Inclusive Teaching Guide

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Section 1
The Current State of the School & Classroom

The classroom we will focus on is currently taught by Laura Shultz, Co-Author.   The community is comprised of middle to lower middle class families. The school population is two hundred. It is a third grade general education non-inclusive classroom in a Detroit metropolitan suburb.   Approximately 75% of the students receive free and reduced lunch.

The school has one fulltime special education teacher on staff. She services twenty students in the building with a paraprofessional. Although it is a pull-out system, she takes it upon herself to come into the classrooms to assist when students are in the regular education room. There is a full time speech and language pathologist at the school, as well as an ECDD morning and afternoon program. Paraprofessionals are in the building, and work within the classroom, giving two hours of assistance, preferably to the Language Arts block of time. There is an ESL paraprofessional on staff to help both students and parents understand school work and communication. The school psychologist and social worker rotate between five buildings in the district. An additional social worker is provided by Oakland County. She meets with individuals and small groups upon the referral of the teacher and parental consent. Oakland County provides a social worker daily who holds weekly group meetings and individual meetings (with parental consent). A physical therapist is contracted to see a few students on a monthly basis.

The classroom is comprised of 27 students, one of which has an above average IQ.   The district does not provided services for students eligible for gifted and talented services until their high school years. Four students have been certified to receive special education services. Three

of these students   receive services (two have been certified as eligible to receive learning disability services, one has been certified as eligible to receive cognitive impairment services) via a pull-out method, usually during language arts.   The fourth student, who is eligible to receive emotional impairment services, remains in the classroom for the entire day. The special education teacher will periodically remain in the classroom while assisting the students receiving services.

We will use the collaborative resources of the authors to determine the best methodology to pave the way toward an inclusive classroom. We hope to end with a finished product that can be utilized to guide the current classroom to a more diverse, community based, and inclusive classroom.

Section 2.1
Classroom Design & Assistive Technology

<u>Classroom Design</u>

Our classroom floor plan can be found in Figure 2.1A. The classroom design has been created to accommodate students with varying learning styles, as well as special needs. We followed the concepts outlined by Mishael Hittie & Michael Peterson in their book, *Inclusive Teaching* with regard to universal design, Figure 2.1B, and the key domains and learning environments, Figure 2.1C, for inclusive education and designing for diversity.

Physical Layout

As a whole the room design has been created to allow access for all students, including those with wheelchairs, walkers or any other device to assist in mobility. Seating needs will also be met by placing students where they can most easily access materials during class time. The classroom design overall has been created to provide flexibility in both presentation and participation.

The room décor will be created by children in the classroom to give them a sense of community. Students will have a sense of pride when having work displayed. Also it will reinforce their learning to use as reference tools in future work. Additionally student created work can be used instead of manufactured décor to give the children a sense of ownership in the room. Displays and decorations frequently as subjects of study change. Overall, the room will be kept as organized as possible to avoid student distractions and overstimuliztion.

The center of the room is where students are able to sit in groups of six. This layout can allow for students to participate in a large class dialogue, a small group project, or in pairs with their neighbor. When students are given time to do independent work, they are able to participate in that at their seats, or, a quiet desk has been provided if a student needs additional space or a place where they can better concentrate on their independent work. Students with ADHD may have minimal distractions if having an area alone to work. Some students who have a preference to working alone may wish to work in this area as well.

The teacher's workstation has been centralized between the rug and student tables to store supplies or additional materials needed when teaching a lesson. The teacher workstation can also be used for reading groups, or any other groups receiving direct instruction for center time.

The rug is located in front of the whiteboard to be used for meetings, stories, or instruction. If children need to be able to see the board more clearly they can move directly in front of it, as opposed to sitting at the tables. The whiteboard also provides a cleaner, brighter appearance, where things written on it can be color coded, or assist students with differentiating items written in front of them. As students use this area throughout the school year, they are given a sense of community as it becomes a focal point of the room and children are a whole group when using this space.

The learning environment created here is flexible to change according to student needs. It has been created to provide access and mobility for all students, as well as a supportive learning environment for student to develop and learn.

Learning Materials:

Within the classroom learning materials should be provided for all levels of academic learning in the classroom. For additional materials to be used in the classroom, see the Learning Center and Assistive Technology sections of 2.1

Reading

- Books at multiple grade levels ranging from picture books to chapter books
- Books of all different genres to provide material of interest to all students
- Supplemental reading material for subject area at different reading levels to use in addition to text books

Writing

- Pencils and crayons of different widths to accommodate for a range in motor skill ability
- Wide lined paper as well as college ruled, to again accommodate for varied fine motor skill
- Raised line paper to aid some students in writing more clearly
- Individual sized alphabet to provide additional support for letter formation, and phonetic symbols (ex: C, with a picture of a cat next to it)

- Technological support for those with greater needs; computer software, Brailler, or use of a laptop

Math

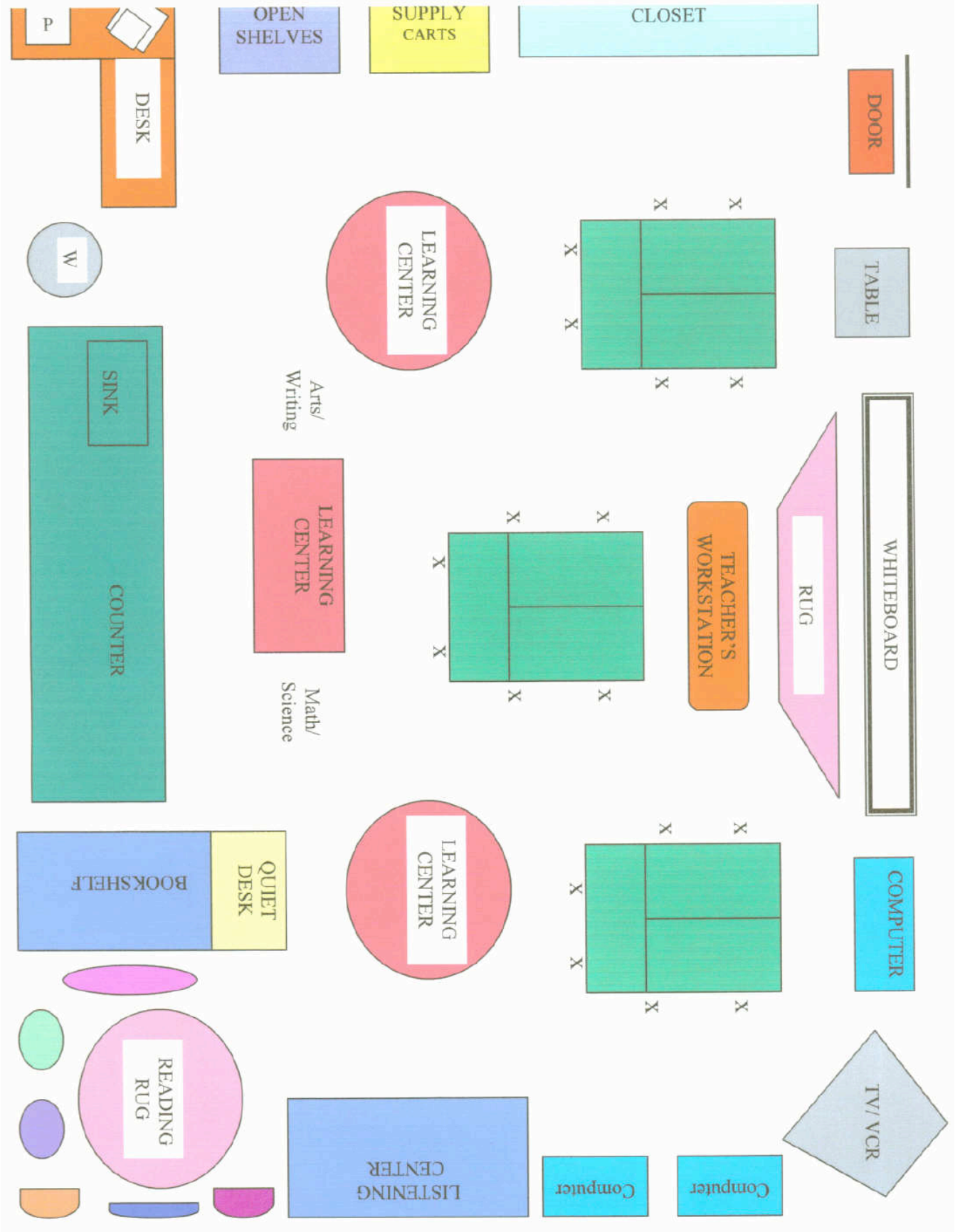- Scratch paper for additional room to calculate and problem solve
- Manipulatives such as counters for computation
- Calculators
- Abacus

Teacher Created Materials

- Dittos should be run off on an off white paper to avoid glare
- Directions can be verbalized and written for additional support
- Directions on worksheets can be simplified to accommodate for special needs (ex: instead of writing the word circle, a circle could be drawn to symbolize that direction)
- Teacher-made worksheets should be standardized to create familiarity (ex: story map looks the same each time)
- Visual representation of centers and activities (ex: a picture of a child reading for reading time)
- Posters to provide specific information to suite child's needs
- Assessments are created and given for appropriate learning level
- The use of rubrics to assess student learning at appropriate level

Figure 2.1A

DESK

P

OPEN SHELVES

SUPPLY CARTS

CLOSET

DOOR

W

LEARNING CENTER

X X X X X X

TABLE

SINK

COUNTER

Arts/ Writing

LEARNING CENTER

Math/ Science

X X X X X X

TEACHER'S WORKSTATION

RUG

WHITEBOARD

BOOKSHELF

QUIET DESK

LEARNING CENTER

X X X X X X

COMPUTER

READING RUG

LISTENING CENTER

Computer

Computer

TV/ VCR

Figure 2.1B

The design minimized hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions

The design can be used efficiently and confortably and iwth a minimum of fatigue

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use, regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility

The Principles of Universal Design

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level
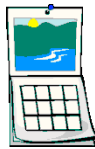
The design communicates necessary informaiton effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abiltiies

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilties

Figure 2.1C

Academic Learning Environments

- √ Books and other resources for different ability levels
- √ Talking computer software
- √ Multiple tools to use to express learning – speech-to-text, software, graphics, audiotapes
- √ Sound amplifications devices
- √ Visual magnification devices
- √ Sing Language offered as a foreign language class

Social Emotional Learning Environments

- √ Places to work together or alone in privacy
- √ Peer buddies
- √ Circles of Support
- √ Student participation in organizing and decorating of room
- √ Classrooms filled with student work

Sensory-Physical Learning Environments

- √ Talking software and input devices
- √ Braille printout form computers
- √ Places for movement in the class
- √ Allowance for drink and food
- √ Clear labels for materials in the class with picture cues
- √ Spaces for wheelchair access

Learning Centers

The computers provided are in the room for countless reasons to assist in learning. Computers can be used to run program for students to publish work using many different forms of software such as a word program, Hyperstudio, KIDspiration, etc. Other learning software can be used to support the curriculum being taught. Including math or reading games. Monitored access to the internet can be permitted to allow for students to find additional information on a subject being studied. Computers can be used additionally with children with disabilities which may affect their written output. Using programs which can read materials to them, or type words as they are saying them will be an essential tool with children having difficulty with small motor skills as well. Software should vary in ability level to be applicable to useful students. It should also provide opportunities for some students to communicate, if they have difficulty with writing or reading on their own.

