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Service Learning: A Creative Strategy for Inclusive Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

The movement for full inclusion is often hindered by the lack of creative and alternative teaching methodologies in regular classrooms. ***Service*** learning not only offers an alternative to traditional classroom teaching methods, it is also a vehicle to provide inclusive ***community*** based instruction, to promote the development of communities, and to provide functional skills training. This paper defines ***service*** learning and its components while also discussing applicability of ***service*** learning for all students.

DESCRIPTORS: ***service*** learning, inclusion, teaching methods, ***service***, students with severe ***disabilities***

Parents, TASH and other advocacy groups, and the courts all provide strong support for the right of students with ***disabilities*** to be ***educated*** with their nondisabled peers. Yet traditional regular ***education*** teaching strategies and methods pose a deterrent to successful inclusion (Pugach & Warger, 1993; Smith & Puccini, 1995). Indeed, Pugach (1995) lamented that inclusion is doomed to failure unless the regular classroom is infused with different and creative ways of teaching.

Service learning is one such different and creative way of teaching (Gent & Gurecka, 1996a). In fact, ***service*** learning is such a departure from traditional pedagogy that it has been billed as a tool to transform schools (Buchen, 1995). ***Service*** learning is an activity-based, cooperative strategy that combines hands-on ***service*** and learning in cross-curricular thematic units. ***Service*** learning provides opportunities for students to practice and refine skills while meeting the real needs of a ***community*** (Perkins & Miller, 1994).

Service learning consists of four interrelated components: learning (preparation), ***service***, reflection, and celebration (Fertman, 1994). The goal of ***service*** learning is to enable students to acquire or practice new skills and "to blend ***service*** and learning goals and activities in such a way that they reinforce each other and produce a greater impact than either could produce alone" (Fenstermaker, 1990, p. 195). Thus, ***service*** learning, in its purist form, is functional skills and typical routines applied in ***community*** environments. Since ***service*** learning promotes application of skills in real environments, both maintenance and generalizability of skills are increased (Fertman, 1994).

Service learning has strong potential to foster multiage grouping, integrated assessment strategies, collaborative learning groups, peer support, responsible citizenship, and the other features of schools of the 21st century. Interestingly, these are the same features required to support inclusion (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996). In ***service*** learning, there is little need to design separate learning activities for students with special needs that ultimately serve to stigmatize the students and isolate them from other students. ***Service*** learning has no prerequisites and thusly is appropriate for all students in all curricular areas (Fertman, 1994). Indeed, Keister, Kinsley, and Resnik (1994) noted, "the fact that anyone can volunteer to help others makes awesome feats accessible to everyone" (p. 20). Obviously, any teaching strategy which claims that students do not need a basic set of prerequisite skills has high potential for use in inclusive classrooms.

This article will explore the nature of ***service*** learning by examining the history of ***service*** learning, types of ***service***, the components of ***service*** learning, the rationale for using ***service*** learning in inclusive classrooms, support systems for ***service*** learning, and research needs relative to ***service*** learning. It will also provide a case study of ***service*** learning in an inclusive classroom.

HISTORY

Service learning has a long history of use. John Dewey (1916), in Democracy in ***Education***, discussed the need for schools to prepare students to be good citizens in a democratic society. He argued that students want to explore and gain control over their environments. He consequently proposed that students spend time working and helping in non-school environments. Dewey's experiential ***education*** program, which emphasized learning through active interaction and experimentation with the environment, was the predecessor to modern ***service*** learning (Kolb, 1984).

The modern tradition of ***service*** learning received national recognition with the passage of the National and ***Community Service*** Act of 1990. This act provided grant money for the development of ***service*** learning programs in elementary schools, secondary schools, and universities. The act also provided a national impetus to embed ***service*** learning into our nation's culture by establishing AmeriCorps, a program for adults who wish to provide a season of ***service***.

TYPES OF *COMMUNITY* INVOLVEMENT

Many terms have been used simultaneously to describe ***service*** learning. Words such as ***community service***, volunteerism, ***service***, and ***service*** learning are often used interchangeability and, therefore, cause much confusion. While all involve some type of activity within the ***community***, they vary as to the participants, motivation for ***participation***, relationship to participant's skills, amount of autonomy, benefits to participants, and benefits to the ***community***. Table 1 differentiates between these dimensions and the various types of ***community*** involvement.

COMPONENTS OF *SERVICE* LEARNING

As Table 1 indicates, ***service*** learning is connected directly to the school curriculum or to the IEP objectives. It occurs during the school day and is not added on. The four components of ***service*** learning--learning (preparation), ***service***, reflection, and celebration--will each be discussed separately in the following sections.

