Review of the Literature on Individual Education Plans

Report to the New Zealand Ministry of Education

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All views expressed in this report, and any remaining errors or omissions, remain the responsibility of the author(s).

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aims and Scope of the Review

This review was carried out under a contract with the New Zealand Ministry of Education, which contained the following requirements:

A literature review of national and international developments in the use of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) with schools and families, with particular attention to special education assessment practice(s) and their relationship to the IEP process.

The purposes of the review were defined as follows:

1. To undertake a literature review of national and international developments in IEP processes and special education assessment practice to contribute to the Ministry of Education's current project to review, revise and position the Individual Education Programme (IEP) Guidelines in relation to:

   o the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education 2007),
   o current assessment practices,
   o effective teaching and learning practices, and
   o engagement and reporting to parents, family and whanau (National Standards).

2. To provide both New Zealand and international research evidence of effective and/or evidence based practice, which, along with the data being collected by the Ministry of Education project team, will ultimately inform the future use of IEPs.

The scope of the review was defined as follows:

1. The focus of the review is to be on:

   o students with special needs in all school sector settings,
   o students as learners, not the disability or the diagnosis they present with,
   o the use of IEPs with schools and parents,
   o the role of special education staff and other agencies in the IEP process, and
   o what makes the IEP process effective for schools, students and their families, and what evidence there is of their effectiveness, with particular reference to the educational implications.

2. The literature sourced will include:

   o studies from both New Zealand and overseas, and
   o peer reviewed journals and other publications.

Sources of Information

In carrying out the review 319 sources were consulted. In the 199 references included in the annotated bibliography (see Appendix Two), 124 came from the USA (62%) and 75 (38%) from outside the USA, including 14 sources from New Zealand.

The sources described in the annotated bibliography were predominantly post 2000 (145), with another 43 published between 1996 and 2000 and the remaining 11 in 1995 or earlier.

Analysis of Literature

The analysis was divided into four sections:

1. Origins, purposes and critiques of IEPs

2. Collaboration and partnerships in IEPs

3. Curriculum and IEPs

4. Assessment and IEPs

Origins, Purposes and Critiques of IEPs

IEPs had their origins in the USA in the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) and have been re-affirmed in IDEA legislation ever since.

More recently, the focus in the US has shifted to the development of the IEP for implementation in regular classrooms.

IEPs are ubiquitous, virtually every country's special education provisions containing them as a key element to its provisions for students with special educational needs.

In different countries, IEPs are variously referred to as 'Negotiated Education Plans', 'Educational Adjustment Programs', 'Individual Learning Plans', 'Learning Plans', 'Personalised Intervention Programmes', and 'Supervisory Plans'.

Since 1997, the US has employed 'Behavior Intervention Plans' (BIPs) in addition to IEPs. These are usually accompanied by 'Functional Behavior Assessment' (FBA).

Having IEPs specifically focused on transition for students with SEN in their last few years of schooling is required in all countries where IEPs are in use

The literature suggests that key components of transition planning are individualized planning, active involvement of student and family members, interagency collaboration, and transition-focused instruction.

Research has found that transition practices often exhibit flaws in the planning process, have low levels of student and family involvement, provide little evidence of interagency collaboration, and tend to focus on academic rather than vocational goals.

IEPs suffer from having multiple purposes ascribed to them, the same IEP document frequently being expected to serve educational, legal, planning, accountability, placement, and resource allocation purposes.

Ensuring that IEPs serve all their other roles without distorting the primacy of acting as an educational planning document is a challenge facing educational policy makers.

In addition to problems arising from the multiple purposes ascribed to them, three main criticisms of IEPs have been advanced: the undue influence of behavioural psychology, the over-emphasis on the individual, and their unproven efficacy.

However, Behavior Intervention Plans have a good, but not overwhelming, research base.

Collaboration and Partnerships in Developing IEPs

The early vision of legislation to support the education of students with special educational needs was that parents, families, whanau and schools should work together in an equitable partnership. However it was apparent even in the early days that equity and partnership would be difficult to achieve as schools started out in the dominant position.

The IEP process assumes cultural norms and values, in particular normalization and individualisation.

When the majority-culture views and practices of school take little or no account of the cultural values of students' home cultures, there is very often a breakdown in communication between home and school. This will have a negative impact on parent and teacher partnerships.

Teacher professional learning should focus on fostering teacher attitudes, knowledge, skills, and practices that will acknowledge, value, nurture, and build upon the cultural capital that Māori and Pasifika learners bring from their cultures.

IEPs form a useful tool in curriculum preparation, the planning of instruction and in evaluating students' programmes and services

All those involved in the education of students with IEPs should be involved in the development and implementation of these documents.

In the case of secondary schools, at least one subject specialist should be directly involved and others should be consulted by the lead professional in the IEP team.

All teachers should be provided with pre- and in-service training and support necessary for their participation in designing and implementing IEPs. Such training should include consideration of the teachers' role in IEPs, working in a multi-disciplinary setting, partnerships with parents, ways of involving students, and how to implement and monitor student progress on IEP goals.

In scheduling IEP meetings every endeavour should be made to ensure the process is efficient and not too time-consuming, for example by considering teachers' schedules when organising IEP meetings, employing technology to disseminate information to all team members, providing release time for teachers to undertake record-keeping and attend meetings, and scheduling several IEP meetings on one day and arrange for a relieving teacher.

There is widespread agreement that the involvement of parents in the education of their children overall and in the IEP process in particular is critical to the effectiveness of

education for children with SEN.

There is extensive evidence for the effectiveness of active parental involvement in improving children's academic and social outcomes.

Studies of participation of parents in the IEP process indicate that practice is patchy, with limitations in both the quantity and quality of the involvement

A range of barriers to parental involvement in general and to participation in the IEP process in particular has been identified.

Strategies for overcoming these barriers and facilitating the participation of parents in the IEP process have been outlined.

To the maximum extent possible, students should be involved in developing their own IEPs.

In some situations, students can take the lead in the IEP process.

Students should understand the purposes and benefits of IEPs.

IEPs should be part of the curriculum for students with special educational needs, with a focus on participation skills, goal-setting and self-determination.

Students should be prepared for participation in the IEP process through prior discussions with their teachers and given time to prepare for IEP meetings.

In the course of IEP meetings, parents and professionals should provide time and prompts for students to participate.

Consideration should be given to whether students should have the right to opt out of participating in developing their IEPs.

SENCos have a significant role in developing and monitoring IEPs.

In secondary schools, SENCos face considerable challenges in coordinating the writing of IEPs, keeping them up to date and linking with a wide range of subject teachers, tasks that involved excessive paperwork and which greatly reduced SENCos' availability to perform other key tasks.

There is some evidence that IEPs in secondary schools do not change teachers' approaches and have little impact on students' learning.

Recent moves in the UK are in the direction of:

- reducing the number of students for whom IEPs are required so that they apply only to those who have needs that are 'additional to' or 'different from' other students in a differentiated curriculum;
- emphasising 'school action plans' that involve differentiation of teaching approaches;
- introducing the idea of students with similar needs having a 'Group Education Plan' (GEP), as distinct from IEPs.

An even more radical suggestion is that whole-school strategies for meeting special educational needs might be more effective, efficient and inclusive than the current individualised system, as expressed in IEPs.

Curriculum and IEPs

Approaches to conceptualising curricular for students with disabilities have moved from a developmental model in the 1970s, through a functional model in the 1980s and 1990s, to the contemporary model of embracing ways of enabling such students to participate in the general education curriculum.

In the US, IDEA 1997, IDEIA 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 specified that all students, including those with significant cognitive disabilities, must have the opportunity to participate and progress in the general curriculum.

The notion of students with special educational needs having access to the general curriculum has long been a feature of New Zealand special education policy.

To make the curriculum accessible, consideration should be given to the following alternatives in relation to content, teaching materials, and the responses expected from the learners: (a) modifications (e.g., computer responses instead of oral responses, enlarging the print), (b) substitutions (e.g., Braille for written materials); (c) omissions (e.g., omitting very complex work); and (d) compensations (e.g., self care skills).

Other modifications can include (a) expecting the same, but only less, (b) streamlining the curriculum by reducing its size or breadth, (c) employing the same activity but infusing IEP objectives, and (d) curriculum overlapping to help student grasp the connections between different subjects, for example.

Assessment and IEPs

Increasingly, students with special educational needs, including those with significant cognitive disabilities, are being expected to participate in their countries' national or state assessment regimes.

High stakes' assessments can have the effects of jeopardising inclusive education, a risk that can be exacerbated by the effects of international comparative studies of educational standards.

In the US, legislation since IDEA 1997 does not allow such students to be exempted from their states' assessment programmes. Instead, educational authorities are required to provide alternate assessment for students who cannot participate in state or district assessments with or without accommodations. IEPs now must include a statement of any accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of such students on state- and district-wide assessments.

The main types of alternate assessments comprise portfolios, IEP-linked bodies of evidence, performance assessments, checklists and traditional paper and pencil tests.

The assumptions underlying these provisions are twofold: (a) that higher expectations will lead to improved instructional programmes and (b) ultimately to higher student achievement.

The requirements for all students to participate in state- and district-wide assessments have been shown in some research to have had unintended negative consequences for students with disabilities, including higher rates of academic failure, lower self-esteem, and concerns

that they would experience higher drop-out rates.

Countries or states should include both content area specialists and experts in severe disabilities in validating performance indicators used in alternate assessment.

With the shift to all students being required to participate in their countries' national or state assessment regimes, teachers of students with disabilities will need professional development on their country's or state's academic standards, alternate achievement standards, and curriculum design that goes beyond functional domains.

In determining assessment policies, it is important to recognise and resolve as far as possible the tensions between measuring the health of the education system and protecting the interests of students with special educational needs.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The contract with the Ministry of Education contained the following requirements:

Long Title

A literature review of national and international developments in the use of the Individual Education Plan (IEP) with schools and families, with particular attention to special education assessment practice(s) and their relationship to the IEP process.

Purposes

To undertake a literature review of national and international developments in IEP processes and special education assessment practice to contribute to the Ministry of Education's current project to review, revise and position the Individual Education Programme (IEP) Guidelines in relation to:

- the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education 2007),
- current assessment practices,
- effective teaching and learning practices, and
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To provide both New Zealand and international research evidence of effective and/or evidence based practice, which, along with the data being collected by the Ministry of Education project team, will ultimately inform the future use of IEPs.

Scope

The focus of the review is on:

- students with special needs in all school sector settings,
- students as learners, not the disability or the diagnosis they present with,
- the use of IEPs with schools and parents,
- the role of special education staff and other agencies in the IEP process, and
- what makes the IEP process effective for schools, students and their families, and what evidence there is of their effectiveness, with particular reference to the educational implications.

The literature sourced will include:

- studies from both New Zealand and overseas, and
- peer reviewed journals and other publications.

Literature review questions

Summarise national and international developments in IEP processes and special education assessment practices.

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1 The terminology used in the original articles is retained.

Update the evidence-base on current practice in the use of IEPs in New Zealand, in particular as schools and families currently view them. Include evidence for the effective use of the IEP process for children and families who identify as Māori and for those who identify as Pasifika and other significant groups within New Zealand.

Report on how IEPs have been linked to national standards in the UK, the United States, Australia or other countries and any evaluation of these approaches.

In addition to the Ministry's requirements, we set ourselves the following specific questions, based on a preliminary scan of the literature:

1.   What legislation and/or policies are there on IEPs?

2.   What are the purposes of IEPs: e.g., increasing accountability, improving learner outcomes, improving teaching, obtaining funding?

3.   What evidence is there for IEPs influencing learner outcomes?

4.   What evidence is there for IEPs improving teaching?

5.   Do IEPs have any unintended consequences?

6.   What processes are used in developing IEPs: e.g., participants, locations, steps involved?

7.   What is the main content of IEPs?

8.   What assessments are required or are typically included in the development of IEPs?

9.   In the above questions, what differences are there between educational settings: e.g., regular schools vs. special schools, primary vs. secondary schools?

10.   What professional development do professionals involved in IEPs need?

Coverage of the review

The review will focus on research literature that reports on studies both within New Zealand and overseas. It will give prominence to any systematic reviews and meta-analyses that have been reported. While the focus will be on post-2000 literature, earlier studies will be reported if they have a seminal character. Literature involving Māori, Pasifika and other cultural groups in New Zealand will be particularly sought.

Methods

Our review was based on research literature derived from the following sources:

• Systematic library searches using such search engines as ProQuest, ERIC (EBSCO), Australian Education Index, British Education Index, and Education Research Complete. This included a search of New Zealand masters and doctoral theses.

• Requests posted on various listserves of which we are members. For example, Dr Mitchell is the list owner of the International Comparative Special Education Network

with over 200 members in 60+ countries, and Dr Morton is a member of such lists as the Society for Disability Studies and the Disability Studies in Education (a Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association).

- Government legislation and policies.
- Personal bibliographies on IEPs and allied topics

CHAPTER II SUMMARY OF LITERATURE

References

In the course of researching the topic, we found 319 references bearing directly or indirectly on IEPs.

A large number of the references (199) were selected for coding (see Appendix One) and annotation as the first step in our analysis. This annotated bibliography, together with the codes we employed, is included as Appendix Two to this report.

Sources of Information

The following is a breakdown of the 199 items in the annotated bibliography:

Publication Date	
Before 1990	1
1990-1995	10
1996-2000	43
2001-2005	82
2006-2010	63

Country of Origin	
USA	124
New Zealand	14
Other	61

Review Questions

The following table summarises how the sections of our review relate to the three principal questions:

Questions	Review Coverage (sections)
Summarise national and international developments in IEP processes and special education assessment practices.	Chapter III: Sections 1, 2, 3, 4
Update the evidence-base on current practice in the use of IEPs in New Zealand, in particular as schools and families currently view them. Include evidence for the effective use of the IEP process for children and families who identify as Māori and for those who identify as Pasifika and other significant groups within New Zealand.	Chapter III: Sections 1.1.4, 1.2, 1.2.2, 1.3.1, 2.4, 2.5, 2.8, 3.2, 4.2 Note: there is a paucity of literature on IEPs with Māori and Pasifika and we have had to rely on drawing inferences from existing research for the most part.
Report on how IEPs have been linked to national standards in the UK, the United States, Australia or other countries and any evaluation of these approaches.	Chapter III: Sections 3 and 4

CHAPTER III ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE

In this chapter, we will analyse the literature on IEPs under the following headings:

1. IEPs: Origins, Purposes and Critiques

2. Collaboration and Partnerships in Developing IEPs

3. Curriculum and IEPs

4. Assessment and IEPs

5. Conclusion

After reviewing the relevant literature, a brief summary of the main points will be presented in each section.

IEPs: Origins, Purposes and Critiques

The same IEP document is expected to serve educational, legal, planning, accountability and resource allocation purposes.
(Shaddock et al., 2009)

Origins and Types of IEPs

IEPs in the USA

IEPs had their origins in the USA some 35 years ago. In 1975, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) mandated an individualised education programme for every student with a disability. The IEP must include short and long-term goals for the student, as well as ensuring that the necessary services and resources were available to the student.

In 1990, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '90) reaffirmed PL 94-142's requirements of a free, appropriate public education through an individualised education program with related services and due process procedures.

Amendments to the Individual with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (IDEA '97) introduced a range of requirements, including:

- IEPs must be developed and implemented for every student with disabilities between the ages of three and 21
- IEPs must include consideration of how a child will be involved in the general curriculum.
- IEPs must be accessible to each teacher and service provider who is responsible for its implementation.
- At least one regular education teacher of the child must be on the IEP team if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment
- The IEP team shall consider such strategies as positive interventions for behaviour that interferes with learning, limited English proficiency, assistive technology needs, communication needs, and for children who are deaf or hearing impaired, communication in their language and communication mode.
- Parents are to be informed of their child's progress, at least as often as parents are informed of progress for their children who do not have disabilities. (US Department of Education, 2000). See also Patterson (2005).

For an elaboration of the legal requirements of the IEP process in IDEA '97, and case law addressing procedural and substantive violations, see Drasgow et al. (2001). Procedural violations included failure to notify parents with adequate time, failure to inform parents of procedural rights, failure to evaluate all areas of need, failure to revise the IEP after new

evaluation results and failure to conduct an annual review. Substantive violations included failure to integrate with non-disabled peers, failure to provide sufficient intensity of ABA programming, failure to demonstrate progress in the school programme, and failure to include research-proven practices for working with students with autism. Drasgow et al. concluded their review with the following statement:

> …procedural requirements provide the structure and process that compels both schools and parents to adhere to a single set of well-specified rules when designing a student's program.

> The substantive requirements of the IEP ensure that a student receives meaningful educational benefit. Schools are on solid legal ground when they design programs that are beneficial and when they collect objective data to document progress. Finally IEPs should be based on research-supported educational programs of proven effectiveness in educating students with disabilities. (pp. 372-373)

In a similar vein, Yell et al. (2003) reviewed the US IEP litigation regarding the education of students with autism spectrum disorders, which they describe as a 'high-stakes issue for parents and school districts' (p.182). Among the recommendations advanced by the authors were that school districts should (a) have professionals with expertise in the area of autism who are able to conduct comprehensive and individualised evaluations of such students, (b) adopt empirically validated instructional strategies and programmes, and (c) collect meaningful data to document both student progress toward IEP goals and the programme's efficacy.

