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Hehir, T. and Katzman, L. (2012). *Effective Inclusive Schools: Designing Successful Schoolwide Programs*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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“Inclusion” or “mainstreaming” of students with special needs is best defined as “the participation of students with disabilities in general education classrooms to the extent appropriate for meeting their needs” (Vaughn, Bos & Schum, 2010). Over the course of approximately 20 years, the rise in mainstreaming in the United States has been meteoric. In 1989, 31.7% of students with disabilities spent the majority of their time in the general education classroom; in 2008, that number climbed to 58% (Aud, *et al.*, 2010). Given these statistics, it is critical that educators, administrators, policy makers and parents understand and address those factors that engender

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effective inclusion. In Thomas Hehir and Lauren Katzman's most recent book, *Effective Inclusive Schools: Designing Successful Schoolwide Programs*, the authors endeavor to explicate the conditions that allow American schools to be "effectively inclusive" by drawing on the stories of three exemplary schools.

Hehir, a well-recognized champion of disability rights, brings his research and policy experience to this text. As professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Dr. Hehir has written extensively about the political and social implications of disability status. In addition to his work as associate superintendent of Chicago Public Schools, Hehir's appointment as director of the United States Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs allowed him to play a pivotal role in the enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Hehir's dynamic background and investment in inclusivity allows him to speak with authority on the breadth of topics covered in this text. Lauren Katzman, who serves as the executive director for special education for the New York City Department of Education, brings additional insight and expertise to this book. In conjunction with her executive experience, Dr. Katzman utilizes her roles as an associate professor of special education at Boston University and a former special education teacher to directly inform her contributions.

Who will find this book useful? This book will appeal to teacher educators, classroom teachers, school administrators, educators of students with special needs, and professional development personnel who want to improve their practice working with all students. The book begins with a preface on Ableism or "the devaluation and disregard for people with disabilities" (Smith, 2001 as cited in Hehir and Katzman, 2012) and is followed by four sections that provide different entry points into what successful schools serving students with special needs look like. The four sections are: The Schools and Their Leaders; What They Do Differently; How to Create More Inclusive Schools, and The Big Picture of Special Education.

The first section of the text, showcases successful school models through a multiple case study research design that focuses on schools' missions, instructional practices,

leadership structures, and the relationship among their faculty and staff, the authors give the reader practical ideas for their own teaching practice or policies. The three Boston school research sites for the text were: Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School; Samuel W. Mason Elementary School; and Boston Arts Academy (BAA). All three schools enroll primarily low-income students of color, and the student body of each school is comprised of a large number of students with special needs. In addition to exploring school context, Hehir and Katzman note that all three institutions are committed to inclusion as their central mission; as such, students with disabilities are educated in a mainstream environment. The importance of school administrators and leaders wishing to build school practices that support all students is critical to the success of these schools. The authors utilize Bolman and Deal's (2008) construct, the "four frames of leadership," to address the schools' values, and culture, organization and resources, power differentials and support systems. The authors contend that these leaders actively attend to all four frames, thus allowing them to cultivate inclusive environments within their respective schools.

The second section of the text looks at what these schools do differently to better meet the needs of students with special needs. The authors see schools as society's "problem-solving organizations." Drawing on Tom Skrytic's (1991) theoretical framework, which presumes that typical schools are not fully equipped to handle the spectrum of diversity, Hehir and Katzman assert that the structure of traditional schooling stifles inclusion. For this reason, the authors believe that effective, inclusive schools are both adaptable and collaborative, and they reject the notion that a teacher is solely responsible for his or her content-specific domain (which has been the prevalent paradigm in US schools since the beginning of federal legal mandates related to students with special needs). Hehir and Katzman find that—within these three schools—all teachers are responsible for educating *all* students.

With a focus on relationships, school culture and accountability, the authors delve into the evolution of each school's culture and the internal and external forces to which they are accountable. The authors find that school leaders take an active role in the selection of new faculty

and staff members. Additionally, they purport that the schools' alignment between individual responsibility, collective expectations and internal accountability contribute to their success. They conclude the second section on what these schools do differently with a specific investigation of these three schools utilization of universal design for learning (UDL), which is premised on the idea that students with disabilities will be active members of the school community.

In section three the authors provide a concrete series of suggestions and strategies, or "lessons," for school leaders, teachers, district leaders and parents to follow in order to engender the development of effective inclusive schools. Many of the principles that Hehir and Katzman offer can be directly attributed to what Hehir observed in the three inclusive school sites and his own experience as a school reformer and academic. They go on to address seminal federal, state and local policies that influence the construction of inclusive schools. They note that the three school research sites benefited from capacity-building grants; as such, he sheds light on how additional financial resources might be targeted and utilized. Finally, this section concludes with policy principles and recommendations where the authors dissect some notable federal policies, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (aka No Child Left Behind) and IDEA. Hehir and Katzman posit several ways to amend these regulations.