LEARNING (PREPARATION)

Learning (preparation) is the most important component of ***service*** learning. Teachers must have specific learning objectives or goals in mind when planning ***service*** learning (Alliance for ***Service*** Learning in ***Education*** Reform, 1993; Boyer, 1990). Learning (preparation) refers to the skills or knowledge students must learn in order to ***participate*** in the ***service*** activity and to meet curricular or IEP objectives. In ***service*** learning, students learn basic skills or knowledge in class and practice them during the ***service*** activity. Appropriate goals or objectives for students include, but are not limited to, self management skills, functional academic skills, basic motor skills, work or job related skills, ***community*** use skills, communication skills, or social skills. Also supportive strategies for friendship development and partial ***participation*** can be applied. For instance, some students with severe ***disabilities*** need to learn such routine social skills as greetings. Haring and Ryndak (1994) noted that these social skills should be taught within context. Using ***service*** learning, students with severe ***disabilities*** can learn such routine social interaction skill patterns as saying, "Hi. How are you?" and then repeatedly practice these patterned social skills through, for example, pairing with nondisabled peers and greeting residents of nursing homes. Other students with severe ***disabilities*** who are learning to use and operate augmentative communication devices typically have the devices programmed with such phrases of introduction as, "Hi, my name is Stephanie." These students can find repeated and multiple opportunities to meaningfully practice the use of such devices in the nursing home by introducing themselves to nursing home residents. Students who are more proficient users of such systems can engage in reciprocal interactions, especially if the devices are programmed with such discussion starters as "I like baseball. What do you like to do?"

In another example, students collecting for a food basket can use the canned goods to practice match to sample, systematic search, counting, and functional reading. They can practice such ***community*** skills as shopping when they purchase additional items for the baskets. They can develop and refine their social and/or communication skills as well as develop friendships when they interact with their peers in

the process. Obviously, a variety of curricular and IEP goals can be met by the same activity.

SERVICE

The second part of ***service*** learning is the ***service*** activity itself. ***Service*** activities generally fall into three basic types: direct ***service***, indirect ***service***, and civic action (Maryland Student ***Service*** Alliance, 1989). Direct ***service*** activities involve personal contact with some individuals in need. For example, students learning to cook can prepare and serve food at a homeless shelter or a soup kitchen or can make cookies to serve at a Red Cross blood collection site. High school students learning about fire safety could use their newly acquired knowledge to teach preschoolers how to "Stop, Drop, and Roll" (Gent & Gurecka, 1996b).

The second basic type of ***service*** activity is indirect ***service***. Indirect ***service*** activities involve channeling resources to solve a problem, e.g., collecting books for needy school districts (Foley, 1994), collecting food for Thanksgiving baskets, or holding a fund raiser for a ***community*** member who requires a transplant. In indirect ***service***, specific ***community*** members indirectly benefit from the ***service*** but the students benefit directly.

The third basic type of ***service*** activity is civic action. In civic action, students actively ***participate*** in citizenship by performing a ***community*** project in which the ***community*** in general benefits. Students may either inform the public about a problem or work with the public on solving the problem. For instance, students might clean up a park or a vacant lot. They might plant and maintain a ***community*** garden. They might design, build, and fill flower boxes for a neighborhood or a section of town. They might adopt a section of highway and work to ensure that it is clean and litter free. Students might make and circulate posters about the impact of drinking and driving. They might warn citizens about fatalities related to unmarked railroad crossings and circulate petitions to have the crossings marked.

Again, a variety of goals, ranging from purely academic to functional life skills and social skills, can be practiced and acquired in each of these ***service*** activities. Additionally, all of these ***service*** activities provide numerous opportunities for meaningful and active partial ***participation*** of students with severe ***disabilities***. Active partial ***participation*** is an important consideration, especially for students with profound and multiple ***disabilities*** who may require extensive support in order to ***participate*** in basic tasks (Logan, Alberto, Kana, & Waylor-Bowen, 1994). These ***service*** activities provide meaningful contexts for both instruction and partial ***participation*** as well as for the development of social support networks.

