

Introduction

The teaching profession today involves both students and educators being consummate learners. Research offers opportunities, but instructional coaches assist with the implementation. The role of an inclusion coach is a collaborative one that is intended to help school leaders view inclusion through a positive lens to build teams of players who are prepared to face inclusion challenges with effective strategies across the curriculum. Schools in the United States—from Florida to Seattle to New York City—as well as in Canada, have inclusion coaches who are formally given that name, while other schools have a variety of people who assume that role—for example, learning disabilities teacher consultants, supervisors, instructional coaches, and principals. It may be a new position in some schools or delegated to experienced special or general education personnel or team leaders, mentors, or coaches who are already on staff, in addition to outside educational consultants who help move the inclusion needle. Schools that do not have inclusion coaches are now realizing the importance of offering teachers this type of collaborative, structured, and ongoing support to promote both student and educator success.

This resource promotes inclusion as a viable and beneficial setting for students when it matches and correlates the needs of individual students, educators, and classrooms with appropriate instruction and supports. *Inclusion*, a term that is not defined in educational legislation, occurs each day in neighborhood schools when students with and without disabilities learn side by side with their age-level peers in the general education classroom. *Coaching* offers professional and respectful support and feedback within trusting pedagogical relationships. *Collaboration* occurs when ideas and resources are shared and reflected upon to formulate new plans, improve current ones, and move forward in programs. And last, but not least, a *school* is a place where students are taught knowledge and skills alongside their peers. Thereby—as its title, *Inclusion Coaching for Collaborative Schools*, indicates—this resource offers professional ways for educational communities to collectively apply these terms to benefit learners of all ability levels with care and concern for the students and educators as well as the concept of inclusion.

Inclusive school environments are the preparatory settings that allow individuals with disabilities to be part of inclusive societies. The legislation states that students are to receive a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Students today are often offered an education within the general education classroom accompanied by the supplementary supports and services. How this inclusive education occurs requires systematic thought, preparation, and ongoing professionalism. Administrators, teacher leaders, supervisors, coaches, general and special educators, families, and students are

aware that inclusion is a complex process. Students with disabilities comprise a heterogeneous group. This range includes students with significant intellectual disabilities along with students with diverse emotional, behavioral, social, language, sensory, communicative, motor, and learning needs. The physical placement of students with disabilities in the general education class from preschool onward begins the inclusive process, but providing the necessary and ongoing resources, supports, and services to both students and educators ensures that students' academic, social, emotional, behavioral, and communicative goals are achieved.

Ideal inclusive settings do not exist without much labor and preparation. Administrators, educators, related staff, students, and their families collaboratively formulate and shape the inclusive factors. There are benefits derived when school leaders offer educators collaborative opportunities. This includes higher teacher satisfaction and student achievement (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Kardos & Johnson, 2007). Veteran teachers share responsibilities with newer teachers, and professional growth is increased for all with curriculum, instruction, and professional development (Goddard, Goddard, & Taschannen-Moran, 2007). This collaboration ranges from having more planning time together, to observing one another, to classroom management, to mapping lesson units of study, to inclusion strategies, and more. Together, all parties ensure that the inclusive environment is an appropriate one for students with and without disabilities. Inclusion coaching practices allow learners to thrive from being placed in the inclusion setting, instead of students facing frustrations or educators becoming overwhelmed. Inclusion requires that each school and classroom effectively include students with the appropriate lessons, supports, and strategies. This resource propagates that inclusion coaching within a collaborative environment helps everyone to continually implement and reflect on the best inclusion choices for school structures and classroom practices.

Inclusion, although never a generic program, has basic governing rules. The following five two-word sentences sound simplistic, but as the book unfolds, each of these inclusion rules will be expanded on to be certain that *inclusion* always *rules!* These pictorial symbols appear on corresponding pages when they come into play, the goal being for these icons to be internalized into each and every inclusive setting.

Basic Inclusion Rules:



1. Be professional.



2. Be compassionate.



3. Be structured.



4. Be aware.



5. Be reflective.

Overall, rules help us move forward and boost productivity, yet each inclusion classroom and grade has different students, teachers, and curriculum standards that require individual considerations and appropriate inclusion applications. Countries around the world, along with private and public organizations, *including schools*, are governed and influenced by rules. Rules are tweaked over time; hence the U.S. Constitution was written, followed by the Bill of Rights with amendments to accommodate different situations. School districts have local education agencies, parent committees, boards of education, administrative directives, and instructional student support teams that discuss, debate, enforce, and amend district policies and practices. Individualized education programs (IEPs) are written and then reviewed; inclusion rules and coaching strategies also require ongoing review.

Good leadership guides its staff with clear signals, consistent focus, and appropriate actions that are directed toward improvements (McClure, 2008). This book affirms that inclusion coaches are a collaborative part of this process to help teachers and students achieve high results.