The listening center gives students support in reading. It helps students to track as they read, expose them to words and vocabulary, and hear voice fluctuation in which to assist in providing meaning to the story. Additionally, it supports children who have a hard time reading. Listening centers also encourages students to be motivated to read books. Students with strength in linguistics, or who are auditory learners may chose to use this center during choice time to reinforce their classroom learning. Children with visual disabilities will be able to use this center to enjoy books that are not translated into Braille, or if they are unable to read Braille themselves. Additionally, students who are second

language learners will learn vocabulary using the illustrations and having additional sessions of hearing a story to clarify their understanding. Materials that would be included at this center would include books on tape, tape recorders or CD's at many different levels to provide for all students' learning needs. Making tapes with the teacher's voice will allow for more books to be recorded, as well as a familiar voice which may provide less distraction for some learners. Headsets to be provided for students who prefer to use them. Portable listening devices, such as a Walkman should be provided to allow for more mobility for the child, as well as the instructional center.

The reading rug provides a comfortable area in which students are able to leisurely read books during a quiet reading time, or doing assigned reading. It also allows for students to move their bodies into a position in which they feel more at ease to do their assignments. The books should be available at a lower level in order to provide access for students who use wheelchairs. This rug would also provide safe area for students to work if they were prone to seizures. Selections of books should include books at all reading levels, non-fiction books of study, as well as various types to provide for the interests of all students, including fairytales, poems, special authors or illustrators. Books should be organized in order for students to quickly locate desired material. Also they can be organized in bins and marked with a color or sticker to represent the books reading level or genre.

The learning center tables are provided to hold materials children can access on their own time or during center learning of various subjects. The table

content can change as topics of study change. Students at these centers are given a chance to have a tactile interaction to experience what the class is learning about. These centers will be particularly effective ways to reach students of the different multiple intelligences.   Because the learning centers will provide activities to encourage discovery and exploration, they will be multilevel centers. All students will be able to work at their own level.

The Math and Science table could have ever changing items to follow lessons within the classroom. For Math included materials could be; scales, and other measurement devices, patterns blocks, representation of solid figures, tangrams, pegboards, or any other item needed. These manipulatives would provide concrete examples and real world application to assist with the learning of all students, including those with disabilities. For Science a variety of materials could be displayed for further study and hands on exploration. Models of any sort for instance, a globe, a solar, system model, would give students of all learning abilities opportunities to make connections. Materials that show growth and change will give students further opportunities and demonstration of the life cycle, or another area of study; including plants or mealworms. Although some things may change at the Science table assistive devices such as a microscope, magnifying lenses, should remain. These will provide all children, as well as those with visual disabilities, to be able to have an enhanced view of an item.

The Arts and Writing table could provide special stationary, envelopes, scissors, and colorful paper for students to publish written work. Paper with raised lines may be available to help students write more clearly if needed.

Different pens, pencils and typing devices should remain here so all students can create written work and be inspired. Art supplies could rotate mediums for children to express themselves in a form in which they may wish. Books providing examples of different forms of written work should be made accessible as well, located at the table.

Storage area is provided for additional supplies including Alpha smarts, class text books, additional paper and other assistive materials mentioned in this section. Storage area will assist in the classroom organization. So students have a clear knowledge of where items are located, and provide less distraction.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology can offer a wide variety of powerful tools to help students with disabilities achieve success in the classroom. It offers support to students when completing assignments and also allows students to work more independently. It helps complete assignments, but will not do it for them. AT takes the stress and anxiety off tedious details and offers the students a more relaxed atmosphere where they can concentrate on the task itself rather than the tedious details. Students can bypass this barrier and focus their time and energy on the task itself. Examples of AT includes, but are not limited to, the following:

Sound Amplification System

- o To assist with children who have difficulty hearing. All students can more clearly hear instruction.

Word Processors

- It allows students to create a writing piece that can be created, edited and revised in a quick manner.

- It also reduces stress for individuals that may struggle with fine motor skills such as handwriting.

- Students can focus their attention on the true meaning of their writing, rather than worry about the mechanics of it.

Books on Tape

- Most textbooks and novels are available on tape through book stores and even the library.

- Assists students in reading a book that may cause difficulty or visual disabilities

AlphaSmart

- Similar to that of a computer or word processor but much small and more simplistic.

- Allows students to create writing masterpieces without being distracted or frustrated by the many commands of a computer.

Spell Checker

- Desktop or Pocket Size tool that will check the spelling of a word

- It can also act as a dictionary and/or thesaurus

- Some actually "speak" so that one can see the word and also hear it at the same time.

Talking Calculator

- A calculator that will speak the numbers, symbols or operation keys as they are pressed.

- Helps students see and hear the calculation. Also assists students in trouble shooting by checking what information has been typed in.

Computer

- Provides all students with a variety of functions that will help them succeed and simplify certain assignments.

- Software could include speech to text programs, talking software, scanners.

Inspiration/KIDspiration

- Offers visual learners a way to organize their thoughts and knowledge in a concept map.

- Helps students remain focused on the main idea because it allows for organization of thoughts.

- Helps students see trouble areas when mapping out main ideas and supporting ideas.

Electronic Math Worksheets

- Helps students organize, align and navigate on the computer

- Focuses on problems involving basic math skills

- Numbers on the screen can be read aloud

The following guide provides examples of AT use in our classroom:

Self –Selected Reading

Books on Tape, Tape Recorder, Computer, Inspiration/KIDspiration

Guided Reading

Books on Tape, Tape Recorder, Inspiration/KIDspiration

Working with Words

Word Processor, AlphaSmart, Spell Checker, Computer, Inspiration/KIDspiration

Writing

Word Processor/ Computer, AlphaSmart, Spell Checker, Text Reading Systems, Inspiration/KIDspiration

Math

Talking Calculator, Calculator, Electronic Math Worksheets, Computer, Inspiration/KIDspiration

Social Studies

Word Processor, AlphaSmart, Spell Checker, Books on Tape, Computer, Inspiration/KIDspiration

Science

Word Processor, AlphaSmart, Spell Checker, Computer, Books on Tape, Inspiration/KIDspiration

Homework/ Other School Activities

Planner, Palm Handheld Computers

Other Forms of AT Our Classroom Utilizes

"Post-its", Highlighter pens or highlighter tape, Transparency sheets, Raised line paper, Graph paper, Pencil grips, White boards, Magnetic letters, Calculators

Section 2.2A
Building Community

In order to create an inclusive learning environment, we must first look at what relationships need to be developed so we can build our community and work together to grow as one cohesive community. A good community exists when people feel valued and know they belong in the group. In our inclusive setting, we want to make sure everyone feels welcome and understands that efforts are made to accommodate and value diversity in our community. There are many benefits that can come with creating a community environment in the school and especially the classroom. For example, students work together and help one another, they learn to self-advocate for themselves, they are tolerant of each other's differences, they learn strategies to work through conflicts, circles of friends are developed and finally, positive, respectful interaction develops between teachers, staff, students and their families. These processes will begin during the first days of school with activities such as those found in Figure 2.2A, 2.2B, & 2.2C. In order to begin building a positive and successful community, we must look at what building blocks we must climb to reach our destination. First, we must create a relationship between general education teachers and other professional staff.

❖ **First Meeting with the teacher and support team(s)**

    a. Talk about philosophy

        In order to have a successful, collaborative classroom, it's important for everyone to be flexible. Teachers and support staff need to keep an open

mind when hearing new teaching philosophies and always remain

understanding of these philosophies.

b. *Determine balance and sharing competence*

We will start by identifying each others' strengths and needs so the

classroom can run more effectively. If we conclude that someone else is

more skilled and stronger in a certain area, this person may be asked to

guide the lesson and act as a mentor to others in the classroom.

c. *Power*

Through discussions between us, the classroom teachers and other

profession staff, we will identify and share what we see as our areas of

strength. It's important for everyone involved to understand how crucial it

is that we all share the power with each other. We will respect each others

opinions and perspectives and ultimately decide what's best for the

classroom.

d. *Team Building*

Providing opportunity for the staff to participate in inventories on their

own learning styles, would be an effective practice to develop

understanding of each other's strengths and styles. These activities could

include, Myers-Briggs, Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences, or True

Colors.

❖ **Team teaching with in-class collaboration teaching by support teachers and paraprofessionals**

The following individuals will provide push-in services, giving us support and assistance in the classroom, assisting all students, but focusing their attention on specific students required to receive services.

1. Special education teachers

2. Social Worker

3. Psychologist

4. ESL

5. OT

6. PT

7. ESL

8. Speech and Language

9. Paraprofessionals

10. Teacher support teams

❖ **Roles for Support**

a. *It's crucial to establish roles for support so the students' needs are being met.*

1. Design curriculum, instruction, and resources for students with diverse abilities

2. Building a community of learners

3. Developing needed adaptations

4. Evaluating students

5. Provide input into grading and contacting parents when necessary

Once we have developed a solid relationship between teachers and staff, it's time to focus our attention to the classroom. The first two or three weeks of school will be devoted to creating a classroom community. This community will be created by the students, for the students. As the classroom teachers, we will stress the importance of valuing our differences and supporting each other's ideas. While we will focus the start of the school year on developing a solid community among our students, many of these practices will be used throughout the entire school year to maintain our community and help us grow together.

1. **Class Decorations and Arrangements**

   a. Students have a say in the layout of the classroom. Give them an opportunity to have their voices be heard.

   b. Allow the class to decide how the room will be decorated. Give them a "blank slate" to work off of and push for creativity so the room represents each and every one of them.

