Effective Inclusion Strategies for Professionals Working with Students with Disabilities

Kathleen A. Hogan, PhD.
Augusta State University

Marla Lohmann, MEd.
University of North Texas

Rose Champion, MEd.
Augusta State University

Abstract

Inclusive classrooms are now the norm in many K-12 public schools across the United States. General education teachers have a difficult job making sure all their students are meeting state standards. With the addition of special education students in the classroom, their job becomes even more difficult due to meeting the needs of the general education students, as well as meeting the academic and behavioral needs of special education students. A student's general and special education teacher need to learn effective collaboration strategies with other educational professionals and parents. The purpose of the article is to provide collaboration strategies to help make the general education teachers' job a little less difficult.

Effective Inclusion Strategies for Professionals Working with Students with Disabilities

There are approximately six million special education students in the United States (United States Department of Education, 2011). Many of these students are currently being educated in inclusive classrooms. With so many special needs students, it is imperative that special education teachers are collaborating and consulting effectively with general educators. Collaboration is best used in inclusive classrooms where the general and special education teacher team-teach together to meet the needs of all students in the classroom. According to Friend and Cook (1990) "collaboration is a style of interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal" (p. 72).

Collaboration is important for several reasons and can be beneficial for all students. First, schools are legally required to utilize collaboration for inclusion; IDEIA (2004) states that students with disabilities must be educated with nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible. Furthermore, collaboration assists in bridging the gap between special education and general education programming and practices (Conderman & Johnston-Rodriguez, 2009; Gallagher, Vail, & Monda-Amaya, 2008; Graden & Bauer, 1996; Sage, 1997; Snell & Janney, 2000; USDE, 2000).

While collaboration is necessary and beneficial, it is not easy to accomplish. The main issues facing educators in today's inclusive classrooms are that (a) special educators are unfamiliar with general education curriculum (Conderman & Johnston-Rodriguez, 2009), (b) general educators

have limited knowledge of inclusion strategies (Baker & Zigmond, 1990; Conderman & Johnston-Rodriguez, 2009), and (c) there is often infrequent communication between general and special education teachers (Conderman & Johnston-Rodriguez, 2009; Haynes & Jenkins, 1986). This article will provide strategies for collaboration between both general and special education teachers, as well as collaboration strategies for paraprofessionals and parents. These strategies have been identified either through research or through teaching experiences and have been helpful in meeting the needs of both teachers and students.

Collaborating with General Educators

The use of collaboration strategies for general and special education professionals need to be addressed by teacher educators, administrators, counselors, paraprofessionals, and parents. Table 1 provides as list of strategies and who is responsible.

Table 1
General Education Collaboration Strategies

Strategy	Responsible Party	Reference
Create a school-wide vision to bridge special and general education	Administration	Baker & Zigmond, 1990; Gravois & Rosenfield, 2006; Griffin, Kilgore, Winn, & Otis-Wilborn, 2008; Kovaleski & Glew, 2006; McLaren, Bausch, & Ault 2007; McNamara & Hollinger, 2003; Meadan & Monda-Amaya, 2008; Santangelo, 2009; Snyder, Garriott, & Aylor, 2001; Welch, Brownell, & Sheridan, 1999
Provide training during pre and in-service experiences	Administration, teacher educators	Conderman & Johnston-Rodriguez, 2009; Fuchs, Fuchs, Harris, & Roberts, 1996; Griffin et al., 2008; Murawski & Hughes, 2009; Welch et al., 1999; White & Mason, 2006
Know and understand your personal collaboration style as well as the collaboration styles of the professionals with which you work	Counselor, special education teacher, general education teacher, administration, parent	Bos & Vaughn, 2006; Gallagher, Vail, & Monda-Amaya, 2008; Snell & Janney, 2000