The latest iteration of IDEA was signed into law in 2004 with the provisions of the Act coming into effect in July 2005. This reauthorisation was called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). With regard to IEPs, there were revisions to their content, which were now to include:

- A statement of the child's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance.
- A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals designed to:
  - meet the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and
  - meet each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability;
- For children with disabilities who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives;
- A description of:
  - How the child's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured; and
  - When periodic reports on the progress the child is making toward meeting the annual goals (such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards) will be provided.
- A statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to

the child, or on behalf of the child…

- A statement of any individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on State and district-wide assessments …; and if the IEP Team determines that the child must take an alternate assessment instead of a particular regular State or district-wide assessment of student achievement, a statement of why the child cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the child…

- Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect when the child turns 16, or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP Team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP must include:
    - Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills; and
    - The transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the child in reaching those goals. (US Department of Education, 2006)

Thus, as Rosas et al. (2009) point out, now the IEP in the US 'is no longer the exclusive responsibility of the special educator and the concentration has shifted to the development of the IEP for the student's success and implementation with the regular classroom' (p.48) – a point also made by Lee-Tarver (2006).

IEPs Outside the USA

IEPs are ubiquitous, virtually every country's special education provisions containing them as a key element to its provisions for students with special educational needs (Fish, 2008; Garten & Murdick, 2008; Killu, 2008; Pawley & Tennant, 2008; Shaddock et al., 2009). We will focus our review mainly on western countries.

United Kingdom. In the UK, the use of IEPs was introduced in the 1994 *Code of Practice* (DfEE, 1994) and reiterated in the revised *Code* in 2001 (DfES, 2001). The original *Code* comprised rules and guidelines that reflected the 1994 Education Act, and it has been slightly amended as a result of the subsequent legislation. As well as reflecting the influence of the US legislation, the progenitor to IEPs in the UK is to be found in the *Warnock Report* (DES, 1978). This landmark report referred to 'educational programmes for individual children' (Section 11.15, p.209) and emphasised the importance of planning long- and short-term learning objectives for children with special educational needs in a range of curricular domains.

The original *Code of Practice* (DfEE, 1994*)* sets out a five-stage framework for meeting children's special educational needs, involving parents at every stage. Stages 1-3 are school-based. In Stage 1, students with special educational needs (SEN) are formally recognised by the teacher and are helped in the classroom. In Stage 2, a Special Education Needs Coordinator is involved and an IEP is drawn up. In Stage 3, the school will normally look for some outside support, for example from educational psychologists and other relevant specialists. Stage 4 is a transitional stage where the LEA considers the need for, and if appropriate arranges, a multi-agency assessment of a child's SEN. At stage 5, the LEA considers the need for a Statement of SEN, in addition to an IEP, and, if appropriate, draws

up a Statement and arranges, monitors and reviews provision for the child.

According to the *Code of Practice*, an IEP normally lasts for a term and is then reviewed, although this is subject to variation across schools. A typical plan would contain: educational targets, arrangements for teaching support in order to attain the targets, a note of any particular materials to be used and how the mainstream curriculum is to be adapted to suit the child.

This guidance also identified groups of students who were at particular risk of social exclusion introducing a framework of Pastoral Support Programmes (PSPs). This was closely related to IEPs, with both sharing the same problem-solving focus of assessment informing intervention.

The following summary of key points relating to IEPs is adapted from a more detailed description presented in a 2009 *Toolkit*, which is designed to be read in conjunction with the *Code* (DFES, 2009):

- The IEP is a planning, teaching and reviewing tool that should underpin the process of planning intervention for individual pupils with SEN.
- It should set out 'what', 'how', and 'how often' particular knowledge, understanding and skills should be taught through additional or different activities from those provided for all pupils through the differentiated curriculum.
- It is a structured planning document detailing the differentiated steps and teaching requirements needed to help the student achieve identified targets.
- It should focus on up to three or four key individual targets set to help meet the individual pupil's needs and particular priorities.
- It should include information about the short-term targets set for or by the student, the teaching strategies to be used, the provision to be put in place, when the plan is to be reviewed, success and/or exit criteria, and outcomes (to be recorded when the IEP is reviewed).

Scotland. More recently, in Scotland, IEPs were couched in terms of the Scottish Executive's raising standards programme (Riddell, 2005). Riddell notes that guidance issued in 1999 indicated to schools that IEPs should be formulated for all students in special schools and units, children with Records of Needs (similar to the Statements of Needs in England and Wales) in mainstream schools and those receiving 'significant planned intervention'. All told, some 4% of the school population had IEPs (compared with 12% in the US). IEPs were to include long and short-term targets, and a level of 80% success in achieving targets should be aimed for. According to Riddell, in Scotland, work to establish a suitable curriculum for pupils with additional support needs has been marked by, on the one hand, a desire to ensure the entitlement of those pupils within a common curriculum framework whilst, on the other hand, ensuring appropriate and targeted support for individual pupils, surely a challenge facing all countries.

Australia. All states in Australia have IEPs or an equivalent. Thus, Victoria provides schools with a 'suggested' IEP proforma, but recognizes that they may use existing proformas, such as those for 'Managed Individual Pathways', 'Literacy and Numeracy Plans' or 'Programs for Students with Disabilities' (Victoria Department of Education &Training, 2010). South Australia employs a 'Negotiated Education Plan' (formerly known as a 'Negotiated

Curriculum Plan (Horrocks, 2001)), which emphasises supporting access, participation and achievement in the curriculum for students with disabilities (South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services, 2010). Queensland has had IEPs but an 'Educational Adjustment Program' (EAP) is replacing these, The EAP is a process for identifying and responding to the educational needs of students with disabilities, by making adjustments to enable them to access the curriculum, achieve curriculum outcomes and participate in school life (Queensland Department of Education and Training, 2006). ACT has 'Individual Learning Plans' in Public schools and IEPs in Catholic and Independent schools (Shaddock et al., 2009). Tasmania and Western Australia and Northern Territory all have Individual Education Plans (or Programs).

Europe. Most countries in Europe have IEPs. For example, in *Ireland,* the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004 provides for a future statutory framework for the preparation and implementation of IEPs, although they had been widely used before that date (National Council for Special Education, 2006). As recorded in a publication from the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2010), at least the following countries employ IEPs: *Finland, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Sweden, Netherlands, Austria, Belgium*, and *Malta*. Some of these countries' arrangements bear some elaboration. Thus, *Finland* has two kinds of plans: a Learning Plan and an IEP. The two are very similar in their structure and content, but the IEP is the more official document and applies only to those with official SEN status. The Learning Plan, on the other hand, is designed to support students to learn and make it easier for a teacher to differentiate lessons. It can be developed for any student, including immigrant students or gifted students.

Switzerland employs an approach to the development of IEPs based on the International Classification of Functioning model of the World Health Organisation. *Sweden* goes further than any other country studied in the present review. As from 2006, every student in the compulsory school has had an IEP, which describes their progress toward curricula goals and what support is to be given. Twice a year, school staff meet with individual students and their parents to assess progress and to set short- and long-term goals.

The dispersal of IEP policies and practices in Europe is further illustrated by their use in *Romania*, where they are referred to as 'Personalised Intervention Programmes', and which have been operating since 2001-02. These have the same basic components as IEPs used in the US, but they do not involve parents' cooperation (Walker, 2010).

Japan. The closest Japan comes to an IEP is what it refers to as 'Supervisory Plans' in which the aims and content 'shall be clarified based on accurate understanding of such factors as the state of each child's disability and level of development…' Such plans shall ' Establish supervisory aims from short- and long-term perspectives for each child and pupil, and progressively adopt supervisory content in order to achieve those' etc. (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, nd).

Canada. Three provinces suffice to illustrate Canadian provinces' employment of IEPs: British Columbia, Ontario, and Prince Edward Island all employ them but, as McLaughlin & Jordan (2005) point out, they do not carry the force of law as in the US.

Typical of IEP requirements in Canada (indeed in most jurisdictions around the world) are the standards and guidelines published by the Prince Edward Island Department of Education Student Services (2005). These are as follows:

- Individualized educational planning is a process by which educators support personnel and parents to collaborate to ensure that students' needs are addressed in a systematic manner.

- The individualized educational planning process provides a mechanism to ensure that an IEP is developed and implemented through a structured format that clearly outlines the steps to be followed.

- The individualized educational planning process provides a framework for decision-making that is informed by a clear understanding of the student's present level of performance.

- Individualized educational planning is initiated for students whose programs vary significantly from the prescribed curriculum and/or who have special educational, medical, behavioural, and/or physical needs.

- The individualized educational planning process relies on information collected from a range of informal and formal assessments.

- The individualized educational planning process is strengthened by the authentic and continued involvement of parents at all stages of planning, development and implementation.

- The individualized planning process mandates the formation of a collaborative individual education planning team when the result of the formal referral process indicates the need for individualized programming.

- The individual education planning team core members include a school administrator, resource/special education teacher, classroom/subject teacher(s), parent(s), and student as appropriate.

- Individual education planning team members should be chosen based on their ability to provide essential information and/or necessary support for the student's individualized program.

- The individual education planning team is responsible for formally designating an educator to serve as coordinator for the development and implementation of the individualized education plan.

- The individual educational planning team has the responsibility to identify and prioritize goals and objectives based on the student's assessed strengths, needs, and interests.

- Individual education plan goals and objectives developed during the individualized educational planning process must be clearly stated, student specific, observable and measurable.

- The individual education plan must include a clear statement on how a wide variety of methods will be used to assess and evaluate the student's progress on the goals and objectives.

- The individual education planning process must allow for updating as required to meet the student's changing needs and must include, as a minimum, an annual formal review date.

- The individualized education plan needs to reflect decisions regarding transition planning across all grades and levels of schooling.

- The individualized education plan, for students who are in their grade nine year, must

include long term goals and objectives, based on current assessments, that reflect knowledge and skills that students will need at the end of their three years of senior high school, to transition from school to the community

Behaviour Intervention Plans

In the US, a major variant of the IEP is the 'Behavior Intervention Plan '(BIP), with its reliance on 'Functional Behavior Assessment' (FBA). BIPs came into force in the US with the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA, and were reiterated in the 2004 IDEIA. As described by Killu (2008) and Etscheidt (2006), BIPs consider the relationship between student learning and any behaviour problems they manifest that may impede their classroom performance or that of other students. A point of distinction between IEPs and BIPs is that the latter must not only focus on individuals, but must also address school-wide issues that serve as contextual factors that may contribute to the behavioural problems (Killu, 2008). For a description of school-wide positive behavioural support, see Mitchell (2008) and for how IEPs can be used as an essential element of individual support within school-wide positive behavioural support, see Riffel & Turnbull (nd).

According to Etschedt (2006), effective BIPs have five characteristics: (a) they are developed when behaviour interferes with a student's learning, (b) they are based on assessment data, (c) they are individualized, (d) they include positive behavioural interventions, and (e) they are implemented as planned and monitored. As asserted by Yell & Katsiyannis (2000),

> FBAs and BIPs, properly conducted and developed, will result in educational programming that does not rely on punitive reductive procedures to change behavior but, rather, will develop skill-based programming designed to improve the lives of students with problem behaviors (p.161).

Unlike the more general IEP, there is a good, but 'not overwhelming', research base indicating the effectiveness of BIPs, according to Maag & Katsiyannis, (2006, p.349). In a review of the literature on the use of 'behaviour support plans' - sometimes used to refer to BIPs - Safran & Oswald (2003) concluded that it demonstrated promising but qualified results. They drew attention to two problems: a lack of generalization beyond the settings in which the students received the intervention and multiple treatment components made it difficult to determine which were responsible for any changes in behaviours. A specific example of research is provided by Noell et al. (2002) in their examination of general education teachers' implementation of BIPs for eight elementary school students referred because of disruptive classroom behaviours. The teachers rated the students' behaviour as changing in the desired direction, a finding confirmed by independent observers.

Taken alone, FBA has a substantial research base, as outlined, for example, by Mitchell (2008).

Transition Plans

In education, students typically undergo several transitions: from early childhood education to school, from one school sector to another, from school to post-school settings and, in the case of students with special educational needs, from special to regular education and vice versa. In this section of our review, we will focus on the school to post-school settings.

Both IDEA 1997 in the US and the Code of Practice for students with special educational

needs in England and Wales (DfEE, 1994; DfES, 2001) include mandated individualised transition planning for such students who are moving from school to adult life. Transition planning is also included in the IEP guidelines used in Ireland (National Council for Special Education, 2006), Scotland (which refers to a 'future record of needs'), Canada (see the Prince Edward Island IEP guidelines summarised earlier in this section), Europe in general (Soriano, 2006), and New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 1998). With respect to New Zealand, the National Administration Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2010) also makes reference to transition planning (although not specifically to Transition Plans) when it requires schools to

> provide appropriate career education and guidance for all students in year 7 and above, with a particular emphasis on specific career guidance for those students who have been identified by the school as being at risk of leaving school unprepared for the transition to the workplace or further education/training (p.2).

In the US, transition plans commence at the age of 16, whereas in England and Wales they begin when the student reaches 14, at which time annual reviews are re-named transition reviews (see Sections 21 and 22 of the Education Act 1996).

The purpose of IEPs with a specific focus on transition is to make sure that the last few years of schooling provide students with special educational needs with the instruction necessary to prepare them for leaving school with the skills they will need to make a successful transition to post-school life.

Key components of effective transition planning are considered to be: individualised planning; active involvement of student and family members; interagency collaboration; and transition-focused instruction (Clark, 2000; Katsiyannis & Zhang, 2001; Morningstar & Matua, 2003). Regarding transition-focused instruction, a major review of studies of transition from school to work for students with disabilities (Phelps & Hanley-Maxwell, 1997) found that the two factors most closely correlated with the likelihood of finding employment were having followed a vocationally oriented curriculum in the last few years of secondary school and having participated in work experience while at school. However, Morningstar & Matua (2003) and Cummings et al. (2000) have found that schools focus almost exclusively on academic achievement rather than the vocational, interpersonal and life skills required for successful transition to adult life.

Regarding student involvement Thoma et al. (2001) studied student involvement in transition planning during their final year at high school for eight students with moderate, severe or multiple disabilities. The authors reported that those with intellectual disabilities were not involved in preparations for transition meetings and, although they attended these meetings, they had no particular role in the process. Staff tended to speak about rather than with students and specified outcomes had little relevance to student goals.

Collet-Klingenberg (1998) examined transition practices for ten students with learning disabilities attending a special education secondary school. Low levels of parental and student involvement in planning and school-related activities were found. Parents and students often attended IEP meetings but adopted passive roles rather than actively contributing to the process. Parents and students seemed to lack knowledge about professional roles and the IEP process and teachers usually made decisions about goals. It was also found that IEPS focused almost exclusively on academic goals with no obvious

connection identified between goals and transition outcomes. It was suggested that there is a need to examine the connection between teaching practice, student learning experiences and long-term post-school outcomes. In addition, Collet-Klingenberg identified a need to conduct follow-up studies on students who had moved on to adult life. She also suggested that educators should develop ways to actively engage parents and students in their children's education and establish school and community transition teams.

Lehmann et al. (1999) evaluated the transition element of IEPs of 94 high school students aged between 18 and 21 years who had learning disabilities, mild intellectual disability, moderate intellectual disability and emotional/behavioural disorders. Many transition goals were vague and there was very limited involvement of other adult service providers in the transition planning process. Vocational training and integrated employment were the most commonly cited goals, with less attention being given to opportunities for further education or community participation. The authors concluded that educators viewed the transition process as an administrative task to be completed rather than an opportunity for quality planning. They also expressed concern that students were usually not actively involved in transition planning processes and suggested that teachers need further training on transitional IEPs. In conclusion, it was found that transition elements of IEPs lacked many of the essential aspects of best practices. This supported the conclusions of the study by Grigal et al. (1997), who evaluated the IEPs of 94 high school students with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 21.

Purposes of Individual Education Plans

In their review of special education in Australia's ACT, Shaddock et al. (2009) noted that IEPs 'tend to serve multiple roles and this could be part of their problem' (p.69) They go on to point out that the same IEP document 'is expected to serve educational, legal, planning, accountability and resource allocation purposes' (ibid.). In the US, for example, the President's Commission (2002) observed that many parents, teachers and educational administrators described IEPs as being 'not actually designed or used for individualized education; instead they are focused on legal protection and compliance with regulatory processes' (p.16). The Commission goes on to comment that 'the original concept of IEPs as an instructional framework…has been lost to the greater need to document legal and procedural compliance' (pp.16-17). This concern has been repeated in New Zealand, where Thomson & Rowan (1996) reported that teachers often viewed IEPs as an administrative task, rather than as a tool to develop more effective instruction and learning

Ensuring that IEPs serve all their other roles without distorting the primacy of acting as an educational planning document is a challenge facing educational policy makers. It may well be that IEPs should not be expected to serve so many diverse purposes and that their focus should be exclusively on generating improved learning for students with special educational needs.

In the remainder of this section, three purposes commonly assigned to IEPs, which may conflict with their educational planning role, will be summarized: accountability, resource-seeking and placement decisions.

Accountability

In a comprehensive review of the literature on IEPs, UK researchers, Millward et al. (2002)

point out how IEPs have become a mechanism for ensuring accountability within the field of special needs education. They noted that the use of targets within IEPs provided a means of measuring the performance of special education as a system and the effectiveness of its component parts, in particular whether resources have been used appropriately to achieve stated objectives. Indeed, when IEPs were introduced to Britain within the framework of the 1994 *Code of Practice* (DFE, 1994), it was emphasised that they were designed to assure accountability through compliance to the other prescriptions in the *Code* (Tod, 1999). However, as pointed out by Millward et al. (2002), systems were not developed to systematically collate and analyse data on the achievement of standards. 'As a result of this perceived ineffectiveness of aggregating individualised targets', they claim, 'the focus of new accountability initiates became one of including standards for students with special needs in states' wider standards-setting programmes' (see later section of the current review).

Resource-seeking focus

As noted by Tod et al. (1998), in the UK, the IEP procedure became at risk of being used as an instrument for securing increased resources via 'evident failure' – a kind of 'perverse incentive', according to the authors. Likewise, in Australia, Pearce (2008) noted that for some schools, IEPs were seen as a means of gaining additional funding for students with disabilities. This distortion of the purposes of IEPs has been noted in New Zealand, too, the Ministry of Education (1998) observing that 'many people have come to see it as a document to access teacher aide hours and resources' (p.2). Nevertheless, the Ministry then goes on to describe how IEPs are intended to support planning for students who have been identified as requiring support in the various Special Education 2000 initiatives, including the then Ongoing Resourcing Scheme. While it seems that the intention was to develop IEPs after the identification or verification process had been completed, it is fairly obvious that an IEP would be used as part of the process to obtain access to the resources in the first place.

