chapter one

EXCEPTIONALITY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

Learning Outcome 1.1: Become oriented to exceptionality and special education.

Learning Outcome 1.2: Understand the educational definition of exceptional learners.

Learning Outcome 1.3: Learn about the prevalence of exceptional learners in both high- and low-prevalence categories and how special education is defined.

Learning Outcome 1.4: Understand and appreciate the history and origins of special education, including legislation and litigation that have affected special education.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT Exceptional Learners

MYTH Public schools may choose not to provide education for some students with disabilities.

FACT Federal legislation specifies that to receive federal funds, every school system must provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for every student, regardless of any disabling condition.

MYTH The causes of most disabilities are known, but little is known about how to help individuals overcome or compensate for their disabilities.

FACT In most cases, the causes of disabilities are not known, although progress is being made in pinpointing why many disabilities occur. More is known about the treatment of most disabilities than about their causes.

MYTH People with disabilities are just like everyone else.

FACT First, no two people are exactly alike. People with disabilities are unique individuals, just like everyone else. Often, most of their abilities are much like those of the average person who is not considered to have a disability. Nevertheless, a disability is a characteristic that is not shared by most people. It is important that disabilities be recognized for what they are, but individuals with disabilities must be seen as having many abilities—other characteristics that they share with the majority of people.

MYTH A disability is a handicap.

FACT A disability is an inability to do something, the lack of a specific capacity. A handicap, on the other hand, is a disadvantage that is imposed on an individual. A disability might or might not be a handicap, depending on the circumstances. For example, the inability to walk is not a handicap in learning to read, but it can be a handicap in getting into the stands at a ball game. Sometimes handicaps are needlessly imposed on people with disabilities. For example, a student who cannot write with a pen but can use a tablet or computer would be needlessly handicapped without such equipment.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How can we get oriented to exceptionality and special education?
- What is the educational definition of *exceptional learners*?
- What is the prevalence of exceptional learners?
- What is the definition of *special education*?
- What are the history and origins of special education?
- What legislation and litigation have affected special education?
- What is our perspective on the reasons for optimism regarding special education?

The study of exceptional learners is the study of both differences and similarities. The exceptional learner differs in some way from the average. In very simple terms, such a person might have problems or special talents in thinking, seeing, hearing, speaking, socializing, or moving. More often than not, she has a combination of special abilities or disabilities. Today, more than 6 million learners with these differences have been identified in public schools throughout the United States. About 1 of every 10 school-age students in the United States is considered exceptional. The fact that many so-called "normal" students have school-related problems makes the study of exceptionality essential.

The study of exceptional learners is also the study of similarities. Exceptional individuals are not different from the average in every way. In fact, most exceptional learners are average in more ways than they are not. And although not all individuals with Down syndrome are high functioning, the following feature demonstrates how many of these individuals aspire to and attain similar life goals as the typical adolescent or young adult (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMoZhgN0V5o). Until recently, professionals—and laypeople as well—tended to focus on the differences between exceptional and nonexceptional learners, almost to the exclusion of the ways in which all individuals are alike. Today, we give more attention to what exceptional and nonexceptional learners have in common—to similarities in their characteristics, needs, and ways of learning. As a result, the study of exceptional learners has become more complex, and many so-called facts about children and youths with disabilities and those who have special gifts or talents have been challenged.

GETTING ORIENTED TO EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

MyLab Education
Video Example 1.1
Jennifer, who has a learning disability and a hand tremor, discusses stereotyping, hurtful words, and their emotional impact on a person with a disability.

Students of one of the hard sciences might boast about the difficulty of the subject matter because of the many facts they must remember and piece together. Students of special education face quite different problems. To be sure, they study facts, but the facts they must master are relatively few compared to the unanswered questions or ambiguities within their minds. Any study of human beings must take into account inherent ambiguities, inconsistencies, and unknowns. In the case of the individual who deviates from the norm, we must multiply all the mysteries of normal human behavior and development by those pertaining to the person's exceptionalities. Because no single theory of normal development is universally accepted, it is not at all surprising that relatively few definitive statements can be made about exceptional learners and that many controversies remain (Kauffman, 2008; Kauffman, Hallahan, & Pullen, 2017).

The Importance of Abilities

Many people with disabilities have abilities that go unrecognized because their disabilities become the focus of concern and distract attention from what the individual can do. We must study the disabilities of exceptional children and youths if we are to learn how to help them maximize their abilities in school. Some students with disabilities that are not obvious to the casual observer need special programs of education and related services to help them live full, happy, productive lives. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that the most important characteristics of exceptional learners are their abilities, not their disabilities.

Consider Nick Vujicic, a Serbian-Australian who was born with a rare disorder called **tetra-amelia**, which results in the absence of all four limbs. He has similar life goals—aspirations for meaningful relationships, gainful employment, and participation in athletics—but he is different in that he has no arms or legs. As educators, we need to focus on both similarities and differences. Moreover, we should be inspired by individuals such as Nick Vujicic to help individuals move beyond their disabilities to reach their maximum potential. We must not allow people's disabilities to keep us from recognizing their abilities or to become so much the focus of our concern that we overlook their capabilities.

Video Example from YouTube

MyLab Education
Video Example 1.2

Nick Vujicic is a Serbian-Australian who was born with a rare disorder called tetra-amelia, which results in the absence of all four limbs. Nick is more like than unlike people without disabilities. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjbX6mDnMwM

Disability Versus Handicap

We recognize an important distinction between disability and handicap: A **disability** is an inability to do something, a diminished capacity to perform in a specific way (an impairment); a **handicap**, however, is a disadvantage imposed on an individual. Thus, a disability might or might not be a handicap, depending on the circumstances. Likewise, a handicap might or might not be caused by a disability. For example, blindness is a disability that can be anything but a handicap in the dark. In fact, in the dark, the person who has sight is the one who is handicapped. Needing to use a wheelchair might be a handicap in certain circumstances, but the disadvantage may be caused by architectural barriers or other people's reactions, not the inability to walk. Other people's insensitive responses can handicap those who differ from themselves (in color, size, appearance, language, and so on) by stereotyping them or not giving them opportunities to do the things they are able to do. When working and living with exceptional individuals who have disabilities, we must constantly strive to separate their disabilities from the handicaps. That is, our goal should be to confine the handicaps to those characteristics and circumstances that can't be changed and to make sure that we impose no further handicaps by our attitudes or our unwillingness to accommodate their disabilities.