Regardless of the type of basic ***service*** activity selected, however, the ***service*** activity must have four qualities. First, it must meet the ***educational*** goals or objectives specified by the teacher, the curriculum, and/or the IEP. Several special educators have suggested that schools involve all students in such ***service*** activities as Red Cross blood drives, cross age helping, and visiting nursing homes (Sapon-Shevin, 1990a; Solomon, Schaps, Watson, & Battistich, 1992). Unless these ***service*** projects are tied to the curriculum or IEP objectives, they are merely ***service*** projects and ***service*** learning is not occurring. If the ***service*** activity does not meet the ***educational*** needs of the students as identified in the IEP or the curriculum, then the ***service*** activity is not appropriate for ***service*** learning. Second, the ***service*** activity must be challenging, engaging, and meaningful for the students. Of course, when students play significant roles in designing ***service*** activities, the result is relevant and meaningful ***service*** activities. Third, ***service*** activities must address a real, recognized need (Alliance for ***Service***-Learning in ***Educational*** Reform, 1993). It would be senseless for students to beautify a public park that had just been cleaned up by park employees. Teachers must do an assessment of the ***community*** to ascertain areas of need (National Center for ***Service***-Learning, 1981). Sometimes social ***service*** agencies can provide information about ***community*** needs. School district administrators, churches, and civic groups are often also well informed about needs of a particular ***community***. Finally, ***service*** learning should not result in the replacement of paid employees. Special educators may be especially sensitive to this issue because of the period in our not-so-distant past in which individuals with ***disabilities*** residing in institutions suffered because of institutional peonage. Thus, ***service*** activities should be tied to curricular or IEP objectives, be relevant and meaningful, be based on real needs, and should not supplant paid

employees.

REFLECTION

The ***service*** activity is followed by the third component of ***service*** learning--reflection. Reflection is defined as the active, persistent, and careful consideration of the ***service*** activity (Gish, 1990). Students who regularly engage in cooperative learning may already be familiar with reflection as a way to process their group effectiveness. Teachers and staff members who engage in formal collaborative efforts may be also be familiar with reflection as the team processing or the "processing the process" component of collaboration (Thousand & Villa, 1990).

Reflection serves several purposes. First, reflection helps students understand the meaning and the impact of their efforts. Second, reflection helps students to understand what they learned and also helps them gain a greater sense of self. Third, reflection enables students to examine problem solving strategies and techniques that can be used in future endeavors (Bransford, Vye, Kinzer, & Risko, 1991). Indeed, reflection, when used in this manner, can lead to continuous improvement and the development of quality ***services***. Finally, reflection helps students to examine their biases.

Reflection can take a variety of forms including, but not limited to, collages, photo displays, journals, portfolios, discussions, videotapes, and poems. During reflection, students should attempt to answer some or all of the following questions: What did I do? What did I learn? Do I feel that I have made a difference? What obstacles did I overcome and how? The first two questions might be more easily addressed by students with severe ***disabilities*** since the questions can be answered in a relatively straightforward manner. These two questions also readily lend themselves to use of pictures and such nonverbal forms of communication as pointing, gestures, or facial expression. Quality reflection requires a structured, clear objective, the use of a method consistent with the ***educational*** and/or IEP objectives, and involvement of all students. Reflection should be ongoing throughout the ***service*** activity.

CELEBRATION

The final component of ***service*** learning is celebration. In celebration, students celebrate their learning and accomplishments while also recognizing their ***community*** partners. Celebration not only creates and nurtures a culture of caring, it provides fertile ground for developing friendships. Like reflection, celebration can take many forms. Celebration can involve sharing the photo collage developed during the reflection with the school board, parents, or administrators; developing a "Good Deed Tree" (Sapon-Shevin, 1990b, p. 68); having a pizza party; posting the number of hours served along with pictures of those who ***participated***; newspaper publicity about the ***service*** activity; or awarding ribbons and badges for ***service***. The possibilities are endless.

WHY USE *SERVICE* LEARNING IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASS?

Many reasons exist for using ***service*** learning as a pedagogical tool in an inclusive classroom. These reasons include an ability to meet the needs of all students, ***community***-based instruction, development of communities, and promotion of critical thinking. These reasons will be explored in the next section of this paper.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL STUDENTS

Some experts have voiced concerns that inclusion will result in an increased emphasis on non-functional skills for students with ***disabilities*** (Smith & Puccini, 1995). Students in inclusive classrooms may require alternate goals, alternate activities, or parallel activities (Stainback & Stainback, 1990; Stainback, Stainback, & Ayres, 1996; Stainback, Stainback, & Stefanich, 1996; Waldron, 1995). Indeed, Ryndak (1996b) argued that inclusive classrooms become "blended" classrooms in which functional activities are blended with other general ***education*** activities. Cross curricular thematic units are especially well suited to this blending because they are flexible and can accommodate a wide variety of learning objectives. As previously mentioned, ***service*** learning is particularly well suited for use in cross curricular thematic units. Table 2 lists some of the possibilities for cross-curricular thematic units from a

general ***education*** curriculum that involve ***service*** learning. As illustrated by Table 2, these units emphasize multiple topic areas and can simultaneously accommodate diversity in objectives and goals.

