Inclusion

Rationale

I am a fresh face to the world of teaching. This year will begin my second year of teaching, first year full time. Also, I will be teaching a different grade than last year. When embarking the idea of beginning graduate school so soon, I decided it would benefit me in areas that I may still feel unsettled in or may even struggle with. So far, it has proven successful. During this class, I have found it very interesting to learn about the ways in which curriculum is developed and used. It has given me important insight into education, and I plan to continue that insight through my final project. I have chosen to research inclusion and how it is working in today’s classrooms.

Inclusion has always been in the forefront of my teacher education. I was taught that the least restrictive environment is the best learning place for children with disabilities. To me, this idea seems natural and essential in education. However, during my first year of teaching, I learned of many veteran teachers who were concerned about teaching students with special needs. Some teachers even complained about the lack of work that our special education teachers did. I was shocked at the amount of controversy surrounding the idea of inclusion in my school. This controversy led to an interest in researching the subject of inclusion.

Also, as a kindergarten teacher, I was faced with a large variety of students. From the first few days, I could identify students who were advanced, average, low, and even
students with special needs. Although I expected a range in my classroom, I did find it
difficult to adjust to the needs of all of my students. I wanted everyone to succeed, so I
pressed myself to individualize the education of my students. After a bit of struggle, I
soon caught on to adjusting the curriculum to the different levels of students. This was
successful for me, but there are some teachers who do not take the time to meet the needs
of all students. Wondering why some teachers didn’t find this need important, I was again
pushed towards studying inclusion.

I began my research with the two journal abstract articles. They told me that
inclusion is a concern for many teachers around the world, not only in the United States.
Also, autism is a growing disorder in this country, and many inclusion teachers are
concerned with their abilities to meets these special students needs. This information led
me to more research about the pros and cons of inclusion and how administrators can
help make teachers more comfortable with the idea of inclusion.

My results show both pros and cons to inclusion. Most teachers find that inclusion
helps children socially. Children with and without disabilities become more comfortable
with one another just by working together in school. Also, inclusion may allow for
positive group work time where peer teaching can take place. Overall, teachers did not
have many conflicts with having children with disabilities in their classrooms.

The problems seem to arise when it comes to teaching. Many teachers do not feel
qualified to teach children with disabilities. The autism article emphasized the need for
teachers to have special training in order to most benefit these students, which is not
offered at all schools. Just as I felt in my first few weeks of taching, the major concern is
meeting the needs of every child in the classroom.
Through my research, I have concluded that many problems surrounding inclusion can be solved with professional development programs. These programs are needed to help teachers learn how to meet the needs of every child and how to handle different types of disorders. Secondly, there needs to be a strong partnership between parents and teachers in order to best suite each child. Lastly, teachers need to have aides or helpers in some classroom settings. Special education teachers should work along with general education teachers to brainstorm and help the students. The key to success in inclusion seems to revolve around one word: teamwork. Administrators need to start this teamwork with preparation programs, followed by teacher support, and home to school communication. With a little extra knowledge and a lot of teamwork, I feel that inclusion will be successful in education.
Works Cited