Disability Versus Inability

Another important distinction is that between inability and disability. All disabilities are an inability to do something. However, not every inability to do something is a disability. That is, disability is a subset of inability: "A disability is an inability to do something that most people, with typical maturation, opportunity, or instruction, can do" (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2005, p. 30; see also Stichter, Conroy, & Kauffman, 2008). Consider age and ability. Most 6-month-old infants cannot walk or talk, but they are not thought of as having a disability because their inability is age appropriate. However, if that inability extends well past the time when most children learn to walk and talk, then we consider their inability a disability. Consider the role of instruction. An adult's inability to read is not a reading disability if she or he has not had reading instruction. Weigh the factor of typical adult human abilities. A typical adult male might not be able to lift 400 pounds, but this isn't considered a disability, because most men simply can't lift 400 pounds. Judging inability in the context of old age, the average 70-year-old can't run 10 miles, but most 70-year-olds can walk a considerable distance. Not being able to run 10 miles is not considered a disability for a 70-year-old, but being unable to walk *at all* is. The point is, simply, that disability is a significant difference from what we expect most people to be able to do, given their age, opportunities, and instruction.

MyLab Education Self-Check 1.1

MyLab Education Application Exercise 1.1: Lauralee's Story: Am I More Alike than Different?

Watch the video clip of Lauralee. As you watch, think about ways in which you and Lauralee are similar.

EDUCATIONAL DEFINITION OF *EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS*

For purposes of education, exceptional learners are those who require special education and related services if they are to realize their full human potential (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2005). They require special education because they differ markedly from most students in one or more of the following ways: They may have intellectual disabilities, learning or attention disabilities, emotional or behavioral disorders, physical disabilities, disorders of communication, autism, traumatic brain injury, impaired hearing, impaired sight, or special gifts or talents. The chapters that follow define as exactly as possible what it means to have an exceptionality.

Two concepts are important to this educational definition of exceptional learners: (1) diversity of characteristics and (2) need for special education. The concept of diversity is inherent in the definition of exceptionality; the need for special education is inherent in an educational definition. Exceptional learners differ from most (typical or average) individuals in a particular way that is relevant to their education. Their particular educationally relevant difference demands instruction that differs from what most (typical or average) learners require (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2005; Kauffman & Konold, 2007; Stichter et al., 2008). Consider the case of Doug Landis, a successful artist who is gifted at drawing but is paralyzed from the neck down. Doug is an example of how the focus on persons with disabilities must be on what they can do rather than on how they are limited. (To learn more about this successful artist, see Up Close with Doug Landis).

UP CLOSE with Doug Landis Doug Landis became quadriplegic (all four limbs are affected by paralysis) in high school as a result of a wrestling accident. After Doug's accident, his brother thought he was watching too much television and challenged him to start drawing by putting a pencil in his mouth. Using a pencil attached to a mouth stick, Doug has become a major artist whose detailed line drawings of wildlife are best known, but he is gifted at drawing many things. He has also made short animated films. Doug is an active member of the organization Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (http://www.mfpausa.com), which assists artists with disabilities to meet their financial needs. Doug Landis's exquisite drawings and paintings of wildlife (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55AFFtP2pSA) illustrate how the focus on persons with disabilities must be on what they can do rather than on how they are limited. You may see Doug's art on his website (http://www.mouthart.com). •

Sometimes seemingly obvious disabilities are never identified, and the consequences for the person and her family, as well as for the larger society, are tragic (Kauffman & Brigham, 2009). Sometimes disabilities are identified but special education is not provided, and opportunities for the child's development are thus squandered. Although early identification and intervention hold the promise of preventing many disabilities from becoming worse, preventive action often is not taken (Kauffman, 2014; Kauffman & Brigham, 2009; Stichter et al., 2008). In fact, launched in 2004, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) "Learn the Signs. Act Early." campaign encourages the early identification of developmental disabilities, including autism. On its website, the CDC provides a library of videos to help parents and professionals track the development of young children (https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/milestones-in-action.html). The videos provide examples of developmental milestones for children birth to 5 years of age.

Special education does not always work as it should, but when it does, educators identify a student's disability early and provide effective special education. Pediatricians also are an important part of this process, particularly for young children, as they can refer patients for evaluation and early childhood special education services. In both early childhood special education and special education for school-age children, the child's parents are involved in the decision about how to address the student's needs, and the outcome of special education is the student's improved achievement and behavior.

Students with exceptionalities are an extraordinarily diverse group in comparison to the general population, and relatively few generalizations apply to all exceptional individuals. Their exceptionalities can involve sensory, physical, cognitive, emotional, or communication abilities or any combination of these. Furthermore, exceptionalities may vary greatly in cause, degree, and effect on educational progress, and the effects may vary greatly depending on the individual's age, gender, and life circumstances. Any individual presented as an example of an "exceptional learner" is likely to be representative of exceptional learners in some respects but unrepresentative in others.

The typical student who receives special education has no immediately obvious or visible disability. He (more than half of the students served by special education are males) is in elementary or middle school and has persistent problems in learning and behaving appropriately in school. His problems are primarily academic and social or behavioral, and may not be apparent to many teachers until they have worked with him for a period of weeks or months. His problems persist despite teachers' efforts to meet his needs in the regular school program in which most students succeed. He is most likely to be described as having a learning disability or to be designated by an even broader label indicating that his academic and social progress in school is unsatisfactory owing to a disability.

By federal law, schools should not identify these exceptional students as eligible for special education until careful assessment indicates that they are unable to make satisfactory progress in the regular school program without special services designed to meet their extraordinary needs. Federal special education laws and regulations include definitions of several conditions (categories such as learning disability, autism, and hearing impairment) that might create a need for special education. These laws and regulations require that schools provide special services to meet whatever special needs are created by a disabling condition that can't be met in the general educational program. The law doesn't require provision of special education simply because a student has a disability.