Increase time for communication and relationship building for general and special educators to build relationships and communicate with one another	Administration	Bos et al., 2006; Conderman et al., 2009; Gallagher et al., 2008; McLaren et al., 2007; Meadan et al., 2008; Ormsbee & Haring, 2000; Snell et al., 2000; White et al., 2006
Discuss your teaching philosophies, pet peeves, classroom management styles	General education teacher, special education teacher	McLaren et al., 2007; Welch & Brownell, 2002; White et al., 2006
Reverse roles in co-teaching	General education teacher, special education teacher	Meadan et al., 2008; Snyder et al., 2001
Delineate responsibilities	General education teacher, special education teacher	Meadan et al., 2008; Snyder et al., 2001
Recognize one another as professionals	General education teacher, special education teacher	Arthaud, Aram, Breck, Doelling,& Bushrow, 2007; Graden & Bauer, 1996; Griffin et al., 2008; McLaren et al., 2007; Meadan et al., 2008; Snyder et al., 2001
Discuss with students the roles of each teacher in the classroom	General education teacher, special education teacher	Bos et al., 2006; Snyder et al., 2001
Share responsibilities for grading and lesson planning	General education teacher, special education teacher	Meadan et al., 2008; Snyder et al., 2001
Only use reprimands when necessary, and in private	General education teacher, special education teacher	Bos et al., 2006
Use compromising techniques	General education teacher, special education teacher	Bos et al., 2006
Teach the class a lesson on disabilities	Special education teacher	Meadan et al., 2008
Have regular, planned communication techniques planned	Special education teacher, general education teacher	Griffin et al., 2008; McLaren et al., 2007

A daily or weekly progress monitoring report was a strategy the authors used to communicate with general education teachers. The report can be done either on paper or via e-mail. At the end of each day or week, the general education teacher briefly describes the students' progress towards both academic and behavior goals, as well as any concerns that need to be addressed. See Figure 1 for an example of one author's weekly progress report.

Figure 1: Weekly Progress Report
Student Name: Date:
Please complete this report for the above-mentioned student and return to me by Monday morning.
1. _____ Does not use class time wisely.
2. _____ Does not come to class prepared.
3. _____ Does not control body and comments.
4. _____ Does not have a positive attitude.
5. _____ Student accepts criticism without argument.
6. _____ Student is disruptive and/or disrespectful to teachers and/or peers.
7. _____ Student acts aggressively towards teachers and/or peers.

Comments: _____

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Another effective strategy was to schedule regular meetings between the general and special education teachers. One author had a scheduled, weekly meeting with each general education teacher. The meeting was short (generally about 20 minutes long) and the teachers discussed upcoming lessons and modifications, as well as the students' progress toward his/her IEP goals. Finally, one author found it to be beneficial for both teachers to have an open-door policy and encourage other teachers and professionals to call, email or stop by at any time.

A second beneficial strategy is for the general and special education professionals to occasionally reverse roles in the classroom (Meadan et al., 2008; Snyder et al., 2001). This can be accomplished when one teacher leads the class while the other teacher assists. Each teacher has the opportunity to teach the class on a regular basis. Therefore, both teachers take turns leading and assisting and the students view both teachers as equal partners in the classroom instruction.

Collaborating with Paraeducators

Paraeducators play a large role in the education of students with special needs, both in the general education classroom and in special education classrooms. The problems with paraeducators occur when they are not provided training. This often occurs when the supervising teacher has not been trained on how to appropriately supervise individuals. Table 2 provides strategies that can be used when collaborating with paraprofessionals.

Table 2
Paraeducator Collaboration Strategies

Strategy	Responsible Party	Reference
Mutual respect and trust	Special education teacher, general education teacher	Griffin et al., 2008; McLaren et al., 2007
Match the paraeducators' duties to his/her interests and strengths	Special education teacher; general education teacher	Maggin, Wehby, Moore-Partin, Robertson, & Oliver, 2009
Remember that paraeducators are eager to learn new skills and strategies	Special education teacher, general education teacher	French, 2001; Wallace, Shin, Bartholomay, & Stahl, 2001
Clarify roles, responsibilities, classroom routines, and expectations *for students* at the beginning of the school year	General education teacher, special education teacher, paraprofessional	Bos et al., 2006; French, 2001; Griffin et al., 2008; Maggin et al., 2009; Salzberg & Morgan, 1995
Clearly define *paraeducator* roles	Special education teacher, general education teacher, administrators	French, 2001; Maggin et al., 2009; Salzberg et al., 1995; Wallace et al., 2001
Be specific when giving tasks to paraeducators	Special education teacher, general education teacher	French, 2001; Wallace et al., 2001