The text is both thorough and well-organized, and the reader is provided with invaluable insight into the implementation and maintenance of an inclusive school. To this end, the text offers specific examples of what teachers, parents and administrators and policy makers might do in order to create or support inclusivity. Rather than leaving the reader with a theory or an anecdote, these takeaways are tangible. The reader might also appreciate the fact that Hehir and Katzman take up—and ultimately reject—the idea that a school must be exceptionally well-funded in order to be successful. Instead of focusing on schools with abundant resources, their three exemplars show how schools with limited funding can employ inclusive practices. The authors do not presume that this model is easily replicable; however, they assert that it is possible. One should note, however, that these three

schools are located in Massachusetts, which invests more money in education of its students than do most other US states.

Hehir and Katzman highlight a universal design for learning as a means of promoting inclusion and combatting *ableism*, or “deeply held negative attitudes in society toward people with disabilities” (p. x). In this way, Hehir is able to draw upon his well-renowned prior research in order to contextualize the benefits of a UDL approach. The premise that UDL schools should meet the needs of all learners diminishes the academic, social and emotional distinctions between those students with disabilities and those without. One specific way that the authors explicate UDL is by exploring the composition of the schools’ faculty. In order to better support UDL, the three school leaders featured in this text employed very specific staffing practices. At the O’Hearn, one general educator and one special educator are placed in each classroom; they are both responsible for all of students in their class. The Mason hires one teacher with dual certification (in special education and in a content area), while the BAA maintains a combination of these two staffing approaches. In this way, schools get away from the “egg crate” mentality practiced at many typical public schools. Instead of expecting that special education teachers are solely responsible for the education of students with disabilities, UDL schools utilize these teachers in a more substantive way. By parsing out the nuances of UDL, Hehir and Katzman make inclusive design that much more accessible to the reader.

The authors also situate the discussion of inclusive schooling in a larger, more robust conversation, as they are able to unite myriad conversations regarding special education theories, policies and practices. For example, researchers have noted the benefits of co-teaching (Cook & Friend, 1995; Thousand, Villa & Nevin, 2009) and the importance of providing teachers time to collaborate (Fennick & Liddy, 2001; Walther-Thomas, Bryant & Land, 1996); the ways that special education policies have shaped schooling (Finn, Rotherham & Hokanson, 2001; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1993; Turnbull, 1995); and the correlation between teacher beliefs and students’ self-efficacy (Woolfson & Brady, 2009). Rather than addressing these issues in isolation, Hehir and Katzman are able to expertly

tie these threads together in order to provide a more comprehensive overview of what it takes to construct a successful inclusive school.

While this text provides the reader with a wealth of information regarding effectively inclusive schools, there are certain limitations that must be considered. For example, the authors find that there is a particular set of conditions that must be in place for an inclusive school to take flight. One such factor is the culture of the school. Hehir and Katzman largely attribute an inclusive school culture to the faculty and staff hiring process, noting that the school leaders featured in this text “actively recruit teachers who share their values and have reputations for being effective within collaborative inclusive schools” (p. 86). While capacity building via grants or other financial resources remains a possibility, it is not necessarily realistic to assume that all principals have the ability to “assemble a staff who share[s] their values” (ibid). For example, as a startup school, the leaders at the BAA maintained a great amount of control when it came to teacher hiring. Since the authors note that the culture of the school is a critical factor when implementing an inclusive program, the ability to hand select educators plays a large part in creating a successful school. For this reason, it might have been helpful for the authors to provide school leaders with a framework to implement in schools where active teacher recruitment is not a viable option.

Additionally, while Hehir and Katzman assert that teacher buy-in is essential to the culture and success of an inclusive school, they presume a great deal regarding teacher autonomy and job availability. For example, the authors urge teachers to “seek out schools with strong inclusive problem-solving cultures” (p. 138) and “seek active collaboration to better educate students with disabilities.” These directives are understandably important—especially when considering the importance of a UDL approach. However, given the financial state of public education, unless the school has leaders that work to build capacity, these directives might remain out of reach.

Ultimately, *Effective Inclusive Schools: Designing Successful Schoolwide Programs* is a must read for anyone

interested in pushing back against programs that marginalize students with special needs. Parents, teachers, administrators, school leaders, policy makers and allies can utilize this text in order to understand the importance of cultivating and supporting an inclusive school culture. Additionally, this book is particularly useful to anyone working in or with a school with limited resources, as it provides specific examples of capacity building. By combining case studies and an action plan, this text extends the conversation past the typical research findings. For those seeking to design an inclusive school—or implement inclusive practices in a currently existing program—this book has much to offer.

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Edward García Fierros is an Associate Professor of Educational Research and Chairperson of the Department of Education and Counseling at Villanova University. Dr. Fierros earned his PhD in the Educational Research, Measurement and Evaluation program at the Lynch School of Education, Boston College. Dr. Fierros took part in the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) at Boston College examining gender differences in mathematic achievement for 4th and 8th grade students in the US and abroad. His current major research interests are: opportunity to learn for K-12 students of color, the placement of minority students with learning disabilities, and the theory of multiple intelligences. Dr. Fierros has written numerous journal articles and is co-author of Kornhaber, Fierros, and Veenema. (2004). *Multiple Intelligences: Best Ideas from Research and Practice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. Dr. Fierros is a Fellow at the National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado Boulder and the Educational Policy Leadership Center in Pennsylvania.

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