MyLab Education **Self-Check 1.2**

MyLab Education **Application Exercise 1.2: Disability Categories: Prevalence Versus Percentages**

Scan Chapters 5 through 14 in your text for an overview of *prevalence* figures for students with disabilities. Then, consider data provided by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics to answer a few questions.

PREVALENCE OF EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS

Prevalence refers to the percentage of a population or number of individuals having a particular exceptionality. Obviously, accurate estimates of prevalence depend on the ability to count the number of people in a given population who have a specific exceptionality.

The task of determining the number of students with exceptionalities might appear simple enough, yet the prevalence of most exceptionalities is uncertain and a matter of considerable controversy. Multiple factors make it difficult to state the number of exceptional individuals with great accuracy and confidence. These factors include vagueness in definitions, frequent changes in definitions, and the role of schools in determining exceptionality—matters that we discuss in later chapters (see also Kauffman, Hallahan, & Pullen, 2017).

Recent government figures indicate that over 6.7 million students (8.7%) between the ages of 6 and 21 years receive special education services in schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). It's important to keep in mind that the number of students served in special education is not necessarily equal to the number of students who actually have the disability. The latter is much more difficult to calculate than the former, because the federal government requires school districts to report the number of students with disabilities they are serving each year. Beginning in the mid-1970s, the number of students served by special education grew steadily, from about 3.75 million in 1976 to more than 6 million in the early 21st century. Most of the children and youths who are served by special education are between the ages of 6 and 17. Although preschoolers and youths ages 18 to 21 are being identified with increasing frequency as having disabilities, school-age children and youths in their early teens make up the bulk of the identified population.

The percentage of the special education population identified as having certain disabilities has changed considerably over several decades. For example, the number of students identified as having learning disabilities has more than doubled since the mid-1970s; these students now make up about half of the number of students receiving special education services. In contrast, the percentage of students whose primary disability is speech or language impairments declined substantially (but is growing again), and the percentage identified as having intellectual disabilities is now about half of what it was in 1976. No one has an entirely satisfactory explanation of these changes. However, they might in part reflect alterations in definitions and diagnostic criteria for certain disabilities and the social acceptability of the "learning disability" label. In subsequent chapters, we discuss the prevalence of specific categories of exceptionality.

High-Incidence and Low-Incidence Categories

Some disabilities occur with a relatively high frequency and are called *high-incidence disabilities* because they are among the most common. Learning disabilities, communication (speech and language) disorders, emotional disturbance, and mild intellectual disabilities are among those usually considered high incidence (Stichter et al., 2008). Other disabilities (such as blindness, deafness, severe intellectual disabilities, and traumatic brain injury) occur relatively rarely and are considered low-incidence disabilities.

Although the rates of occurrence of most of the high-incidence disabilities have remained relatively stable in the early 21st century, some of the low-incidence categories have increased dramatically. For example, the identification of **autism** or **autistic spectrum disorder** has increased dramatically since about 1995 (discussed further in Chapter 9; see also Stichter et al., 2008). In fact, some professionals speculate that it will eventually be considered a high-incidence disability. Other low-incidence categories showing a substantial increase in numbers include **traumatic brain injury (TBI)**, orthopedic impairments, and other health impairments. Increases in the first two are due to increases in spinal cord injury and in survival of severe physical trauma because of better medical care. As we point out in Chapter 7, the increase in OHI is due to an increase in ADHD, which is included in OHI.

Much of the increase in diagnosis of autism probably represents improved identification procedures along with identification of milder cases of autism, not an epidemic (National Research Council, 2001). Although some of the increase in TBI might represent better diagnosis, it might also reflect actual increases in brain injuries, as we will discuss in Chapter 13. Increases in orthopedic impairments might reflect the increasing survival rates of infants born with significant physical anomalies and of children involved in accidents. Reasons for the increase in ADHD are open for speculation. It may be partially the result of increased awareness.

MyLab Education Self-Check 1.3

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education means specially designed instruction that meets the unusual needs of an exceptional student and that requires special materials, teaching techniques, equipment and/or facilities. Students with visual impairments might require reading materials in large print or braille; students with hearing impairments might require hearing aids and/or instruction in sign language; those with physical disabilities might need special equipment; those with emotional or behavioral disorders might need smaller and more highly structured classes; and students with special gifts or talents might require access to working professionals. Related services—special transportation, psychological assessment, physical and occupational therapy, medical treatment, and counseling—might be necessary if special education is to be effective. The single most important goal of special education is finding and capitalizing on exceptional students' abilities.

The best general education cannot replace special education for those who need it; special education is more precisely controlled in pace or rate, intensity, relentlessness, structure, reinforcement, teacher–pupil ratio, curriculum, and monitoring or assessment (Pullen & Hallahan, 2015). We think it's a good idea to improve the education of all children, an objective of the federal education laws of the early 21st century; however, good or reformed general education does not and cannot replace special education for those students at the extremes of the range of disabilities (Kauffman & Konold, 2007; Pullen & Hallahan, 2015; Zigmond, 2007; Zigmond & Kloo, 2017 Zigmond, Kloo, & Volonino, 2009).

HISTORY AND ORIGINS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

There have always been exceptional learners, but there haven't always been special educational services to address their needs (see Holmes, 2004; Metzler, 2006). During the closing years of the 18th century, following the American and French Revolutions, effective procedures were devised for teaching children with sensory impairments (i.e., those who were blind or deaf; Winzer, 1993). In 1829, Samuel Gridley Howe created the first residential school for students who were blind; the curriculum focused on both instruction in traditional reading, writing, and mathematics and the development of students' individual interests and abilities (Sapp & Hatlen, 2010). Early in the 19th century, the first systematic attempts were made to educate "idiotic" and "insane" children—those who today are said to have **intellectual disabilities** and **emotional or behavioral disorders** (or **emotional disturbance**; Kauffman & Landrum, 2006; Stichter et al., 2008).