Placement decisions

According to an OECD report (OECD, 1999), one of the main functions of IEPs is that of 'ensuring that only children really requiring special schooling would be so placed' (p.23). It does not take much imagination to see how this function could become distorted by schools seeking to maintain the highest possible 'standards' by having students with special educational needs placed outside any testing regime that might negatively effect the school's performance profiles. An equally perverse outcome that works in the opposite direction can be found in Quebec, where students with IEPs are counted twice when assessing the size of the school's roll (Dufresne, 2003).

Critiques of Assumptions Underlying Individual Education Plans

Several writers have stood back from the minutiae of IEPs and have critically examined the assumptions that underpin them. Three main criticisms have been advanced: the undue influence of behavioural psychology on IEPs, the over-emphasis on the individual, and the unproven efficacy of IEPs.

Undue influence of behavioural psychology

Firstly, some writers have criticised the behavioural model that greatly influenced IEPs when they were first proposed and which is still present (Frankl, 2005). Relying heavily on the writings of Poplin (1985 and 1988) Millward et al. (2002) noted that the behavioural model was written into the entire PL94-142 in the US. They noted that it also underpinned the Warnock Report in the UK. In terms of IEPs, 'behavioural psychology suggests that, to facilitate learning, a particular task must be broken down into a number of component parts. A pupil's learning can then be charted as each successive step is achieved.' Millward et al. are critical of this reductionist view of learning and claim that it is inimical to the principles of inclusive education. They admit, however, that the focus on objectives that goes with IEPs fits very well with concerns about regulating special education and with the recent emphasis on educational accountability.

In the New Zealand context, Moltzen (2000) rather sanguinely notes that 'uncritical adherence to behavioural principles is rarely a feature of IEPs in New Zealand today' (p.135). In fact, he speculates that the ideas associated with this theory are more likely to have been uncritically rejected than blindly accepted behavioural approaches to learning (ibid.).

Over-emphasis on the individual

IEPs are, of course, almost exclusively concerned with the individual learner. Some writers have criticized this perspective, arguing it runs counter the philosophy of inclusive education. Thus, Shaddock et al. (2009) argue that 'a high degree of focus on individualised programs for a few individuals appears incompatible with the way teaching and learning occurs in schools – to groups of students working on a class program that is adapted where necessary' (pp.68-69). Elsewhere, he asks, 'How do we reconcile the individualised planning model with school-based curriculum and with approaches that focus on group instruction, particularly in a climate that favours inclusion?' (Shaddock, 2002, p.197). An allied argument is that the IEP is essentially premised on the medical model, in which the pathology is identified in the student and the cure resides with the professionals (Macartney, 2009). We will return to the issue of the individual vis-à-vis the group later, when we address the intersection of IEPs with curricula and assessment.

Unproven efficacy

In their recent review of the IEP literature, Shaddock et al. (2009) arrived at the pessimistic conclusion that 'although the logic and purposes of individual plans appear sound, there has been very little research on their effectiveness for improving student learning outcomes' (p.68). On the basis of our own review of over 260 IEP items, we rather reluctantly concur with this finding although, as noted earlier, Behavior Intervention Plans have a good, but not overwhelming, research base. In fact, only one piece of research approached the issue of efficacy of IEPs and it was not a strong source of evidence. This was a survey of opinions carried out in Scotland by Riddell et al. (2002) in which the researchers employed questionnaires and interviews to sample the opinions of policy makers, administrators and professionals in special and mainstream schools. They found that while there was a measure of agreement that there was a link between IEPs and raising attainment, there was no shared understanding about the nature of that link.

Summary

The literature indicates the following:

1. IEPs had their origins in the USA in the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) and have been re-affirmed in IDEA legislation ever since.

2. More recently, the focus in the US has shifted to the development of the IEP for implementation in regular classrooms.

3. IEPs are ubiquitous, virtually every country's special education provisions containing them as a key element to its provisions for students with special educational needs.

4. In different countries, IEPs are variously referred to as 'Negotiated Education Plans', 'Educational Adjustment Programs', 'Individual Learning Plans', 'Learning Plans', 'Personalised Intervention Programmes', and 'Supervisory Plans'.

5. Since 1997, the US has employed 'Behavior Intervention Plans' (BIPs) in addition to IEPs. These are usually accompanied by 'Functional Behavior Assessment' (FBA).

6. Having IEPs specifically focused on transition for students with SEN in their last few years of schooling is required in all countries where IEPs are in use

7. The literature suggests that key components of transition planning are individualized planning, active involvement of student and family members, interagency collaboration, and transition-focused instruction.

8. Research has found that transition practices often exhibit flaws in the planning process, have low levels of student and family involvement, provide little evidence of interagency collaboration, and tend to focus on academic rather than vocational goals.

9. IEPs suffer from having multiple purposes ascribed to them, the same IEP document frequently being expected to serve educational, legal, planning, accountability, placement, and resource allocation purposes.

10. Ensuring that IEPs serve all their other roles without distorting the primacy of acting as an educational planning document is a challenge facing educational policy makers.

11. In addition to problems arising from the multiple purposes ascribed to them, three main criticisms of IEPs have been advanced: the undue influence of behavioural psychology, the over-emphasis on the individual, and their unproven efficacy.

12. However, Behavior Intervention Plans have a good, but not overwhelming, research base

Collaboration and Partnerships in Developing IEPs

> *Kotahi te kohao*   *There is but one eye*
> *O te ngira*   *of the needle*
> *E Kahuna ai*   *Through which passes*
> *Te miro ma*   *The white thread*
> *Te Miro pango* *The black thread*
> *Te miro Whero* *The red thread*
>
> *Attributed to the Māori King Potatau*

Introduction

In all jurisdictions where IEPs are employed, they are premised on an assumption of collaboration and partnerships among a range of participants, usually involving some combination of special education teachers, general education teachers (in the case of inclusive education settings), parents/caregivers, students with special educational needs, SENCos or their equivalents, specialists, teachers' aides or assistants, and community agencies.

As defined by Idol et al. (1994), collaboration can be defined as a process that enables groups of people with diverse expertise to combine their resources to generate solutions to problems over a period of time. As Mitchell (2008) emphasises, educating students with special educational needs requires collaboration among many people; indeed, he argues, there are few areas of education that call upon so much collaboration and teamwork. Mitchell goes on to summarise the most important things to take into account in collaborative arrangements, all of which are pertinent to the IEP process:

- Establish clear common goals for the collaboration.
- Define respective roles and who is accountable for what, but accept joint responsibility for the decisions and their outcomes.
- Take a problem-solving approach – with a sense that all those in the collaborative arrangement share ownership of the problem and its solution.
- Establish an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect for each other's expertise.
- Be willing to learn from others.
- Aim for consensus decision-making.
- Ask for and give immediate and objective feedback to others in a non-threatening and non-judgemental manner.
- Give credit to others for their ideas and accomplishments.
- Develop procedures for resolving conflicts and manage these processes skilfully. Better still, anticipate possible conflicts and take steps to avoid them as far as possible. This is not to say that disagreements can or even should be avoided.

Collaboration is a challenge that is not always successfully achieved, particularly among professionals who spend much of their time working in isolation in their classrooms or clinics and for parents for whom the process may be well outside their comfort zones. As we shall see in this section, establishing and maintaining collaborative relationships raises issues to do with power, responsibility, role definition, respect and trust (Clark, 2000; Davis, 2008; Lytle & Bordin, 2001; Rodger, 1995). Difficult it may be, but as Clark (2000) points out,

> Collaborative problem-solving and decision-making focused on teaching and learning for students with disabilities have the potential to create fundamental change in the ways that teachers teach and students learn. (p.66)

In the remainder of this section, we will review the literature relating to the following topics:

- Equity, reciprocity and power in IEPs
- Culture and IEPs
- Teachers' participation in IEPs
- Parents' participation in IEPs
- Students' participation in IEPs
- SENCos' participation in IEPs
- Identifying and overcoming barriers to collaboration

Equity, Reciprocity and Power

This section describes the values of equity, reciprocity and power that underpin the original aims of IEPs. The section begins with a description of the development of IEPs in the US. The development of IEPs in New Zealand is discussed in the second part. In New Zealand the aims of equity, reciprocity and power are captured in the focus on "partnership" between families and schools.

Equity, Reciprocity and Power in the US Context

Skrtic (1991) outlines in detail the aims and values underpinning the development of the legislation requiring IEPS. An explicit aim of the *Education for all Handicapped Children* Act (1975) was to achieve a balance of power between parents and professionals. The spirit of the law is collaboration, mutual respect for the contributions for all working with a particular student, and an emphasis on valuing the knowledge that parents bring to the relationship. Unfortunately this results in a clash of values, the spirit of collaboration is pitted against the '…value orientation of the professional bureaucracy in every way, given that it is a performance organization in which individual professionals work alone to perfect standard programs' (p.172). The clash of values is captured within and symbolized by the ceremony of the IEP meeting. Twenty years later, Skrtic (2010) argues that IEPs continue to be 'more symbolic and ceremonial than real' and do not 'actualise the intent of the law.' Turnbull takes this argument further, arguing that the ceremony of the IEP reifies professional power, it 'imbues those with power with even more power.'

In 1990 Smith called for a vigorous review of the aims and processes of the IEP. Schools and families both struggle when relationships become tense. Murray (2000) writing from a parental perspective argues that

… the relationship between parents of disabled children with learning difficulties and educational professionals is one which is fraught with issues of social conditioning and power. The word partnership has been used and misused within this context to such an extent that it now carries little real meaning (p.695).

Fine (1993) and Vincent and Tomlinson (1997) have strongly critiqued this notion of partnership, arguing that the effect is that, rather than resulting in a sharing of power, parents are invited to share the blame for the continued failure of policy and of individual schools to really improve the lives and outcomes of students with disabilities.

Beyond the US context, similar problems are found in developing collaborative relationships between parents and educators. Stroggilos and Xanthacou (2006) reported that in both the UK and in Greece, IEPs were not being used as a collaborative tool between parents, teachers and other educational professionals.

"Partnership" in the New Zealand Context

"Partnership" is used in various contexts in the policy environment in Aotearoa/ New Zealand (Morton & Gibson, 2003). These include:

the Treaty Principle,

the need for consultation with the NZ community as a process on all legislative and policy changes, reviews and implementation,

the need to directly engage with specific communities on issues with specific impact on their lives

the shared decision making occurring at a practice level between government agencies and individuals or families.

The remainder of this section reviews the aims and uses of partnership in the New Zealand experience of schools and families working together to support the learning of students with special educational needs.

Meanings of "partnership": The Ministry's uses of "partnership" in publications about Special Education 2000

The publications on the introduction, implementation, and refinement of Special Education 2000 (SE2000) show that "partnership" has been used in two ways. "Partnership" has been constructed both as a *means* or *process* by which successful educational outcomes can be achieved, and as an *outcome* in its own right. Schools should be developing effective partnerships with parents, caregivers and whänau: such partnerships are the essential means by which to deliver good education to children with special needs. Timperley and Robinson (2002, pp.11) have also looked at what they term the two "rationales" of partnership. The first rationale is to further a policy agenda of increased social democracy. The second rationale is more functional – increasing partnership will increase student achievement. They argue that it is necessary to distinguish between these rationales, because '… the rationales become the criteria against which their respective adherents evaluate the processes and outcomes of partnership' (p.11).

In the writing about partnership and the implementation of SE2000, more often than not these two meanings are conflated, as the following excerpts show. In the February 1998 newsletter *Special Education 2000* there were a number of references to the school-parent relationship, and parents rights to be involved in a number of decisions. On the front page under the headline 'What's Happening in Term One' a number of bullet points are listed, including

> Principals and boards of trustees, in consultation with parents/caregivers, decide allocation of Special Education Grant

> Principals, teachers, parent/caregivers and fundholders decide allocation of funding for Ongoing Resourcing Scheme students for Term 2

In a front-page sidebar titled 'Letter to Parents/Caregivers' readers were told that

> *Special Education 2000* is about providing substantially more funding for children with special education needs. This nation-wide programme is to make sure all these children have access to better learning opportunities, wherever they may be.

> For this to happen, *Special Education 2000* depends on schools working with parents and caregivers to decide how the special education funds are to be spent to meet the needs of individual children. Your child may be eligible for direct funding through the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme. If not, there are four other initiatives in *Special Education 2000,* including the Special Education Grant, that will provide learning opportunities for your child. There may also be special education teachers in your area who can help. Contact your school and work with them to see how your child will benefit from the new funding.

The provision and use of either individually targeted funding (Ongoing Resourcing scheme – ORS) or bulk funding (the Special Education Grant – SEG) were signalled as areas where parents could expect to participate with schools in decision-making. Inside the document under the heading '4. Special Education Grant' readers are again told that

> Schools will need to work with parents/caregivers on how this fund should be spent to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students with moderate to high special needs.

A further sidebar is titled 'Schools and Parents/Caregivers – The Key Relationship.' This material also emphasises shared decision-making for allocating funding for both the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) and the Special Education Grant (SEG):

> A fundamental principle behind Special Education 2000 is that schools and parents/caregivers together are best placed to decide how the special education needs of individual students should be met. Achieving this depends on close constructive relationships to overcome barriers to students' learning.

> During Term 1 decisions for allocating funding for Ongoing Resource Scheme students should be made by schools, parents/caregivers and fundholders working together. This may be during a regular IEP or special meeting. Schools should consider encouraging parents/caregivers to bring a friend or advocate if they feel they would like support.

Schools should also involve parents/caregivers in the allocation of the Special Education Grant. Funding is now provided to schools rather than centrally because it is believed that schools and parents/caregivers are best able to make resourcing decisions about their students. Such decisions are more likely to be understood and supported if carried out with full consultation.

The last section of the publication is called 'Questions and Answers' setting out 10 possible queries. The question/answer relevant to this chapter is:

What do parents do if they feel their child is not being fairly resourced from the Special Education Grant?

The Special Education Grant is provided to schools so they can help students with moderate to high special education needs (not resourced through other *Special Education 2000* initiatives). Boards of trustees have a responsibility to ensure that the grant is used for this purpose. The Education Review Office will review how schools use the Special Education Grant as part of its regular programme.

Parents may wish to discuss with the school how this grant is being used to meet their child's needs. Any questions should be discussed with the principal and the board of trustees. If necessary the local Ministry of Education Management Centre could then be contacted.

From its earliest dissemination, *SE2000* set clear expectations that parents/caregivers could and should be involved in consultation and decision-making about the allocation of both ORS and SEG funds. With ORS, these decisions might take place as part of the IEP. Boards of trustees could expect to be held accountable by parents and by ERO for the appropriate use of SEG in particular.

Considering partnership as an outcome, Timperley and Robinson (2002) review literature that shows that

… partnership is employed to advance a political and social policy agenda of enhancing democratic participation and responsiveness. Partnership is seen as a new form of governance which provides an alternative to marketisation or paternalistic bureaucracies by bringing together a range of providers and interest groups to tackle intransigent issues (p.10).

The providers and interest groups in SE2000 are schools and parents respectively. The intransigent issue being tackled is the use of limited financial resources to meet the learning needs of students with disabilities.

The Update for Schools Issue 9 (October 1999), and Update for Families Issue 3 (October 1999), included a brochure setting out the Special Education Policy Guidelines:

The brochure enclosed with this update is a revised version of the guidelines first published in 1995 by the National Advisory Committee on Special Education. It is an important document as it sets out the overriding principles of special education in New Zealand. It is the umbrella document from which the Special Education 2000 policy has been developed.

Of particular interest to this paper is the principle of partnership as described in the Special *Education Policy Guidelines:*

4.   Partnership between parents and education providers is essential in overcoming barriers to learning.

This principle will be visible in practice when:

4.1   information about barriers to learning and the provision of resources is shared between parents and education providers;

4.2   full information is provided to learners and parents to enable them to make sound educational choices and to participate fully in the enrolment, assessment, planning and programming, placement and monitoring of the learner's progress;

4.3   both education providers and parents share in the responsibility for ensuring maximum benefit from the resource;

4.4   parents are able to have placement and other decisions reviewed;

4.5   parents may choose to be supported by an advocate in assessment, planning, placement, review and appeal processes;

4.6   schools and early childhood services consult with parents of learners with special needs when recruiting and appointing special education staff.

In *Sharpening the Focus Issue 6* (May 2001), Boards of Trustees, principals and teachers are reminded of their responsibilities to meet the requirements of *NAG 1*. The school should be 'working in partnership with parents' as they 'consider national expectations and then set realistic goals for all students, including those with special needs' (pp. 2-3). At the end of 2001 a collection of 3 booklets on *Meeting Special Education Needs at School* was released. There is a booklet for Boards of Trustees, one for parents, and one for schools. In a two-page summary of *Information to Boards of Trustees*, partnership is again highlighted as fundamental to best practice. The summary states

Quality partnerships between boards, schools, specialists, parents, caregivers and families/ whänau will:

o   Provide strong platform for meeting special education needs for readily resolving any issues as they arise [sic].
o   Promote relationship building.
o   Encourage open consultation and communication.
o   Model mutual respect and provision of feedback without fear of repercussion.

Debates about the meanings of partnership precede the development and implementation of SE2000. This section summarises some of the literature on parent-professional partnership.

Parent-professional partnership has different meanings for parents than for professionals, and appears to change in different contexts, particularly in the shift from early childhood/early intervention to primary school. By school age, most discussion seems to focus around partnership in the context of the Individualised Education Plan (IEP) process, with recommendations for a successful IEP process focussing on managing relationships prior to

and during IEP meetings. Timperley and Robinson (2002) review literature that is critical of oversimplification 'partnership', confusing it with 'participation.'