Moreover, Stainback, Stainback, and Stefanich (1996) recommended that teachers in inclusive classrooms design "activities that can address the diverse abilities of students while maintaining a group context" (p. 14). ***Service*** learning can serve as this context for instruction since a wide variety of student learning objectives can be promoted by the same ***service*** learning activity. Use of a matrix, which would list goals of all students with and without ***disabilities***, would help to ensure that the ***educational*** needs of all students are being met.

COMMUNITY-BASED INSTRUCTION

Students with ***disabilities***, especially those with severe ***disabilities***, require instruction in the ***community*** (Falvey, 1989). ***Community***-based instruction sustains authentic learning (Logan et al., 1994). It provides opportunities for interaction, opportunities for general case programming, and exposure to natural cues and consequences. ***Community***-based instruction, however, is undergoing renewed scrutiny since it effectively segregates students with ***disabilities*** from their peers (Stainback, Stainback, & Stefanich, 1996). This segregation can negate the positive effects of inclusion and can reduce the possibility of becoming a group member. To rectify this, some attempts have been made to include students without ***disabilities*** in ***community***-based instruction. Students without ***disabilities*** serve as tutors or peer helpers for students with ***disabilities***. Yet this process is being criticized because it removes the students without ***disabilities*** from the classroom. As a result, some are calling for an elimination or reduction of ***community***-based instruction for students with severe ***disabilities*** (Falvey, 1995; Stainback, Stainback, & Stefanich, 1996).

The abandonment of ***community***-based instruction may be premature given that ***community***-based instruction can be inclusive and can meet the ***educational*** needs of all students when ***service*** learning is adopted as the instructional tool. In other words, ***service*** learning can be the vehicle to make ***community***-based instruction inclusive while simultaneously meeting the ***educational*** needs of all students. For instance at one school, all sixth grade students, including those with ***disabilities***, worked in small groups and purchased groceries for people who were "shut ins" (Fosdick, 1994). While doing so, some of the students were perfecting their shopping and communication skills. Other students were practicing such consumer skills as comparison shopping, coupon use, and budgeting. Still other students were practicing calculator use and mobility skills. Thus, all students benefited from this inclusive ***community***-based ***service***.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITIES

Schools need to be communities of connected individuals that provide mutual respect and acceptance for all of their members (Sapon-Shevin, 1990a). Interdependence is one characteristic of good inclusive schools (Sapon-Shevin, 1990a, 1990b; Stainback, Stainback, & Ayres, 1996). Unfortunately, communities just don't happen. "The vision and reality of ***community*** come when people have direct experience of each other, experience of mutuality and interdependence unmediated by government sanctions and codes. The vision and reality of ***community*** come when people have a rich array of opportunities to interact in public, interactions which draw out and encourage the human impulse toward life together" (Palmer, 1996, p. 2).

Ryndak (1996a) noted that the "task of school personnel is to facilitate membership in natural support networks by providing opportunities to interact during various types of activities" (p. 72). These opportunities to interact can lead to acceptance and the development of friends (Snow & Forest, 1987) and natural social support networks (Stainback & Stainback, 1990). ***Service*** learning provides those opportunities for interaction and contributes to the development of respect and positive attitudes amongst ***participating*** students (Conrad & Hedin, 1990; Luchs, 1981). Indeed, 54% of the special ***education*** teachers surveyed by Brill (1994) reported that their students with ***disabilities*** had better relationships with nondisabled peers as a result of their involvement with ***service*** learning. The students with ***disabilities*** reported feeling more accepted and more respected by their peers without ***disabilities***.

Unfortunately, most ***service*** learning programs do not actively involve students with special needs (Newman & Rutter, 1986). Instead, people with ***disabilities*** are most often recipients of the ***service*** in ***service*** learning (Brill, 1994; Conrad & Hedin, 1980; Newman & Rutter, 1986). This can perpetuate negative stereotypes and may cause some students to see individuals with ***disabilities*** as objects of pity. Indeed, Ballamy et al. (1984) argued that volunteerism or unpaid work by people with ***disabilities*** results in equalities and continues the perception of people with ***disabilities*** as second class citizens. Since ***service*** learning in an inclusive classroom would involve all students, however, students with ***disabilities*** would not be singled out or treated inequitably. Instead, involving students with ***disabilities*** in ***service*** learning cultivates a positive perception of people with ***disabilities*** since it causes society to view individuals with ***disabilities*** as contributing, and therefore, valuable members of society. In other words, ***participating*** in ***service*** learning can increase social role valorization (Wolfensberger, 1983). Indeed, one outcome of a model ***service*** learning project carried out in an inclusive setting was that students with ***disabilities*** were seen as providers of ***service*** rather than as mere recipients of ***service*** (Gurecka, Gent, Pappas, & Fosdick, 1995). Therefore, ***service*** learning in inclusive classrooms can promote acceptance of, and respect for, people with ***disabilities*** (Gent & Gurecka, 1996a).