In the prerevolutionary era, the best that society offered most children with disabilities was protection—asylum from a cruel world that had no place for them and in which they couldn't survive with dignity, if they could survive at all. But as the ideas of democracy, individual freedom, and egalitarianism swept across America and France, a change in attitude occurred. Political reformers and leaders in medicine and education began to champion the cause of children and adults with disabilities, urging that these "imperfect" or "incomplete" individuals be taught skills that would allow them to become independent, productive citizens. These humanitarian sentiments surpassed a desire to protect and defend people with disabilities. The early leaders sought to normalize exceptional people to the greatest extent possible and confer on them the human dignity they presumably lacked.

Contemporary educational methods for exceptional children can be traced directly to techniques pioneered during the early 1800s. Many (perhaps most) of today's vital, controversial issues have been concerns ever since the dawn of special education. Some contemporary writers believe that instruction in the history of special education is critically important in fostering understanding of today's issues because of the lessons we can learn from our past (e.g., Gerber, 2017; Kauffman & Landrum, 2006). In our discussion of major historical events and trends since 1800, we comment briefly on the history of people and ideas, the growth of the discipline, professional and parent organizations, and legislation.

People and Ideas

Many of the originators of special education were European physicians. They were primarily young, ambitious people who challenged the wisdom of the established authorities, including their own friends and mentors (Kanner, 1964; see also Kauffman & Landrum, 2006; Stichter et al., 2008).

Most historians trace the beginning of special education as we know it today to Jean-Marc-Gaspard Itard (1774–1838), a French physician who was an authority on diseases of the ear and education of students who are deaf. In the early 19th century, this young doctor began to educate a boy of about 12 years of age who had been found roaming naked and wild in the forests of France (he is sometimes referred to as the "wild child" or the "wild boy of Aveyron"). Itard's mentor, Philippe Pinel (1745–1826), a prominent French physician who was an early advocate of humane treatment of "insane" people, advised Itard that his efforts would be unsuccessful because the boy, Victor, was a "hopeless idiot." But Itard persevered. He did not eliminate Victor's disabilities, but he did dramatically improve the wild child's behavior through patient, systematic educative procedures (Itard, 1962). Several years ago, Mary Losure (2013) published a nonfiction book for children and adolescents that provides the history of the wild boy of Aveyron. Cases such as the wild boy of Aveyron bring into question the role of nature and nurture in human development (see the Focus on . . . The Nature–Nurture Controversy).

The ideas of the first special educators were truly revolutionary for their times. Following are some of the innovative ideas of Itard, Édouard Séguin, and their successors that form the foundation for present-day special education:

- *Individualized instruction,* in which the child's characteristics, rather than prescribed academic content, provide the basis for teaching techniques
- *A carefully sequenced series of educational tasks,* beginning with tasks the child can perform and gradually leading to more complex learning
- *Emphasis on stimulation and awakening of the child's senses,* to make the child more aware of and responsive to educational stimuli
- *Meticulous arrangement of the child's environment,* so that the structure of the environment and the child's experience of it lead naturally to learning
- *Immediate reward for correct performance,* providing reinforcement for desirable behavior
- *Tutoring in functional skills,* to make the child as self-sufficient and productive as possible in everyday life
- *Belief that every child should be educated to the greatest extent possible,* because every child can improve to some degree

So far, we've mentioned only European physicians who figured prominently in the rise of special education. Although much of the initial work occurred in Europe, many U.S. researchers contributed greatly during those early years. They kept informed of European developments as best they could, some of them traveling to Europe for the specific purpose of obtaining firsthand information about the education of children with disabilities.

Among the young U.S. thinkers who were concerned with the education of students with disabilities was Samuel Gridley Howe (1801–1876), an 1824 graduate of Harvard Medical School. Besides being a physician and an educator, Howe was a political and social reformer, a champion of humanitarian causes and emancipation. He was instrumental in founding the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts, and also taught students who were deaf and blind. His success in teaching Laura Bridgman, who was deaf and blind, greatly influenced the education of Helen Keller. In the 1840s, Howe was also a force behind the organization of an experimental school for children with intellectual disabilities (mental retardation) and was personally acquainted with Séguin.

When Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1787–1851), a minister, was a student at Andover Theological Seminary, he tried to teach a girl who was deaf. He visited Europe to

Video Example from YouTube

MyLab Education
Video Example 1.3

Laurence Steinberg of Temple University explains the interaction of genetics and the environment and its role in human behavior; he highlights the need to break down the false dichotomy between genes and the environment.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-nnJpV1iuE

FOCUS ON

The Nature–Nurture Controversy

One of the oldest controversies involving the education of exceptional learners is the extent to which nature and nurture contribute to what a child becomes. What is attributable to biological factors such as genetics and other aspects of physical endowment, and what is attributable to environmental factors such as opportunity, encouragement, and teaching? The controversial idea was part of Itard's work in the early 19th century, and is still being debated by psychologists (e.g., Pinker, 2002) and popular writers (e.g., Gladwell, 2008) today.

For many years, theoreticians tended to view the nature–nurture issue from an either/or perspective: Either you believed that heredity held the key to determining intellectual development or you believed that the environment was the all-important factor. Today, however, most authorities believe that both heredity and the environment are critical determinants of intelligence. Some scientists have tried to discover how much of intelligence is determined by heredity and how much by the environment, but many view this quest as futile. They assert that heredity and environment do not combine in an additive fashion to produce intelligence. Instead, the interaction between genes and environment results in intelligence.

learn about educating the deaf and in 1817 established the first American residential school for students who were deaf (now known as the American School of the Deaf) in Hartford, Connecticut. Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., the only liberal-arts college for students who are deaf, was named in his honor.

The early years of special education were vibrant with the pulse of new ideas. It isn't possible to read the words of Itard, Séguin, Howe, and their contemporaries without being captivated by the romance, idealism, and excitement of their exploits. The results they achieved were truly remarkable for their era. Today, special education remains a vibrant field in which innovations, excitement, idealism, and controversies are the norm. Teachers of exceptional children—and that includes all teachers—must understand how and why special education emerged as a discipline (see Gerber, 2017).