Encourage professional training for paraeducators	Administrators, special education teacher, general education teachers	French, 2001; Maggin et al., 2009; Telzrow, McNamara, & Hollinger, 2000; Salzberg et al., 1995; Wallace et al., 2001
Evaluate paraeducators on a regular basis and provide feedback on the evaluation	Administrators, special education teachers, general education teacher	Maggin et al., 2009; Salzberg et al., 1995; Wallace et al., 2001
Schedule time weekly or monthly to meet and discuss classroom plans and any problems	Special education teacher, general education teacher	French, 2001; Maggin et al., 2009; McLaren et al., 2007
Share your goals for the day, month, lesson, students, etc.	Special education teacher, general education teacher,	Wallace et al., 2001

Developing mutual respect and trust between yourself and your paraeducator is an integral part of collaboration. This can be accomplished in many ways. One strategy is to get to know your paraeducator and his/her strengths and weaknesses as well as his/her likes and dislikes. There are several types of interest inventories that can be used to accomplish this. Additionally, setting up a breakfast or lunch meeting with your paraprofessional to get to know him/her is a non-threatening way to find out more about your paraprofessional. One author occasionally wrote notes to her paraeducators telling them why she appreciated them and often included a small treat (a candy bar, a can of Coke, etc.) with the note. Additionally, the authors found it beneficial to ask their paraeducators for ideas about how approach classroom problems or modifications for particular students.

A second strategy is to define paraeducator roles and responsibilities. It was noted during the authors' time teaching that some paraeducators needed to have explicit directions on what needs to be accomplished. It is important that the classroom teacher explicitly describe classroom responsibilities for the paraeducator to perform and provide those responsibilities in verbal and written instructions. Additionally, teachers must be sure to clearly articulate roles for the following areas (1) lesson planning, (2) instruction delivery, (3) proactive and reactive responses to students' behaviors, and (4) strategies to promote communication, and methods of student evaluation (Malian & Nevin, 2008).

Additionally, the authors provided their paraeducators with either a 3-ring binder or expandable binder. One author taught in a self-contained emotional and behavioral classroom and used the 3-ring binder method. In this binder she included (a) roles and responsibilities of the paraeducator (see Figure 2), (b) the teacher schedule (see Figure 3), (c) paraprofessional roles throughout the day, (d) notebook paper for documentation, (e) student behavior intervention plans (BIP), (f) student individual education plans (IEP), and (g) accommodations page. A second author taught in a self-contained classroom for students with autism and intellectual disabilities and incorporated the expandable notebook method, which included, (a) the paraprofessionals' daily schedule, (b) copies of the students' IEPs, (c) a spiral notebook for daily, written communication between the teacher and the paraprofessional, (d) daily assignments for the students while in the inclusive classroom, and (e) forms for documentation of student's progress toward IEP goals, and (f) accommodation materials, such as a visual timer.

Figure 2: Paraeducator Roles/Responsibilities
SEAC Responsibilities
- ❖ Escort students to and from the special education busses
- ❖ Help with filing
- ❖ Work with students as a group or individually (I will give you their assignment and then you execute…If you have more information about the subject and you feel comfortable giving them more detail please do)
- ❖ CPI as needed
- ❖ Working with students in outclasses
- ❖ Filling out point sheets
- ❖ Help with keeping track of levels, points, etc.

Inclusion Responsibilities
- ❖ Work with SEAC student to make sure BIP, IEPs and modifications are being followed
- ❖ Work with other students that need help
- ❖ Help the classroom teacher as needed
- ❖ If a student needs a modification that the teacher has not modified, ask the teacher how they want it or do it yourself and then tell them what you are doing.
- ❖ Keep a close eye on SEAC students' behavior, if they start having a problem do what you feel is necessary to get the behavior under control before sending them back to SEAC (this can include taking a walk with them, taking them out to the hall to calm down, moving them to a different seat, etc.)

Floater Responsibilities
- ❖ As of right now we have a low number of students and many of which don't need constant supervision. With this comes some down time that I am going to have a floater.
- ❖ You will go to different classrooms to check up on SEAC students.
- ❖ Monitor behavior…If student is not doing what they are supposed to be doing, then step in…give that teacher a break from our student…Take student out in hall and talk to him/her if the need presents itself.
- ❖ Help teacher/students if needed (wanted).
- ❖ You can come and go out of your assigned classes as you feel fit. If the student is doing well and you want to go and check on another room and then go back do so.
- ❖ I want this to be a visual for our students so they know we will be checking up on them and a visual for the teachers so they know we are there to help.