CRITICAL THINKING

Teaching students to be effective critical thinkers has historically been one of the goals of ***education*** and has more recently been considered as a goal for students with ***disabilities*** (Brown, Evans, Weed, & Owens, 1987; Stainback & Stainback, 1990). Stainback and Stainback (1990) noted that "All students, including those traditionally classified as having severe, profound, and multiple ***disabilities***, need to be provided opportunities to think, reason, and make ... decisions" (p. 15).

Teaching critical thinking requires restructuring of traditional curriculum and instructional strategies (Jones & Idol, 1991). Adams and Hamm (1990) noted that to increase critical thinking skills, schools "must provide experiences that go beyond the textbook ... students [must] work in cooperative group settings to solve problems, construct projects, design activities" (p. 44). As students make decisions about these projects, develop plans, and carry out their plans, critical thinking skills are developed and enhanced (Adams & Hamm, 1990).

Using ***service*** learning as a pedagogical tool in an inclusive classroom may help to improve critical thinking skills (Alliance for ***Service***-Learning in ***Education*** Reform, 1993; Conrad & Hedin, 1982). Indeed, Yoder and Retish (1994) reported that their special ***education*** students became "active problem-solvers" (p. 27) as result of ***participating*** in ***service*** learning. Likewise, Conrad and Hedin (1982) concluded that those students involved in ***service*** learning showed greater increases in problem solving skills than peers not enrolled in ***service*** learning. Batchelder and Root (1994) also noted gains in decision making and reasoning in the 226 students enrolled in ***service*** learning that they studied.

A CASE EXAMPLE OF *SERVICE* LEARNING IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

Amanda, a sixth grader with severe multiple ***disabilities***, has IEP objectives pertaining to use of augmentative communication devices, mobility in an electric wheelchair, using an electronic switch to indicate choices, following a schedule relying on tangible symbols, such self management skills as purchasing a lunch in the school cafeteria, and such ***community*** access skills as using an adapted "next dollar" strategy (McDonnell, Horner, & Williams, 1984) at the store. She is included in a class with her sixth grade peers in her neighborhood middle school. The curriculum for her sixth grade peers includes such language arts topics as improving reading proficiency and comprehension, letter writing, grammar, and oral speaking; such mathematics topics as percentages, basic math processes using decimals, division using multiple dividends, and calculating rate; such social studies skills as legislative processes and the development of a law.

An appropriate ***service*** learning project for these students is to help families on limited budgets procure car seats for their newborn infants. The students do so by establishing and maintaining a small school store which sells pencils, pens, notebook paper, and items bearing the school logo to their middle school peers during home room. The profits from the sale of these items will be used to purchase infant

car seats. The car seats will be donated to the local hospital to distribute to families who need them. This project enables Amanda's peers to develop their skills in language arts, social studies, and math. It also provides multiple opportunities for Amanda to develop her skills in relation to her IEP objectives, as well as help to promote the development of a network of friends.

In order to carry out this ***service*** learning project, these sixth graders must first ascertain the need. They contact ***community*** leaders to speak to them about the need for car seats. During the speaker's presentation, Amanda is prompted to check her schedule so that she knows the events of the day. She uses her electronic device to choose a peer partner and meaningfully ***participates*** when she and her partner write a question to ask the speaker. The teacher and the peer partner program this question into Amanda's communication device. At the appropriate time, the peer prompts Amanda to ask the question by activating the communication device. The students must also write letters to hospital administrators describing the project and asking them to become partners in the project. The students are divided into groups of five to do so. Every group is assigned a leader, a secretary, and a time keeper. Again, Amanda ***participates*** by selecting a group to work with. She indicates her desire to ***participate*** by using her communication device. She also uses her communication device to answer questions asked by the group's leader. When the letter is completely transcribed by the secretary and approved by the teacher, Amanda, accompanied by a peer, maneuvers her wheelchair to the mailbox outside of the building to mail the letter.