2. **Who are we? Getting to know our classroom community**

   a. In order for students to develop a community relationship with their peers, it's crucial for them to get to know one another on a higher level, rather than just "a kid in my class".

   b. Students will get a sense of who they are to each other through the class decorations and arrangements by participating in activities like those found in Figure 2.2A, 2.2B, & 2.2C.

   c. The students will be engaged in fun activities that promote community and interaction among peers. For example, students may play "Who are You?" Bingo, Fact or Fiction?, and Stand Up/Sit Down.

d. There will also be a time when students will have the opportunity to share things about themselves. This may be done through conversation, art projects, and significant artifacts from home, and sharing of thoughts and ideas.

e. Include support staff to introduce themselves and give a clear description of their role as a part of the classroom. Students may be given an opportunity to interview and ask questions about the person to better get to know who will be involved in the classroom.

3. **Communicating Respectfully**

a. It's important that we as teachers model for our students how to communicate respectfully.

b. We don't put students on the spot or try to influence their behavior through our responses.

c. Students will not be compared to one another.

d. Students feel more comfortable taking risks and sharing when they feel the sense of security and respect from the teacher.

e. We never want to let our students feel intimidated or worried because this will only destroy the communication bond.

f. Include the involvement of the social worker or school psychologist on lessons on effective communication role playing for students to further develop communication strategies.

4. **Democratic Exercise of Power and Classroom Rules**

a. Students will have the understanding that the classroom belongs to them as a whole, and not just us teachers.

b. In order to do this, the class will collectively create rules that will govern them throughout the school year. Everyone's voice will be heard and a few simple, yet critical, rules will be created.

c. The rules will be posted as a friendly reminder to everyone.

d. This helps students take responsibility for their actions and those actions of their peers.

5. **Daily Routines**

a. As a class, we will develop a variety of daily routines that will provide our days will supportive structure and help our days run smoothly.

b. The entire class will address the following topics and create strategies to help create a smoothly run classroom.

    i. Getting the class' attention

    ii. How will we transition between areas and activities?

    iii. How will we handle bathroom breaks?

    iv. Lunch Count: Students will each have a Popsicle stick with their name on it. They will put their stick in the cup to designate their desired lunch: hot or cold. One student will be responsible for recording this information and sending it to the office.

    v. Routine for leaving the room throughout the day

    vi. Taking attendance

    vii. Lining up

    viii. Entry and dismissal for the day

c. Ensure all staff is on board for modeling appropriate behavior by making timely entrances and respecting the routine of the classroom.

6. **Class Meetings**

   a. Every other Friday morning, we will hold a Class Meeting. This will be in addition to our regular morning meetings, but more extensive on a different level.

   b. The Class Meetings will be student led, with the teacher facilitating. The students will take turns running the meetings, taking notes, monitoring the discussion floor, etc.

   c. The students will choose topics or else students can anonymously write down a topic they wish to discuss and put it in the Meeting Topics box.

   d. Before we begin running meetings, the students will come together and determine how the meetings will be run and how the students will be delegated a job.

7. **Sharing**

   a. Our classroom will be a safe place to share good news, celebrations, challenges, grief, and pain.

   b. Teachers and staff will share their lives with the students to help build a circle of trust.

   c. A calendar will be set up in the room for students to record any upcoming celebrations they would like to share with the rest of the class. This might include but is certainly not limited to: extra-curricular achievements,

anniversaries, family member's birthdays, other family events, bar mitzvahs, etc.

d. This is not only a time to share the good news but also share the bad news. In our community, we want everyone to know it's a safe place to come in their time of need.

8. **Making Choices**

a. Students will play a role in not only the mechanics of the classroom but also at the academic level.

b. Students will share what they would like to learn at the start of a new unit. We will try to incorporate their ideas as much as possible.

c. Support staff and additional services provided in the classroom will be aware of the themes, and choices made by the students to maintain continuity and reinforce classroom learning.

d. Students will have the opportunity to voice their opinion on how to structure a window of time during the day, once a week. This allows them to continue to feel as a member of their community, rather than a follower with the teacher as the leader.

e. Students may select books to read, stories to write, projects to complete, etc.

f. Students will create goals and focus on one each week. They will choose an area where they feel needs improvement. They will be asked to make a conscious effort to work on this goal and report back on their progress of this goal. The students will determine the best method of reporting back and whom to.

9. **Student Roles**

   a. *Classroom Leadership*

      i. We want to help students be more responsible and improve their self-esteem. This can be done through various leadership roles.

      ii. The classroom will have a variety of jobs that need to be completed on a daily or weekly basis. The students will determine how the jobs will be distributed each week.

   b. *Helping others as Experts*

      i. Students will act as Buddies, Tutors, and Peer Mentors toward their peers and help those who need further explanation for better understanding.

      ii. Cooperative learning groups will be established, thus giving everyone the opportunity to play the role as the "expert" and the "tutoree".

   c. *Circles of Friends*

      i. A circle of support is what some children need in order to get involved and be an active participant in our community.

      ii. We will call on peers, teachers and possibly family to help support our students.

10. **Dealing with Differences**

    a. It's crucial for everyone to understand and accept everyone's different talents and abilities.

    b. We need to point out that this does not change who we are, nor does it make us another better or worse than our neighbor.

c. Students will be told that about multiple intelligences and different learning styles so they understand that not everyone learns the same way, at the same rate. Again, showing them this does not make anyone better or worse than someone else.

d. The class will be advised that class will be working at different levels to meet individual needs.

e. Include lessons within the classroom with support staff to celebrate the differences between everyone in the classroom.

11. Games and Learning Activities

a. These activities will be played at the beginning or end of the day to help promote the community in the classroom.

b. These games will help students see the need to work together rather than compete with one another.

c. The games will also address other issues such as social skills, conflict resolution and problem solving.

d. Staff will model healthy forms of problem solving and promote a positive community environment by working together as a team.

12. Community Learning

a. *Multilevel Cooperative Learning*

i. Students work together in heterogeneous groups on center based activities and projects, focusing their attention on their level of expertise.

b. *Cross-Grade-Level Interactions*

       i. We will pair with a 1st grade classroom for various reading activities. We will also work with them on math and science activities to help build the relationship and community throughout the school.

   c. *Round the Clock Learning Buddies*

       i. Students find a 'buddy" for each hour on their clock. This promotes heterogeneous grouping while eliminating any problems with partnering students.

Figure 2.2A

A Self-Image Invento

I like to_____

I brag about_____

I feel hurt when_____

My hero is_____

I want to get even with_____

I make believe that_____

I get disgusted when_____

I want_____

I am afraid_____

I hate_____

I am happy about_____

I am unhappy about_____

I pity_____

I love_____

I feel ashamed when_____

I feel proud when_____

My three most important wishes are_____

_____

_____

_____

Figure 2.2B

What Do You REALLY Thi

When I'm 30, I expect to be_____

A good teacher is one who_____

It's human nature to_____

My father is_____

When I need help, I usually turn to_____

The rules around here are really made by_____

I feel proud when_____

What seems to be really unfair is_____

When I feel very happy, I_____

At home, we_____

My mother and I_____

I get happy when_____

When I think of what the future will be like, I_____

I get embarrassed when_____

Kids need_____

When people criticize me, I_____

Most people think of me as_____

Love is_____

When something gets me really mad, I_____

Brothers and sisters_____
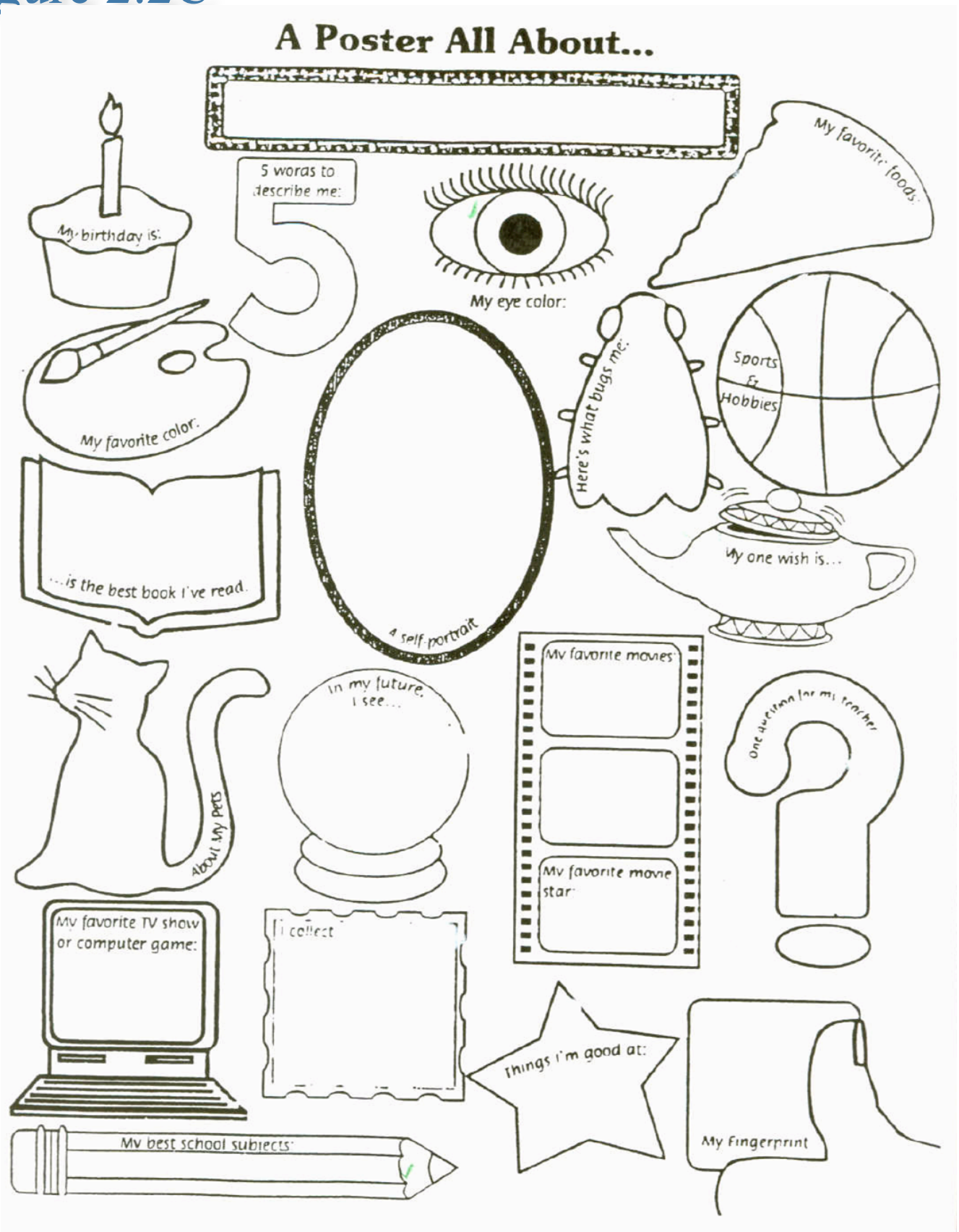
The worst thing that could happen to me would be_____

People are wrong to_____

What I like most around this school is_____

If I were in charge, I'd _____

Figure 2.2C

A Poster All About...