Normalization, Deinstitutionalization, and Inclusion

Among the major 20th-century ideas in special education is *normalization,* the philosophy that we should use "means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviors and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible" (Wolfensberger, 1972, p. 28). With normalization, the barriers to the participation of people with disabilities in normal life are broken down. The concept of normalization was in itself important and led to related ideas, such as closing institutions and including exceptional learners in general education classrooms and schools.

MyLab Education
Video Example 1.4
Author Interview: A discussion of the term "full inclusion," and what that means for students being placed into special education services.

Normalization continues to be a goal in special education and all other aspects of responding to disability. Breaking down barriers to participation of people with disabilities in activities with nonhandicapped individuals was one of the ideas leading to the **deinstitutionalization** movement of the late 20th century. At one time, it was common to place nearly all children and adults with intellectual disability (formerly mental retardation) and/or mental illness in residential institutions. In the 1960s and 1970s, systematic efforts were made to move people out of institutions and back into closer contact with the community. This led to more children with disabilities being raised by their families and resulted in the closure of many institutions regardless of the nature of the problems of the people involved. Today, smaller facilities within local neighborhoods are common. Transitional living homes (sometimes called halfway houses) exist for individuals with emotional difficulties, who no longer are thought to need the more isolated environment of a large institution. However, much still needs to be done to improve the quality of life for some people with disabilities who previously may have been in institutions. In fact, many people who formerly would have been in institutions are now homeless or in jail (see Earley, 2006; Goin, 2007; Nomani, 2007; Powers, 2017). Increasing numbers

of individuals are homeless in the United States, and cognitive and mental health disabilities are significant risk factors for homelessness (Edens, Kasprow, Tsai, & Rosenheck, 2011; Mercier & Picard, 2011).

Perhaps the most controversial issue growing out of the idea of normalization is **inclusion**. Actually inclusion, or integration, has long been an issue with all exceptional students, including those with special gifts or talents. Although, historically, educators built educational programming for students with disabilities on the assumption that a variety of service delivery options need to be available (Crockett & Kauffman, 1999, 2001; Kauffman, Mock, Tankersley, & Landrum, 2008), inclusion of exceptional learners in ordinary classrooms with their nonexceptional peers has become the single most important issue for some advocates. The issue of inclusion became controversial among parents and others in the late 20th century and continues to be a topic of heated opinion and discussion.

At the unfolding of the 21st century, the inclusion controversy was sharpened, especially by the higher standards expected of all students. The direction the controversy will take is anyone's guess (see Bateman, 2017; Kauffman, Anastasiou, Badar, Travers, & Wiley, 2016; Kauffman & Hung, 2009; Kauffman & Landrum, 2018b; Zigmond & Kloo, 2017). We can't overemphasize the importance of intensive instruction in meeting the needs of exceptional learners. In our opinion, exceptional children should be placed where such instruction is most likely to be provided, even if that place is somewhere other than the general education classroom. It is critical that inclusion in the general education setting full time should not be at the expense of the specialized instruction that is required to help students with disabilities meet their academic potential.

Council for Exceptional Children and Development of the Profession

Special education didn't suddenly spring up as a new discipline or develop in isolation from other disciplines. The emergence of psychology and sociology and especially of the widespread use of cognitive tests in the early years of the 20th century had enormous implications for the growth of special education. Psychologists' study of learning and their prediction of school failure or success by means of tests helped to focus attention on children with special needs. Sociologists, social workers, and anthropologists drew attention to the ways in which exceptional children's families and communities responded to them and affected their learning and adjustment. Anecdotal accounts of intellectual disabilities or mental disorders can be found in the 19th-century literature, but they are not presented within the conceptual frameworks that we recognize today as psychology, sociology, and special education (Kauffman & Landrum, 2006). Even in the early 20th century, the concepts of disability seem crude by today's standards.

As the education profession itself matured and as compulsory school attendance laws became a reality, there was a growing realization among teachers and school administrators that a large number of students must be given something beyond the ordinary classroom experience. Elizabeth Farrell, a teacher in New York City in the early 20th century, was highly instrumental in the development of special education as a profession. She and the New York City superintendent of schools attempted to use information about child development, social work, mental testing, and instruction to address the needs of children and youths who were being either ill served in or excluded from general education classes and schools. Farrell was a great advocate for services for students with special needs. Her motives and those of the teachers and administrators who worked with her were to see that every student—including every exceptional child or youth—had an appropriate education and received the related health and social services necessary for optimum learning in school (Gerber, 2017). In 1922, Farrell and a group of other special educators from across the United States and Canada founded the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), which is still the primary professional organization of special educators.

Contemporary special education is a professional field with roots in several academic disciplines—especially medicine, psychology, sociology, and social work—in addition to professional education. The discipline is sufficiently different from the mainstream

of professional education to require special training programs but sufficiently like the mainstream to maintain a primary concern for schools and teaching.

Individuals, Parents, and Organizations

Individuals and ideas have played crucial roles in the history of special education, but it's accurate to say that much of the progress that has been made over the years has been achieved primarily by the collective efforts of parents and professionals. Professional groups were organized first, beginning in the 19th century. Effective national parent organizations have existed in the United States only since about 1950.

Many people have been influential in the development of special education or other opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Among them is the late President John F. Kennedy's sister Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Their sister Rosemary had an intellectual disability. Eunice Shriver originated the Special Olympics. Having sports competitions in which individuals with disabilities could compete no doubt enriched the lives of many. Even though the Special Olympics has generated criticism, it stands as an example of advocacy for caring and fair treatment of individuals with disabilities. Ms. Shriver (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0CukBoFytFY) undeniably changed the self-perception of many people with disabilities and also changed the general public's perceptions of individuals with disabilities for the better and improved the quality of life for many.

