

Preface

Every year when a new school term begins, teachers nervously look over class lists in an attempt to make best practice and educationally sound decisions. What is commonly determined through the review of previous year's assessment results, anecdotal notes, and information found in the cumulative file is that every child arrives on the first day of school with unique and specific needs. It then becomes the teacher's obligation to synthesize the information and plan accordingly to best meet each student's needs.

One purpose of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) is to hold school districts, even more specifically, educators, accountable for adequate yearly progress of all students in their classroom. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), requires that students with disabilities be provided a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. Often the least restrictive environment is inclusion in the general education classroom. The combination of these two laws often places an overwhelming responsibility on the general education teacher—a responsibility for which many general classroom teachers feel unprepared.

General education and special education programs at the collegiate level are two separate courses of study. It is most common for college students to focus on one or the other area and not both. For example, students focusing in the area of general education often receive limited training in the laws, requirements, and best practices in area of special education. This creates a specific challenge considering that NCLB and IDEA require general educators to ensure appropriate progress of all students, including those with special needs.

Meeting the needs of all children within one classroom is a difficult challenge for veteran and rookie teachers alike. The purpose of this resource is to provide a user-friendly handbook for those who are responsible for and required to ensure that every child is making appropriate growth within the school setting. The information provided in this resource is not complex or complicated. It is simply arranged in a way that will provide easy to implement strategies, suggestions, and answers to questions that will help general education classroom teachers provide that best possible support to all students.

General educators are held accountable to teach and invoke progress in all students in their classrooms, a challenging task considering the variety of learning styles, ability levels, and diverse needs of each individual student. Educational research is continually being conducted to support and provide teachers with current, up-to-date, best practice teaching tools and methods to assist general educators in successfully meeting and exceeding this challenge. The third edition of this user-friendly resource provides new components, including complete descriptions of research-based intervention strategies to support student progress as well as an implementation guide, key points, and benefits of the Response to Intervention (RTI) model, to assist general educators in becoming as effective in the classroom as possible.