5 words to describe me:

My birthday is:

My eye color:

My favorite foods:

My favorite color:

Here's what bugs me:

Sports & Hobbies

...is the best book I've read.

My one wish is...

A self-portrait

My favorite movies:

In my future, I see...

One question for my teacher:

About My Pets

My favorite movie star:

My favorite TV show or computer game:

I collect:

Things I'm good at:

My Fingerprint

My best school subjects:

Section 2.2B
Responding to Behavioral Challenges

In our classroom, we will have many challenges throughout the year that will need to be rectified in an effective manner. The first challenge that we may face is how to respond proactively to social and behavioral challenges. By implementing different strategies such as: designing engaging instruction, building a strong classroom community, building respect, giving choices, providing support and developing relationships, will help teachers to respond to difficult behavior challenges in a successful way.

In the beginning of the year, teachers will instill positive relationships through concern and care, give students attention and support, encourage cooperative learning and group work, teach in fun and engaging ways with structured activities, have students help with decision and rule making, have students support one another, and institute sharing time to talk about important events in life. Creating this type of positive, student-centered atmosphere will allow students to grow emotionally and develop appropriate social skills.

In our classroom, we will promote and implement positive behavioral supports. This strategy will allow all teachers to understand student's behaviors that are being communicated and ways to meet their needs in a socially acceptable way. For an example, if a student decides to call different students bad names, we as teachers, will want to know why this behavior is happening. One teacher, will pull the student aside and ask her what is happening, and make clear that this behavior is not acceptable, but we know something is bothering her. In doing so, we are helping this student think about her behavior and showing we care about her. Further, we gain the respect of the students by being strong and communicating with them as individuals then demanding compliance.

In order to use positive behavioral supports effectively, we must understand how to utilize this strategy and promote success. When using positive behavior supports in our classroom, we must first identify the behavior that is being communicated and hypothesis about why this behavior is occurring. Next, a functional analysis assessment needs to be completed to determine the reasons for the behavior. Then, target goals will be developed to help the student learn better ways of communicating needs. Next, an intervention will be implemented and will provide support for the student. This intervention will be designed to reduce frustration, teach alternative ways to communicate, and to learn socially appropriate ways to interact. Lastly, positive behavioral supports should allow the student to be successful and solve problems and make acceptable choices from their point of view.

The school psychologist, social worker, and teachers will be responsible in developing a strategic positive behavior support plan which will promote positive self-efficacy and appropriate student behavior. Should students are in need of specific behavior plans, a collaborative effort by the classroom teacher/s, school psychologist, administration, and parents should be involved in developing a program that will meet individual needs. This plan should be designed to provide motivation for the child, positive reinforcement, and consequences. The plan will be designed to be functional in the classroom with possible bridges to apply at home. Students will have full understanding of new strategies put into place, and consistency from the classroom teachers and parents. All support staff should be aware of the class goals for this plan to give a fluent structure to the day for students. This will include any classroom policy, as well as language consistency, and consequences. Parents should also be aware of classroom behavior management strategies to additionally reinforce positive behavior at home.

As intervention is implemented, student behavior should be monitored. If there is positive change of student behavior from the baseline date, the program should continue as planned. If there is no change, an additional meeting with staff and parents needs to be made in order to reassess reasons for behavior and modify the structure of behavior management for that particular child.

Section 2.3
Strategies for Inclusive Academic Instruction

<u>Authentic Learning</u>

In the classroom, our goal is to provide an authentic, multilevel learning environment (See Figure 2.3A). We want our students to become fully engaged in their surroundings and take pride in what they do. It's crucial for students to see the importance of their hard work and how positive things can result. One way we plan to do this is through authentic instruction. This strategy allows the student to directly connect what they are learning to their own personal life of family or the community. We want our students to have the opportunity to create their own knowledge in the classroom. By doing this, they will learn at a deeper level through real-life experiences. Authentic instruction engages students in meaning activities that connect to their real-life. Students are given instant gratification of their new knowledge because they quickly see its relevance in life. Authentic instruction also promotes critical thinking and allows students of all levels to participate in such activities. Finally, it's about the quality of the topic not the quantity. Our class may focus on only a few topics during a thematic unit but these topics will be examined in greater depth.

Authentic instruction provides the teacher with the opportunity to allow students to work at their own level on the same project. Students will be doing the same work, but their final outcome will be in relation to their academic ability. This permits all students to participate in the project without any significant modifications or accommodations. Students often times feel very empowered when they have such control over their own

learning environment. Many times students will succeed above set expectations because they don't have the pressure or stress of possible failure because an assignment is too difficult. For example, in the Authentic Instruction Matrix, the students are often given an open-ended project of a presentation. If a child feels more comfortable creating a PowerPoint presentation while another child might prefer to write a paper or a poem, it's their choice. Others may choose to create a visual aid that allows them to use their kinesthetic preferences while someone else might enjoy performing a skit or reading a poem to share their information. When dealing with mathematical topics, students may choose (or be assigned) different levels of unit measures. An example of this might be the distance in planning a trip. A child with a low academic ability might choose a trip from their house to the mall, a child with a higher academic ability might choose a trip that takes them out of state.

The strategy of authentic instruction can be very beneficial in an inclusive classroom for a variety of reasons. Because the projects are multilevel, all students can participate, regardless of their academic ability. If a student needs a little extra guidance or assistance on a project, they can turn to the classroom teacher, support staff or even their peers. They do not have to leave the room or be given a different assignment, which only brings focus to their lower ability level. Many, if not all, of the projects mentioned in the matrix can be completed in cooperative learning groups. In such an environment, all students would be able to take part and contribute to the assignment. By providing authentic instruction, there are more opportunities to address the many different multiple intelligences and learning styles in an inclusive classroom. Students can be challenged at

their own level and can even be pushed ahead to a higher level when appropriate. Thus resulting in greater success for all students in our inclusive classroom.

Figure 2.3A

Authentic Learning Matrix					
SUBJECT AND TOPICS	**ACADEMIC LEVEL**	**L.A.**	**MTH**	**SCI.**	**S.S.**
Language Arts: Letter to the Principal petitioning to have a school rule changed.	**High – Low:** Powerpoint, Brochure, Petition, Argument Outline	X			X
Language Arts: Zoo Animal Poetry: Students will be asked to choose a zoo animal, research and present their findings in the form of a poem.	**High – Low:** Depth of Poem, Research of Animal, Details included in presentation of poem – pictures, words, etc.	X		X	
Math: International Heritage Recipe: Students will research their heritage, choose a family recipe to share.	**High – Low:** Larger/ Smaller Fractions, Conversion of Fraction, Mixed Numbers, Conversion Amount	X	X		X
Math: Metric Olympics: Students will learn about the metric system and pull artifacts from their home and other surroundings	**High – Low:** Measuring Lengths, Liquid Amounts, Grams, Conversion between Metric System and Customary Measures, Presentation of Materials		X	X	X
Social Studies: Map Activity - Planning A Trip: Students will plan a trip, determining distance in regards to gas, time, mileage, and other necessities for the trip.	**High – Low:** Map Skills, Distance between two locations, Presentation of Materials, Details of trip plans	X	X		X
Social Studies: Industrial Revolution Activity: Students will work on an assembly line and work together as a team to finish the product.	**High – Low:** Skill level, Fine Motor Skills, Jobs on the factory line, Reflection Paper	X	X		X
Science: Natural Disasters – Tornado, Hurricane, Tsunami, Earthquake: Simulate and research the effects of natural disasters.	**High – Low:** Level of Creation, Research of Natural Disasters – Past and Present Time, Presentation of Materials	X	X	X	X
Science: Tell Me About Your Planet: Students will choose and explore a planet. They will create a physical model of their planet as well as a way to share their researched information.	**High – Low:** Research information, Presentation of Materials, Distance between Planet and Earth	X	X	X	

Centers

A center is a specific area designed for specific learning purposes. Centers are a way for students to work at their own level and at their own pace, and in doing so, assume roles as active learners. This strategy allows for students to work individually, or in any kind of group. Each center should have an opportunity for choice, while the activities provided are connected to classroom learning. Students are able to experiment and explore with hands on experiences, visual aids, and on going study of different topics. With the use of centers students are empowered by the sense of choice, as well the sense of security in a comfortable, self-paced setting. At the same time students are given the opportunity to collaborate with others and practice to reinforce what they have learned in class. The amount of time needed at a center, or how often a center should change is flexible depending on with what the students and teachers are most comfortable.

Reading Center

As mentioned in Section 2.1, the Reading center can offer the opportunity for students to explore literature on their own. A reading center could include the listening center. Students may make the choice to listen to books on tape. This center could also include the computers, if students desire to use a reading program that is in a software form. Students should again be permitted to make choices on how they would like to use the center. Because students are at different levels some choices may be better suited for

developing readers, while other choices would work better for fluent readers. Choices may include;

- Partner read with a friend

- Read with a certain theme in mind (example "winter")

- Read about an author

- Write a book review

- Write personal connections or questions on sticky notes as a student reads a book

- Write a new ending to a story

- Write in your reader's response journal

- Make a story map

- Take mixed up sentences from familiar stories and write them on sentence strips. Students put the sentences back into the correct order.

- Take mixed up pictures from a familiar story and put them in order

- Compare (and contrast) two different books

- Sequencing using mixed up pictures

- Read a book. Fill in the information for the 5 W's (Who? What? When? Where? Why?) In the story.

- Have index cards and have students sort them (multiple ways: names, nouns, verbs, animals).

- Read a restaurant menu. Decide what to order. Extensions (examples): How much will it cost? Which restaurant did this menu come from? How many salads do they serve?

- Book box- Students read a magazine box containing familiar reading material. Example: books from previous guided reading sessions, songs and poems collected in folders, any mini reproducible books made in class....

Writing Center

Section 2.1 illustrates some ideas that could be utilized in a writing center. This center should again provide a wide selection of opportunities for students. Ideas students may use for activities are provided. Mediums students may wish to use may include a variety of paper products on which to publish, chalk boards or dry erase, or assistive technology if preferred. Additionally different utensils should be offered such as markers, pens, or pencils.

