

2. Inclusion (pages 26-28)

(a) Definition and Purpose

Inclusion is moving a child or children with identified special needs into a general or regular educational setting for the amount of time deemed appropriate for the child's success.

To maximize student learning and effective teaching, the parties agree to the following provisions regarding the inclusion of SPED students into regular classrooms.

(b) Teacher Input

Teacher members of the school-site inclusion planning teams shall be chosen by the school's faculty. Each Principal/Headmaster shall notify teachers of any inclusion plan to be implemented in their school during next school year prior to February 15, so that: – teachers and paraprofessionals have an opportunity to plan and prepare for its implementation, and – teachers who wish to may exercise their contractual right to excess themselves or transfer.

(c) SPED Placement

Prior to assigning a student to a specific class for purposes of inclusion:

(1) At elementary schools, in accordance with the regulations, the Evaluation Team Leader will convene a meeting of the Evaluation Team plus the SPED and/or regular education teachers who currently have the student and the regular education and/or SPED teacher who is to receive the student.

(2) At middle and high school level schools, in accordance with the regulations, the Evaluation Team Facilitator shall convene a meeting of the evaluation team, including the special education teacher and the regular education teacher who has been designated as the liaison teacher for the student in question. Teachers who volunteer to be liaison teachers will gather information and input from the other regular education teachers to bring to that meeting. They may use two of their administrative periods to perform this task.

(3) When a student moves from an elementary school to a middle school or from a middle school to a high school, whenever possible, Cluster offices from the receiving school cluster will provide a transition person to meet with the sending school teams when they are preparing IEPs. Decisions about classroom placement shall be made in those meetings in accordance with the regulations which govern placement.

(4) The BPS Special Education Department will clarify in writing for all personnel the policies concerning progress reports, 504 plans, service plans, and the goals addressing the new standards, and any other policies regarding the implementation of special education and support programs.

(d) Appeal of SPED Placement

When a teacher has concerns about the placement of a student, that teacher shall make a request to the Principal or Headmaster to reconvene the team to reconsider the placement in accordance with the regulations. The evaluation team shall respond to the appeal within two weeks. If, upon reconsideration, the team finds the placement inappropriate, it shall present an IEP which contains an appropriate placement option to the parent.

(e) Common Planning Time

Whenever possible, teachers teaching in inclusion classrooms at a school site shall be scheduled so that they have joint planning time at least two periods per week to plan activities in the inclusion setting

(f) Class Size and Staffing

At each school site, teachers, in consultation with the Principal or Headmaster, will decide how best to configure their inclusion classrooms. However:

(1) In no instance shall an inclusion classroom exceed the ratio of 20 students to one teacher. The 20:1 ratio assumes a maximum of 6 SPED students, however, teachers in consultation with the Principal/Headmaster may exceed this maximum if they determine it is in the best interest of the students to do so.

(2) The staffing of inclusion programs at all schools shall be in a ratio of one special education teacher to one regular education teacher where a full complement of 502.4 students are part of the student body.

(3) The model currently in effect at the O'Hearn School shall be grandfathered and is not subject to this section.

(Note: The parties agree to continue the class size settlement outlined below in sections (4), (5), (6), and (7) as part of the 1997-2000 agreement.)

(4) Article VA(2)(f) Class Size and Staffing of the parties 1994-97 collective bargaining agreement addresses the situation where two classes, one regular education and one special education, have been combined, resulting in an inclusion classroom. Schools which are adopting other models or other integration of classes must consult with their school site councils and follow the procedures for and obtain a waiver consistent with Article III C(4)d under school based management.

(5) Schools which adopt an inclusion model which changes the way that resource rooms are configured or changes the way that resource room services are delivered must follow the procedures for and obtain a waiver through the school based management provisions, referred to in paragraph 1 above. Classrooms with mainstreamed SPED students who continue to receive resource room services which are not changed by the school's inclusion plan will continue to fall under the provisions of Article V(A)1.

(6) Schools are reminded that the planning process referred to in Article V A2(b) and (h) is vital to the success of any inclusion program.

(7) Article V A2(g) Paraprofessionals and Other Support, ensures that the paraprofessional

support assigned to the classes at a school will not be reduced as a result of the inclusion. The article neither entitles teachers to additional paraprofessionals as a result of inclusion, that is, more paraprofessionals than the number assigned to the students prior to inclusion, nor does it allow a reduction because of the inclusion model. Article V A2(g) gives schools flexibility in allocation of their paraprofessional support. Schools with inclusion models which vary from this must obtain a waiver through the school based management process.

(g) Paraprofessionals and Other Support

Principals/Headmasters, with input from the evaluation team, will decide how best to allocate paraprofessional support. In all inclusion classrooms to which 502.4 students are assigned, paraprofessionals shall be provided as well as other support required by that student's IEP.