Although they offer membership to individuals who don't have exceptional children, parent organizations primarily comprise parents who do have such children and concentrate on issues that are of special concern to them. Parent organizations have typically served three essential functions: (1) provide an informal group for parents who understand one another's problems and needs and help one another deal with anxieties and frustrations, (2) provide information regarding services and potential resources, and (3) provide the structure for obtaining needed services for their children. Some of the organizations that came about primarily as the result of parents' efforts include the ARC (formerly the Association for Retarded Citizens), the National Association for Gifted Children, the Learning Disabilities Association of America, the Autism Society of America, and the Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. (See the links to these organizations at the end of this chapter.)

Legislation and Litigation

Legislation (lawmaking) and litigation (defending one's rights under law) have played major roles in how students with disabilities are identified and educated. These roles have often been reciprocal, with one influencing the other and vice versa.

LEGISLATION Much of the progress in meeting the educational needs of children and youths with disabilities is attributable to laws requiring states and localities to include students with special needs in the public education system (Bateman, 2007, 2017; Bateman & Linden, 2006; Huefner, 2006). We focus here on significant legislation that represents a culmination of decades of legislative history. However, litigation (lawsuits or court decisions) has also played a major role in special education (see Yell, Crockett, Shriner, & Rozalski, 2017; Yell, Katsiyannis, & Bradley, 2017).

A landmark federal law was passed in 1975: the **Education for All Handicapped Children Act**, commonly known as PL 94-142* (Martin, 2013). In 1990, this law was amended to become the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**. In 1997, the law was amended again, but its name was not changed [see Bateman & Linden (2006) and Yell (2012) for details]. The law was reauthorized again in 2004, as the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)**. As a field, we still refer to the law simply as IDEA, as the basic requirements of the law have not changed. The federal law known as IDEA ensures that all children and youths with disabilities have the right to a free, appropriate public education.

*Legislation is often designated PL (for public law), followed by a hyphenated numeral; the first set of digits represents the number of the Congress that passed the bill, and the second set represents the number of that bill. Thus, PL 94-142 was the 142nd public law passed by the 94th Congress.

FOCUS ON

The Major Provisions of IDEA

Each state and locality must have a plan to ensure*:

Identification	Extensive efforts to screen and identify all children and youths with disabilities.
Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)	Every student with a disability has an appropriate public education at no cost to the parents or guardian.
Due Process	The student's and parents' rights to information and informed consent before the student is evaluated, labeled, or placed, and the right to an impartial due process hearing if they disagree with the school's decisions.
Parent/Guardian Surrogate Consultation	The student's parents (or guardian) are consulted about the student's evaluation and placement and the educational plan; if the parents (or guardian) are unknown or unavailable, a surrogate parent must be found to act for the student.
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	The student is educated in the least restrictive environment consistent with his or her educational needs and, insofar as possible, with students without disabilities.
Individualized Education Program (IEP)	A written individualized education program is prepared for each student with a disability, including levels of functioning, long-term goals, extent to which the student will *not* participate in the general education classroom and curriculum, services to be provided, plans for initiating and evaluating the services, and needed transition services (from school to work or continued education). Parents must be invited to the meeting and efforts made to enable them to attend.
Nondiscriminatory Evaluation	The student is evaluated in all areas of suspected disability and in a way that is not biased by his or her language or cultural characteristics or disabilities. Evaluation must be by a multidisciplinary team, and no single evaluation procedure may be used as the sole criterion for placement or planning.
Confidentiality	The results of evaluation and placement are kept confidential, though the student's parents (or guardian) may have access to the records.
Personnel Development, In-service	Training for teachers and other professional personnel, including in-service training for general education teachers, in meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

**Detailed federal rules and regulations govern the implementation of each of these major provisions. The Code of Federal Regulations comprises the rules for implementation of the law.*

Another landmark federal law, enacted in 1990, is the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**. ADA ensures the right of individuals with disabilities to nondiscriminatory treatment in other aspects of their lives; it provides protections of civil rights in the specific areas of employment, transportation, public accommodations, state and local government, and telecommunications. For information about the provisions for students under Section 504 of the ADA, you can go to www.ed.gov and in the "Search" box, type in "Americans with Disabilities Act Section 504."

IDEA and another federal law focusing on intervention in early childhood (PL 99-457) mandate a free appropriate public education for every child or youth between the ages of 3 and 21, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. PL 99-457 also provides incentives for states to develop early intervention programs for infants with

known disabilities and those who are considered to be at risk. Together, these laws require public school systems to identify all children and youths with disabilities and to provide the necessary special education and related services to these students.

The federal law we now know as IDEA was revolutionary because it was the first federal law mandating free appropriate public education for all children with disabilities. Its basic provisions are described in the Focus on . . . The Major Provisions of IDEA. "Celebrating 35 Years of IDEA" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUn6luZQaXE) provides a history of the legislation of the federal special education law.

MyLab Education
Video Example 1.5

The Individualized Educational Program (IEP) is a critical element in IDEA. This video is an example of an IEP meeting. Note that the mother is included in the IEP meeting.

Historically, legislation has been increasingly specific and mandatory. Beginning in the 1980s, however, a renewed emphasis on states' rights and local autonomy plus a political strategy of federal deregulation led to attempts to repeal some of the provisions of IDEA (then still known as PL 94-142) and loosen federal rules and regulations. Federal disinvestment in education and deregulation of special education programs remain popular ideas. It's not surprising that federal mandates for special education have come under fire. Dissatisfaction with federal mandates is due in part to the fact that the federal government contributes relatively little to the funding of special education. Although the demands of IDEA are detailed, state and local governments pay most of the cost of special education programs.

Some have characterized the legal history of special education as a "long, strange trip" (Yell, Rogers, & Rogers, 1998, p. 219). Special education law is highly controversial, and battles over IDEA are ongoing. The amendment and continuation of IDEA in 1997 and 2004 represented a sustained commitment to require schools, employers, and government agencies to recognize the abilities of people with disabilities, but the extent to which the 2004 revision of the law represents actual improvement is debatable (Turnbull, 2007; Vitello, 2007). IDEA and ADA require reasonable accommodations that will allow those who have disabilities to participate to the fullest extent possible in all the activities of daily living that individuals without disabilities take for granted. The requirements of ADA are intended to grant equal opportunities to people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodations, state and local government, and telecommunications.