- Write a poem, a variety of styles to be provided
- Write a list and categorize
- Write a letter to someone real or fictional (provide envelopes)
- Make a card
- Write a book
- Write using a story starter
- Write a fractured fairytale
- Write about yourself
- Write a page for a class book
- Create a cartoon
- Write a description for something.
- Write about something that you know about
- Write using stencils

- Write with a partner

- Make a recipe

- Create an advertisement

- Write a sentence, paragraph, or essay (depending on grade) on a certain topic

- Have a picture, student write about the picture

- Write articles for a classroom newsletter

- On large paper create learning posters for the room

Math Center

The Math center could provide opportunities for students to explore manipulatives used in the math class to become more familiar with the items used in class instruction. Students could have time in the Math center to use the manipulatives creatively on their own, and extend their learning from prior lessons by exploring different ideas in which to use them. Manipulatives that could be provided in the math center are listed.

- Pattern Blocks

- Math games

- Clocks

- Measuring equipment

- Dominoes

- Graph paper

- Tangrams

- Shape stencils and solid figures

- Pegboards

- Calculators

Additionally, the activities provided at the Math center, should give students an opportunity to use math in a real world context. There are many activities depending on the course of study but some examples of choices could be;

- Measurement- measure items in the classroom using different devices and units

- Finding patterns in nature or around the room

- Using an activity involving probability with number cubes or marbles

- Sorting change and finding different ways to make a dollar

- Making up a story problem

- Classifying items

- Use flash cards with a partner

- Estimate a variety of items in a jar

- Fill in a calendar for a month or year

Science

The Science center, similar to the Math center has a wide variety of activities that could be ever changing with different themes of study, current events, or interests of the students. Activities at this center should provide students with opportunities to be a scientist themselves. Students should be given a chance to explore, discover, and research at this center. Student activities at this center allow for students to participate in taking an active role;

- Predicting

- Observing

- Hypothesizing

- Experimenting

- Collecting

- Classifying

- Examining

- Discussing

- Drawing conclusions

Students should be given a chance to record their growth as a scientist by recording data about their learning before, during, and after and activity is done.

Social Studies

The Social Studies center can follow along with the course of study being followed in the classroom, but often times current events can be included into this center as well. Maps, globes, history cards and books, all give students an opportunity to explore this subject. There are times when the Social Studies, as other subjects, could be linked to the writing center as a brochure or report may be published in a variety of ways. Students at this center may have opportunity to have community visitors, or go outside to the school into their community to create authentic experiences.

When centers are used as a teaching strategy, they are explored by a student either alone or with the collaboration of their peers. These groups or individual are able to create their on path of learning and engage in meaningful tasks with the teacher participating more as a guide. Students can choose an activity for themselves which may be at their own level or more challenging. Children are given the responsibility of their

own learning. When students are given the power of choice they are able to work in their comfort zone and grow. Students are able to become more independent and find success in the activities they choose. Centers allow for students to use tactile objects, a variety of mediums, and topics of interest to motivate and foster a positive self-efficacy within, and outside of, the classroom community.

Multilevel Instruction

In our classroom, using multilevel teaching is the most effective strategy when teaching various ability levels. Designing lessons of different abilities enables students to learn together at the appropriate levels of ability. An effective multilevel teaching strategy is the use of workshops. Workshops are designed to support students of all ability levels, challenge and provide opportunities at multiple levels, and focus on the zone of proximal development. Workshops are centered on learning goals that challenge our students and encourage them to think at a deeper level. Learning goals are developed around meaningful tasks, thought processes, concept extension and complex activities that encompass the highest- ability students, average and lowest- ability students.

Reading

In the beginning of reading workshop, as a class we will gather together for a minilesson based on a specific reading strategy. Then the students will select books to read at their own ability level of challenge. During this time they may read in pairs, in small groups or alone. Students can record the books that they have read and write in journal regarding their books. During self selected reading, we will conducts conferences with students about their individual reading plan, discuss their thoughts

about the book, assess comprehension strategies, or share reading strategies.

Writing

In writing workshop, the students will select their own topics, often linked to other subject areas, and will write at their own ability level. Students will become engaged in different genres and will have exposure to many different types of writing. Students will keep journals regarding the writing process and ideas to write about, their feelings about the process, or a record of activities. We will also combine the workshop approach with minilessons and whole group instruction.

Math

In math workshop, students will explore how math is used and develop a deeper understanding about mathematics. We will begin the math workshop by using multiple strategies, manipulatives and hands-on activities to help students visualize mathematical operations. Students may work together or in small groups, thinking about math and creating their own methods for learning the particular concept.

Science & Social Studies

In science and social studies workshops, students will be involved in inquiry learning through developing questions, seeking answers, and developing products that demonstrate learning. We will help students develop questions, plan an approach, gather information, explore meaning,

publish and share work. Inquiry learning will help students become

engaged in multiple ability levels centered on ownership and choice.

Section 2.4
Sample Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan 1:

What do *You* need after a Hurricane?

Teacher's Name: Melanie Mazzola   Date: 12/6/05

Grade Level: Third Grade   Subject Area: Math

Learning Goals:
   Level 3: The student will be able to:
   - Identify and prioritize at least 12 daily necessities
   - Develop leadership skills by cooperatively working with other students.
   - Calculate the total cost, along with tax and work within a budgeted amount of money.

   Level 2: The student will be able to:
   - Identify and prioritize daily necessities (minimum of 7 necessities).
   - Learn how to work cooperatively with a partner to determine the individual cost of these items.
   - Calculate the total cost and work within a budgeted amount of money.

   Level 1: The student will be able to:
   - Identify 5 items that they use on a daily basis that they need everyday.
   - Work cooperatively with a partner to determine the cost of these items.
   - Write down the price for each item and line up the decimal by using graph paper or another tool for assistance.
   - Calculate the total cost of these items using manipulatives or assistive technology such as a computer or calculator.

Materials:
   - Web Map
   - Debit Card
   - Weekly Ads from various stores
   - Computer

Prior Knowledge:

Students will have prior knowledge of natural disasters. As a class, they have been studying Hurricane Katrina and its affect on our country.

Activity:
1. We will begin by recapping what we have learned about Hurricane Katrina and its affects on the United States, focusing primarily on those individuals who were directly affected by this disaster. We will discuss how families have lost everything, including those daily essentials that we might take for granted.

2. As a class, the students will brainstorm a list of necessities that they feel are crucial for everyday living. We will do this in the form of a web map so the students can see the relationship between items.

3. Students will be asked to create their own web map of items that they feel they would need to buy if they had lost everything, as so many did from Hurricane Katrina.

4. Once they have created their web map, they are to prioritize items in the order of importance.

5. Students will be given a "debit" card with a set value. They will be doing some "shopping" where they can only spend this set amount of money.

6. Students will work in cooperative groups, looking through the weekly ads to find the items and the prices for their items. They will list these items, along with the prices. If they are unable to find all the items in the weekly store ads, they will use the Internet for further research.

7. The students will be continuously totaling up their list of items to make sure they do not go over the set amount on their debit card. In doing this, they will be lining up the decimals, adding and subtracting.

Assessment/ Evaluation:

Once the students have completed the activity, they will take their information and determine how they would like to present this material to the rest of the class. They will be given a rubric with the required information but the final product will be their choice from the following options:

1. PowerPoint presentation
2. Poster Board
3. Write a paper
4. Suggestion from the student (teacher approved)

Adaptations:

1. A student with a cognitive disability may only decide on 5 items of importance, while a student who is gifted may list fifteen or twenty times that they feel are crucial to everyday life.

2. The type of items may vary based on each student's level of ability. For example, a student with a cognitive disability may choose more simple items such as a toothbrush and toothpaste, while a child who is gifted may choose more complex items.

3. The value on the "debit" card can vary for each student. A child with a cognitive disability may receive a lesser amount to spend, while a child who is gifted may receive more money to manage.

4. A student with a cognitive disability may choose to use a certain program such as boardmaker to represent their items, rather than looking through weekly ads.

5. A student with a cognitive disability may list the items, lining up the decimal and use a calculator to add up the total, depending on his or her math skill level.

6. A student who is gifted may be asked to find the tax for each item and add this to the final total.

7. A student who is gifted may be asked to categorize their items and find how what percent of their spending amount is going towards that particular category.

8. The type of assessment can vary based on each student's level of ability. They may choose a project listed above or suggest their own project to the teacher.

Extensions:

        The following websites will act as good extensions for students to explore when they complete their project or as a follow-up activity.

http://www.fema.gov/kidsApps/quiz_multichoice_questions.do?quiz=math_hurr&action=init
http://www.mathcats.com/hurricane.html
http://www.fema.gov/kids/

Rubric

What do *You* need after a Hurricane?

Name: _____   **Date:** _____

Evaluation Scale:
    5 = Excellent
    4 = Very Good
    3 = Good
    2 = Fair
    1 = Try Harder

Criteria	Evaluation					Points
Were you an engaged partner, listening to suggestions and working cooperatively throughout the lesson?	5	4	3	2	1	
Did you use the manipulative as instructed to find a price for all items?	5	4	3	2	1	
Did you correctly record the prices, including the decimal places?	5	4	3	2	1	
In your project, did you display all your items in words or using pictures?	5	4	3	2	1	
Did you creatively display your information so others can easily view your data?	5	4	3	2	1	
Is your work presented in a neat, clear, organized manner that is easy to read?	5	4	3	2	1	
					Total Points	

Teacher Comments:

Lesson Plan 2:

Social Studies Lesson Plan

Learning Goal:
> Students will have a clearer understanding of what the needs of a community.

Objectives:
> To develop an understanding of communities.
> To create an understanding of challenges faced by communities.
> Problem solve ways communities can rebuild, with an understanding of their needs.

Time: 45 minutes- 1 hour

Materials:
- Copies of the graphic organizer (below)
- A globe (for each group)
- United States map (for each group)
- Writing utensil
- Images either video or photographic of New Orleans before, immediately following, and during clean up of Hurricane Katrina.

Accommodations:
> Students with difficulty learning will be placed in groups with their "buddies", who are students that are able to help others in an appropriate manner, while still completing their own work.

