

# Electronic Journal for Inclusive Education

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## Welcome

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## Introduction by Dr. Patricia Renick, Editor, EJIE

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WELCOME to the second edition of the Electronic Journal of Inclusive Education. As you have read we are still under construction in several segments of the journal. However, the articles the editorial board has chosen for this edition reflect the growth of inclusion initiatives across the country and throughout the educational system.

Before you read further, I would like to direct your attention to the "C.L.A.S.S." logo on the cover of the journal. C.L.A.S.S. stands for Creating Laboratory Access for Students with Disabilities. Funded by the National Science Foundation, the purpose of this project is to prepare secondary science educators to adapt laboratory and science instruction to meet the needs of students with physical and mental impairments. The logo will take you directly to the web site where more information is available concerning this new and exciting project. Please take a moment to read it and, if you are interested in participating, follow-up information is provided.

Returning to the journal:

- Dr. Finegan's research into kindergartners' perception and acceptance of a student with disabilities reveals the importance of age appropriate, need appropriate education at the earliest levels. It also provides insight into the mind set of young children as they encounter and learn to work with a student perceived as different from themselves. As with all qualitative research, this work reveals the need for more questions and ongoing research into early inclusive education.
- Dr. Whitworth's article presents the necessary components of a preservice teacher preparation program. This program prepares teachers for inclusive settings by dividing preparation into three categories: collaborative teaching; techniques and strategies; and collaborative experiences. Clearly describing each component of this program with the expected teacher outcomes, Dr. Whitworth challenges us to think critically about existing preparation programs and encourages us to ask significant questions concerning the readiness of teachers to work in collaborative situations with other professionals and parents.
- The need to structure middle school programs to use the "hidden curriculum" of participation in extracurricular activities as a means of furthering acceptance of all students is examined in the Garner and Knowlton article. This article also provides a link with middle school inclusion initiatives and an organization devoted to developing inclusive middle schools.
- *Awakening Genius in the Classroom*, the title of a book reviewed by Dr. Collier is an excellent resource for understanding and guiding the learning of gifted and talented students. This particular book provides a definition of "genius" that encourages us to think in terms of multiple-intellegences and learning styles. It is an excellent resource for working with all students.

Ms. Walker in collaboration with DR. Ovington, have provided an excellent piece of graduate work that discusses the effects of inclusive practice within the classroom. This report is thought provoking and provides a broad overview of research and opinion concerning the topic of inclusion.

Finally, we have included a poem, that once again draws attention to the importance and strength we find in the acceptance of the diversity inherent in the human family.

The journal is actively seeking new papers for the next edition and beyond. The editorial board and I hope you find this second edition thought provoking, timely and that it contributes to the conversation concerning inclusive practices.

Patricia R. Renick, Ph. D., Editor