In the early 21st century, under the administration of President George W. Bush, the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) became a major factor in the focus of public schooling, including special education (see Huefner, 2006; Yell & Drasgow, 2005). NCLB was an attempt to improve the academic performance of all students, including those with disabilities. Under NCLB and its successor, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESSA), most students with disabilities are to take standard tests of academic achievement and achieve at a level equal to students without disabilities. Moreover, NCLB included the requirement that all teachers be "highly qualified," a designation that left much to interpretation (Gelman, Pullen, & Kauffman, 2004). Some have noted that core requirements of NCLB were neither reasonable nor achievable, particularly with reference to special education (Kauffman, 2010; Kauffman & Konold, 2007; Rothstein, Jacobsen, & Wilder, 2006).

LITIGATION Laws often have little or no effect on the lives of individuals with disabilities until courts interpret exactly what the laws require in practice. Primarily through the actions of parent and professional organizations, exceptional children have been getting their day in court more frequently since IDEA and related federal and state laws were passed. Therefore, we must examine litigation to complete the picture of how the U.S. legal system may safeguard or undermine appropriate education for exceptional children.

Zelder (1953) noted that in the early days of public education, school attendance was seen as a privilege that could be awarded to or withheld from an individual child at the discretion of local school officials. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the courts typically found that disruptive children or those with mental retardation (intellectual disabilities) could be excluded from school for the sake of preserving order, protecting the teacher's time from excessive demands, and sparing children the discomfort of seeing others who are disabled. In the first half of the 20th century, the courts tended to

defend the majority of schoolchildren from a disabled minority. But now the old excuses for excluding students with disabilities from school are no longer valid.

Today, the courts must interpret laws that define school attendance as the right of every child, regardless of her disability. Litigation is now focused on ensuring that every child receives an education that is appropriate for her individual needs. As some legal scholars have pointed out, this doesn't mean that laws or litigation support full inclusion of all children with disabilities in general education (Bateman, 2017).

Litigation may involve legal suits primarily filed for either of two reasons: (1) because special education services aren't being provided for students whose parents believe their children deserve them or (2) because students are being assigned to special education when their parents believe that the assignment is unwarranted. Suits for special education have been brought primarily by parents whose children are unquestionably disabled and either are being denied any education at all or are being given very meager special services. The parents who file these suits believe that the advantages of their children's identification for special education services clearly outweigh the disadvantages. Suits against special education have been brought primarily by parents of students who have mild or questionable disabilities and who are already attending school. These parents believe that their children are being stigmatized and discriminated against rather than helped by special education. Thus, the courts today are asked to make decisions in which individual students' characteristics are weighed against specific educational programs.

Parents want their children with disabilities to have a free public education that meets their needs but doesn't stigmatize them unnecessarily and that permits them to be taught in the general education classroom as much as possible. The laws governing education recognize parents' and students' rights to such an education. In the courts today, the burden of proof is ultimately on local and state education specialists, who must show in every instance that the student's abilities and disabilities have been completely and accurately assessed and that appropriate educational procedures are being employed. Much of the special education litigation has involved controversy over the use of intelligence (IQ) and other standardized testing to determine students' eligibility for special education. Although the debate about IQ tests has been acrimonious, some scholars have found that IQ scores themselves haven't been the primary means of classifying children as eligible for special education (MacMillan & Forness, 1998).

One historic court case of the 1980s deserves particular consideration. In 1982, the U.S. Supreme Court made its first interpretation of PL 94-142 (now IDEA) in *Hudson v. Rowley*, a case involving Amy Rowley, a child who was deaf (*Board of Education of Hendrick Hudson v. Rowley*, 1982). The Court's decision was that appropriate education for a deaf child with a disability does not necessarily mean education that will produce the maximum possible achievement. Amy's parents had contended that she might be able to learn more in school if she were provided with a sign language interpreter. But the Court decided that because the school had designed an individualized program of special services for Amy and she was achieving at or above the level of her nondisabled classmates, the school system had met its obligation under the law to provide an appropriate education. In fact, Amy's education proved to be successful in that she went on to coordinate the American Sign Language Program at California State University East Bay, where she is currently an associate professor in Modern Languages and Literature.

MyLab Education
Video Example 1.6
This video demonstrates how much a sign language interpreter can help a student with hearing impairment in the classroom. Note that during the interview, Joline, the interpreter, makes sure that the interviewer's questions are understood by the student.

School districts have used the precedent about the necessary level of benefits a student must be provided set in the *Rowley* case for decades; however, a new case may increase the level of benefit districts need to provide students with disabilities to meet FAPE. In the case of *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* (2017), the District used the *Rowley* language to argue that Endrew F. was receiving some benefit from the IEP, which met the letter of the law. The tenth district court interpreted *Rowley* to establish a rule that:

> a child's IEP is adequate as long as it is calculated to confer an " educational benefit [that is] merely . . . more than de minimis," 798 F. 3d 1329, 1338 (internal quotation marks omitted), and concluded that Endrew's IEP had been "reasonably calculated to

> enable [him] to make some progress," id., at 1342. The court accordingly held that Endrew had received a FAPE. (580 U.S. –No. 15–827. Argued January 11, 2017—Decided March 22, 2017, p. 2).

However, the U.S. Supreme Court decided in favor of Endrew F., stating in its opinion:

> When all is said and done, a student offered an educational program providing "merely more than de minimis" progress from year to year can hardly be said to have been offered an education at all. . . . The IDEA demands more. It requires an educational program reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances. (580 U.S. --No. 15–827. Argued January 11, 2017—Decided March 22, 2017, p. 15).

Although the Court did not attempt to define "appropriate," it clearly set a new precedent for the level of benefit a child should receive from an IEP. The *Endrew F.* case, as well as other future cases, will undoubtedly help to clarify what the law means by "appropriate education" and "least restrictive environment." In Chapter 2, we go into more detail about the law and what it requires. We pay particular attention to writing individualized education programs (IEPs) and to the meaning of *least restrictive environment* (LRE).