- Ask what is a community? (Students have discussed and read about communities all year as a part of their curriculum, therefore have prior knowledge on the topic). Think, pair and then share ideas. Students can do the first box on their own, then share with a neighbor their ideas, make changes if desired. Then share some as a whole group (volunteers). The below graphic organizer can be used for students to write or draw their ideas, dependent upon their level.
- Get into Social Studies Groups. (Social Studies groups have been heterogeneously established).Ask what are some important parts, or needs of a community to make it successful? Have the groups record what they know about community needs and share with the class.
- Locate New Orleans on a globe and a map. Distribute a globe and U. S. map to each group. Ask if students know what happened to the communities in this area recently, share ideas and record.
- Show video and/or pictures of the way the community looked before and immediately following Hurricane Katrina, and a slight time following, when water has receded. Briefly describe what happened and discuss
- In small groups, describe the changes that occurred in the communities affected by Hurricane Katrina. Share as a large group.

- Discuss if the needs of the community now have changed from before. How has there been change?
- In small groups have students discuss; what are things that need to be done to make the community successful again?
- Share ideas as a class and record. In the next class period these ideas will be revisited. Students will decide upon one-three needs that people from the Katrina affected area have, and figure out a plan to address those needs.

Assessment:

By using the included worksheet, the teacher will be able to see if the student can represent the meaning of the community, identify its needs before and after the Katrina disaster. If a child needs assistance with written representation, it can be dictated to the buddy to record information, or given orally to the teacher.

A Community is

Community Needs

New Orleans and the affects of Hurricane Katrina

Before the Hurricane	Right After the Hurricane	Now

What are the communities needs now?

Lesson Plan 3:

Teacher's Name: Shannon Kroll   **Date:** November 15, 2005

Grade Level: Third   **Subject Area:** ELA

Lesson Plan Title: Reading about Hurricanes and Writing Letters to Katrina Survivors

Content:
R.IT.03.01 Identify and describe a variety of informational genres (e.g. textbooks, encyclopedias, magazines).**R.CM.03.01** Connect personal knowledge, experiences and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in text and oral and written responses.**W.PR.03.01** Set a purpose, consider audience, and replicate author's styles and patterns when writing narrative or informational text. **W.PR.03.02** Apply a variety of prewriting strategies for both narrative and informational text (e.g. graphic organizers such as story maps, webs, Venn diagrams) in order to generate, sequence and structure ideas (e.g. Sequence for beginning, middle, end; problem/ solution; compare/contrast). **W.PR.03.06** Edit and proofread their writing using appropriate resources (e.g. dictionary, spell check, writing references) and grade level appropriate checklists both individually and in groups.**W.GR.03.01** Identify and use subjects and verbs that are in arrangement, past verb tenses, nouns and possessives, commas in a series, and begin to use of quotation marks and capitalization in dialogue.

Objectives:
Students will learn the fundamentals and the function of a hurricane through reading and writing. Students will read, about hurricanes and write friendly letters to Hurricane Katrina survivors. All subject area content follows the Michigan Curriculum Framework for the third grade.

Materials Needed:
Whiteboard for brainstorming/ modeling, informational and nonfiction books for all reading levels, student's writing journals, sticky paper, dictionaries, thesauruses, editing checklists, colored paper, rulers and markers.

Introduction:
As a class, students and the teacher will have a brief discussion about hurricanes. On the whiteboard, students and the teacher will use a brainstorm web to brainstorm ideas, actions, and words about hurricanes.

Development:
In small groups, students will read through various nonfiction picture books about hurricanes. While reading students will develop a basic understanding of hurricanes, increase personal knowledge, and connect it to the world around them. Also, students will individually write down important thoughts on sticky paper. During sharing time, students will share their important thoughts about what they have learned.

Next, the teacher and students will have a discussion about Hurricane Katrina and ways that the school community can help other boys and girls in the state of Louisiana. Together as a class, the teacher will model how to write a friendly letter.

Practice:
Individually, students will begin writing letters to the Hurricane Survivors in their journals including main ideas and supporting details. The teacher will walk around monitoring students and probing others for deeper understanding while the writing process is underway. When students are finished drafting, they will be placed in heterogeneous groups for revising and editing. When revising, students will be responsible for reading everyone's story in the group and writing down on sticky paper two pulses and one wish about the author's story. Then it will be the author's responsibility to reread and make any changes if needed. After revising is finished, students will use an editing checklist, dictionaries, and thesauruses to edit each other's stories.

Guided Practice:
When revising and editing the teacher may have small groups participate in different mini-lessons to enhance particular skills. Also the teacher will conduct conferences with each group about their stories. Then a brief explanation will be provided and an example will be shown of how to create a final letter. Time will be provided for all final projects to be completed.

Accommodations/Adaptations:
Students who are experiencing difficulty can be supported by a learning buddy or a circle of support. Students are to work at their "just right" level. Assistive technology is available if needed.

Check for Understanding:
The teacher will observe students working, monitoring their reading and writing, probe for deeper understanding if necessary.

Closure:
As a class, students will make a card using colored paper, rulers, and markers then they will write their letter inside. Next, they will decorate their cards. Finally, students will share their letter with each other.

Evaluation:
Evaluation is done through observation of student's journals, group work, final project and completion of rubric.

Letter-Writing : Hurricane Katrina Letters

Teacher Name: **Ms. Kroll**

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Salutation and Closing	Salutation and closing have no errors in capitalization and punctuation.	Salutation and closing have 1-2 errors in capitalization and punctuation.	Salutation and closing have 3 or more errors in capitalization and punctuation.	Salutation and/or closing are missing.
Sentences & Paragraphs	Sentences and paragraphs are complete, well-constructed and of varied structure.	All sentences are complete and well-constructed (no fragments, no run-ons). Paragraphing is generally done well.	Most sentences are complete and well-constructed. Paragraphing needs some work.	Many sentence fragments or run-on sentences OR paragraphing needs lots of work.
Ideas	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the letter was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organziation could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the letter was about.	The letter seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the letter was about.
Grammar & spelling (conventions)	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar and/or spelling.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar and/or spelling	Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar and/or spelling.
Capitalization and Punctuation	Writer makes no errors in capitalization and punctuation.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in capitalization and punctuation.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in capitalization and punctuation.	Writer makes more than 4 errors in capitalization and punctuation.
Neatness	Letter is typed, clean, not wrinkled, and is easy to read with no distracting error corrections. It was done with pride.	Letter is neatly hand-written, clean, not wrinkled, and is easy to read with no distracting error corrections. It was done with care.	Letter is typed and is crumpled or slightly stained. It may have 1-2 distracting error corrections. It was done with some care.	Letter is typed and looks like it had been shoved in a pocket or locker. It may have several distracting error corrections. It looks like it was done in a hurry or stored improperly.

Section 3
Support for Inclusive Teaching

<u>Instructional Scheduling</u>

In this section of the Inclusive Teaching Guide, we have provided a comprehensive layout of scheduling and methods to work towards implementing a fully inclusive classroom. This design has been developed to take into consideration the needs of all children, as well as the needs of the multidisciplinary team, who will be executing this program. Expectations for all of the staff and volunteers have been provided. To account for the different staff and volunteers needed to create a successful program, an explicit breakdown of meeting and planning time has been scheduled and categorized to ensure the needs of students are being met, and problem solve if necessary. A model of daily scheduling has provided to establish routine and accommodate for daily teacher preparation. In order for the teachers within the classroom to feel comfortable with teaching within an inclusive classroom, various methods have been explained to accommodate for what will work best for different teaching and learning styles within the classroom. In addition, students within the classroom and district will be utilized to provide support for others using different peer and mentoring systems.

Weekly Staffing Matrix

Weekly Staffing Matrix for the classroom can be found in Figure 3A. Please refer to the matrix in understanding logistics in reference to staff scheduling and planning.

Figure 3A

SHELORA Typical Weekly Class Schedule

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
8:30am - 9:00am	Art	Art	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR
9:00am - 9:30am	Art	Art	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR
9:30am - 10:00am	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	Music	Music	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW
10:00am - 10:30am	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	Music	Music	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing
10:30am - 11:00am	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing
11:00am - 11:30am	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	PE	PE	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:30am - 12:00pm	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	PE	PE	Math	Math	Math	Math
12:00pm - 12:30pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30pm - 1:00pm	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Life Skills	Life Skills	Science	Science
1:00pm - 1:30pm	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Life Skills	Life Skills	Science	Science
1:30pm - 2:00pm	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Library	Library
2:00pm - 2:30pm	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Library	Library
2:30pm - 3:00pm	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS
3:00pm - 3:30pm	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS
Community Volunteers always welcomed (with proper completed paperwork)										

School Population: 280; Classrooms: Two classrooms each (K,1,2,3,4,5), total 12
Ancillary Staff divided equally among all classrooms

Ancillary Staff:

Special Education Teacher, 1 FTE	ESL Teacher, .25 FTE	Paraprofessional, 4 FTE	Parent Volunteers
Social Worker, .5 FTE	OT, .25 FTE	S&L Path., .5FTE	Community Volulnteers
Psychologist, .5 FTE	PT, .25 FTE	High School Volunteers	

*SSR = Self Selected Reading, GR = Guided Reading, WWW = Working with Words, PE = Physical Education, SS = Social Studies

Staff Scheduling:

Parent & Community Volunteers:

Volunteers and the community can provide support for the school, the teacher, and the classroom through resource centers, classes, mentoring, special programs, group meetings and trainings. In addition, we welcome parent and community volunteers into our classroom. Each volunteer is required to complete paperwork and have it on file in the main office. In addition, we ask that volunteers follow these guidelines:

1. Please sign in at the main office upon arrival and sign out upon departure.

2. You will receive a "Visitor" parking tag for your vehicle upon check in. Please take a moment and place it on your dashboard.

3. You may use the staff restrooms throughout the building.

4. Vending machines are available in the teachers lounge, but please refrain from lounging – teachers use this area for confidential material.

5. Please mute your cell phone. If you need to use it, please remove yourself from the classroom. If you need to use a phone, and do not have a cell phone, you may use the office phone.

6. If you have volunteered for a specific time, but need to reschedule, please contact the main office and the office personnel will contact the teacher.

7. All information at school must remain confidential. Please do not discuss students' behavior and/or abilities with others.

8. Volunteer time is to volunteer – Please do not consider this a time to discuss your child with the teacher.

9. If you are volunteering during a fire drill, tornado drill, or violent intruder drill, please follow the instructions of the teacher. If you are not with the teacher, please report to the classroom immediately.

10. Please adhere to the School Code of Conduct and Dress Code while volunteering.

ESL Teacher:

The ESL teacher participates in our classroom during Monday's Working with Words. This will give the students needing support time with him/her when they are first hearing the words of the week.