But learning about the need and recruiting partners is not enough. The students must also learn about the laws mandating infant car seat use. They read articles documenting the need for special infant car seats. They trace the passage of the law from its introduction as a bill in the state legislature to the governor's signing ceremony. During this reading/discussion portion, Amanda chooses a peer to be paired with and meaningfully ***participates*** by responding to questions that require yes/no answers. She also partially ***participates*** in the development of a flow chart documenting the legislative process.

Next the students brainstorm about inventory, and select and order that inventory. Some sixth graders are perfecting their written communication and their mathematics skills. Amanda, however, is developing her communication skills, social skills, and choice making skills. For instance, with the help of a peer, Amanda looks through catalogs and answers questions related to inventory (e.g., "We're voting on which pencil to order. Do you like this one or that one?").

During the days that the store is in operation, Amanda is prompted to check her schedule to determine if she is scheduled to work in the store. Photographs of school store "employees" are of great assistance in this endeavor. Accompanied by a buddy, she maneuvers her wheelchair down the school hall to get to the store. She greets customers using such routine social skills as an eye gaze and the use of her communication device which is programmed with "Hello" or "Hi." With prompting from a peer, she answers questions relative to the sale (e.g., "Hey Amanda, do you have any purple pencils?"). At the end of the daily store hours, Amanda partially ***participates*** in the inventory process and the counting of money. As the class practices math skills by maintaining the accounting books for the project, Amanda either partially ***participates*** by answering questions and making choices, or she works on a specific self management skill.

When the class accumulates enough money to purchase the infant car seats, they are broken into shopping teams. Again, Amanda is prompted to check her schedule so that she knows that the trip to Walmart is on her schedule. With the help of her teammates, Amanda maneuvers her wheelchair throughout the store to the section with baby items. One student calculates the price of the car seats including tax. Again, with the help of a peer, Amanda is involved in the choice making process (e.g., "We can afford this one and that one. Which one do you vote for?"). Since one student in each team is designated to carry the money and pay for the car seat, Amanda and a peer buddy are the designated "payers." They use the adapted next dollar method to pay for the car seat. Because the car seat costs much more than the nine dollars or less range Amanda has been typically using during the acquisition phase of learning this strategy, the peer buddy counts out the ten and twenty dollar bills while Amanda provides the "next dollar."

During the daily reflection period, Amanda uses her augmentative device to answer such questions as

"Did Ethan help you at the store?" or "Did you work at the store today?" Sometimes she even re-checks her schedule to affirm her response. On days when journal writing is the form of reflection, Amanda, with the help of a peer, maneuvers throughout the classroom and distributes journals to her classmates. While the students write in their journals, a peer tapes the picture of Amanda working at the store in her journal, and asks her questions. She is prompted to respond using her augmentative communication device and her peer writes her responses in the journal.

For celebration, the students deliver the car seats to the hospital where they present the car seats to the social work department and get their pictures taken with a family and their new baby. The pictures are published in the local newspaper as well as the hospital employee paper. The pictures and articles are cut out of the papers and posted on a bulletin board in the school lobby under the caption "We care about kids!!" Of course, Amanda is included in all of this. Even though the celebration is fun and rewarding, opportunities are structured for Amanda to make choices, use her wheelchair, and use her augmentative communication device.

Throughout this ongoing ***service*** learning project, Amanda and her peers worked toward their ***educational*** goals as outlined in the curriculum and the IEP. They frequently interacted with each other providing a common ground for the development of friendships and communities. This project helped Amanda practice her ***community*** access skills without being segregated from her peers. This project also demonstrated to the students, the hospital staff, and the ***community*** at large that students with ***disabilities*** can provide ***service*** to the ***community***.

SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Service learning is like inclusion in that supports are necessary for successful implementation. Not surprisingly, similar supports are required for each. Support for inclusion entails partnerships with other educators, financial support, an advisory board and administrative support. Similarly the support for ***service*** learning entails ***community*** partners, financial support, an advisory board, and administrative support. This section of the paper will briefly discuss each of these support systems.

PARTNERSHIPS

Both ***service*** learning and inclusion emphasize the need for partnership and collaborative activities. In inclusion, the partners and collaborators are usually other teachers. In ***service*** learning, the partners are usually ***community*** organizations or members. Partnerships must be true partnerships in which both partners are constantly communicating and both are getting something out of the relationship (Rogers & Whetten, 1982). That is, win-win situations must be created through the partnerships.

For example, a win-win partnership could be created with an inclusive classroom and a nursing home. Students could visit elderly residents at a nursing home (Smilow, 1993). Those who needed to could practice social and communication skills by interacting with the residents of the nursing home. They could engage in recreation-leisure skills by playing games or showing a movie using the VCR. Students can also learn about aging, medical conditions, and medical related careers. Because the nursing home needs to show that its residents are receiving visits from ***community*** members, the nursing home may very willingly split the cost of the bus transportation to and from the nursing home. The project would meet the needs of the students as well as the needs of the nursing home. It is a win-win situation.