Evaluation of partnership in the context of SE2000

Wylie (2002, p.1) describes the results of her evaluation of the Special Education 2000 policy:

> One of its major themes was the fragmentation of responsibilities and provision, which undermined the policy's intentions to improve educational experiences and outcomes for students with special needs.

In a three-year evaluation of SE2000, one of the research questions explored the quality of the relationships between schools and families in each of three phases of the evaluation (Bourke et al., 2002). The study found that

- One of the factors that contributed to a sense of a good relationship was a feeling that communication was open and information shared.
- Parents were much more likely than schools to think that they should be involved in decisions about funding. Parents were sometimes suspicious about the equitable allocation of funding, and whether or not actual allocated funding was being spent on their child. Funding, whether satisfactory or contested, was pivotal to the sense of partnership.
- Expectations about parental involvement seemed to be worked out on the run, rather than at the beginning of the relationship between school and home.

Strategies for enhancing the relationships between parents and schools are reported in sections 2.5 and 2.8.

Culture and IEPs

International literature

Reviews of literature and empirical studies point to the continuing gulf between schools and those families whose cultures differ from their children's school (Calicott, 2003; Hanson et al, 1990; Harry, Allen & McLaughlin, 1995; Kalyanpur & Harry, 1997; Robinson & Rathbone; Thorp, 1997; Trainor, 2010; Valenzuela & Martin, 2005; Zhang & Bennett, 2003; Zionts & Zionts, 2003).

Harry et al. (1995) examined the disjuncture between school and home cultures. These authors considered the impact of ongoing misunderstandings and miscommunication to be a major concern. These authors state 'The absence of meaningful communication throughout the assessment and placement process … was a source of much confusion and distress for families' (p.373). They also concluded that even though professionals may act according to the (US) legal requirements for parental involvement, the actions of these professionals continue to tell parents that parental engagement and involvement is not a high priority. Citing a 1992 study by Harry, Harry et al. (1995) described three specific recommendations by parents to improve participation in what are described a *placement meetings*. These suggestions may also be appropriate to IEP meetings that take place after placement. The first is that before any meeting, parents should be told if there are issues that will need their particular input. Second, parents should be included in the assessment process. Finally, there should be a specific agenda item calling for parents to describe their child's needs and their progress.

Summarising her review of the literature on home-school interactions, Trainor (2010) noted 'linguistic differences, beliefs about disability, and deference to educators as experts may affect Asian American and Latino parents' approach to IEP meetings and other home–school interactions' (p.136). Trainor noted that some studies have suggested that a solution to improving parent participation in their child's education, including participation in IEPs, lies in parent education (e.g. parent advocacy training), or introducing parents to support groups that share the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their families.

An alternative framing of the problem, and hence the solution, is characterised in the analysis undertaken by Kalyanpur, Harry & Skrtic (2000). These authors argued

> In trying to assess whether professional implementation or family circumstances contribute to a lack of collaboration, it is easy to overlook the fact that both professionals and parents operate within a cultural context and that, in fact, there are certain features of the culture, or 'contextual barriers', that impede the collaborative process; poor implementation and logistical constraints are merely outcomes (p.120).

Trainor (2010) describes some of these contextual differences. A key difference is that many families do not concur with or conform to the principle of normalisation.

> This lack of conformity among parents may account in part for variation in approaches that parents use when they interact with teachers and administrators. For example, whereas parents from low socioeconomic backgrounds valued education in ways similar to their middle- and upper-class counterparts, they tended to be more likely to leave the responsibility of educational decision-making up to teachers and rely on kinship

connections to solve school-related problems. Furthermore, linguistic differences, beliefs about disability, and deference to educators as experts may affect Asian American and Latino parents' approach to IEP meetings and other home–school interactions (p.136).

The normalization principle is one of the cultural assumptions built into the US legal mandate for parental participation. Other assumptions include individualism and the prioritising of individual rights over community values (Robinson & Rathbone, 1999; Valenzuela & Martin, 2005). Kalyanpur et al. (1995) suggest that it is not sufficient to examine the problems of culturally and linguistically diverse families. There is also a need to bring into the open and examine the assumptions and values embedded in the professional practices of schools and related education supports. The IEP process is one example of the potential for dominant or privileged cultural norms and practices to ignore these differences. The notion of 'diverse families' can imply there is an accepted norm that remains unexamined in both content and consequences.

Māori approaches

We were unable to find any documented examples of a Māori approach to IEP planning. However, we did find descriptions of approaches to Māori teaching and learning, as well as relationships between home and school, which potentially have important implications for IEP planning with Māori families.

Two large-scale projects in New Zealand focussed specifically on the experiences of Māori tamariki and whānau. The three year monitoring and evaluation of Special Education 2000 (SE2000) (Bourke et al., 1999, 2001, 2002) looked at the provision of services for Māori students with disabilities in mainstream settings and in kura kaupapa Māori. Phillips (2003) undertook a comprehensive review of the literature on educational provision for Māori students with moderate to high support needs.. Both projects emphasise the impact of dominant or privileged cultural norms and practices ignoring Māori world-views and values.

Bevan-Brown (2006) has summarised the SE2000 evaluation reports. Her conclusion is that 'Many people who work with Māori learners with special needs do not recognize the important influence culture has nor do they see the need for culturally appropriate services, procedures, programmes and resources' (p.223). She also lists the detrimental effects to Māori children and their families that result. Relevant to the IEP process are these five:

1. Low teacher expectation leading to self-fulfilling prophecies the under-representation in Māori children in gifted programmes); and the over-representation of Māori amongst children with behavioural difficulties.

2. Negative and stereotypical attitudes toward Māori children, their parents and whanau, e.g. teachers disbelieving or ignoring parental concerns and blaming parents for their children's special needs

3. Abdication of responsibility for cultural input into education, e.g. Pakeha teachers not addressing cultural issues in the belief that this is the sole responsibility of kura kaupapa Māori or Māori teachers in English-medium schools

4. Meritocratic, individualistic and competitive ideologies that lead to special education and societal institutions, structures, systems and practices that conflict with holistic,

cooperative Māori values and beliefs and with the establishment of a pluralistic society.

5. Majority culture ethnocentrism resulting in differences being perceived as deficits; education and medical services and procedures being firmly based on Pakeha beliefs, concepts, values and expectations; and Māori culture, concepts, values and ways of working being undervalued). Special education examples include Māori staff being prevented from using Māori-relevant procedures with Māori children and Pakeha medical personnel not referring their Māori patients to Māori disability organizations. (p.224)

Phillips (2003) argued that the Bevan-Brown's findings confirm that deficit thinking continues to predominate the way non-Māori think of Māori students with special educational needs and their families. The effect is that schools and processes associated with special education, including IEPs 'culturally and scholastically marginalises and disadvantages Māori students with special needs' (p. 140). Phillips further suggests that where schools do stress that they consider culture, such consideration is only

> from their own cultural frames of reference. Notions of individualism, and equity as treating everyone the same are the predominant cultural values evident in their responses. Also evident are the lowered expectations, and negative and stereotypical perceptions some teachers and teacher aides have of Māori students and their whänau (p141).

When Māori parents were asked how their families' cultures could be more a part of their child's education (including the IEP process) they had some suggestions to make. Of particular relevance to IEPs are the suggestions that te reo be part of the child's programme, the assessment, reporting and discussion elements of the IEP; that there be an increased awareness of Māori ways of doing things, that meetings be held on marae, and that teachers take more time to get to know and understand their students' backgrounds.

Macfarlane (2005) has set out the importance of listening to culture in order to engage meaningfully with Māori students and their whanau. He argues that the hui is a relevant model to adopt when meeting to discuss what are sometimes difficult issues. Hui are different from meetings because in hui, 'aspects of Māoritanga are given authentic appreciation' (p.110).

Bishop and Berryman (2009) have described the features of an effective teacher using the Te Kotahitanga profile. These descriptors are very similar to the elements described in Bevan-Brown (2006) and in Phillips (2003). Te Kotahitanga stresses the importance of the relationships between teachers and students; teachers see students as capable learners (with the important effect that teachers see themselves as capable teachers who can make a difference in their students' learning).

In the same issue of the journal *Set*, Macfarlane (2009) described *Te Pikinga ki Runga* as

> An assessment, analysis and programme-planning framework specifically intended to guide education professionals in their interactions when working with Māori students and their whanau. The framework was originally developed to guide work with those Māori students who are exhibiting severe and challenging behaviours in education

settings and are therefore at risk of educational underachievement – or even failure. However, it has become increasingly clear that Te Pikinga ki Runga is able to be implemented by education practitioners (including teachers) for Māori students who are exhibiting mild-to-moderate learning disabilities and/or behavioural challenges in education settings. (p.42)

The framework is based on the three principles of the Treaty of Waitangi: partnership, protection and participation. In particular there is a need to pay close attention to the unequal power relationships that can exist in any partnership. These unequal relationships result in partnerships that are destructive. Protection speaks to the importance of both protecting and 'enhancing student self-concept and cultural identity' (p.44). Participation speaks to the importance of presence and being seen as a valued member of the classroom and learning community. These principles are most likely to be met when the approaches taken to assessment and planning are holistic as well as being strength and credit based.

Pasifika approaches

As with the section above, we were unable to find any documented examples of Pasifika approaches to IEP planning. However, we did find descriptions of Pasifika approaches to support learning and fostering relationships between home and school that potentially have important implications for IEP planning with Pasifika families.

Ferguson, Gorinski, Wendt Samu & Mara (2008) undertook a comprehensive review of the literature examining Pasifika students' classroom experiences in New Zealand schools. These authors identified the continuing problem of deficit theorising used by educators to explain Pasifika students' poor educational attainment relative to the palangi classmates. Such deficit theorising means that palangi teachers are not required to consider their pedagogy, or reflect on their cultural assumptions as the problem of learning is presumed to lie within the learner. Rather, Ferguson et al. (2008) say that schools and teachers must have and demonstrate a 'commitment to nurturing relationships with families/caregivers and communities' (p.54). The authors call for teacher professional learning that 'must necessarily focus upon fostering teacher attitudes, knowledge, skills, and practices that will acknowledge, value, nurture, and build upon the cultural capital that Pasifika learners bring from their diverse and unique nations' (p.54).

Fletcher, Parkhill, Fa'afoi, Taleni & O'Regan (2009) report a series of studies looking at Pasifika students' literacy learning. These studies examined the factors that supported the success of students and the barriers that hindered success in literacy. Their research used a methodology known as *talanoa* to learn from Pasifika students and families. Talanoa uses traditional Pasifika values and rituals important to maintaining relationships and communication.

Fletcher et al. (2009) also emphasised 'the importance of acknowledging the cultural capital of Pasifika students and their families in the school setting' (p.25). Specifically this means that

> Pasifika students' literacy learning (and overall academic learning for that matter) is likely to be enhanced when Pasifika values, languages and cultural knowledge are made an implicit part of teaching and learning practices throughout the school. The valuing and some use (e.g., greetings, songs, correct pronunciation of students' names) of the

different Pasifika languages in their schooling acknowledge that their cultural capital and heritage are valued. (p.32)

These recommendations are similar to the elements of the *Pasifika Adaptation of Sheet's Diversity Typology* described in Ferguson et al. (2008) and providing 'a framework for educators to reflect and respond positively to diverse classrooms, and in particular, to Pasifika students in their schools and classrooms' (p.49).

Teachers' Participation in IEPs

Special education teachers and regular education teachers (in the case of inclusive classrooms) are, of course, integral to IEPs. As pointed out by Davis (2008) for example, 'Teachers represent the largest and most knowledgeable resource in programming for the needs of students. The quality of their relationship with parents/carers and community agencies plays a large part in the overall outcomes for students.' (p.3). Further, according to Weishar (2001), US federal law specifies that IEP teams 'must include at least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be participating in the regular education environment'.

Thomson and Rowan's 1996 New Zealand study serves as a good baseline to measure more recent research, all of it overseas. In their study, Thomson and Rowan (1996) examined 159 IEPs from a random sample of 36 schools: 27 primary schools, five secondary schools and four special schools, including one residential special school. Two teacher focus groups and two parent focus groups were also conducted to further explore emergent issues. In addition, questionnaires were completed by 59 teachers, which provided information on their opinions on strengths and weakness of the IEP process. The researchers found that a regular class teacher attended the meetings in 60% of the cases and a special education teacher in 43%. In 16% of the IEP meetings there was no indication of any teacher being present. Findings from the questionnaire indicated that 53% of teachers had received training on using IEPs and were generally satisfied with this training. All teachers found the IEP process helpful for their teaching of students with disabilities and more than three quarters of them would wish to continue the individual education planning process if it was not mandatory. The questionnaire and focus group data outlined teachers' views on the specific advantages and disadvantages of the IEP process. Advantages included identification of teaching needs, communication with parents, access to external agencies, making staff and students accountable, and the holistic view of the student. Disadvantages of the process were the time and training required, parents feeling threatened by the process and lack of support for classroom teachers involved in the IEP process. The authors expressed concern that teachers viewed individual education planning as an administrative task rather than a tool to develop more effective instruction and learning.

Several studies have been carried out to investigate teachers' perception of IEPs. In an Australian study, Rodger et al. (1999) interviewed 45 IEP team members, including teachers, to investigate their views on the IEP process provided in two special schools for students with moderate to severe disabilities. Almost all of the respondents valued the opportunity to listen to other team members' viewpoints at IEP meetings. In addition, most staff recognised that the IEP process provided direction and structure for daily classroom activities. Staff suggested that goals that could be integrated into the daily classroom routine were more likely to be implemented than those that required withdrawal of students from the classroom.

The classroom teacher was viewed as the primary coordinator for implementation of the IEP plan in the classroom, the level of involvement of other team members depending on individual teachers' management style. The authors emphasised that their findings suggested that ownership and responsibility for goals was a key issue for implementing IEP decisions. It was important to teachers that other professionals independently assumed responsibility for their role in implementation and that parents conducted follow-up work with the student at home.

More recently, in the US, Lee-Tarver (2006) carried out a survey to investigate the perceptions of 123 regular education teachers on the utility of IEPs for children with disabilities within an inclusive classroom. Results indicated that the majority of the teachers perceived IEPs as useful tools in curriculum preparation and that they were active participants in the IEP process. However, responses also suggested that additional training was warranted. Examples of the data from this study included 63% of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing that IEPs provided a curriculum for special education students currently within their classrooms. Results of a question concerning the utility of the IEP in systematic planning of instructional objectives demonstrated that 57% of agreed or strongly agreed that IEPs were useful. The role of IEPs as a tool to evaluate students' programmes and services was supported by 72% of the respondents. In a similar vein, 63% agreed or strongly agreed that IEPs helped them to organize and structure their teaching, while 52% reported that they were a better teacher because they have an IEP to guide their instructional planning. These positive appraisals reflected those obtained in the Thomson & Rowan and Lee-Tarver studies above. Results also indicated that the majority of the teachers played a role in the formation of goals for their students, and that the process of developing and implementing the IEP was a team activity. Lee-Tarver concluded by stating it is essential that regular education teachers are provided training and support that would facilitate the acquisition of skills for adapting their classrooms to students with special needs. A further link in the chain would be the modification of teacher education programmes.

In another US study, Menlove et al. (2001) discussed findings from a survey of 1005 IEP team members and subsequent focus groups with representatives of each IEP team member's group, including regular teachers. Unlike the previous studies, these researchers found that regular teachers expressed low levels of satisfaction with the IEP process in general. They were also dissatisfied with the low level involvement of students. The regular teachers outlined the reasons why they did not attend IEP meetings. These included: time, preparation demands, inadequate training and doubts about the relevance of the IEP. Further, the teachers felt that other team members did not always value their input and that other team members did not adequately address their concerns. They also found that regular teachers were often frustrated with a lack of preparation, a lack of organisation from other team members and being unsure how to prepare for an IEP meeting. Teachers reported that student progress in the general classroom was not adequately considered in the IEP process. This resulted in unrealistic goal setting and a lack of accountability for student achievement. Menlove et al. suggested that efforts to overcome this issue could include:

- controlling the time required for IEPs through effective organisation and preparation;
- considering regular teachers' schedules when organising IEP meetings;
- scheduling IEP meetings for after school;
- employing technology to disseminate information to all team members (for example,

possibly discussing goals by email or providing public information on web pages);

- providing transport and childcare so parents can attend after school hours;
- holding meetings in regular teachers' classrooms where they feel comfortable and have access to relevant documentation;
- scheduling IEP meetings along with other teacher-parent conferences;
- providing release time for teachers to undertake record-keeping and attend meetings;
- scheduling several IEP meetings on one day and arrange for a substitute teacher;
- drawing up an IEP agenda and sharing it with all team members who should make greater efforts to communicate with each other;
- providing training on the IEP process, including the teachers' role, multi-disciplinary working, monitoring student progress on IEP goals and implementing these goals in the general classroom.

In a third US study, Martin et al. (2004) analysed 393 secondary school IEPs involving 1638 participants. Their study included a report on the perceptions of general education and special education teachers. Martin et al. (2004) found that general education teachers reported helping make IEP decisions significantly less than all other participants and knew less about 'what to do next' than all other participants except students. However, when students were present at IEP meetings, the general education teachers felt more comfortable about saying what they thought, knew better what to do next, and felt better about the meeting. The reciprocal also applied: when general educators attended meetings, other participants reported talking more, talking about strengths and needs, feeling more empowered to make decisions, having better knowledge of what to do next, and feeling better about the meeting. Special education teachers generally led the IEP meetings and, perhaps not surprisingly, they reported talking more than all other team members and scored higher on most other survey items. Martin et al. note, in conclusion, that just as students need instruction in the IEP process, so do general education teachers. Thus pre- and in-service programmes need to teach general educators about the IEP process and the different roles the participants play.