High School Volunteers:

Our class will have a partnership with the high school honor societies in order to help high school students fulfill their service learning requirements and to help our students with tutoring, mentoring, and role modeling. They will join our class at the end of the day (after high school lets out) for the Social Studies curriculum.

Occupational Therapist:

The OT will participate in our classroom during Monday's writing segment. He/she will work on the goals for the week with students

needing OT support. This will also be a great opportunity for the OT to help students with items such as their grip on the pencil when we are working on writing out words.

Paraprofessional:

The paraprofessional will be in our classroom two hours per day during Self-Selected Reading/Guided Reading, a portion of Writing, and a portion of Math.

Physical Therapist:

The PT will not participate in our classroom, but will participate while our class is in physical education. This is a natural, meaningful way to incorporate physical therapy into the week.

Psychologist:

The psychologist is included in our classroom on Wednesdays & Fridays. This time is spent observing and monitoring the students in a real-life situation. The information gathered from these observations will help determine the needs of each student when matched with the other data kept by the psychologist.

Social Worker:

The social worker is included in our classroom on Tuesdays and Thursdays during Social Studies. Mush of our social studies curriculum is partner & group based. Therefore, the social worker will help with the social interactions of the groups.

Special Education Teacher:

The Special Education Teacher works with our class every morning during Self-Selected Reading & Guided Reading. During this time the class is involved in self-selected reading. The class is divided into six reading groups. The paraprofessional and teacher are each facilitating three twenty-minute guided reading groups. The special education teacher is working with a guided reading group or with an individual on his/her specific needs.

Speech & Language Pathologist:

The SLP joins our classroom during Working with Words on Tuesdays & Thursdays. She will be providing additional assistance on the words of the week, or she may do a language enrichment activity for the entire class.

Planning:

Planning time is the most essential time needed in order for inclusive teaching to be successful. During planning time, collaborative teams will design curriculum, instruction, physical layout, accommodations/ modifications for students, resources for students with disabilities, addressing behavioral challenges, and evaluating students. Teams will also discuss the methods for teaching together within an inclusive classroom.

Daily Prep Time:

General Rule of Thumb:

- 90% Multi-Level Instruction Planning
- 10% Adaptation/Accommodation/Modification Planning

Prep Time:

Monday: 8:30am – 9:30am

Tuesday: 9:30am – 10:30am

Wednesday: 11:00am – 12:00pm

Thursday: 12:30pm – 1:30pm

Friday: 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Weekly Team Meetings:

Collaborative Teacher Team Meeting:

Collaborative Teacher Teams involve two or more teacher who work together to collaborate on learning activities, lessons, and subject matter. Our team will include the general education teacher, the special education teacher, and the paraprofessional. We will discuss the lesson plan for the upcoming week during self-selected reading and guided reading. We will design the curriculum, instruction and resources for students will diverse abilities. We will strive to build a community of learners, develop needed adaptations, evaluate students' needs, provide grading input, and contact parents when necessary.

Mondays 3:45 – 4:30pm

Monthly Department Meetings:

Third Grade Team Meeting:

Discuss instructional strategies, timelines, etc.

Upper Elementary Team Meeting:

Discuss instructional strategies, timelines, etc.

Monthly Team Meetings:

Individual Student Team Meeting:

Periodic Meetings:

Teacher Support Team Meeting (Child Study Teams):

Teacher Support Teams involve child study teams through which the teacher can bring concerns regarding a child to the attention of other specialized staff. This meeting includes an administrator, a general education teacher, a special education teacher, a psychologist, and any addition staff interested in attending. Bi-weekly meeting, Thursdays 3:45pm – 4:45pm

Professional Development:

Bi-monthly meeting provided by Department of Instruction

Individual Educational Plan Team Meeting:

This team involves those that provide support and assistance to those who qualify to receive special services. This meeting will include the teacher and every ancillary staff member (excluding volunteers) that provides services to students in the classroom, as well as the teachers of specials (art, music, PE, life skills, & library).

Communication:

In addition to planned meetings, communication via email, notes, and phone will be an essential tool for the entire team.

Teacher & Student Support & Methods:

Weekly Teaching Matrix

Weekly Teaching Matrix for the classroom can be found in Figure 3**B**. Please refer to the matrix in understanding logistics in reference to teacher and student support.

Teacher Support:

Collaborative Teaching:

Adaptations

Support staff work with children in the general education classroom developing needed adaptations to instruction for a specific student. Every educator will provide adaptations throughout the classroom curriculum.

Inclusive Multilevel Teaching

Support staff works with the general education staff to design and implement multilevel curriculum. This support method will be discussed in detail during the collaborative team teacher meetings.

Team Teaching:

One Teach, One Observe

One teacher is responsible for the instruction while the other observes one student, a small group, or the entire class to monitor learning and develop strategies to improve instruction. The general education teacher and the speech pathologist may use this method during working with words.

Figure 3B

SHELORA Typical Weekly Teaching Method Schedule

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday	
8:30am - 9:00am	Art	Art	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR
9:00am - 9:30am	Art	Art	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	SSR & GR
9:30am - 10:00am	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	Music	Music	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW
10:00am - 10:30am	SSR & GR	SSR & GR	Music	Music	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing
10:30am - 11:00am	WWW	WWW	WWW	WWW	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing
11:00am - 11:30am	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	PE	PE	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:30am - 12:00pm	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	PE	PE	Math	Math	Math	Math
12:00pm - 12:30pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30pm - 1:00pm	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Life Skills	Life Skills	Science	Science
1:00pm - 1:30pm	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math	Life Skills	Life Skills	Science	Science
1:30pm - 2:00pm	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Library	Library
2:00pm - 2:30pm	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Library	Library
2:30pm - 3:00pm	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS
3:00pm - 3:30pm	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS	SS

Community Volunteers always welcomed (with proper completed paperwork)

School Population: 280; Classrooms: Two classrooms each (K,1,2,3,4,5), total 12

Ancillary Staff divided equally among all classrooms

Team Teaching:

One Teach, One Observe
One Teach, One Drift
Station Teaching
Parallel Teaching
Alternative Teaching
Teaching Together occurs periodically

Student Support:

Groups
Peer Buddies
Tutors /Mentors

*SSR = Self Selected Reading, GR = Guided Reading, WWW = Working with Words, PE = Physical Education, SS = Social Studies

One Teach, One Drift

One teacher is responsible for instruction while the other teacher circulates to answer questions, bring students back to attention and provide mini lessons. The teacher will use this method during science when parent volunteers are in the classroom. The teacher will provide the instruction while the parent circulates.

Station Teaching

Students are arranged in stations around the room. Each teacher delivers instruction to one small group, while the other groups work independently. This method is used during self-selected reading and guided reading.

Parallel Teaching

The class is split into two groups and two teacher work simultaneously; one teacher per group. The teacher and the paraprofessional adopt this method during the last part of writing and the first part of math.

Alternative Teaching

One teacher manages the majority of the class while the other teacher pulls a small heterogeneous group aside to preview, review, assess, or provide support. This method can be seen with the social worker and psychologist during Social Studies.

<u>Teaching Together</u>

Two teachers manage and instruct the class at the same time, flexibly interacting with small groups, partners, and individuals. Periodically this class will use this form of block teaching and team with the other third grade class and use this method.

Student Support:

Groups:

Center based activities with heterogeneous groups benefit the students in addition to providing an opportunity to meet with students individually. During the language arts block, students may read a play, distribute parts, and perform the play. During the math block, students can work together to manipulate pattern blocks or tangrams providing them the opportunity to discover their own unique ideas when using blocks. In both instances, the students are learning from one another.

Peer Buddies:

During science, social studies, and math students are periodically assigned to a partner to complete the work together.

Tutors/Mentors:

The high school students provided mentoring and tutoring during the social studies curriculum at the end of the day.

Section 4
Case Study

In our classroom, we believe it's crucial to include all students in everyday activities and events, regardless of a disability. We feel it's not only beneficial for the students who have a disability but it's also valuable for the other students, as well as us teachers, to learn and grow. We believe the social aspect of school is just as important as the academic learning. It's critical to develop socially so that we can grow even more academically. We will begin the school year by building classroom community. We will do this by getting to know one another through various activities such as interviews, self-portraits and other icebreaker games. All students will be able to participate in such activities because there is no limits set on how the students portray themselves. As a community, we will develop some classroom rules that will help us understand what's expected of everyone in the classroom. In order to help all students, but especially students who are cognitively impaired, we will write the rules in words but also use symbols to help represent each expectation. The desks will be arranged in groups of four or five so all students will be sitting together. Everyone will be asked to participate in our group activities and assignments, regardless of their academic or social level. During our class meetings, we will go over the proper way to greet someone and how to have a conversation. All students need to learn social skills and how to handle themselves in public situations. For a student who is cognitively impaired, we will create a circle of friends or a learning buddy for this individual. The focus student or the teachers may choose this group of friends. The group will brainstorm ways everyone can assist the focus student. There may be special group activities in which they will do together such as lunch with the teachers. For students who are gifted, we may ask them to

lead a group that offers academic support to lower level students. They may be chosen to be a peer tutor to help out with various tasks throughout the day.

Once we feel we've successfully created a community environment in our classroom, we will focus our efforts on continuing to include students who are cognitively impaired and gifted and talented and all those academic abilities in between. For students who are gifted, we will begin with pre-assessment to learn more about their current academic ability. It would be a disservice to them if we taught them what they already know. One way to avoid this is to allow them to engage in enrichment activities or explore units or topics in greater depth. Center based learning will allow the students to discover and create their own knowledge on an independent level. We will provide tiered lessons so that students can move ahead when they are ready. There will be a variety of multi-level activities students may select from. For example, when working on a project, a rubric will be provided where a minimum for one student may be the maximum for another student. Students who are gifted need to be pushed and supported as they move to the next level. Scaffolding will be done through peer tutoring or cooperative learning groups. In the groups, the students will be asked to review or teach a student who may be experiencing some difficulty with a particular topic. The class will be provided with materials at different levels so all students will be coving the same topic but the depth or breadth of the topic will vary. Students who are gifted will be given the opportunity to participate in social action projects or community-based projects. They may be asked to investigate an area of concern in the school or community and follow through with their chosen action. They may be asked to participate on a fund-raising committee that involves the school or members of the local community. By implementing these various strategies and activities, we hope to provide a

structured, multi-level, engaging learning environment for all students, but especially those who are gifted and talented.