This resource is sectioned into five parts. Part I of *Inclusion Coaching for Collaborative Schools* offers a foundation of collaborative inclusion knowledge and defines the coaching roles of administrators, learning support teams, educators, teacher mentors, co-teachers, related staff, families, and students. It includes information about learners and descriptive ways that school decision makers, coaches, and educators ensure that inclusion is embraced and implemented within appropriate school and classroom structures. Part II establishes coaching baselines and offers ideas on how the inclusion principles are aligned to learner profiles with lesson differentiation, inclusion goals, norms, planning, strategies, and curriculum practices that align with the Common Core State Standards. A consideration for the needs of whole classes, small groups, and individual students and for the importance of reviewing results is delineated. English language arts, math, and cross-disciplinary lessons are connected to the inclusion principles and coaching rules. Part III talks about the strengths and challenges of inclusion with factors such as scheduling, funding, co-teaching responsibilities, how to close the gaps and ambiguities, and addressing the attitudes that appear within shared environments and individual classrooms. Coaching planners and staff activities are offered. Part IV outlines ideas for specific professional development actions, ranging from learning more about disabilities to formulating professional roles with inclusion bridges that maximize individual competencies. This includes outlining 21st century inclusion competencies from teams to peers and book clubs. Part V invites readers to have inclusion inferences beyond the data to think about the longevity of inclusion in their environments to ensure ongoing student achievements. Inclusion coaching vignettes and curriculum connections are offered. Delineated activities threaded throughout the book also offer ways to engage staff in reflective and collaborative inclusion practices. As denoted by icon in the margin, many of these forms are also available online as downloadable PDFs. Inclusion coaching strategies require professional collaboration, structure, compassion, awareness, and reflections that connect the learning to each and every student and educator. The first chapter begins with the most important people involved, namely, the students. Refer to Table I.1 for an overview, and then read on for more specifics.



Table I.1 Inclusion Coaching for Collaborative Schools at a Glance

	<i>Activities and Documents</i>	<i>Objectives for School Leaders</i>
Part I Collaborative Inclusion Knowledge	Figure 1.1 Sample Individualized Education Program Form	To offer a model of essential elements to include in students' individualized education programs
	Figure 2.1 Inclusion Coaching Checklist	To plot staff baseline levels of communication, leadership, and professionalism for inclusion improvement plans
	Figure 2.2 Inclusion Coaching Notes: Sample Lesson Figure 2.3 Inclusion Coaching Notes: Template	To present a template to organize and share thoughts with educators during coaching debriefing sessions
	Figure 2.4 Response to Intervention (RTI) Form	To provide structure for staff to review whole-class, small-group, and individual student responses to intervention at set time periods each marking period
	Figure 2.5 Benefits and Challenges of Co-Teaching Models Figure 2.6 Positive Co-Teaching Actions Figure 2.7 Reflecting on Our Co-Teaching Practices	To invite educators to vary their co-teaching models
	Figure 2.8 Family Collaborations: Proactive Approaches	To develop healthy homeschool partnerships by collaboratively formulating an agreed-upon set of responsibilities for each environment
	Figure 2.9 Communication Logs	To encourage staff to continually document family contacts
	Figure 3.1 INCLUDE Planner	To plan annual, monthly, and weekly inclusion actions to individualize, naturalize, collaborate, communicate, learn, understand, and evaluate
Part II Establishing Inclusion Coaching Baselines	Inclusion Coaching Agenda	To offer a model timeline of annual inclusion topics for general and special education teachers
	Figure 4.1 Inclusion Principle 7: Applicable Standards-Based Curriculum Example Figure 4.2 Inclusion Principle 5: Applicable Standards-Based Curriculum Example Figure 4.3 Inclusion Principle 14: Applicable Standards-Based Curriculum Example	To highlight basic inclusion principles for coaches and educators
	Figure 4.4 Inclusion Principle 17: Applicable Standards-Based Curriculum Example	To remind educators to think of ways to increase student self-awareness of levels and progress