In a fourth US study, Simon (2006) used a 29-item questionnaire to survey special education teachers and parents with children who receive special education services to investigate their perceptions of the IEP requirements. Results indicated that teachers, as a whole, held significantly more positive views of the IEP process than did parents. They posited a number of possible reasons for the higher teacher scores. For example, teachers work with many children at any given time, and they may have rated the IEP process based on their high levels of familiarity, understanding, and experience with the IEP process. On the other hand, most parents base their perceptions on experiences with only one child and it may be difficult for them to see a greater overall pattern of how the IEP functions on a regular basis. The participants may have viewed this opportunity as a means to vent their discontent with the process. Simon also points out that the parent sample in this study is comprised of more African American and Hispanic/Latino parents than are found in the general population of parents with school age children; therefore, it is possible that these parents were less pleased with the IEP process due to language or other ethnicity-related barriers.

According to sources cited by Rosas et al. (2009), most general education teachers feel 'in the dark' about the IEP process. Their review of the literature indicated that, historically,

general educators have not been actively involved in the development of IEPs. In their own study, Rosas et al. noted that since the IEP document outlines for both general and special education teachers how to specifically work and accommodate for instruction, it serves as a vital guide. In order to assess teachers' compliance with the IEP requirements of IDEA 2004 an instrument based on the nine key areas mandated in the legislation was administered to 33 teachers who taught students with special needs in a US high school. These areas included students' present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, measurable annual goals, short-term objectives, periodic reporting to parents, accommodations for district testing, and coordinated transition activities beginning at 16. Results of the study indicated that IEP documents did not consistently include all requirements under IDEA 2004. The study concluded that general and special education teachers needed further training on IEP development to assure compliance with IDEA mandates.

Parents' Participation in IEPs

Active participation of parents of children with SEN in the IEP process is widely considered to be an essential element in the provision of effective education for such children. In the USA, where Public Law 94-142 mandated IEPs, parental participation is considered one of the six major principles of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997) (Strickland & Turnbull, 1993; Turnbull et al., 2010). In the UK, the need to work in partnership with parents is one of the fundamental principles of the SEN *Code of Practice* (DfEE, 1994; DfES, 2001), through which the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) are implemented. In Ireland, the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004) emphasises the importance of parental involvement, which is reflected in the *Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process* in Ireland (National Council for Special Education, 2006). In NZ, the *IEP Guidelines* (Ministry of Education, 1998) suggest that, 'The process should be set up as a partnership between parents and professionals' (p.21). Specifically, it is widely acknowledged that this partnership should be one that is guided by the principles stated by Zhang & Bennett (2003): 'Professionals need to build a partnership with family members based on mutual respect, open communication, shared responsibility, and collaboration' (p.56).

The reason for this emphasis on such partnerships is that there is now an extensive international literature which supports the potential of involving parents in improving children's academic achievements and social outcomes (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2003, 2005). The role of parent involvement in improving educational outcomes for children has been recognized in New Zealand by publication of the *Schooling Strategy* (Ministry of Education, 2005), in which improving parent and family involvement in children's education is one of three priority areas, along with improving the quality of teaching and increasing evidence-based practice.

Extensive evidence for the effectiveness of parent involvement in facilitating children's achievements has been reported by several reviews and meta-analyses of the international literature (Cox, 2005; Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Fan & Chen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Jeynes, 2003, 2005). Effect sizes for the impact of parent involvement on children's academic achievement have been calculated from these meta-analyses of studies to be 0.51 by Hattie (2009), who reports that the overall average effect size for educational interventions is 0.4. It is therefore clear that active parental involvement is an important factor in effective education interventions, including IEPs. However, there is an extensive

research literature on parental participation in the IEP process, which indicates that the reality of parental participation in IEPs is problematic.

For example, Garriott et al. (2000) reviewed eight studies of parental participation in the IEP process that were carried out in the 25 years following the introduction of IEPs in PL 94-142 in 1975. The overall picture was one of low levels of participation and parents occupying a passive role in the IEP process. For example, Harry et al. (1995) reported from their three-year study of 24 families that parental involvement typically consisted of parents signing the IEP document rather than being active participants in the planning process. From their own study of 98 parents of children with a wide range of disabilities, Garriott et al. found that 89% of parents always attended IEP conferences but only around half of these felt they were treated as equally respected members of the IEP team. Forty-six percent of parents were satisfied with their involvement in the IEP process but 27 percent were not.

Somewhat more positive results were reported by Spann et al. (2003), who surveyed 45 parents of children with autism aged from four to 18 years about their experiences of the IEP process. They found that 73% of parents considered that they had moderate to high knowledge of their children's IEP documents; 87% considered that they had moderate to high involvement in the IEP process; and, 86% reported overall satisfaction with the IEP process.

In the most recent article located, Fish (2008) includes a brief review of previous studies, including three not reviewed by Garriott, et al. (ibid.). The picture is not very encouraging. He reports a study of Mexican-American parents of children with SEN which found that their input was frequently not respected in IEP meetings (Salas, 2004) and a study which concluded that all parents surveyed perceived their initial IEP meetings to have been traumatic and confusing, resulting in their dissatisfaction with the special education system overall (Stoner, et al., 2005). He also includes his own previous study conducted with parents of children with autism, which found that most parents had negative experiences of the IEP process (Fish, 2006). He then reported findings from his study of 51% of children with a wide range of disabilities and ages, which found that 63% of parents had positive experiences of IEP meetings while 16% had negative experiences. He also found that 56% of parents considered that IEP meetings benefitted their children whereas 16% thought they had not (Fish, 2008).

In a major New Zealand study of the IEP process with a random sample of 36 schools, Thomson & Rowan (1996) found that only 55% of parents participated in IEP meetings. Parents who did attend generally indicated that they appreciated the opportunity to meet with teachers to discuss their children and participate in developing IEPs but noted that they felt uncomfortable at IEP meetings. Parents also appreciated the involvement of specialists from outside the school in IEP meetings but only if these professionals had first-hand knowledge of their children with SEN.

On a positive note, the survey of parents and schools in New Zealand, carried out as part of the *Review of Special Education 2000* by Bourke et al. (2001), reported a trend towards increased parental involvement in IEPs and behaviour management plans. Schools attributed this trend to implementation of the policy. However, the survey also found varying expectations about parental involvement both within and across schools.

Therefore, it seems that the reality of parental participation in the IEP process is very

different from the principle of active involvement and collaboration based on mutual respect, as stated in the literature reviewed above. This gap between the rhetoric and the reality of parent involvement is considered to be because there are various barriers to the meaningful participation of parents, both generically and those specifically related to IEPs. An explanatory model for the generic barriers to parent involvement has recently been developed by Hornby & Lafaele (in press) and is outlined below. The specific barriers related to IEPs are addressed in later sections of this review.

An explanatory model has been developed in order to clarify and elaborate on the major barriers to parent involvement, which are focused on four areas. Firstly, there are parent and family factors, focusing on parents' beliefs about parent involvement, parents' current life contexts, parents' perceptions of invitations for involvement in schools, and the influence of class, ethnicity and gender. Secondly, there are child factors, focusing on children's age, learning difficulties and disabilities, gifts and talents, and behavioural problems. Thirdly, there are parent-teacher factors, focusing on the differing agendas, attitudes and language used by parents and teachers. Fourthly, there are societal factors, including historical and demographic issues, political issues, and economic issues which have an impact on parent involvement (Hornby & Lafaele, in press).

Specific barriers to parental participation in the IEP process have been identified by Dabkowski (2004), Rock (2000) and Zhang & Bennett (2003). These include:

- scheduling of IEP meetings when parents are working or at other inconvenient times

- transport difficulties of parents actually getting to meetings

- child care responsibilities of parents clashing with meetings

- settings for IEP meetings lacking privacy or poor arrangement of seating for encouraging participation

- use of jargon and other language and communication differences between parents and teachers

- lack of schools' cultural sensitivity and responsiveness to diverse parent populations

Strategies for overcoming the above barriers and facilitating the participation of parents in the IEP process are available from several sources, including those in books (e.g., Moltzen, 2005; Seligman, 2000; Strickland and Turnbull, 1993; Turnbull et al., 2010), journal articles (e.g., Dabkowski, 2004; Garriott, et al., 2000; Johns, et al., 2002; Rock, 2000; Simon, 2006; Zhang & Bennett, 2003) and IEP guideline documents (e.g., Ministry of Education, 1998 and 2007; and in Ireland by the National Council for Special Education,2006). The most comprehensive of the articles is that by Rock (2000) and the most easily available to New Zealand teachers are those in the *IEP Guidelines* (Ministry of Education, 1998, and updated on its website) and the chapter by Moltzen (2005). A synthesis of the strategies for increasing parent participation suggested in these sources indicates that they include the following main aspects:

- maintaining effective working relationships with parents, beyond IEPs, through such mechanisms as: home visits; monthly parent meetings/workshops

- creating IEP manuals for parents including sample IEPs

- preparing for IEP meetings by sending to parents beforehand IEP manuals, IEP meeting agendas, summaries of children's progress

- helping parents prepare for IEP meetings by asking them to respond to questions about children's needs and about their priorities though a brief questionnaire sent home or during a home visit or pre-IEP planning meeting at school arranged for this purpose

- liaising with parents to arrange a mutually convenient time for the IEP meeting

- arranging for child care and transport to meeting if needed

- arranging suitable private and distraction-free venue for meeting, with round table seating if possible

- arranging for interpreters if there are language difficulties

- encouraging parents to bring a friend or family member for support

- using jargon-free language and good communication skills in meeting

- being respectful of and responsive to cultural differences

- presenting assessment data in accessible format, e.g., using charts and graphs to illustrate children's progress

- conducting a brief review at end of meeting, asking participants for feedback on any aspect they wish to comment on

- drafting the IEP during the meeting, not before, writing up after meeting and sending to parents for feedback

- providing training for parents and teachers on how to participate effectively in IEPs

No studies could be located which evaluated whether implementing such strategies has led to increased participation of parents in the IEP process. However, a relevant study conducted in the UK does report some illuminating findings. Hughes & Carpenter (1991) developed a 'parents' comments form' intended to help parents organise their thoughts on their child's progress and needs so that they could contribute more meaningfully to meetings to conduct annual reviews of their child's statement of special educational needs. In an evaluation of the use of the form, with parents of children attending a special school for children with intellectual disabilities, it was reported that parents found the forms helpful in preparing for the review meetings and it was considered that this led to more effective parent participation in the meetings.

Students' Participation in IEPs

In the various countries whose IEP policies and practices have been reviewed, students are expected to be involved in the development and implementation of their plans. Thus, in the USA, for example, the President's Commission (2002) asserted that 'It is *always* appropriate for students with disabilities to be invited and present at IEP meetings' (p.46). Similarly, writing from a UK perspective, Cooper (1996) argued that students should be fully involved and understand IEPs. In Ireland, too, it is policy that students should be 'supported and encouraged to participate fully in the IEP process' (National Council for Special Education, 2006, p. 55). In another example, the Czech Republic specifies that IEPs must consider conclusions made by professional counsellors and special teachers with the pupil and his/her parents (European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, 2010). In New Zealand, the 1998 *IEP Guidelines* stated that 'Serious consideration should be given to including the student in all or part of the meetings whenever possible'. (Ministry of Education, 1998, p.8). The current version of the IEP Guidelines (Ministry of Education,

2010) refers to students as being part of the 'core IEP team' and states that 'Effective implementation of any plan depends on the involvement of the student' (pp.6-7).

Individual writers, too, have supported students being involved in the IEP process. For example, several US studies have focused on this issue. Shriner (2000) argued that all students are part of the learning community and should be included in assessments of progress toward their learning goals, while Spencer & Sands (1999) recommended their involvement in transition planning. According to Eisenman & Chamberlin (2001), educators can help foster self-determination by including students in IEP planning, implementation and evaluation. Barrie & McDonald (2002) describe a student-led IEP process, arguing that this helps students develop a better understanding of their own strengths and needs. Eisenman et al (2005) also describe a student-led IEP process, concluding that even small implementation efforts had benefits for students and other IEP team members. In a UK study, Rose et al. (1999) reported on a small-scale study of procedures for assessing 'pupil readiness' for full involvement in a target-setting process.

While supporting student involvement, however, Shaddock (2002), asks how should professionals respond when individuals with a disability say they do not want to participate in IEP meetings?

There is quite a substantial body of research into student participation in the IEP process, some of it painting a somewhat negative picture. On a positive note, in a review of 16 studies, Test et al. (2004) concluded that students with widely varying disabilities can be actively involved in IEPs and that curricula designed to teach skills to students to enhance their participation and person-centred planning strategies can increase involvement. In an earlier study, Mason et al. (2002) found that high school students with mild learning difficulties were able to describe their disabilities, their rights and the purpose and benefits of IEPs. In a series of case studies conducted in Scotland and Canada, Thomson et al. (2002) found that students were happy to participate in the development of their IEPs and that they appreciated the opportunity to discuss their concerns with a teacher.

In a US web survey of teachers, administrators and related service professionals, however, Mason et al. (2004) found that while they highly valued student involvement in IEPs and self determination skill training, only 34% were satisfied with the level of student participation in IEP meetings and as few as 8% were satisfied with their teaching of participation skills. The low level of student participation in IEP meetings was confirmed in a US study by Martin et al. (2006a), who found that special educators talked 51% of time, family members 15%, general educators 9%, support staff 6%, and students only 3%. In a UK study, Pawley & Tennant (2008) interviewed high school students with learning difficulties about their experiences with IEPs. They found that few students could communicate a clear understanding of IEPs and few of their stated targets matched those in their IEPs. Drawing on the work of Martin et al. (2006), Van Dyke et al. (2006) observed how students were involved in their IEP meetings. They reported that students expressed interest in 49.4% of the meetings, expressed options and goals in 27.1% of the meetings and expressed skills and limits in 20% of the meetings. However, their level of participation constituted only 3% of the meeting time and they rarely asked for feedback or asked questions. In a similar vein, Martin et al. (2004) found that students knew less than other participants in the IEP process about the reasons for meetings, while Zickel & Arnold (2001), in their study of students with moderate learning disabilities, found that many students never saw their IEP or understood

why they had one or what strategies had been identified to support their learning.

There is general agreement that, in order to facilitate their participation in the IEP process, students need to be taught meeting participation skills (Martin et al. (2006a). As Eisenman & Chamberlin (2001) point out, students need multiple opportunities over time to develop skills in goal setting, plan development, monitoring and adjusting. In a similar vein, Mason et al. (2002) recommended that skills in self-determination and in leading IEPs should be an integral part of the curriculum for students with disabilities. They also observed that logistical dilemmas need to be resolved, e.g., finding time for student preparation, especially in inclusive settings.

Several studies have aimed at increasing student participation in IEP meetings. For example, Martin et al. 2006b) used a Self-Directed IEP training programme to teach IEP meeting skills to high school students with a range of disabilities. This programme included such modules as reviewing past goals and performances, asking questions, asking for feedback, dealing with differences of opinion, and expressing interests (Martin et al., 1996). The programme was found to have a strong effect on increasing the percentage of time students talked, their participation increasing from 3% to 12% of the time and their contributions increased across all 12 leadership steps taught in the programme. Zickel & Arnold (2001) also employed a teaching programme, which aimed to teach fourth grade students with learning disabilities about IEPs. The programme focused on four key stages: reflecting on strengths and weaknesses; goal setting; speaking up to tell people about their abilities and disabilities and supports they may need; and checking ideas with their teachers to plan and implement them collaboratively. The results of the programme demonstrated an increase in the students' self-advocacy skills and a fostering of ownership of the process.

Most jurisdictions that employ IEPs have developed guidelines for participants, which normally include ways of facilitating the participation of students. For example, McGahee-Kovac (2002), on behalf of the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities, in the US, has written a guide for students, which includes such topics as What to do before the IEP meeting, writing the IEP, getting ready for the IEP meeting, participating in the meeting, and after the meeting.

SENCos' Participation in IEPs

The position of Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) seems to be a uniquely UK one, although other jurisdictions have equivalent or nearly equivalent positions. The NZ situation is that although SENCos with at least 0.4 time allowance were recommended for all schools by the Wylie (2000) report, this was never officially implemented, so having a SENCo is 'optional' for schools. While many NZ schools have a named 'SENCo' that person typically has minimal time allowance to do the job and is unlikely to have any training in inclusive and special education. For the purpose of this review, the focus will be on the UK SENCos and their role in IEPs.

In brief, the position of SENCo was first defined in the *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice* (DfES, 1994). According to regulations coming into force in 2009 (http://www.governornet.co.uk/linkAttachments/ACF9F7E.doc), their key responsibilities includes the following in relation to each registered pupil who has special educational needs (SEN):

- identifying the pupil's SEN

- co-ordinating the making of special educational provision which meets those needs

- monitoring the effectiveness of any special educational provision made for the pupil

- securing relevant services for the pupil where necessary

- ensuring that records of the pupil's special educational needs and the special educational provision made to meet those needs are maintained and kept up to date

- liaising with and providing information to a parent of the pupil on a regular basis about that pupil's SEN and the special educational provision being made for those needs

- promoting the pupil's inclusion in the school community and access to the school's curriculum, facilities and extra-curricular activities

- selecting, supervising and training learning support assistants who work with pupils who have SEN

- advising teachers at the school about differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils with SEN

- contributing to in-service training for teachers at the school

All SENCos are now required to have qualified teacher status, which was not necessary under the 1994 *Code*.