Figure 3: Schedule							
Teacher	1st Period	2nd Period	3rd Period	4th Period	5th Period	6th Period	7th Period
Teacher #1	SEAC	SEAC	SEAC	SEAC	Work w/LP	SEAC	SEAC (AD)
Teacher #2	SEAC	SEAC w/AR	Jones (1007)	Wallac (1007)	SEAC PE	SEAC	SEAC (CV)

			w/AD	w/AD			
Teacher #3	SEAC	SEAC	Johnson w/BD	SEAC	SEAC	SEAC PE	Smith (1406) w/LP

Encouraging professional development among paraeducators is another strategy that can be used to prepare them for future challenges in the classroom. There are several school districts that now require paraeducators to attend district training. The authors also provided both formal and informal training when they worked with paraeducators. One of the easiest ways to accomplish this, according to the authors, was to provide them with the notes from any relevant professional learning they attended. Also, you can provide information to the administrators when you find a training that may benefit both you and your paraprofessional. In one author's school district, the teachers and paraeducators participated together in a book club, where they read and discussed books on topics relevant to education and child development.

Evaluating paraprofessional performance should be a collaborative effort among administrators and the teachers that work closely with the paraeducator. Scheduling time to meet with your paraprofessional can be done several ways. Some ways the authors accomplished this was to meet every day after school, just for a few minutes, to rehash the day. Another example is that once a month they would all meet to go out to lunch or meet before school for breakfast provided by the teacher.

Collaborating with Parents

Parent collaboration is also very important in both general and special education settings for all students. The research has identified several strategies that can assist with this process to make this sometimes daunting task a reality (see Table 3).

Table 3
Parent Collaboration Strategies

Strategy	**Responsible Party**	**Reference**
Provide information early on, before the parents have to ask	General education teacher, special education teacher, administrator	Fish, 2008; Kirmani, 2007
Listen to the parents' concerns	General education teacher, special education teacher, administrator	Center for Family Involvement in Schools, 2011; Coots, 2007; Fish, 2008; Hobbs & Westling, 1998; Kirmani, 2007; Orozco, 2008
Introduce parents to everyone at IEP meetings	Administrator, special education teacher	Fish, 2008; Kirmani, 2007
Try to put yourself in the parents' shoes	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Coots, 2007; Kirmani, 2007

	administrator	
Complete home visits	Administrator, special education teacher	Kirmani, 2007; Orozco, 2008; Wang, McCart, & Turnbull, 2007
Invite parents into your classroom/school	General education teacher, special education teacher, administrator	Center for Family Involvement in Schools, 2011; Fish, 2008; Kirmani, 2007; Orozco, 2008
Include parents in transition planning – "change can be difficult for parents and their child"	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Sheehey & Sheehey, 2007, p. 8
Focus on the child's strengths instead of comparing him/her with typically developing peers	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Fish, 2008
Realize that parents may need the school day as a time for respite	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Coots, 2007
Realize that families are different	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Coots, 2007; Murray & Curran, 2008; Orozco, 2008
Conduct IEP meetings at convenient times	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Fish, 2008
Seek parents' input	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Coots, 2007
Focus on family's unique characteristics	General education teacher, special education teacher,	Kirmani, 2007; Murray & Curran, 2008
Find out the family's goals for the child	General education teacher, special education teacher,	
Pick one day a week to call parents	General education teacher, special education teacher,	
Provide communication forms	General education teacher, special education teacher,	

One strategy to use when working with parents of a child with special needs is to find out more about the child and family, as well as the family's goals for their child. The authors provided a questionnaire to their students' parents at the beginning of each school year (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Family Questionnaire I

Contact Name #1 _____

Email/Phone#: _____

When is the best time to contact you regarding your child? -

_____

Contact Name #2 _____

Email/Phone#: _____

When is the best time to contact you regarding your child? -

_____

There are times that as a consequence, your child could be asked to stay after school. Would this be possible for your child? _____

1. What do you feel the needs of your child are?
2. What do you feel are your child's strengths?
3. What do you feel are your child's weaknesses?
4. What do you see as your child's interests?
5. What are your expectations of your child?
6. What are your expectations of your child's teachers?
7. What do you feel your child needs to be successful at school?
8. Is there any other information you would like your child's teachers to know?

Another strategy used by the authors was to pick one day a week to call the parents, for both positive and negative reasons. One teacher also sent one or two short emails to each student's family on a weekly basis. The teachers found, though, that parents are often more receptive to hearing the negative when the majority of interactions are positive; therefore, it is important to contact parents on a regular basis about a child's progress. Figures 8 and 9 are examples of the communication logs the authors used to track telephone calls, e-mails, and meetings.

Figure 8: Communication Log I
A Note from Mrs. XXXX

Today's Date:

Today, we worked on the following things:
Language Arts:
Math:
Science:
Social Studies:
Functional Skills:
Specials:

Notes about the day:
Your child did well with…

and with…

Your child struggled when…

Other notes:

Figure 9: Communication Log II

Date and Time	Form of Contact	Who Initiated Contact?	What was Discussed?	Notes from Communication

Figure 10: Daily Communication Sheet **Joe's Daily Communication Chart**					

Math	Reading	Science/ Social Studies	Specials	Behavior	
☺ ☹	☺ ☹	☺ ☹	☺ ☹	☺ ☹	

Notes from Mrs. XXXX:

The authors also used two other types of communication forms such a daily communication form (see Figure 10) and an assignment sheet (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: Assignment Sheet			
Assignment #1	*Completed (Yes or No)*	*Signature*	*Homework*
Assignment #2	*Completed (Yes or No)*	*Signature*	*Homework*
Assignment #3	*Completed (Yes or No)*	*Signature*	*Homework*

Conclusion

Due to both the legal requirements and the benefits to the students and education professionals, collaboration is essential in the inclusive classroom. Special educators must become proficient at collaborating with other teachers, with paraeducators, and with parents. By using the strategies outlined in this article, teachers can increase their collaborative skills and improve the education of all students in their classroom.

References

Arthaud, T. J., Aram, R. J., Breck, S. E., Doelling, J. E., & Bushrow, K.M. (2007). Developing collaboration skills in pre-service teachers: A partnership between general and special education. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *30*(1), 1-12.

Bos, C. S., & Vaughn, S. (2006). *Strategies for teaching students with learning and behavior problems.* Boston: Pearson

Center for Family Involvement in Schools. (2002). *Our Philosophy: Parent Involvement Essential for Academic Success.* Retrieved September 12, 2009 from http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~cfis/index.html.

Conderman, G., & Johnston-Rodriguez, S. (2009). Beginning teachers' views of their collaborative roles. *Preventing School Failure 53*(4), 235-244.

Coots, J.J. (2007). Building bridges with families: Honoring the mandates of IDEA. *Is*sues *in Teacher Education*, *16*(2), 33-40.

Fish, W.W. (2008). The IEP meeting: Perceptions of parents of students who receive special education services. *Preventing School Failure*, *53*(1), 8-14.

French, N. K. (2001). Supervising paraprofessionals: A survey of teacher practices. *Journal of Special Education, 35,* 41-53.

Fuchs, D., Fuchs, L. S., Harris, A. H., & Roberts, P. H. (1996). Bridging the research-to-practice gap with mainstream assistance teams: A cautionary tale. *School Psychology Quarterly, 11,* 244-266.

Gallagher, P. A., Vail, C. O., & Monda-Amaya, L. (2008). Perceptions of collaboration: A content analysis of student journals. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 31*(1), 12-20.

Graden, J. L., & Bauer, A. M. (1996). Using a collaborative approach to support students and teachers in inclusive classrooms. In S. Stainback, & W. Stainback (Eds.), *Curriculum considerations in inclusive classrooms: Facilitating learning for all students.* Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes.

Griffin, C.C., Kilgore, K.L.., Winn, J. A., & Otis-Wilborn, A. (2008). First-year special educators' relationships with their general education colleagues. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *35*(1), 141-157.

Hobbs, T., & Westling, D. L. (1998). Promoting successful inclusion through collaborative problem solving. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 31*(1), 12-19.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Public law 108-446, 108th Congress (2004).

Kirmani, M.H. (2007). Empowering culturally and linguistically diverse children and families. *Young Children, 62*, 94-98.

Kovaleski, J. F., & Glew, M. C. (2006). Bringing instructional support teams to scale: Implications of the Pennsylvania experience. *Remedial and Special Education, 27,* 16-25.

Maggin, D. M., Wehby, J. H., Moore-Partin, T. C., Robertson, R., & Oliver, R. M. (2009). Supervising paraeducators in classrooms for children with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Beyond Behavior, 18*(3), 2-9.

McLaren, E. M., Bausch, M. E., & Ault, M. J. (2007). Collaboration strategies reported by teachers providing assistive technology services. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 22*(4), 16-29.

McNamara, K., & Hollinger, C. (2003). Intervention based assessment: Evaluation rates and eligibility findings. *Exceptional Children, 69,* 181-195.

Meadan, H., & Monda-Amaya, L. (2008). Collaboration to promote social competence for students with mild disabilities in the general classroom: A structure for providing support. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 43*(3), 158-167.

Murawski, W. W., & Hughes, C. E. (2009). Response to intervention, collaboration, and co-teaching: A logical combination for successful systemic change. *Preventing School Failure*, *53*(4), 267-277.

Murray, M. M., & Curran, E. M. (2008). Learning together with parents of children with disabilities: Bringing parent-professional partnership education to a new level. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *31*(1), 59-63.

Ormsbee, C. K., & Haring, K. A. (2000). Rural assessment team members' perceptions of effectiveness. *Rural and Special Education Quarterly, 19*(1), 17-25.

Orozco, G.L. (2008). Understanding the culture of low-income immigrant Latino parents: Key to involvement. *The School Community Journal*, *18*, 21-37.

Salzberg, C. L., & Morgan, J. (1995). Preparing teachers to work with paraeducators. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 18,* 49-55.

Santangelo, T. (2009). Collaborative problem solving effectively implemented, but not sustained: A case for aligning the sun, the moon, and the stars. *Exceptional Children, 75*(2), 185-209.

Sheehey, P.H., & Sheehey, P.E. (2007). Elements for successful parent-professional collaboration: The fundamental things apply as time goes by. *TEACHING Exceptional Children Plus*, 4(2). Retrieved October 31, 2008 from http://escholarship.bc.edu/education/tecplus/vol14/iss2/art3

Snell, M. E., & Janney, R. E. (2000). Teachers' problem-solving about children with moderate and severe disabilities in elementary classrooms. *Exceptional Children, 66*, 472-490.

Snyder, L., Garriott, P., & Aylor, M. W. (2001). Inclusion confusion: Putting the pieces together. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 24*, 198-207.

Telzrow, C. F., McNamara, K., & Hollinger, C. L. (2000). Fidelity of problem-solving implementation and relationship to student performance. *School Psychology Review, 29,* 443-461.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2011). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2010* (NCES 2011-015), Table 45.

Wallace, T., Shin, J., Bartholomay, T., & Stahl, B. J. (2001). Knowledge and skills for teachers supervising the work of paraprofessionals. *Exceptional Children, 67,* 520-533.

Welch, M., Brownell, K., & Sheridan, S. (1999). What's the score and game plan on teaming in schools? A review of the literature on team teaching and school-based problem-solving teams. *Remedial and Special Education, 20,* 36-49.

Welch, M., & Brownell, K. (2002). Are professionals ready for educational partnerships? The evaluation of a technology-enhanced course to prepare educators for collaboration. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 25,* 133-144.

White, M., & Mason, C. Y. (2006). Components of successful mentoring program for beginning special education teachers: Perspectives from new teachers and mentors. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 29*, 191-201.

Wang, M., McCart, A., & Turnbull, A.P. (2007). Implementing positive behavior support with Chinese American families: Enhancing cultural competence. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 9, 38-51.

About the Authors

Dr. Kathleen Hogan is currently an Assistant Professor of Special Education at Augusta State University. Previously she taught in a self-contained classroom for students with emotional and behavioral disorders at both the elementary and secondary levels. Her research interests include professional collaboration in schools and meeting diversity standards in higher education.

Marla Lohmann, MEd. is a former teacher of students with autism, ED, and MR at the early childhood, elementary, and junior high levels. She is currently a doctoral student in Special Education at the University of North Texas and her research interests include professional collaboration in education and preschool behavior management.

Rose Champion, MEd., is a graduate of Augusta State University in the School Counseling program. She is currently residing in Baton Rouge, LA. Her research interests include professional collaboration in education and meeting CACREP standards in higher education.