Part II Establishing Inclusion Coaching Baselines	Figure 4.5 How I/We Will Infuse These Big Ideas into Lessons	To invite educators to apply 18 principles to learners across populations, subjects, and grade levels
	Figure 4.6 Inclusion Norms: Establishment and Expectations	To collaboratively establish inclusion norms and expectations at the beginning of each school year
	Figure 4.7 Big Ideas of Inclusion	To help educators focus on the objectives, procedures, assessments, and follow-ups of inclusion classroom coaching programs
	Figure 5.1 Class Monitoring and Curriculum-Based Assessments and Weekly Interventions	To offer a sample of types of accommodations and modifications for both instruction and assessments
	Figure 5.2 Inclusion Survey	To obtain feedback from staff before coaching sessions begin to determine current inclusion and co-teaching levels, experiences, and concerns and to structure the coaching and professional development
	Figure 5.3 Learner Profile: Example Figure 5.4 Learner Profile: Professional Activity	To collaboratively highlight and match students' strengths and interests with social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and communicative objectives
	Figure 5.5a Differentiation Rubric	To offer staff the categories and degrees of lesson differentiation
	Figure 5.5b Differentiation Ideas	To allow educators an opportunity to plan a differentiated unit of study
	Figure 6.1 Curriculum Goals at a Glance Figure 6.2 Quarterly Lesson Plan Units for Reading and Language Arts (Second Grade) Figure 6.3 Algebra II Figure 6.4 Physics Class Quarterly Plans Figure 6.5 Quarterly Lesson Plan Units	To encourage staff to outline unit objectives for each quarter and month at the onset of the year
	Figure 6.6 Applying the CCSS for English Language Arts to Inclusive Classrooms	To offer a model for staff to see how English language arts standards-based lesson objectives are delivered to the whole class, small groups, and individual students
	Figure 6.7 Eight CCSS Standards of Mathematical Practice: Grades K–12	To apply Common Core State Standards math practices to classroom scenarios to increase student achievement
	Figure 6.8 Let's Do This Together: Cross-Curricular Planner to Strengthen Connections	To invite educators to share their plans with each other to tap into one another's strengths, insights, and collaborative expertise to develop cross-curricular lessons

(Continued)

Table I.1 (Continued)

Part III Strengths and Challenges of Inclusion	Figure 8.1 Inclusion Structures for Educators and Students	To offer inclusion practices and nonexamples
	Figure 8.2 Inclusion Coaching: Our Goals for the Year	To present a sample August–June agenda of annual goals for a K–6 school
	Figure 8.3 Communications Between an Inclusion Coach and K–6 Teachers	To delineate co-teacher concerns, plans, goals, and strategies to strengthen partnerships
	Figure 8.4 Middle School Team Meetings	To review the communications of educators of students in Grades 5–8 with corresponding action plans and coaching recommendations
	Figure 8.5 Inclusion Coaching Planning Sheet: My/Our Thoughts About . . .	To invite educators to express their inclusion thoughts about differentiated lessons, applying appropriate strategies and classroom structures
	Figure 9.1 Disability-Curriculum Analogies	To generate discussion and promote positive attitudes about disabilities
	Inclusion and Co-Teaching Wish List	To discuss effective co-teaching structures
	Assessment Insights	To increase professional knowledge of assessments and resources
Part IV Professional Development	Figure 11.1 Inclusion Frameworks	To increase collaborative knowledge of inclusion practices that consider the planning, preparation, environments, instructional strategies, and professional development
	Figure 11.2 Our Inclusion Framework	To encourage professionals to prepare, create, collaborate, communicate, and learn more about successful inclusion factors
	Figure 11.3 Council for Exceptional Children: Initial-Level Special Education Preparation Standards (Beginning Special Education Professionals) Figure 11.4 CEC Special Education Specialist Advanced Preparation Standards	To increase staff knowledge of professional standards and associated skills
	Figure 11.5 Online Resources and Professional Organizations	To encourage professional exploration of available inclusion resources
	Figure 11.6 Learning More About Student Populations Within an Inclusive Classroom Figure 11.7 Collaboration: An Essential, Continual Step	To offer online investigation of different disabilities students present within general education classrooms to promote collaborative next steps
	Journal and Magazine Choices	To offer staff journals and magazines as resources to capitalize on the knowledge to advance professional growth and, in turn, students' skills

Part IV Professional Development	Figure 12.1a Team Planner	To invite staff to continually document inclusion interventions at scheduled planning dates
	Figure 12.1b Formative and Summative Progress Monitoring and Assessment Notes	To encourage professionals to keep quarterly anecdotal notes on students
	Figure 12.2 Books to Gain Increased Sensitivities and Knowledge About disABILITIES	To provide titles of adult reads about disABILITIES across genres for professional book clubs to discuss and learn more about differences
	Literature Ties: <i>The Don't-Give-Up Kid and Learning Differences</i> <i>The Man Who Loved Clowns</i> <i>Singing Hands</i>	To offer bibliotherapy choices on elementary and secondary levels to increase students' knowledge of disabilities
Part V Inclusion Coaching Realities	Figure 14.1 Inclusion Curriculum Coaching Connections	To relate inclusion coaching to curriculum examples
	Figure 14.2 Sixth-Grade Social Studies Assignment: Original and Compartmentalized	To offer snapshots of inclusion coaching scenarios and curriculum connections
	Figure 15.1 Revisiting Inclusion Rules	To encourage staff to reflect on how they plan to continually apply structure, awareness, compassion, professional collaboration, and reflection in inclusive classrooms
	Figure 15.2 Inclusion Coaching Is as Easy as the ABCs	To remind professionals of all of the collaborative inclusion coaching basics