Clearly, SENCos have a significant role in IEPs. So, how do they feel about this responsibility? Three studies have investigated this issue. In 2001 and 2002, Wedell summarised the opinions of IEPs as expressed on the SENCo-Forum, an electronic mailing list with 800 members. There was evidence that SENCos spend a large proportion of their time writing IEPs and keeping them up to date, particularly in secondary schools where SENCos had to link with teachers in a range of subjects. Conversely, the SENCos were concerned as to how secondary teachers could possibly keep in mind the targets set for each pupil with SEN in their classes. These and other considerations made some SENCos feel that producing IEPs had become an end in itself. They argued that schools which are concerned with being responsive to the diversity of their students' needs through 'school action plans', involving differentiation of teaching approaches, did not really need IEPs, unless the students required more specific support. The SENCos further argued that limiting the number of students for whom an IEP would be appropriate would allow SENCos and teachers to be more focused and 'to ensure that the IEP actually becomes worthwhile'. Correspondingly, SENCos could gain time to play their part in furthering a whole-school special needs policy to meet students' needs (Wedell, 2002). In a similar vein, Tennant (2007), a UK writer, raised the issue of abandoning the assumption that students with SEN in mainstream secondary should have IEPs, leaving it to schools themselves to decide how to organise their SEN provisions, with lines of accountability as at present.

Writing about the same time as Wedell, and also with a focus on secondary schools, Lingard (2001) asked whether IEPs helped subject teachers to address individual students' special educational needs or 'would whole-school strategies for meeting special educational needs be more effective, efficient and inclusive than the current individualised system?' (p.187). Lingard reported on the responses of 26 secondary school SENCos to a questionnaire on IEPs. Examples of the findings include a general feeling that IEPs did not change teachers' approach to their teaching and, correspondingly, that IEPs had little impact on improving

students' learning. Further, the SENCos believed that subject teachers did not have time to provide individual students with the specific teaching outlined on their IEPs. Rather than writing IEPs, 21 of the 26 respondents felt that it would be far more efficient and inclusive to describe the flexible systems that were in place in their schools – a point also raised by Wedell, as noted above. Lingard further argued that 'Released from the 'paperwork/target setting/ review treadmill' for all but those with Statements, the SENCo could concentrate on informing, advising and supporting colleagues to improve direct pupil support' (p.189).

A third UK writer, Frankl (2005), focused on the implementation of a strategy to reduce the number of students with IEPs and so reduce the workloads of SENCos. Frankl noted that earlier work had pointed out that, over time, IEP systems in the UK were becoming increasingly unworkable and suffering from unintended consequences. In particular, earlier requirements of the 1994 *Code of Practice* (DfES, 1994) for all students at stage 2 and above in the *Code* to have IEPs which were reviewed three times a year, plus the statutory annual review of students' Statements, required SENCos to engage in lengthy paperwork (see, for example, Gross, 2000). Furthermore, the implementation of IEP targets was often seen as the responsibility of SENCos, not teachers. Progress for students with SEN was often measured against their IEP goals, rather than progress in their overall learning. Frankl noted that the revised *Code of Practice* (DfES, 2001) went some way to reducing the bureaucracy surrounding IEPs. IEPs then became a requirement only for those students who have needs that are 'additional to' or 'different from' others on a differentiated curriculum. It also suggested that students with similar needs could have a 'group educational plan' (GEP), as distinct from an IEP. Similarly to Wedell and Lingard, Frankl argued for the integration of SEN planning into whole-class planning that is the responsibility of class teachers, thus allowing SENCos to become consultants for their teacher colleagues.

While not strictly comparable to SENCos, resource room teachers in the US often have coordinating roles similar to those of SENCos. It is therefore appropriate to mention the research of Dalley et al. (2008), who investigated high school resource teachers' perceptions of system-wide collaboration on students with IEPs. These teachers had the responsibility for designing instructional practices that supported the general education curriculum, a role that involved collaboration with general education teachers. They identified collaboration differences between what resource room teachers believed were important when compared to what existed in their schools. The authors recommended that the changing role of the resource room teacher should be acknowledged and understood by the general education teacher, administration and school community. In particular, more time needed to be provided for resource room teachers to meet with all members of the learning community that interact with resource room students. General education teachers should regularly discuss their resource room students' IEPs with the resource room teacher and be more sensitive to the resource room teachers' schedule. Additionally, Dalley et al. recommended that general education teachers take a more active role in meetings that involve resource room students. Administrative staff can best facilitate this interaction by providing regular times in which resource room and general education teachers can meet and discuss students with IEPs that limit the loss of instructional time, while ensuring that students with IEPs are given the attention that their IEPs require.

Identifying and Overcoming Barriers to Collaboration

As we have seen so far in this section, preparing and implementing IEPs is not without its problems. Those relating to collaboration will be reiterated and expanded below, with some suggestions on possible ways of overcoming them.

Insufficient time and excessive paperwork. Many researchers have drawn attention to the demands IEP preparation make on participants (e.g., Huefner, 2000; Smith, 1990). Shaddock (2002), for example, asks, 'How do we respond to the frequently demonstrated finding that individualised planning requires some people, particularly teachers, to undertake a great deal of additional work?' (p.197) As noted by Wedell (2001, 2002), for example, SENCos in the UK complained about the inordinate proportion of their time keeping up with the administration of IEPs and the paperwork involved. This was especially problematic in secondary schools where SENCos were expected to consult with a range of subject teachers. He explored a range of ways for reducing this demand on time, even suggesting solutions as radical as dispensing with IEPs for all except those with very high needs and relying instead on schools to devise their own approach to flexibly responding to students' diverse needs. A similar argument was advanced by Frankl (2005), who suggested that SEN planning could be integrated into whole-class planning, which could include *Group* Education Plans (as distinct from *Individual* Education Plans) to be followed by class teachers. In another approach, the NSW Department of Education and Training limited outcome statements to reduce the time required by teachers in interpreting and assessing student outcomes (Eltis, 2003). An Australian special school went even further, doing away with 'elaborate forms of IEPs'. As Nayler (2006) reported, this proved to be liberating as it assisted teachers to broaden their framework of teaching and learning. Another approach to reducing the time demands in preparing IEPs is by means of computer-managed IEP record systems. According to Serfass & Peterson (2007), in the US there are numerous computer programs available that can create and manage all required special education documentation. Support has also been given to the provision of additional planning time to allow teachers to give due attention to the work that goes into IEP preparation (Gallagher & Desimone, 1995; LeRoy & Simpson, 1996; Menlove et al., 2001). Other Australian 'shortcuts' to preparing IEPs have been reported by Pearce (2008). These include hiring a casual teacher to write IEPs and Year Coordinators consulting with a small range of interested parties, writing the IEP and distributing it to the teachers.

Lack of clarity as to the purposes of IEPs. Clearly, if the participants in the IEP process do not understand or agree on the purposes of IEPs, collaboration will be jeopardised. This problem was recognised by the New Zealand Ministry of Education (1998) when it claimed that the IEP process has been misused as a method of accessing additional resources and support. It argued, instead, that the IEP is primarily a document that should serve strictly educational goals. Thus, in the New Zealand context, Wylie (2000) noted that parents often regarded the IEP as 'an agreement to provide set amounts of teacher-aide time and other support, and did not realise it sets out resourcing goals which may not be achieved.' (p.102). Similar confusion as to the role of the IEP has been reported elsewhere. In their review of the literature, Shaddock et al. (2009), for example, pointed out that IEPs tended to be expected to serve educational, legal, planning, accountability and resource allocation roles. They found examples of this confusion in submissions made to their review of special education in ACT in Australia. Similarly, in the USA, the President's Commission (2002) drew attention to the

frequency with which parents, teachers and administrators described how IEPs were not actually designed for individualised education, but were frequently written for legal and administrative compliance.

Logistical barriers to parents' participating in IEP meetings. These barriers include a lack of transport or babysitting. In an Australian study, Rodger et al. (1999) highlighted the need for an appropriate venue and flexible times for IEP meetings.

Social and cultural barriers to parents' participating in IEP meetings. These include parents' lack of information about the process, feeling intimidated in meetings, and communication being hampered by language and cultural differences and jargon (Hornby & Lafaele, in press; Turnbull et al., 2006).

Unrealistic or inappropriate goal-setting. In their Australian study, Rodger et al (1999) emphasised that findings suggest that ownership and responsibility for goals was a key issue for implementing IEP decisions. In her review of special education in New Zealand, Wylie (2000) noted that some IEPs had been written in a standard format, with little linkage to actual provisions.

Inadequate teamwork. Several writers have argued that one of the most important dimensions of the IEP process is the ability of team members to work collaboratively in the development and implementation of IEPs and transition plans (Callicott, 2003; Clark, 2000; Dalley et al., 2008; Davis, 2008; Fisher & Frey, 2001; Gallagher & Desimone, 1995; Katsiyannis & Zhang, 2001; Lytle & Bordin, 2001; Mitchell, 2008; Morningstar & Mutua, 2003; Rodger et al., 2003; Seligman, 2000; Tod, 1999; Ware, 1999; Zickel & Arnold, 2001). Perhaps reflecting the litigious nature of US society, the President's Commission (2002) recommended training for skilled facilitators to run IEP meetings to avoid conflict and reach agreement.

Lack of training in planning and consultation. Several writers have noted that participants in the IEP process need training in what is involved. The result of this deficiency can include IEPs (a) lacking mandated components (in the case of USA), (b) targeting non-functional skills, (c) containing little information regarding how goals will be generalised, (d) emphasising pre-academic skills rather than real-life skills, (e) not appearing to serve as an intervention guide, and (f) not having a direct impact on student outcomes (Pretti-Frontczak & Bricker, 2000). Concerns have been expressed that many classroom teachers lack the training and knowledge to implement IEPs (Alberta Teachers' Federation, 2009; Gallagher & Desimone, 1995; Martin et al., 2004; Rosas et al., 2009; Smith, 1990). Training should not be limited to professionals, but should also include parents and students.

Various studies focusing on training educators in IEP processes have been reported. For example, in their review of research conducted in the previous two decades, Pretti-Frontczak & Bricker (2000) found that a programme focused on training teachers on writing IEP goals and objectives, using a curriculum-based measure, had positive effects. In another study, Flannery et al. (2000) investigated the effects of a Person Centred Planning (PCP) programme for professionals. This programme focused on designing support from the perspective of its recipient. They found that the training increased the use of PCP procedures, increased the number of written goals supported outside school-time, and resulted in higher satisfaction with the planning process. In another study, Kamens (2004) taught pre-service teachers the knowledge and skills for writing useful and meaningful IEPs in the future. Such

training of educators, whether it is at the pre-service or in-service levels, should not be narrowly focused on IEPs. Rather, it should incorporate broader considerations of meeting the needs of diverse learners within regular education settings (Tod, 1999; Thomson & Rowan, 1996)

Training should also address collaboration and partnership. Here the principles advanced by Turnbull et al. (2010) could well define the focus. They argue that there are seven elements of the parent-professional partnership (which we believe could apply to all other partnerships as well): communication, competence, commitment, respect, equality and advocacy, held together by trust. The content of any training programme could well incorporate the elements of collaboration as outlined by Mitchell (2008) and summarised at the beginning of this section.

Summary

The literature indicates the following:

1. The early vision of legislation to support the education of students with special educational needs was that parents, families, whanau and schools should work together in an equitable partnership. However it was apparent even in the early days that equity and partnership would be difficult to achieve as schools started out in the dominant position.

2. The IEP process assumes cultural norms and values, in particular normalization and individualisation.

3. When the majority-culture views and practices of school take little or no account of the cultural values of students' home cultures, there is very often a breakdown in communication between home and school. This will have a negative impact on parent and teacher partnerships.

4. Teacher professional learning should focus on fostering teacher attitudes, knowledge, skills, and practices that will acknowledge, value, nurture, and build upon the cultural capital that Māori and Pasifika learners bring from their cultures.

5. IEPs form a useful tool in curriculum preparation, the planning of instruction and in evaluating students' programmes and services.

6. All those involved in the education of students with IEPs should be involved in the development and implementation of these documents.

7. In the case of secondary schools, at least one subject specialist should be directly involved and others should be consulted by the lead professional in the IEP team.

8. All teachers should be provided with pre- and in-service training and support necessary for their participation in designing and implementing IEPs. Such training should include consideration of the teachers' role in IEPs, working in a multi-disciplinary setting, partnerships with parents, ways of involving students, and how to implement and monitor student progress on IEP goals.

9. In scheduling IEP meetings every endeavour should be made to ensure the process is efficient and not too time-consuming, for example by considering teachers' schedules

when organising IEP meetings, employing technology to disseminate information to all team members, providing release time for teachers to undertake record-keeping and attend meetings, and scheduling several IEP meetings on one day and arrange for a relieving teacher.

10. There is widespread agreement that the involvement of parents in the education of their children overall and in the IEP process in particular is critical to the effectiveness of education for children with SEN.

11. There is extensive evidence for the effectiveness of active parental involvement in improving children's academic and social outcomes.

12. Studies of participation of parents in the IEP process indicate that practice is patchy, with limitations in both the quantity and quality of the involvement

13. A range of barriers to parental involvement in general and to participation in the IEP process in particular has been identified.

14. Strategies for overcoming these barriers and facilitating the participation of parents in the IEP process have been outlined.

15. To the maximum extent possible, students should be involved in developing their own IEPs.

16. In some situations, students can take the lead in the IEP process.

17. Students should understand the purposes and benefits of IEPs.

18. IEPs should be part of the curriculum for students with special educational needs, with a focus on participation skills, goal setting and self-determination.

19. Students should be prepared for participation in the IEP process through prior discussions with their teachers and given time to prepare for IEP meetings.

20. In the course of IEP meetings, parents and professionals should provide time and prompts for students to participate.

21. Consideration should be given to whether students should have the right to opt out of participating in developing their IEPs.

22. SENCos have a significant role in developing and monitoring IEPs.

23. In secondary schools, SENCos face considerable challenges in coordinating the writing of IEPs, keeping them up to date and linking with a wide range of subject teachers, tasks that involved excessive paperwork and which greatly reduced SENCos' availability to perform other key tasks.

24. There is some evidence that IEPs in secondary schools do not change teachers' approaches and have little impact on students' learning.

25. Recent moves in the UK are in the direction of:

   a. reducing the number of students for whom IEPs are required so that they apply only to those who have needs that are 'additional to' or 'different from' other

students in a differentiated curriculum;

b.   emphasising 'school action plans' that involve differentiation of teaching approaches;

c.   introducing the idea of students with similar needs having a 'Group Education Plan' (GEP), as distinct from IEPs.

26.   An even more radical suggestion is that whole-school strategies for meeting special educational needs might be more effective, efficient and inclusive than the current individualised system, as expressed in IEPs.

Curriculum and IEPs

*Ensuring that students with special needs can
access the general curriculum, while at the same time having
their essential needs met is
far from being unproblematic*

Introduction

In a very interesting, wide-ranging analysis of what should constitute an appropriate
curriculum for students with disabilities, Browder et al. (2004) commenced by recognising
that 'curriculum, the content of instruction, has been one of the most controversial areas in
education because determining what students will learn in school reflects both educational
philosophy and societal values' (p.211). They go on to trace the evolution of different
approaches to the curricula for students with disabilities.

The first approach was the *developmental model*, which emerged in the 1970s after PL94-
142 established the right for all students with disabilities to have a free, appropriate
education. In this model, educators adapted existing infant and early childhood curricula, on
the assumption that the educational needs of students with severe disabilities could best be
met by focusing on their mental age.

The second was the *functional model*, which was based on what was required to function in
the daily life of a community. By the late 1980s, according to Browder et al., a strong
consensus had emerged that curricula should focus on age-appropriate functional skills. This
typically involved selecting from a range of such skills those which best fitted a particular
student – hence the IEP.

The third model was described as an *additive model,* initially reflecting a focus on including
students with severe disabilities in general education classrooms and with a strong emphasis
on social inclusion and student self-determination (reflected, for example in 'person-centred
planning'). Browder et al. noted that with the continued efforts to promote inclusive
education, this additive curriculum focus became extended to embrace ways of enabling
students with disabilities to participate in the general education curriculum.

It is this third, and current, model that will form the basis of the following analysis.

Policies Requiring Access to the General Curriculum

With the advent of inclusive education policies and practices, many countries are addressing
the need for students with special educational needs to have access to the general education
curriculum. Thus, in the US, IDEA 1997, IDEIA 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act of
2001 specified that all students, including those with significant cognitive disabilities, must
have the opportunity to participate and progress in the general curriculum. As stated in the
IDEIA 04, IEPs must incorporate 'a statement of measurable annual goals, including
academic and functional goals, designed to … meet the child's needs that result from the

child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum' (IDEIA 2004 614(d)(I)(A)(i)(II)).

In interpreting these requirements, Pugach & Warger (2001) observed that

> Although the law still maintains the right of each student with disabilities to an individually referenced curriculum, outcomes linked to the general education program have become the optimal target. It is no longer enough for students with disabilities to be present in general education classrooms (p.194).

Even so, this requirement for students with special needs to access the general education curriculum is not always adhered to. For example, in a survey of 84 special education teachers in Iowa, Agran & Wehmeyer (2003) found that the majority were not frequently involved in curricular planning with regular teachers and half of the school districts represented did not have clear plans to involve students with disabilities in the general curriculum.

The notion of students with special educational needs having access to the general curriculum has long been a feature of New Zealand special education policy. Thus, in its *IEP guidelines*, the New Zealand Ministry of Education (1998) emphasised the place of the national curriculum in IEPs:

> The *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* recognises that all students are to have the opportunity to undertake study in the essential areas of learning and to develop essential skills. The principles of the framework are the basis of the Individual Education Programme (IEP) process and the criteria for judging the validity of all teaching and learning (p.1).

Similarly, the *National Administration Guidelines* (Ministry of Education, 2010) requires boards of trustees, through principals and staff, 'to provide all students in years 1-10 with opportunities to achieve success in all areas of the National Curriculum' (p.1). The current version of *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) also aims for inclusiveness and to meet the needs of all students, as reflected in the following statements:

> The New Zealand Curriculum applies to all English medium state schools (including integrated schools) and to all students in those schools, irrespective of their gender, sexuality, ethnicity, belief, ability or disability, social or cultural background, or geographical location. The term "students" is used throughout in this inclusive sense unless the context clearly relates to a particular group (p.6)

> Inclusion is 'one of the key principles of the curriculum 'that should underpin all school decision-making' (p.9).

> Each board of trustees, through the principal and staff, is required:

> - to gather information that is sufficiently comprehensive to enable evaluation of student progress and achievement;
> - to identify students and groups of students who are not achieving, who are at risk of not achieving, or who have special needs and to identify aspects of the curriculum that require particular attention; (p.44)

However, despite the earlier policy requirement, Thomson & Rowan (1995) in their examination of 195 IEPs, found that they gave little consideration to the general curriculum and that, indeed, some teachers viewed the IEP as the curriculum for students with disabilities.

Scotland is another country that seeks to ensure that students with special educational needs can access the common curriculum framework, while at the same time ensuring appropriate and targeted support (Riddell et al., 2006). This arrangement has been in place since the early 1990s, when the 5-14 Curriculum, with its accompanying Support for Learning pack, came into force. This material endorsed five strategies for customising the curriculum: differentiation, adaptation, enhancement, enrichment and elaboration. According to Riddell et al., these strategies would enable teachers to plan a suitable curriculum for individual students, while ensuring that their learning was framed by the national curriculum guidelines.

In contrast with the US, New Zealand and Scotland, some countries have separate curricula; one for mainstream students and the other for students with special educational needs. The Flemish community in Belgium is one such country (Riddell et al., 2006).

In the UK, a compromise has been reached with the introduction in 2006 of 'P Scales' to support the structured progression of students with special educational needs working towards level 1 of the National Curriculum. Beyond the level when P Scales are employed, Attainment Targets and Programmes of Study are designed to allow maximum participation in the National Curriculum for all students. To enable this to occur for those with special educational needs, teachers are encouraged to recognise that such students need time, support, carefully structured teaching programmes, and, in some cases, use of alternative means of communication. While modifications and exemptions to the national Curriculum can be written into students' Statements, it is hoped that the need for these would be minimised.

http://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/Education/SEN/SEN_The_National_Curriculum.asp

Adaptations and Modifications to the General Curriculum

According to Mitchell (2008), 'Making appropriate adaptations or modifications to the curriculum is central to inclusive education' (p.30). He describes curriculum in an inclusive classroom as having the following features:

- It is a single curriculum that is, as far as possible, accessible to *all* learners, including those with special educational needs. (Conversely, special educational needs are created when a curriculum is not accessible to all learners.)

- It includes activities that are age-appropriate, but are pitched at a developmentally appropriate level.

- Since an inclusive classroom is likely to contain students who are functioning at two or three levels of the curriculum, this means that multi-level teaching will have to be employed; or, at a minimum, adaptations will have to be made to take account of the student diversity.

- To make the curriculum accessible, consideration should be given to the following alternatives in relation to content, teaching materials, and the responses expected from the learners, as noted by Jönsson (1993):

- *modifications*: e.g., computer responses instead of oral responses;
- *substitutions:* e.g., Braille for written materials;
- *omissions:* e.g., omitting very complex work;
- *compensations*: e.g., self care skills, vocational skills.

Mitchell goes on to give an example of curriculum differentiation in South Africa, where, a 'curriculum ladder' is used to indicate how to adapt work according to the strengths and needs of individual learners (Department of Education, 2005). In spelling, for example,

- in step 1 educators ascertain if learners can work at the same level as their peers;
- in step 2 the learners may be able to do the same activity but with adapted expectations (e.g., fewer words);
- in step 3 they may be able to do the same activity but with adapted expectations and materials (e.g., matching words to pictures);
- in step 4 they may be able to do a similar activity but with adapted expectations (e.g., using words that are functional to the learners' environment);
- in step 5 they may be able to do a similar activity but with adapted materials (e.g., using a computer spelling programme);
- in step 6 they may be able to do a different, parallel activity (e.g., learning a computer programme with a spell check);
- in step 7 they may be able to carry out a practical and functional activity with assistance (e.g., playing with a word puzzle, flash cards etc, possibly assisted by a peer or a teaching assistant).

Several researchers have investigated ways in which IEPs can be connected with the general curriculum. For example, Fisher & Frey (2001) described a study in which students with 'significant disabilities' accessed the core curriculum in several regular classrooms. The authors concluded that, despite there being 'a disconnect between the IEP and curriculum and instruction' (p148), 'the findings… indicated that students with significant disabilities can and do access the core curriculum with appropriate accommodations and modifications' p.155). These accommodations and modifications are worth quoting at length:

- An **accommodation** is a change made to the teaching or testing procedures in order to provide a student with access to information and to create an equal opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Accommodations do not change the instructional level, content, or performance criteria for meeting standards. Examples of accommodations include enlarging the print, providing oral versions of tests, and using calculators.
- A **modification** is a change in what a student is expected to learn and/or demonstrate. A student may be working on modified course content, but the subject area remains the same as for the rest of the class. If the decision is made to modify the curriculum, it is done in a variety of ways, for a variety of reasons, with a variety of outcomes. Again, modifications vary according to the situation, lesson or activity. The four most common ways are listed here:
  - **Same, only less** – The assignment remains the same except that the number of items is reduced. The items selected should be representative areas of the curriculum. …

- o **Streamline the curriculum** – The assignment is reduced in size, breadth, or focus to emphasize the key points. …
- o **Same activity with infused objective** – The assignment remains the same, but additional components, such as IEP objectives or skills, are incorporated. This is often done in conjunction with other accommodations and/or modifications to ensure that all IEP objectives are addressed. …
- o **Curriculum overlapping** – The assignment for one class may be completed in another class. Students may experience difficulty grasping the connections between different subjects. In addition, some students work slowly and need additional time to complete assignments. This strategy is especially helpful for both of these situations…. (p.157)

Clayton et al. (2006) describe a four-step process for enabling students with significant cognitive disabilities to access the general curriculum. Step 1 involves identifying the appropriate content standard and what is the most basic concept or critical function that the standard defines. The second step is to define the learning outcome of instruction in a particular unit for all students and then consider the ways in which the complexity of what is required may be adjusted for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Step 3 involves identifying the instructional activities, ensuring that students with significant cognitive disabilities have equitable access to instruction and the curriculum provided to other students. The final step requires the targeting of specific objectives from the IEP for instruction within the unit. Clayton et al. note that in addition to grade-level curriculum standards, students with significant cognitive disabilities often need instruction in such areas as basic communication, motor skills, and social skills. They argue that 'by embedding these skills within the context of general education activities, the teacher gives students access to the curriculum as required by IDEA 2004 and NCLB, while still providing ongoing instruction on those essential basic skills' (p.25).

Other writers who have examined ways in which students with special educational needs can access the general curriculum include Sullivan (2003), who suggested that teachers should augment the general curriculum rather than replace it for such students; Udvari-Solner (1996), who described a process for designing curricular adaptations; Udvari-Solner & Thousand (1996), who outlined ways of creating responsive curricula for inclusive schools; and Janney & Snell (1997), who looked at curricular adaptations for students with moderate and severe disabilities in regular elementary classes.

Problems in Accessing the General Curriculum

Ensuring that students with special needs can access the general curriculum, while at the same time having their essential needs met is far from being unproblematic. In their recent review of special education in the ACT, Shaddock et al. (2009), for example, noted that several submissions to the review pointed out that 'what a student with a disability learns when participating in a lesson or course may not be what they actually need to learn' (p.66). This became particularly evident when the gap between such students' performance and that of their peers was too great, when the students lack the necessary skills to keep pace with the rest of the class, and when the focus of the teacher is more on getting through the course than on the mastery of essential content by all students.

In a similar vein, Karnoven & Huynh (2007) observed that evidence is suggesting that

curricula for students with significant disabilities have begun to 'shift away from functional approaches seen in the 1980s and 1990s to include more academics' (p.275). They thought that it was encouraging that 97% of the 292 IEPs for students with significant disabilities in their study contained academic objectives.

Summary

1. Approaches to conceptualising curricular for students with disabilities have moved from a developmental model in the 1970s, through a functional model in the 1980s and 1990s, to the contemporary model of embracing ways of enabling such students to participate in the general education curriculum.

2. In the US, IDEA 1997, IDEIA 2004 and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 specified that all students, including those with significant cognitive disabilities, must have the opportunity to participate and progress in the general curriculum.

3. The notion of students with special educational needs having access to the general curriculum has long been a feature of New Zealand special education policy.

4. To make the curriculum accessible, consideration should be given to the following alternatives in relation to content, teaching materials, and the responses expected from the learners: (a) modifications (e.g., computer responses instead of oral responses, enlarging the print), (b) substitutions (e.g., Braille for written materials); (c) omissions (e.g., omitting very complex work); and (d) compensations (e.g., self care skills).

5. Other modifications can include (a) expecting the same, but only less, (b) streamlining the curriculum by reducing its size or breadth, (c) employing the same activity but infusing IEP objectives, and (d) curriculum overlapping to help student grasp the connections between different subjects, for example.

Assessment and IEPs

*Experience has shown us, in education,
what gets measured gets taught.
(National Science Board, 2006)*

Introduction

In the previous section, we saw how the trend in western countries was for students with special educational needs to participate and progress in the general curriculum, albeit with appropriate modifications and adaptations. In this section, we will explore parallel issues, namely the extent to which such students are expected to participate in a country's national or state assessment regimes and what, if any, alternate assessment procedures are permitted. Both trends are part of the wider concern for standards-based reform in education that is dominating much of the educational and political discourse around the world. The vast bulk of literature on modified and alternate assessment has emanated from the US and this section of our review reflects that.

Policies Requiring Access to General Education Accountability Systems

United States. Until recently, in the US, accountability in special education was defined in terms of progress in meeting IEP goals. This all changed in IDEA 97, which required all students, including those with disabilities, to participate in their states' accountability systems. This was followed by a policy memorandum from the U.S. Department of Education (2000), to the effect that an exemption from a state's assessment programmes was no longer an option for students with disabilities. Both IDEA 97 and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) of 2002 required the provision of alternate assessment for students who could not participate in state or district assessments with or without accommodations. Districts are permitted to measure up to 3% of their students using alternate assessments (1% against alternate achievement standards and 2% against modified standards – a distinction that will be described in more detail below). The use of alternate assessment is a decision to be made by a student's IEP team. To quote IDEIA, IEPs must include 'a statement of any appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on state- and district-wide assessments' (IDEIA, 2004, p.118). As well, the NCLBA stipulated that student performance be disaggregated by special education status, among others, and, to avoid sanctions, by 2013/2014 schools must show that students in various subgroups are making adequate yearly progress toward mastering content standards.

At this juncture, it is worth quoting at length a personal communication we received from David Egnor, Assistant Division Director, National Initiatives, Research to Practice Division, Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education:

> … one of the main pushes in the U.S. particularly among special education

administrators, but also teachers, is to develop standards-based IEPs. I believe that standards-based IEPs are becoming much more attractive from an administrative point of view as a direct result of our country's increasing focus on standards-based educational reform … and which will ratchet up even further under the Obama administration. That is, requiring standards-based IEPs for every student with a disability (not currently required for all students with disabilities, although things are moving that way) provides a way, from an administrative perspective, to more efficiently administer and monitor special education service delivery and to do so within a standards-based accountability environment, where, in the past, special education practice historically focused more on individualized services and outcomes for students with disabilities. My view is that the growth of standards-based IEPs in the U.S. is a clear sign that special education practice is undergoing fairly significant changes that are directly tied to standards-based reform under the ESEA/NCLB and the next iteration of our main federal education law currently under consideration in the US Congress. I think that what we are seeing with regard to standards-based IEPs is an outgrowth of the special education inclusion movement, where as a field special education attempts to make the general education environment more accessible to students with disabilities. Given the focus on standards-based educational reform, it is not surprising that special education administrators, in particular, seek a way to join with the standards-based movement through the IEP development process and, as a result, students' IEPs are emphasizing general education standards more and more. Although a standards-based IEP should not limit the services a student receives (just standardize, to some extent, the educational outcomes we expect), I think that this movement may be unintentionally limiting services for some students with disabilities. I also think that more work needs to be done to explicate how individualization (equity) for students with disabilities can co-exist within the growing context of standards-based reform (excellence).

According to Defur (2002), the thinking behind the earlier requirements was two-fold. Firstly, it was assumed that higher expectations would lead to higher achievement for students with disabilities. Previously, the educational progress of such students had been limited by low expectations, which in turn narrowed their access to the general curriculum and to higher achievement. The second assumption was that assessment information on students with disabilities would lead to improved instructional programmes, which in turn would lead to improved student outcomes. It would seem that this rationale still applies.

England and Wales. In England, tasks and tests set for assessment at the end of Key Stages 2 and 3 (for students aged 11 and 14, respectively) are designed to monitor attainment targets for each of the National Curriculum subjects, and are expected to be accessible to the vast majority of students, including those with *special educational needs.* However, those children in Key Stage 2 working at level 1 or below of the National Curriculum eight-level scale are assessed by teacher assessment alone. Similarly, at Key Stage 3, students working at or below level 2 of the National Curriculum scale are assessed by teacher assessment and not by statutory national testing. If a student's statement of special educational needs modifies the statutory assessment arrangements, the provisions within the statement should be followed in respect of the statutory tests and tasks. With regard to the GCSEs and GCE A levels, although the same examinations are available for students with special educational need*s* as for other students, special arrangements in examinations may be made for *some* of them. The nature of these arrangements is determined according to the assessment needs of

the individual student, but must not give him or her an unfair advantage over other students. Some may be awarded extra time to complete the assessment task, or may be permitted to take supervised breaks or rest periods during the examination. For visually impaired students, the visual presentation of the papers may be changed by, for example, the use of large print or simplified layout of the examination paper, or by the use of Braille versions of the papers. Other candidates may have questions read to them; flashcards may be used to assist hearing-impaired candidates in mental arithmetic tests; or typewritten, word processed or transcribed responses may be accepted from students who are unable to write. Some candidates may also be allowed to take their examinations at a venue other than the examination centre, for example, at home or in hospital (see http://www.inca.org.uk/wales-sources-special.html#31)

In England, too, the 'P Scales', referred to earlier in the section on Curriculum, can also be employed to provide a means of assessing students with special educational needs for accountability and school improvement purposes, prior to them becoming eligible for assessment on national instruments. These P Scales have eight levels against which students' progress can be mapped. However, Riddell et al. (2006) while recognising that P Scales are helpful for curriculum planning, noted that 'whether they will be useful in terms of tracking and comparing the progress of pupils with special educational needs has yet to be fully assessed' (p.5).

Scotland. According to Riddell et al. (2006), in Scotland there are 'ongoing difficulties in devising a national system of assessment which is able to recognise the progress of all pupils' (p.5). The Standard Grade system, they point out, is regarded as too difficult for some students with special educational needs, particularly those with significant difficulties in numeracy and literacy.

New Zealand. Three policies refer to requirements to take students' special educational needs into account in the assessment process in New Zealand.

Firstly the *National Administration Guidelines* (Ministry of Education, 2010a) requires each board of trustees, through the principal and staff, to, *inter alia*:

    a.   on the basis of good quality assessment information, identify students and groups of students:

        i.   who are not achieving;

        ii.   who are at risk of not achieving

        iii.   who have special needs; and

        iv.   aspects of the curriculum which require particular attention

    b.   develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to address the needs of students and aspects of the curriculum identified in (c) above;

Secondly, the National Certificate in Education has a set of 'special assessment conditions' (NZQA, 2010). Their specifications include the following:

    a.   Special assessment conditions are approved by NZQA to give eligible candidates with a permanent or long-term medical, physical or specific learning disability that directly impacts on their ability to be fairly assessed, access to assessment for national qualifications. These conditions allow

eligible candidates to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding in assessment, without providing unfair advantage over other candidates.

b. Evidence of need must be established by a current report from an independent, registered professional recommending special assessment conditions to address the candidate's specified needs. The report should be completed in time for the first year of assessment for national qualifications, and remains valid for three years. Where schools do not have evidence from an independent, registered professional, but have **appropriate alternative documented evidence**, this should be submitted annually to NZQA with the application for approval. …

f. Schools and NZQA can offer appropriate special assessment conditions from the list below:

   i.   **Standard conditions**
      Reader assistance
      Writer assistance
      Reader/writer assistance
      Separate accommodation
      Computer use
      Extra time (not available when the time allowed for external standards entered is 150 minutes or less)
      Enlarged papers (to A3 only)
      Braille papers

   ii.   Exceptional conditions
      Special papers
      Rest breaks
      Home Supervision
      Signer

   iii.   Conditions must reflect the candidate's normal way of working, for which there is documented evidence of need, unless such conditions would affect the integrity of the assessment …

h. Special assessment conditions will not be granted for candidates identified only with "low intellectual ability" and no specific learning disability. …

The third assessment policy that takes account of students with special educational needs can be found in the recent *National Standards* (Ministry of Education, 2010b).

Most students with special education needs will be able to progress against and achieve the standards. A very small group of students have very significant learning disabilities; and are in the Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes (ORRS) or are accessing the Supplementary Learning Support service; and are likely to learn long-term within Level 1 of the New Zealand Curriculum. These students' progress will be assessed against the standards as part of their individual education plans. Boards of trustees will continue to report on these students separately in their charters and annual reports.