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM

In this chapter, we've not presented a naively optimistic view of exceptionality and special education. The field faces many challenges. It's these very challenges, however, that make special education a dynamic field—a field not only worth studying but also of critical importance to millions of students with disabilities. We remain optimistic for these students' future because we know of so many teachers and other professionals who care, and because of the never ending scientific advances pertaining to disabilities.

Scientific Advances on Causal Factors of Disability

In the vast majority of cases, professionals are unable to identify the exact reason *why* a person is exceptional, but researchers are making progress in determining the causes of some disabilities. In Chapter 5, for example, we discuss the detection of causal factors in **Down syndrome**, a condition that results in the largest number of children classified as having moderate intellectual and developmental disabilities (mental retardation, which is now called either intellectual disability (ID) or intellectual and developmental disability (IDD)). Likewise, the incidence of **retinopathy of prematurity**, at one time a leading cause of blindness, has been greatly reduced since the discovery of its cause. The metabolic disorder **phenylketonuria (PKU)** was discovered decades ago, and now infants are routinely tested for PKU soon after birth, so that this type of intellectual disability can be prevented. More recently, the gene responsible for **cystic fibrosis**—an inherited condition characterized by chronic respiratory and digestive problems—has been identified. Advances in drug treatments appear to hold the potential for a cure for **muscular dystrophy**, another inherited disorder characterized by progressive degeneration of muscles (Zordan et al., 2013). In the future, the specific genes governing many other diseases and disorders will also likely be found. Scientific advances raise the possibility of medications or gene therapies to prevent or correct many disabling conditions. Physicians can now perform surgery to correct some identifiable defects on a fetus before birth (in utero), completely avoiding some conditions, such as **hydrocephalus** (an accumulation of fluid around the brain that can cause mental or physical disabilities if not corrected). And before long, research might lead to the ability to grow new organs from tissues taken from a person or from stem cells, perhaps allowing replacement of a poorly functioning lung, pancreas, or other internal organ and avoidance of the associated physical disabilities. Advances in reproductive technology also hold promise for preventing many disabilities (Kauffman & Hallahan, 2009).

Scientific Advances in Learning and Teaching

Besides these and other medical breakthroughs, research is enhancing understanding of the ways in which the individual's psychological, social, and educational environments are related to learning. For example, special educators, psychologists, and pediatricians are increasingly able to identify environmental conditions that increase the likelihood that a child will have learning or behavior problems (see Kauffman & Landrum, 2018b; Landrigan, Lambertini, & Birnbaum, 2012; Rauch & Lanphear, 2012).

Educational methodology has also made significant strides. In fact, compared to current knowledge about causes, the knowledge about how exceptional learners can be taught and managed effectively in the classroom is much more complete. Although special educators lament that not all the questions have been answered, considerably more is known today about how to educate exceptional learners than was the case years ago (see, for example, Kauffman, Hallahan, & Pullen, 2017).

One final point: We all must certainly learn to live with disabling exceptionalities, but we must never accept them. We prefer to think there is hope for the eventual eradication of many of the disabling forms of exceptionality. In addition, we believe that it is of paramount importance to realize that even individuals whose exceptionalities are extreme can be helped to lead fuller lives than they would without appropriate education.

MyLab Education Self-Check 1.4

MyLab Education Application Exercise 1.3: An Overview of the History of Special Education

For this exercise, you will need to refer to the section "History and Origin of Special Education" in your text.

▼ chapter one SUMMARY

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How can we get oriented to exceptionality and special education?

- Exceptionality involves similarities and differences.
- Reasons for optimism include better treatment and education, medical breakthroughs, and prevention.
- Abilities as well as disabilities must be recognized.
- A disability is an inability to do something; a handicap is a limitation that is imposed on someone.
- Not all inabilities are disabilities; a disability is an inability to do something that most people, with typical maturation, opportunity, or instruction, can do.

What is the educational definition of *exceptional learners*?

- Exceptional learners are those who require special education services to reach their full potential.
- Many individuals with disabilities require special education services, but some do not.

What is the prevalence of exceptional learners?

- About 1 student in every 10 (about 10% of the student population) is identified as exceptional for special education purposes.
- Some categories of disability are considered high incidence because they are found relatively frequently (e.g., learning disabilities, communication disorders, emotional or behavioral disorders).
- Some categories of disability are considered low incidence because they occur relatively rarely (e.g., blindness, deafness, deaf-blindness).

What is the definition of *special education*?

- *Special education* means specially designed instruction that meets the unusual needs of an exceptional student. It may include special materials, teaching techniques, or equipment and/or facilities.
- The trend is toward placement in environments closest to the general education classroom in format, especially for younger children.

What are the history and origins of special education?

- Special education became common in institutions and in major cities' public education systems in the 19th century.
- Physicians and psychologists played important roles in the early formation of special education.

- The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and many important parent and professional organizations were formed in the 20th century.

What legislation and litigation have affected special education?

- The primary federal law affecting special education is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), enacted in the 1970s and reauthorized by the U.S. Congress in 2004.
- Also important is the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in employment and communications.
- In the 21st century, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) also was important in the education of exceptional learners.
- Lawsuits (litigation) have added to interpretation of the meaning and application of the law.
- Some parents sue because they want their children with unquestionable disabilities to be identified for special education and provided services or because they want them placed in more specialized environments. Others sue because they feel their children have been incorrectly identified for special education or because they want to have them educated in less atypical situations.

What is our perspective on the progress of special education?

- Special education has made great progress, but making it better is a continuing struggle.

▼ INTERNET RESOURCES

Pertinent Organizations

- The major professional organization for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in special education, with about 40,000 members is the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) (http://www.cec.sped.org). CEC is made up of 17 divisions, each covering a different aspect of special education; for example, the Division for Learning Disabilities (http://teachingld.org), Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (http://daddcec.org), Council of Administrators of Special Education (http://www.casecec.org), and Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners http://community.cec.sped.org/ddel/home.
- CEC provides numerous member benefits: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA4wwlyXT74&feature=c4-overview&playnext=1&list=TLZcuAELOx3Ss.

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Exceptional Learners

FOURTEENTH EDITION

AN INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATION