not transfer to the general education classroom.*
- *The resource room was a special education model.*
- *Usually not used in an inclusive manner.*
- *A special service model.*

#### b) Regular Class Curriculum Focus

- *A student may be withdrawn to a resource room where a different instructor, who works in close contact with the regular teacher, will deliver the modified learning experience called the IEP. Significant in this process is that the student remains a member of the regular class.*
- *Support service staffed by professional teachers and teacher associates to help students learn strategies for success in the regular classroom.*
- *A room for special students to receive instruction in various subjects to assist regular class learning.*

### To Receive Specialized Instruction

Within the caveat that instruction may support a basic special education program approach or a regular class program approach, many participants noted that students went to a Resource Room for specialized instruction. The dominant message is that specialist personnel are required to provide a special program.

- *Often a special education teacher carries out intensive instruction on basic skills and learning.*
- *Children with disabilities can receive specialized assistance.*
- *A multi-purpose room into which students are withdrawn for the purpose of small group or individualized instruction and have access to specialized (and expensive) equipment and instruction by qualified personnel.*
- *External assistance is provided, not only academic but social.*

- *A classroom where extra help is given by educational assistants or special education teachers.*
- *Specialized teacher supports students.*

### **A Separate Learning Environment**

Participants pointed to the Resource Room as being separate from the regular classroom. One participant characterized the Resource Room as “*the point between self-contained and regular classrooms*”.

- *A room separate from the regular classroom.*
- *Segregated area within the school.*
- *An area outside the regular classroom.*
- *An alternate physical setting.*
- *Room students go to or are taken to.*
- *Teacher can't cope so students are sent out to another room.*
- *A place to send students having difficulty in the regular classroom.*
- *The room is not usually used as a classroom.*
- *The **resource room** is a place where students go.*
- *An actual physical place for students to come to if they require support in their learning.*

### **A Time Limit**

A major characteristic of the Resource Room, as described by participants, is that students spent only a portion of the school day in the room. The amount of time varied among respondents. Time not spent in the Resource Room was spent in the regular classroom. Time in the Resource Room was in accord with individual student needs.

- *For less than 50 % of the school day.*
- *Often from 30 to 60 minutes.*
- *The amount of time students spend each day in the resource room varies according to individual needs.*
- *One hour a day, 30 minutes on Tuesday and Thursday, etc..*
- *For part of the day.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Participant responses outlined a set of characteristics for the Resource Room which leads to a recommended definition. Consideration was given to recommendation of two definitions, differing by whether instructional focus was on a special curriculum or on support for the regular curriculum. In the end, one definition is recommended. It includes the characteristic of possible differing curriculum foci.

*A Resource Room is an assigned space in a school separate from the regular classroom. In a Resource Room specialized instructors teach assigned learners with disabilities for varying periods of the school day in accord with individual instructional needs. Resource Rooms are associated with either the Special Education Model of the Inclusive Education*

*Model depending on whether instruction follows a specialized curriculum or is in support of the curriculum of the regular classroom.*

## RESOURCE TEACHER

### Associated with Both Models

Defining the term Resource Teacher challenged Crucial Terms Project participants. A number of views emerged. No strong majority of participants associated Resource Teacher with the Special Education or Inclusive Education Model. Some 5 % opted for direct association with the Special Education Model, 26 % for the Inclusive Education Model, and 24 % for both.

### Regular or Special Setting

Whether Resource Teachers work in regular classrooms or special settings drew mixed responses from participants and the literature scan. A number of comments made direct connection to special setting focus. In addition, some general comments suggested that services were such that a special class was called for in order to deliver services.

- *In reality the SERTs (Special Education Resource Teachers) don't involve themselves in the teaching strategies of a regular classroom and seem to focus on segregated services.*
- *Part of the special education approach.*
- *Denotes special learning area.*
- *Such teachers are mostly used to offer a non-standard special education curriculum.*
- *It is completely associated with special education.*

A fair number of other participants either connected the work of the Resource Teacher directly to the regular classroom, or, as with those which implied a special setting, suggested that the appropriate setting for a Resource Teacher was the regular classroom.

- *Resource teachers design, alter, and present instruction across a number of curriculum areas and address elements that facilitate student's success in the regular environment.*
- *The prime facilitator of special education services is inclusive education in a school.*
- *Some resource teachers possess the skill and knowledge to teach special students in settings beyond the segregated classroom.*
- *The resource teacher is a better way to support students in an integrated class.*
- *A resource teacher works in an inclusive environment.*
- *Resource teacher is a newer term attached to the inclusive model, speaking more of a teacher involved in the collaborative process of educational services brought to the student.*
- *Resource teacher refers to a teacher who supports students who require additional assistance in order to be successful in the regular classroom.*

This mixture of responses on the setting in which a Resource Teacher works is reflected in the figures supporting association with either the Special Education or the Inclusive Education Model. In the second set of comments, inclusive settings are mentioned directly. However, other responses referring to regular settings may be connected either to the Special Education Model through the integration option of the Continuum of Services, or to the Inclusive Education Model.

### **Direct Service to the Learner with Disability**

Whichever setting is meant in various responses, many participants believed the role of the Resource Teacher to be direct service to learners with disabilities.

- *Special education teacher who provides direct services to students with disabilities in a special education or general education classroom.*
- *They may also provide direct instruction to exceptional students.*
- *A specialized, skilled person whose training and background enable her/him to support a broad range of student and teacher needs.*
- *A specially designated and trained teacher in special education that provides support for teachers and students.*
- *A person who delivers special programming to students who need remedial support.*
- *A teacher with specialized teaching skills to help struggling learners.*
- *Pull-out, isolated therapy.*
- *A teacher or educational assistant in special education who helps higher needs students in a special setting exclusively.*
- *Resource teacher is a special education teacher who provides direct services to students with disabilities in a special education or general education classroom.*
- *They may provide direct instruction to exceptional students.*
- ***Do**, not **may**, provide direct instruction.*
- *Direct services to students.*

### **More of a Supportive, Consultative Role**

Of similar strength was the view that Resource Teachers play more of a background role. In this role they provide a variety of supports to a variety of groups; teachers, parents, students, and others. Commonly, the notion of a collaborative process comes across. This view was evident primarily in CTQ responses and focus group discussions.

- *A teacher who gives help to students, staff, and parents.*
- *Someone who provides additional assistance to classroom teachers.*
- *A specialist who acts as a consultant to teachers: provides materials, methods, and a model.*
- *Ideally a designated teacher who offers resources and strategies for classroom teachers.*
- *This teacher may provide in-service, co-teaching, and/or pullout support.*

- *A resource teacher has a wide range of strategies and materials that might be helpful to teachers, parents, and students.*
- *Sounds like resource teacher owns IEP but it is a collaborative effort, the resource teacher coordinates the collaborative process.*
- *Needs to speak of the resource teacher's responsibility to provide **professional development**: to educate teaching staff who need to deliver services, creating the inclusive climate, and developing the collaborative culture.*
- *Resource teacher needs to be a lead player in setting up team.*
- *Educate other staff in school – other teachers what they can do.*
- *A qualified individual who has a belief in the potential of all students and a sincere want to help facilitate learning and growth for all members of their community.*
- *It may also refer to a resource for other teachers.*
- *Activities include collaboration with teachers, parents, and staff to ensure classroom activities that meet the child's needs, planning for achievable goals, communicating knowledge of resources, information, research, etc., and assisting in adapting/modifying programs to meet individual needs. The contemporary resource teacher also completes administrative duties such as applying for and distributing funding.*
- *As a collaborator the resource teacher works with the school and family to support the needs of a classroom and the needs of the entire school. The resource teacher has a role in program planning, as he/she can help devise effective teaching skills for specific students and then also teach those skills to their classroom teachers.*

### **Recommended Definition**

All of the above make a number of points important to a definition of Resource Teacher. This professional has specific professional preparation of the position. The work relates to education of learners with disabilities in whatever setting they are placed. Service may be provided to the learner directly or to regular class teachers, parents, and others involved in the education of the learner.

*A Resource Teacher works within both the Inclusive Education and Special Education Models. Under either, responsibility commonly focuses on direct service to learners with disabilities, or support of teachers, parents, students, and other groups through in-service professional development, consultation, co-teaching, administrative duties, and development of a collaborative team approach to planning, service delivery, and problem-solving. Under Inclusion the total focus is on maintaining learners with disabilities in the regular classroom. Under Special Education the focus is broader and includes support of work both in regular classrooms and in alternate settings.*

## SEGREGATION

### Associated with Special Education

Crucial Terms participants overwhelmingly associated Segregation with the Special Education Model (91%). Some comments made the point that Segregation was the opposite of Inclusion.

- *Having students with disabilities work outside a regular class setting.*
- *If it is a special class, it must be special education.*
- *The old special education model.*
- *The special education approach is to group students with disabilities away from the mainstream.*
- *Basis of the special education model.*
- *Does not exist in inclusion.*
- *Opposite to the inclusive approach.*
- *Antithesis of inclusion.*

### Segregation Means Separation from Others

Data from the literature scan, the CTQ, and focus groups defined a central characteristic of Segregation as setting students with disabilities apart from their typical peers. The point was made that Segregation is a forced choice for many. A second point was that Segregation is considered as in the student's best interest.

- *To separate. Keep apart. Segregation is usually associated with exclusion from a group, generally for mutual benefit, and rarely involves choice. It separates and isolates.*
- *Education apart from the regular classroom for students with disabilities.*
- *A term juxtaposed with congregated. Congregate has the mindset of providing the best for the child, while segregation has the mindset of keeping the child away.*
- *Segregated programs within a school; children weeded academically.*
- *Segregation was seen as separating people based on differences and consequently treating individuals differently.*
- *They agreed that segregation involves separating people into distinct groups based on perceived abilities.*

### Segregation is Based on Specific Criteria

A number of participants made the point that Segregation is based on criteria developed to support choice of a particular placement. Among the criteria are labels, ability level, values, and perceived characteristics of students.

- *When individuals are divided according to a set of criteria.*
- *Segregating groups based on ability, race, or other characteristic.*

- *Segregation has societal implications and philosophical undertones that are undesirable. It speaks to values and implies that someone is not welcome and does not belong.*
- *Based on values and criteria, not needs based.*
- *A student is separated from their peers because of the system's response to a perceived characteristic. There is strong value judgement attached to the segregated choice.*
- *You force kids to be in a different setting because of the educational barriers or convenience, funding, etc..*
- *Segregation is forcing people into compartments without giving them a choice. Choice is important.*
- *Imposed on people, families.*
- *The group also suggested this term represented a decision in which the voices of the student or his/her parents remained unheard and from which there was no recourse.*
- *Isolation of a group, some say "The room in the basement". To separate from regular classrooms.*

### **Based on Different Needs and/or Abilities**

A considerable number of comments argued that Segregation is an educational choice in response to differing student's needs and/or abilities by grouping outside the mainstream of education.

- *The segregation of students identified as having different needs. Students with mental handicaps are congregated in a special class or separate building.*
- *When a person is removed from society to an artificial environment for needs of the person to be met.*
- *Segregation refers to separating people into distinct groups, and placing students into separate classrooms based on their abilities.*
- *Students socialize and communicate only with people with similar disability.*
- *Segregation is placing children together because of their learning needs and differences rather than where they choose to want to be.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Discussions resulted in development of a number of aspects of Segregation. Primary among these are clear association with the Special Education Model, segregating students with disabilities from other students for their education, and use of a set of criteria based on perception of differing needs and abilities.

*Segregation in education for learners with disabilities is an educational response based on perception of needs and abilities which differ to such an extent from those of typical learners that educational settings apart from these peers are required. Criteria for special settings guide the choice to separate. Special instruction is offered. Closely associated with the Special Education Model.*

## SPECIAL CLASS

### Associated with Special Education Model

Some 95 % of participants associated Special Class with Special Education. A variety of comments laid out qualities of a Special Class which led to this association.

- *A classroom for special education students in which the students receive the vast majority (if not all) of their educational programming.*
- *They participated in small classes with different, less academic, curricula.*
- *Where students with similar exceptionalities receive special education services from a trained special education teacher.*
- *Segregated class.*
- *Students require extremely specialized training/programs before they can function in society.*
- *Students are grouped together to meet very special learning outcomes.*
- *An example would be a class structured to teach life skills.*
- *Like ability groupings need specific equipment, or learning opportunities.*
- *Special classes evolved from special education.*
- *A special class is an option within the special education model.*
- *Locally developed course designed to meet the needs of students.*
- *The assumption is that special education is for people with a deficit.*
- *The group felt the term special class is associated with the segregated model.*

Among qualities which emerge from such comments are: a special class is a grouping of students, members of the group have similar needs, the students receive the larger part of their educational programming in the special class, specially trained teachers deliver the curriculum, the curriculum differs from that offered other students, and members of a special class are set apart from typical students, though in the same school.

### Apart from Typical Students

A primary, often critiqued, aspect of special classes is that students with disabilities are set apart from their typical peers. Being educated separately from their regular peers is necessitated by the special needs of these learners.

- *This type of programming does not include, or at least minimizes, interactions with nonhandicapped peers.*
- *A class grouping of students apart from other students and defined by disability.*
- *Students are placed in a classroom with other students with a disability.*
- *Children with disabilities brought together for instruction and social interplay.*
- *A segregated class where students with disabilities are taught.*
- *An educational setting outside of the general classroom.*
- *A special class set-up is for a specific set of students.*
- *Belief that students with disabilities are taught most effectively when grouped with like others.*

- *A special class refers to a class within a “regular” school way from the “regular” classes.*

### **Purpose of Special Class**

The concept underlying need for Special Classes was developed mostly in CTQ responses, though also mentioned in the literature and in focus groups. The concept is that needs of special students are such that educational curricula and goals differ from those of typical students. The purpose of a Special Class is to deliver these different curricula and goals.

- *A class designed to target a specific population of students, or a class designed to target the needs of students.*
- *A small class placement for a specific set of exceptional students with a special set of goals and curricula.*
- *Students are taught something different in a different environment.*
- *Special classes are delivered to respond to special needs based on a segregated approach.*
- *Special class was defined as a room for children with homogenous needs in order to treat them similarly.*

### **Special Class, Congregated Class, Segregated Class, Self-Contained Class**

Participants indicated that Special Class, Congregated Class, Segregated Class, and Self-Contained Class are synonymous terms. There was little doubt that a number of participants used the terms interchangeably.

- *Special class (also referred to as self-contained class)*
- *The same as a congregated class.*
- *Segregated or self-contained classroom.*
- *Segregated Class*
- *Possibilities: conglomerated, small class, self-contained.*
- *It is a self-contained class. That’s how it’s called in Alberta.*

### **Concerns with Special Classes**

Just as some find acceptable arguments for Special Classes, others find concerns. Concerns may not fit into a definition of the term Special Class, but those involved in education and disability should be aware that such exist.

- *A bunch of students taught incorrectly are put together so they can be more effectively taught incorrectly.*
- *A place that teaches students to be different.*
- *The term Special Class is associated with the segregated model and, therefore, it is still stigmatized.*
- *Confusion around “Special” because it assumes there is a normalcy.*

- *As an alternate, the group felt the student should choose rather than being slotted in a special class.*
- *Research shows that if you have a child who is slower, you should not put them together with other students who are slower. There will not be motivation to achieve higher.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Participants in the Crucial Terms Project associated Special Class with the Special Education Model. They described a Special Class as apart from typical students and necessitated by the educational needs of learners with disabilities which call for specially trained teachers, a special curriculum, special teaching methods, and special equipment.

*A Special Class is a grouping of learners with disabilities resulting in similar educational needs and abilities. The class is taught by a teacher with special training and offers instruction typically involving special curricula, specialized teaching, and special equipment. Special Classes are associated closely with the Special Education Model. The term is synonymous with Segregated Class, Congregated Class, and Self-Contained Class.*

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

### Associated with the Special Education Model

A sizeable majority of DTQ respondents (70%) connected Special Education to the Special Education Model. Somewhat surprisingly, 10 % connected Special Education to the Inclusive Education Model, with a further 20 % to both models. This finding is the first indication of confusion in meaning of the term. When it came to description of Special Education, almost all comments leaned toward the Special Education Model. A number of comments attached the term to students directly.

- *Special Education Program and Services: There were two themes related to the importance of retaining and sustaining an inclusive philosophy. The first was that a continuum of supports be maintained, with integration into a child's home school as the preferred or first option.*
- *Old definition for special students with significant needs.*
- *When it comes to educational settings, the alternatives are determined by the unique needs of each child. Inclusion in the general classroom; special education classes; special schools; residential schools; home/hospital instruction.*
- *Education for students who are not regular students, but are special in some way.*
- *All children can benefit from a continuum of services.*
- *Special Education Approach: A five-step model of service delivery that leads to traditional category-based programs/interventions and student alternative.*
- *The group perceived special education and inclusion as mutually exclusive.*

A few comments suggested that Special Education crosses both Special Education and Inclusive Education approaches. This suggestion seems to consider inclusion as subsumed within the Special Education Model.

- *Inclusion should not simply imply location.*
- *Can be delivered successfully in either inclusion or alternate model.*
- *Really both, but more special education as inclusion grows.*

Other comments indicated clear difference.

- *The group perceived special education and inclusion as mutually exclusive.*
- *It is not inclusive by design.*
- *Non-inclusive.*

### Directed at Special Needs of Students

Various responses made clear that Special Education is an educational response to the special needs of certain learners, those considered to have a disability. Special programs and services are developed to meet these needs.

- *A continuum of services for students with identified special needs.*

- *Programs and services provided for students with special needs.*
- *Changes required to help children with special needs to be successful.*
- *Individualized program required to meet student needs.*
- *Is it a needs basis? They need a special setting.*
- *Special education is meeting needs to be successful.*
- *It necessitates the provision of needs. If you call it a need, then the school board must fulfill this need.*
- *What is special education? It is to meet needs and maximize potential of all kids.*

### **Emphasis on Learners with Disabilities as Different**

A third characteristic described by participants is that Special Education is an educational response based on degree of perceived difference. The learning ability and needs of some students are so different that a different educational response is needed.

- *Education of those who do not fit an artificial norm.*
- *Educating students in a different way because they are different.*
- *A system parallel to the regular education system based on the belief that students with disabilities are often so different from others that they cannot be educated together.*
- *Special education does not start with the premise that these students are the same.*
- *It just means difference.*

### **A Different Curriculum is Required**

The theme of educational response based on difference is followed through in the responses of many participants when mention is made of curriculum/instruction. Though some associated Special Education with Inclusive Education and the regular classroom curriculum, different curricula for learners with disabilities was the dominant message.

- *Specially designed instruction provided by the school district or other education agency that meets the unique needs of students identified as exceptional.*
- *Modified or accommodated curriculum individually designed to meet needs of students with exceptionalities.*
- *Learn different things. Not the same as everyone else.*
- *Learning programs that differ from the regular classroom.*
- *Identifies a different approach to teaching and learning than that in regular education.*
- *The implication is that a different program development and delivery system is required.*
- *Instruction that is specially designed to meet unique needs of children and youth who are exceptional.*
- *Programming and instruction designed especially to suit the needs of an individual child who is exceptional.*
- *Of the many assumptions underlying special education, the most fundamental is the belief that every individual is unique.*

Taken together such responses focus on difference and specially designed educational response on an individual level. In practical terms, this means that the curriculum needs to be tailored to learners with disabilities. This “tailoring” can be modification or accommodation of the curriculum, or it can be a fundamentally different curriculum. The difference between these is related to the degree of “uniqueness” of the learner.

### **Recommended Definition**

Insofar as the three data sources indicated that participants primarily associated Special Education with the Special Education Model, the message is that Special Education is an educational response directed at the special needs of learners, and is sensitive to the degree of difference of individual learners from their typical peers. Degree of difference leads to specialized curricular design to address special needs.

*Special Education refers to educational response to the individual needs of learners with disabilities tuned to degree of individual difference. The form of this response in terms of curricula ranges from slight change to fundamental change in what is taught. Degree of change to curricula leads to instructional placement varying from full-time integration in the regular classroom to part-time or full-time placement in segregated settings. This response is closely associated with the Special Education Model.*

## SPECIAL SCHOOL

### Associated with Special Education Model

The great majority (94 %) of CTQ respondents connected Special School to the Special Education Model. There was no confusion regarding this connection, though differences of opinion were apparent in various areas. References to Special School as related to the Special Education Model noted characteristics of Special Schools, such as being segregated, being residential or day, enrolling only students with intellectual challenge, or having a common condition of challenge, such as deafness.

- *A different building, location, people who are labelled, segregated environment.*
- *Least Restrictive Environment. Most appropriate location is not always a regular school.*
- *Usually based on ability and fits the special education approach.*
- *Non-inclusive.*
- *Special education in Canada began with residential institutions designed to serve the special needs of students who were blind, deaf, and mentally retarded.*
- *A few special day schools still provide special education services.*
- *The group agreed that this term refers to a school designed for a specific group of students with disabilities rather than abilities.*
- *A special school is a school for students with disabilities.*

Note that not all agree that Special Schools were established on differences in intellectual ability.

### A Specialized Facility

Many participants noted that a Special School was established with a specific purpose. Students have to qualify in certain ways and staff require specific training.

- *A school designed with a specific focus.*
- *A school designed for students that fit a criterion.*
- *With teaching and non-teaching staff trained to deliver a specialized program.*
- *Special schools provide education to a specific set of individuals.*
- *May be a school for the deaf.*
- *Valid example would be a school for deaf children in Burnaby.*
- *E.g. City Park School for students with behavioural problems.*
- *E.g. School for the Blind.*

### To Meet Student Needs

A large proportion of participants agreed that Special Schools were established to meet student needs. Meeting needs included differences from regular schools in programming, differences in student ability, differences from typical students, and inability to benefit from a regular school program.

- *A school that has different programming for learning needs.*
- *A school dedicated to special learning needs.*
- *A school designed to meet students' needs (deaf, blind, autistic).*
- *A separate school for students based on perceived academic ability.*
- *Ultimate belief that students with disabilities must be educated together due to differences from regular students.*
- *Promotes the idea that to best meet needs a segregated or special school is needed.*
- *Special school is a dedicated program which addresses special children's needs.*
- *Some of these students may have a short attention span and do not demonstrate the minimum requirements to be taught in the regular school system.*
- *Schools were designed and equipped to meet the needs of discrete populations of students who were exceptional.*

### **Choice and Right of Selection**

The issues of choice and right came up in a few comments. Though such mentions were few, difference perceptions of who should hold the right of choice were obvious. This is a major point of contention and confusion.

- *Definition of a special school should include choice (so it's a parents'/kid choice).*
- *Special school is a dedicated program which addresses specific children's needs based on choice.*
- *Group members also recognized that the school board has the right to place a child in a special school.*

### **Benefits for Students**

Various participants ascribed benefits to students of being educated in a Special School. Benefits included a more secure environment, properly trained staff, a customized curriculum, and interaction with other students with disabilities.

- *Educators realize that special students feel insecure and fall between the cracks when included in the mainstream.*
- *The benefits of a special school include the fact that the teachers usually have the proper training.*
- *The curriculum is geared toward students with a disability.*
- *Students are also able to have interaction with other disabled students.*

### **Limitations of Special Schools**

Not all participants agreed that only benefits to students might be involved. Issues of educator ability to respond to needs, of questionable societal values, and of separation from others were noted.

- *A place for people with developmental disabilities, when educators did not know better or differently.*
- *Special schools mean that as a society we don't believe there is value in reciprocal learning, social relationships with peers.*
- *One of the problems with residential schools is that they separate the child from the home.*

### **Recommended Definition**

Though the term Special School was included for detailed exploration on the basis of imputed confusion, little actual confusion emerged. What did emerge was mild confusion around the specialization aspect of such schools, disagreement on values of such schools, and issues of right and choice. These latter points are not ones which commonly would appear in a definition. Those aspects which would include connection to a particular approach to education and disability and characteristics of specialness.

*Special Schools are closely related to the Special Education Model. Such a school is a specialized facility designed to meet educational needs of populations of special students. Teaching staff have special training, curricula are special, and special approaches to instruction are taken.*

## APPENDIX A

### Full List of Terms Considered for Crucial Terms Project by Expert Panel

Inclusive Education	Categorical Model
Full Inclusion	Cross-categorical Model
Special Education	Collaboration
Mainstream	Collaborative Planning
Regular Education Initiative	Consultative Model
Segregation	Cooperative Planning
Integration	Co-teaching
Congregated Class	Team Teaching
Withdrawal Program	In-school Team
Pull-out Program	Resource Team
Partial Inclusion	Special Needs Student
Partial Integration	Teacher Ownership
Special Class	At-risk Student
Special School	Peer Tutors
Individual Education Plan	Peer Assistants
Remediation	Peer Advocates
Resource Room	Curriculum Adaptation
Special Education Teacher	Curriculum Modification
Regular Class Teacher	Assessment
Resource Room Teacher	Evaluation
Facilitator	Functional Assessment
Special Education Resource Teacher	Standardized Assessment
Cascade of Services	Psychological Assessment
Continuum of Services	Dynamic Assessment
Inclusive Philosophy	Authentic Assessment
Alternative Placement	Heterogeneous Grouping
Transition Plan	Homogenous Grouping
Educational Assistant	Peer Modeling
Category of Exceptionality	Buddy System