In other circumstances, one could become partners with a ***community service*** agency like the Kiwanis or the Rotary (Gent & Gurecka, 1996a). In one ***community***, members of the Kiwanis group regularly collected and raised money to provide food baskets for needy ***community*** members at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. For each holiday, Kiwanians would take the money, shop for the grocery items, and assemble the food baskets. An enterprising teacher contacted the Kiwanis group and asked if her students could do the grocery shopping for the Kiwanis. The Kiwanians agreed, provided the teacher with the list, the money for the groceries, and even a little extra for transportation. The students practiced needed money and shopping skills. The Kiwanis, in turn, served two constituent groups. They helped the students by providing them an opportunity to practice academic and functional life skills. They also helped the ***community*** by providing food baskets to needy members. Again, this partnership is

a win-win situation.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Inclusion often requires the development or purchase of modified materials for the students being included. The materials can be nominal in cost or can be quite expensive. Likewise, ***service*** learning can involve nominal costs or can be more expensive. Depending on the ***service*** project selected, money for the project or transportation to a different site might be required. These may be derived from partners, from the school budget, or from volunteers.

If cost is an issue, however, ***service*** projects can be devised that require little or no extra money or costs. For example, high school students collected aluminum cans for recycling and donated the money garnered from the can recycling to the "Make-A-Wish" Foundation (Miller, 1997). Obviously, some of the high school students learned about the environment and the benefits of recycling while doing so. Others practiced match to sample skills, and math and money skills as they sorted the cans, weighed the aluminum cans, determined their worth, and redeemed them. Additionally, the students with severe ***disabilities*** who worked alongside of the students who were not disabled practiced communication, social skills, and such functional academics as money and counting. No additional cost was incurred by the school district. Moreover, since the ***service*** learning could be carried out within the school building, the liability risks often associated with transportation and off campus activities were minimized (Anderson & Witmer, 1994).

ADVISORY BOARDS

It is often advantageous to form an advisory board or task force to support and advocate for inclusion (Stainback & Stainback, 1990). Similarly, in ***service*** learning it may be advantageous to form a ***community*** advisory board or committee. Like the inclusion advisory board, the ***service*** learning advisory board can provide support and advocacy. The advisory board helps to sell the ***service*** learning idea to the ***community***. Additionally, if the advisory board is composed of parents and representatives from business, industry, and social ***service*** agencies, one cultivates willing allies and promising future partners.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL REFORM

Without doubt, both ***service*** learning and inclusion are similar in terms of the need for administrative support. Both necessitate supportive school climates and incentives for ***participating***. Both require a redefinition of staff roles. Both require ongoing staff development and provision of staff planning time so that exemplary programs can be developed and maintained. At times, both are complicated to implement and sustain. Both require parental support. Moreover, both are initiated and maintained by the same types of people. Campus Compact (1996) reported that ***service*** learning is more likely to be adopted by innovative individuals who are visionary, willing to change and who are described as risk-takers or experimenters. Likewise, Olson, Chalmers, and Hoover (1997) noted that the effective inclusionists they interviewed were warm, supportive teachers who were positive, open to new ideas, and who could be described as risk-takers. Thus, the types of teachers or administrators who support ***service*** learning are very likely to be the same types of teachers and administrators who will support inclusion.

With the current emphasis on school reform, the opportunity exists to consider both inclusion and ***service*** learning. National groups and task forces have been established to promote school reform for ***service*** learning and for inclusion. Both of these reform groups are doomed to failure unless they join hands. Fullan (1982) noted that schools change slowly, if at all, because teachers are too consumed by the day to day tasks to expend the necessary time to learn new philosophies or teaching methods. Without a coordinated reform effort that would simultaneously incorporate ***service*** learning and inclusion, schools will be faced with the all too "familiar pattern of 'change but no change'" (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Adoption of reform efforts that include inclusion as well as such creative ways of teaching as ***service*** learning will increase the rate of change. Moreover, the sustainability of that change

will be enhanced.