At the other end of the spectrum, we will also provide a multitude of strategies to include students who are cognitively impaired in our classroom. We will begin by creating a circle of support through a circle of friends, as previously mentioned. Next our efforts will be on helping these students learn independence, self-management and skills necessary for managing their own lives and learning. We will begin doing this by helping them become involved in different community experiences. We want to broaden their horizons and allow them to see everything out there for them to explore. We will help them learn how to create their own interests. We will allow them new choices to help them understand who they are and what they like. Once we have fulfilled the social aspect, we will focus our attention on what we can do to help the students academically. We use multi-level teaching in our classroom because we feel this strategy is most beneficial for all students, regardless of ability level. In doing this, all students are able to learn the same subject area information but at a level that will be challenging to them. Students will be given choices of how they would like to represent their learning. For example, they may create a model or diagram, prepare a discussion, draw pictures to tell the story, present the material orally to the class, use assistive technology such as Boardmaker, Voice to Text, Kidspiration, Powerpoint or the Internet. When giving an assignment, we will make any necessary accommodations or adaptations such as modifying the amount of work required, using manipulatives, models or diagrams, offering the choice of doing something verbally or written. These strategies will be limited to assignments that do not ask for a project to represent their knowledge and thinking. When possible we will provide authentic learning to help them connect what we are learning in class to their life at home and their surrounding communities. We want

their learning to be fun and exciting which can be done by helping students make that connection between school and real life situations. By creating an environment that will foster growth at the social and academic level, all students, ranging from cognitively impaired to the gifted and talented, will strive and achieve excellence in our classroom.

Section 5
Strategies for Change

Sandra Koelzer:

For me, it's not about how to change my instruction but about learning what I believe it right. It's about putting terminology and documentation behind my thoughts that were swirling around in my head. It's about understanding that the ways that I envisioned teaching do, actually, exist. It's about having the knowledge that other schools are actually providing inclusive environments – and making it work. It is about *every child, every time*.

I find myself taking the information we have learned and realizing that there are certain things that will not be negotiable in my classroom. Things such as the design of my classroom, the building of a community in the classroom, and the limitless array of assistive technology that everyone can use.

Because of this class, I now have the benefit of inclusive knowledge in my back pocket when I am applying for employment. I get to choose which employer best fits my philosophy of inclusive education. I am hoping I won't need to provide the leadership toward effective inclusive education – I am hoping it will already exist. However, if I find myself in an inclusive education leadership role, I am thrilled that I have my guide as a foundation and starting point for change.

I was recently at a family function discussing inclusive education and how I truly believed in it. A relative stated something to the effect that "Yeah, everyone believes in it, we just can't make it work. People have believed in it for forty years". My response? Simple: "Many schools are making it work today, and I have a guide to help me make it

real in my school".   The ability to make a difference… Pretty powerful stuff when you think about it!

Shannon Kroll:

Over this discovery and journey through inclusion, I have learned a large amount of information about inclusive teaching strategies, and I feel I ready to become an effective inclusive teacher. I know that my journey as a special educator had just begun and I have information, the latest strategies and techniques to share with others, which in return, I hope will benefit all learners.

There are a few changes as a teacher that I am willing to accept on the behalf of my students. The first major changes I will undergo, is giving up my classroom, giving up individualized time with my students, understanding that this is the most important gift I can give my students, helping others understand how important inclusion is, and collaborating with them effectively.

I will begin to promote inclusion in my school by communicating and educating other special education teachers and support staff about the benefits of full inclusion. After I gain the support from my special education department, we will contact and meet with our administration staff, general education staff, and parents to discuss special education roles, strategies, and techniques to benefit all learners in an inclusive classroom. I may have to contact various groups several times to get approvable and acceptance from, in order to implement full inclusion successfully.

I am excited for the challenge that awaits me and I understand that it is going to be difficult to have others accept my personal beliefs, teaching strategies, and implement

change to support all students within education. My students, who have various

disabilities, are important and should be included within general education.

Melanie Mazzola:

Full inclusion is not a concept or a method of practice that can be implemented

over night. It's a way of life that needs to be nurtured and cared for to ensure proper

development and implementation. When developing an inclusive school, it's crucial to

take baby steps so we can create the most beneficial learning environment for all our

students. I believe many things can be done by one individual to set an example and help

create a full inclusive classroom. In order for me to become a more effective inclusive

teacher, I believe I need to redirect my teaching practices but at the same time, act as an

advocate and role model for the rest of the school. So many times, teachers do not

understand the true concept behind full inclusion. They have not received the knowledge

or training on how to accommodate and include special education students in the

classroom. This fear of the unknown will often times lead to resistance to change. It's

our job as educators to take on the leadership role and help others understand the

importance of full inclusion.

The first step I would take in developing full inclusion is to spread the word.

Communication is a powerful tool that everyone responds to. I will share my own

philosophy on inclusive teaching with my peers, administration and families of our

community. It's important for everyone to know that this information is not my own

personal beliefs but information based on research and best practices. Everyone needs to

be aware of the facts about inclusion so they can gain a better understanding and gain

acceptance of full inclusion. I will communicate my message through staff meetings, parent information meetings, and other school and community-wide events.

The next step in my plan would be to practice what I preach. People learn from communicating but it's even more powerful to see this new information put into practice. People don't just want to be told what they can do but how to do it. As people are being educated, they want to see different strategies being used to help create and support such an environment. It's critical to have documentation and examples of what can be done in the classroom. I will provide examples of how I will build community in the classroom and throughout the school, starting from the beginning of the school year. I will also provide a physical layout of my classroom to show how minimal accommodations can be made to suit any student's needs. It's also important for everyone to see how special education students will be dealt with academically and socially. I will provide examples of authentic learning and assistive technology. Many teachers already provide an authentic learning environment but don't realize with just a few minor changes, all students can participate in every lesson. I would like to hold a brief training seminar to help all faculty and parents learn about accommodations and modifications that can be used to help any student. I feel it's very crucial for all parents to be involved and understand how they too can help their child succeed academically with the use of accommodations.

The third step I would follow in my plan for full inclusion is to talk to my fellow teachers and find out who is interested in learning more and willing to create a support committee. This group would be responsible for developing, educating, and promoting a fully inclusive environment. It would be extremely beneficial if the group consisted of

general education teachers, special education teachers, parents and administration. Every committee member would be able to bring something different to the table when discussing inclusion. We need to develop a partnership between general education and special education teachers. There needs to be communication and acceptance on both parts, especially from the special education teacher since there may be push-in services or co-teaching in the classrooms. The group will continue to spread the word about inclusion, using various forms of documentation as testimonials. The group can also plan visits to schools that already practice full inclusion. This way they can talk with other teachers and students and find out what works, what might need to be changed but overall, the effectiveness of inclusion.

My final plan of action is to continue to act as a good role model by seeking out special education students. I feel very comfortable having a variety of students in my classroom with various learning needs and levels. I welcome a diverse group of students. I believe it's beneficial and educational for everyone in the classroom, not just the special education students. In seeking out my students, I would begin by discussing my desire for a heterogeneous classroom with my building principal. I would also express my interest to the special education teacher and other teachers in the building. I would request all students, ranging from students with mild to severe disabilities to those students who are gifted. My only stipulation would be that I do not have all special education students – that is not the picture of a heterogeneous classroom. If necessary, I would also contact the parents, expressing my desire to work with their child in my classroom and sharing my personal philosophy on inclusion.

At present time, I feel I have the knowledge and tools to help create an inclusive classroom. Many of the steps I would follow to create such an environment were previously discussed in my leadership role. I would start the year off by building community in the classroom. This would be done through various activities that help students get to know one another and understand our classroom is a safe, learning environment for everyone. It does not belong to one single person but we all have equal ownership. Once our community has been established, I feel it's critical to provide multi-level instruction in an authentic learning environment. Not all students learn the say way, at the same pace, but this does not mean we can't all learn together. Providing multi-level lessons allows our students to be challenged to their zone of proximal development rather than to a level of frustration. By providing accommodations and modifications in the classroom, it eliminates the need for a student to go to the resource room. They will be able to do the same work as the rest of the class but just at a different level. Finally, a very important area of change for me would be in developing proactive ways of responding to challenging behaviors. First instinct is to remove the student from the situation but this is not always the best solution. Full inclusion welcomes all students, even those who are challenging due to behavior issues. It's vital to see these students not only need our support and guidance academically but more so socially. We need to be there for all our students to provide an education but we also need to be there to provide some social and emotional stability. This type of education not only benefits one particular student, but it helps all students realize the importance of support and friendship.

<u>Laura Shultz:</u>

After taking these weeks throughout the course to think and learn about inclusion, I have begun to formulate the way I feel about the way things are done now, and what improvements can be made. I can find mistakes more often then positives, but focusing on the positives and building them up is a possibility.

As a regular education teacher in the public schools, I see many ways things can be changed and improved. There is a desire and ability however, to begin making small steps towards a more inclusive system. The special education teacher has been teaching for almost thirty years, and is someone who keeps up on policy and educational change. She has taken a strong interest in coming into the classrooms of the school, versus pulling students out. She spends 30-45 minutes in the classroom with me, helping students with their writing. She usually sits near the students she services, but all of the kids in the class have the ability to ask her questions and seek her advice. She still does to pull-out, as that is what is expected where we currently teach, but she does take the time and efforts to come in on a regular basis.

I see this type of work between this special education teacher and two other regular education teachers in the building aside from myself. The work we have done together can be seen as a strong argument to make for our administrators on having more inclusive classrooms. We have shown the ability to work together collaboratively. We have talked about doing things more inclusively and we have started a teamwork process. We have problem solved the scheduling already on our own and therefore we can demonstrate student success as they are included in the regular classroom. Students in her classroom are now included into the regular education room much more regularly.

As she once stated, "He wants so bad to be a regular third-grader." about one of the students who is certified CI. He had before been in a self contained room and did realize he is a regular third grader; he likes basketball and playing video games. As we shape the opinions of others, this child and more like him to see it that way, changes can be made. I can see how students will benefit more and more. Students will no longer see themselves as different and therefore needed to be isolated. Instead they see themselves as different and a contributor to the class as a whole.

I have begun to see the value in these small steps.   A tidal wave of change will cause an upset with teachers, parents, and students. But if small things like push-in services in a few classes at a time, will begin to build a case and problem solving at a small scale can start. She and I are at the step of planning and collaborating. It is becoming the time where with the inclusive plan that the group and I have created, and with the teachers that are already on board, we can begin to have conversations with receptive teachers in the building. As we begin to change the general idea of special education being services not a classroom on the outskirts of the building. And give teachers manageable schedules where they do not feel they are taking on more. If we can get a large minority on board, we can make a more significant change by presenting to the leadership in our building.

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