RESEARCH NEEDS

Service learning is like inclusion that in both reform movements began with a moral imperative: a philosophical base about what is right for students. As such, initial ***service*** learning publications focused on the virtues of ***service*** learning. These were followed by publications that were essentially program descriptions. The purpose of these program descriptors was to disseminate information about ***service*** learning. ***Service*** learning is now in the process of expanding the extant research base about the effectiveness of ***service*** learning (Fertman, 1994). Part of the reason behind the sparse extant research base is a perceived reticence on the part of some educators to evaluate something that feels right and needs to be done. Another part of the reason behind the sparse research base is that some changes, e.g., changes in critical thinking skills, may be apparent only over an extended period of time and thus necessitate the use of longitudinal studies.

This need for further research is especially conspicuous when ***service*** learning involves students with ***disabilities*** as providers of ***service***. Only one study (Brill, 1994) systematically examined the effectiveness of ***service*** learning with students identified as disabled. Brill interviewed 13 special ***education*** teachers about the impact of ***service*** learning on their students. Half of the teachers surveyed taught students with mild to moderate ***disabilities*** while the other half taught students with severe to profound ***disabilities*** Ninety-one percent of the teachers reported increased socialization skills in students, 85% reported positive behavioral changes, 69% reported increases in functional skill acquisition, and 54% reported academic gains as a result of ***participation*** in ***service*** learning.

To our knowledge, no studies systematically and objectively examined ***service*** learning in inclusive classrooms. While the potential exists for an amicable and productive marriage of ***service*** learning and inclusion, practitioners should be aware of these limitations in the knowledge base. Moreover, practitioners involved in either ***service*** learning or inclusion or both should work to systematically evaluate ***service*** learning and inclusion and the interconnection between them.

CONCLUSIONS

Without a doubt, many inclusive programs based on general ***education*** curricula are struggling to meet the ***educational*** needs of students identified as having ***disabilities***. Traditional classrooms and such traditional classroom activities as memorization, responding to questions, pencil and paper evaluations, and seat work activities continue to present roadblocks for students with ***disabilities***. ***Service*** learning has demonstrated a strong potential for productive learning in inclusive settings because of its inherent flexibility and its functional application to real life situations. Although ***service*** learning is not, by itself, an entire curricular reform movement, it can be an effective alternative methodology for the enhancement and fulfillment of curricula that support a best practice approach to making all students valued members of the ***community***.

ADDED MATERIAL

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Table 1 Types of ***Community*** Involvement

	Community Service	Volunteerism	
Definition	Volunteering done in the ***community***	Providing a ***service*** or work of one's own free will and without pay	Provi or con gra
Participants	Usually criminals	Anyone	Stude

			tea
Motivation for ***participation***	Reduction in jail time	Usually related to one's personal beliefs and/or needs	Conti gra dip
Relationship to skills	***Service*** may or may not be related to the skills of the participants	Usually based upon the skills or perceived skills of the participants. May assume prior competence in area of ***service***	***Servi*** not the par Ass par acq eth and mor res res ***par*** the act
Autonomy	***Service*** activity is determined by the courts; quitting may result in incarceration	Purely self-controlled. May begin and quit at any time. Can choose own area in which to serve.	Parti sel May are but del
Benefits to participants	No pay; reduction in sentence or jail time. May increase feeling of ***community*** "connectedness"	No pay; improved self-esteem and sense of personal fulfillment	No pa sen res emp eth Increas con ***com***
Benefits to ***community***	***Service*** provided. Less money spent on incarceration	***Service*** provided at minimal or no cost to ***community***	***Servi*** Stu con ***par*** the and env

	Service Learning
Definition	Providing a ***service*** or work as a means to facilitate specific curricular goals
Participants	Students and teachers
Motivation for ***participation***	Meets specific learning objectives; provides opportunities to practice newly acquired skills in real world settings
Relationship to skills	Assumes that academic skills will be acquired and/or enhanced as a result of ***participation*** in a ***service*** activity
Autonomy	***Service*** activity determined by teacher in relation to the curriculum and the needs of the ***community***. ***Participation*** is required for enhanced comprehension of the subject matter
Benefits to	No pay; improved academic, social

participants	and/or behavioral skills. Increased sense of moral responsibility, empathy and ethic of ***service***. Increased connection with the ***community***
Benefits to ***community***	***Service*** provided. Students may continue to ***participate*** within the ***community*** and the ***service*** environment. May reduce drop outs. Academic skills are practiced.

Table 2 Uses of ***Service*** Learning

Subject	***Service*** Activity
History	Interview older ***community*** members, write a history of the ***community*** or a part of the ***community***, copy and distribute that history
Art	Paint a mural at a day care center, homeless shelter, hospital, women's shelter or school
Health	Design & distribute pamphlet about the effects of alcohol use during pregnancy
Environmental Science	Develop animals habitats
Reading	Record books on tape for people who are blind or learning disabled

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