In their report to the Ministry of Education on *Curriculum Policy and Special Education*

Support, McMenamin, Millar, Morton, Mutch, Nuttall & Tyler-Merrick (2004) present their review of the literature and five case studies of curriculum and assessment practices for students with special educational needs in New Zealand schools. McMenamin et al. (2004) found that where schools were teaching students with high or very high needs – still working to achieve learning outcomes described at Level 1 in the *New Zealand Curriculum*– most schools described reporting on these students on an individual basis only. The schools acknowledged that this could make it difficult to meet their requirements to report to ERO on a school wide basis, and it was difficult to produce a report that was "meaningful." These students did not participate in any national assessment programmes; these were seen as "nonsense" and that students would "skew the results." Other teachers suggested that there was a "problem with aggregated reporting because students with special education needs dramatically lower the means." The IEP plays an important role in assessment and reporting for many of these students. Teachers drew on other tools (such as developmental checklists) to gather information and choose next steps. One school described their aim of using attainment of IEP goals as the basis for school-wide reporting on students with special education needs. However the teacher cautioned that there could be as much danger in "teaching to the checklist" as there is in "teaching to the test." Teachers also described the importance of relating IEP goals to the curriculum goals. One school had elaborate school and teaching plans (including plans for assessment) detailing the connections between various assessment tools and the curriculum statements – mostly at level 1 achievement objectives, with some level 2 for science and maths, and many at a 'preparatory' level. Three schools described how – in addition to reporting to IEP goals – data for their students were included in milestone reports for the Ministry of Education. One school kept testing and re-testing data "to see if we're making a difference."

At the secondary level, participation in NCEA was seen as problematic for various reasons:

- Individual student performance could be negatively affected as students with special education needs could have more frequent absences (e.g. due to higher health needs), including missing testing
- For some students NCEA could be achievable with appropriate support
- For other students an alternative assessment was more appropriate.

One school reflected on the lack of an assessment or award which would allow students with very high needs to celebrate what they had achieved in their years at school, and all of the work that could go in to achieving at Level 1.

McMenamin et al. (2004) concluded that there was still considerable work to do in the development of meaningful methods to report on students' progress, at the level of the individual student as well as in any aggregated form. These authors noted that the few studies that had paid attention to the relationships between assessment and curriculum for students with special education needs have put forward two arguments in particular. First, there needs to be better collaboration between educators with expertise in teaching a diverse range of students and teachers with expertise in curriculum development. Second, there needs to be similar collaboration between the development of assessment and curriculum policy resources.

In 2006 the Ministry of Education called for the development of the *New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars for Learners with Special Education Needs* (Ministry of Education,

2009a). The original *New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars* (Ministry of Education, 2003) were designed to support assessment of student learning using the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993): "An exemplar is an authentic piece of student work, annotated to illustrate learning, achievement, and quality in relation to the levels in the national curriculum statement." The *New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars for Learners with Special Education Needs* are related to the current *New Zealand Curriculum* (*NZC*) (Ministry of Education, 2007) in three important ways:

1. These exemplars provide authentic examples of students work, annotated by teachers, which illustrate learning in the Key Competencies in the context of the Learning Areas.

2. These exemplars are explicitly linked to the section on Effective Pedagogy in the NZC.

3. The students whose work features in these exemplars are working long-term within Level 1 of the NZC.

The team developing these exemplars also produced the accompanying resource, *Narrative Assessment: A Guide for Teachers* (Ministry of Education, 2009b). Parents and teachers described how narrative assessment, also known as learning stories, had made an impact on their relationships with teachers and schools:

Some parents also noted that narrative assessment made a difference to the nature of the goals and objectives developed through the Individual Education Programme (IEP) process (Ministry of Education, 2007b). In particular, they felt that learning stories capture a sense of progress in learning and the impacts of that learning on important life outcomes that is sometimes missing from IEPs.

An earlier study (Lepper, Williamson, and Cullen, 2003) on the use of learning stories in the IEP process suggests that parents feel more comfortable with this approach to assessment and, as a result, more empowered to contribute to the IEP process. Participants in this study identified various ways in which learning stories contributed to stronger relationships between parents and others contributing to the IEP process (Ministry of Education, 2009b, p.13).

In the absence of revised guidelines for the development and use of IEPs, the release of the *NZC* with the Key Competencies, and with the subsequent release of *The New Zealand Curriculum Exemplars for Learners with Special Education Needs*, we are aware that teachers and schools have begun to devise new IEP formats. With the permission of schools and families, we have included examples of these newer IEP formats in Appendix Three.

Adaptations, Modifications and Alternate Assessment

Geenen & Ysseldyke (1997) identified six types of accountability systems relating to the extent to which students with disabilities are included in assessment regimes:

Total inclusion. This type establishes a single set of standards, with one assessment programme for all students, including those with disabilities. At the time of writing (1997), two US states had developed portfolio-assessment programmes that covered all students.

Partial inclusion. Here there is one set of standards for all students, with alternate or modified standards for students with disabilities. Many states were adopting this arrangement.

Dual systems. This type involves two sets of standards: one for students without disabilities and another one for students with disabilities, the latter usually focussed on 'functional' objectives.

Multiple systems. Here there is one set of standards for students without disabilities and multiple sets of standards for those with disabilities, usually based on their disability category.

Total exclusion. In this type, students with disabilities are excluded from standard-setting efforts, statewide assessments, and databased reporting procedures. Usually, the IEP is seen as sufficient for accountability purposes, despite the difficulty in aggregating their outcomes.

System-based. This sets standards on a system rather than an individual basis. Here, students with disabilities 'count' in the overall statistics.

Research relating to one or more of the models as outlined by Geenen & Ysseldyke (1997) has been reported in the literature.

For example, in a paper by Defur (2002), the Virginia state assessment programme was outlined. This state employed the *total inclusion model*, albeit with accommodations/modifications/exemptions in parts of the tests for students with disabilities (the author pointed out that after her study, Virginia eliminated the use of total exemptions). It is interesting to note that 98 special education administrators in the state identified some intended and unintended consequences of this assessment policy. Among the intended consequences were (a) 'some degree of benefit for students with disabilities' - reported by 83% of the respondents, (b) 'access to the general curriculum' (73%), and (c) 'improved daily performance by students with disabilities' (but only 21% noted this) (p.206). There were also unintended, negative consequences of the policy. These included (a) higher rates of academic failure (reported by 51% of the administrators), (b) lower self-esteem among students with disabilities (50%), and (c) concerns that these students would experience higher drop-out rates (44%). As well, some were of the opinion that standards should be lowered (33%) and that accommodation options should be increased (37%). And, finally, 55% of the respondents expressed the belief that special education teachers were not adequately trained to assist students with disabilities to meet Virginia's assessment standards.

In full inclusion assessment models, with no exemptions or accommodations permitted, there is a risk that 'the accountability procedures may have the incidental effect of discouraging schools from taking on children who are likely to perform poorly in examinations, of encouraging schools to expel children whom they find difficult to teach, or of tempting schools to omit children with learning difficulties from testing programmes' (OECD, 1999). As proof of this danger, OECD cites a study by Thurlow in 1997 in which it was found that two-thirds of students with disabilities in US schools had been excluded from a National Assessment of Educational Progress. Thus, 'high stakes' assessments, and associated 'league tables' can have the effects of jeopardising inclusive education (Dyson, 2005; Slee, 2005; McLaughlin & Jordan, 2005). As Watkins & D'Alessio (2009) point out, this risk can be exacerbated by the effects of international comparative studies of educational standards –

most notably OECD's PISA studies

A second study, involving the *partial inclusion model,* was reported by Browder et al. (2004). Subject specialists and experts in severe disabilities from 31 US states were surveyed and interviewed regarding their views on the extent to which alternate assessment content was aligned with academic and functional curricula in maths and the language arts. The findings were quite mixed, with some states rated as having a high degree of alignment and some having missed the mark. The authors also noted that their results suggested that the alternate assessments included in their study had a strong focus on academic skills, but also reflected an approach that linked academic and functional skills, one which they referred to as 'a blended curriculum approach' (p.221). Browder et al. concluded with the recommendation that states should include both content area specialists and experts in severe disabilities in validating performance indicators used in alternate assessment. In another paper by the same authors (Browder et al. 2003) some lessons to be drawn from their research are outlined. These included the need to develop research into (a) ways of teaching students with severe disabilities the more advanced academic skills that were being expected under the US legislation, (b) the impact of alternate assessment in general, and (c) the optimal way of blending functional and academic curricular priorities, and hence assessment approaches. And, finally, they argued that 'We also need to avoid a transformative approach in which academics become the replacement curriculum' (p.179).

In a similar vein, Ford et al (2001) pose some pertinent, albeit rhetorical, questions. Firstly, when a state develops separate standards for students with disabilities, is it suggesting there is no overlap between the 98% of the students included in the regular assessment and the 2% who are not? Secondly, when states elect to use identical standards for those participating in alternate assessment, 'does this mean that all students should be held to the same set of standards – and that these are the only valued areas of learning?' (p.215).

In another US study involving Geenen & Ysseldyke's (1997) partial inclusion model, Ketterlin-Geller et al. (2007) investigated the consistency of test accommodations across 38 3rd grade students' IEPs, teachers' recommendations, and students' performance data. They defined accommodations as representing 'changes in the medium through which information is presented, the response formats, the external environment, or the timing of the testing situation that are designed to mediate the effects of a student's disability that inhibit understanding or expression of domain-specific knowledge' (p.194). They found significant differences among all three of the comparisons, i.e., students' IEPs, teachers' recommendations, and students' performance data. For example, individual teachers often made accommodation decisions without support from the IEP team and there was little correspondence between the accommodations listed on IEPs and teacher recommendations. As Ketterlin-Geller observed, 'IEPs were more likely to make errors of omission, whereas teachers were more apt to make errors of commission in recommending accommodations' (p.203). With respect to the latter errors, the researchers commented that by making decisions without recognition of the IEP, teachers may be subverting the legal requirements and that this may significantly affect student success by withholding accommodations or by providing unnecessary accommodations. This, they concluded, compromises both students' needs and the accountability systems set up to ensure that their needs are being met. 'The current system', they stated, 'needs improvement' (p.205).

In yet another US study, Karnoven & Huynh (2007) investigated the relationship between

IEP characteristics and test scores on an alternate assessment instrument for students with significant cognitive disabilities. They found that whereas the curriculum emphasised in IEPs and alternate assessments were aligned for some students, for others they were not. They concluded that teachers of such students, who may have operated outside the general education curriculum for many years, 'need professional development on state academic standards, alternate achievement standards, and curriculum design that goes beyond functional domains' (p.291). As well, they argued that there is a need to create standards-based IEPs and that test developers must contribute to improving the curriculum-assessment link.

For other studies of alternate assessments and some attendant concerns, see papers by Browder et al., 2003c; Crawford & Tindall, 2006; Kohl et al., 2006; NAREM Associates, in cooperation with OECD, 2005; Rabinowitz et al., 2008; Salend, 2008; Thompson & Thurlow, 2000; Turner et al., 2000; and Zatta & Pullin, 2004.

In the US, the National Center on Educational Outcomes has published extensively on alternate assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities (see Lazarus et al., 2010a and 2010b; Olson, et al., 2002; and Quenemoen et al., 2003). These documents are too lengthy to summarise here, but suffice to say they provide information on States' accommodation policies on alternate assessments and guidelines for such assessments. Other useful guides to alternate assessment are to be found in the recently published book by Bolt & Roach (2009) and in publications from the US Department of Education, particularly those relating to its policy for including students with disabilities in standards-based assessment used in determining 'adequate yearly progress' (Technical Work Group on Including Students with Disabilities in Large Scale Assessments, 2006).

Some definitions of Assessment Accommodations and Alternate Assessments

Basically, there are two types of adjustments to nation- or state-wide assessments.

Assessments with accommodations. This involves making changes to the assessment process but not the essential content. Braden et al. (2001) describes accommodations as alterations to the setting, timing, administration and types of responses in assessments. Here, assessors need to distinguish between accommodations necessary for students to access or express the intended learning content and the content itself.

Alternate assessments. As defined by the US Department of Education (2003), alternate assessments are defined as assessments 'designed for the small number of students with disabilities who are unable to participate in the regular State assessment, even with appropriate accommodations' (p.68699). They refer to materials collected under several circumstances, including: teacher observations, samples of students' work produced during regular classroom instruction, and standardised performance tasks. Further, alternate assessments should have:

- a clearly defined structure
- guidelines for which students may participate
- clearly defined scoring criteria and procedures
- a report format that clearly communicates student performance in terms of the

academic achievement standards defined by the State

- high technical quality, including validity, reliability, accessibility, objectivity, which apply, as well, to regular State assessments.

Quenemoen et al. (2003) provide more detailed definitions and examples of the following alternate assessment approaches:

Portfolio: a collection of student work gathered to demonstrate student performance on specific skills and knowledge, generally linked to state content standards. Portfolio contents are individualized and may include wide ranging samples of student learning, including but not limited to actual student work, observations recorded by multiple persons on multiple occasions, test results, record reviews, or even video or audio records of student performance…

IEP Linked Body of Evidence: Similar to a portfolio approach, this is a collection of student work demonstrating student achievement on standards-based IEP goals and objectives measured against predetermined scoring criteria…This evidence may meet dual purposes of documentation of IEP progress and the purpose of assessment.

Performance Assessment: Direct measures of student skills or knowledge, usually in a one-on-one assessment. These can be highly structured, requiring a teacher or test administrator to give students specific items or tasks similar to pencil/paper traditional tests, or it can be a more flexible item or task that can be adjusted based on student needs. For example, the teacher and the student may work through an assessment that uses manipulatives and the teacher observes whether the student is able to perform the assigned tasks….

Checklist: Lists of skills, reviewed by persons familiar with a student who observe or recall whether students are able to perform the skills and to what level. Scores reported are usually the number of skills that the student is able to successfully perform, and the settings and purposes where the skill was performed.

Traditional (pencil/paper or computer) test: Traditionally constructed items requiring student responses, typically with a correct and incorrect forced-choice answer format. These can be completed independently by groups of students with teacher supervision, or they can be administered in one-on-one assessment with teacher recording of answers.

For useful descriptions of alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities, see Perner (2007), who gives examples of various States' methods, such as portfolio and performance-based assessments referred to above.

A Final Comment on Inclusive Assessment

As might have become apparent in the foregoing, there is a tension between the need for schools to ascertain students' level of achievement for accountability purposes and the need to take account of what is best educationally for students with special educational needs (Bauer, 2003). This distinction is sometimes referred to 'assessment *of* learning' (or summative assessment), compared with 'assessment *for* learning' (or formative assessment)

(Harlen, 2007; Watkins & D'Alessio, 2009). If the purpose is to compare students against pre-determined standards, then the former is best suited; if the purpose is to improve learning, the latter should be used.

In recent years, the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education has argued that assessment processes contribute to or hinder the process of inclusion (see various documents on the Agency's website: www.european-agency.org). Thus, it has focused on what it refers to as 'inclusive assessment', which it defines as:

> An approach to assessment in mainstream settings where policy and practice are designed to promote the learning of all pupils as far as possible. The overall goal of inclusive assessment is that all assessment policies and procedures should support and enhance the successful inclusion and participation of all pupils vulnerable to exclusion, including those with SEN (Watkins, 2007, p.47).

Educational policy-makers, then, must optimise both the needs of the system and those of its students.

Summary

The literature indicates the following:

1. Increasingly, students with special educational needs, including those with significant cognitive disabilities, are being expected to participate in their countries' national or state assessment regimes.

2. High stakes' assessments can have the effects of jeopardising inclusive education, a risk that can be exacerbated by the effects of international comparative studies of educational standards.

3. In the US, legislation since IDEA 1997 does not allow such students to be exempted from their states' assessment programmes. Instead, educational authorities are required to provide alternate assessment for students who cannot participate in state or district assessments with or without accommodations. IEPs now must include a statement of any accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of such students on state- and district-wide assessments.

4. The main types of alternate assessments comprise portfolios, IEP-linked bodies of evidence, performance assessments, checklists and traditional paper and pencil tests.

5. The assumptions underlying these provisions are twofold: (a) that higher expectations will lead to improved instructional programmes and (b) that these will lead in turn to higher student achievement.

6. The requirements for all students to participate in state- and district-wide assessments have been shown in some research to have had unintended negative consequences for students with disabilities, including higher rates of academic failure, lower self-esteem, and concerns that they would experience higher drop-out rates.

7. Countries or states should include both content area specialists and experts in severe disabilities in validating performance indicators used in alternate assessment.

8. With the shift to all students being required to participate in their countries' national or state assessment regimes, teachers of students with disabilities will need professional development on their country's or state's academic standards, alternate achievement standards, and curriculum design that goes beyond functional domains.

9. In determining assessment policies, it is important to recognise and resolve as far as possible the tensions between measuring the health of the education system and protecting the interests of students with special educational needs.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

We have reviewed 319 references bearing directly or indirectly on IEPs. An annotated bibliography was constructed using 199 of these references. The majority of the references are from the US; 14 references are from New Zealand. There continues to be a dearth of reported studies on how the IEP process is working for Māori students and their whānau, or for Pasifika students and their families. We would like to make a number of points arising from our reflections on the topic of IEPs.

Firstly, it is clear that IEPs provide a window on special education, indeed on education in general. Thus, they raise issues to do with inclusive education, assessment and accountability, assessment for learning, curriculum, pedagogy, collaboration, culture, rights, equity, power, policies, legislation, and the place of individuals in society.

Secondly, it is clear that IEPs should not be primarily designed to fit the student with special needs into existing systems, but rather, they should also lead to those systems being reformed so as to better accommodate diversity.

Thirdly, we believe that any future policies on IEPs and their implementation should be evidence-driven and data-based.

Our fourth point is that collaboration between schools and families is often compromised when IEPS are included in processes determining access to services or resources. The place of IEPs in assessment for learning can be undermined when the same document is used to emphasise students' needs. A strengths or credit-based approach to IEPs is supported by the *New Zealand Curriculum.*

Our fifth point is that students can and should be able to participate in their own IEPs. Learning to self-assess and to set goals for learning is important of all students; these are key competencies in the *New Zealand Curriculum.*

And, finally, in examining the role of IEPs we believe that they should ultimately lead to a high standard of education for students with special educational needs, as reflected in improved educational outcomes and the best possible quality of life for such students.

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APPENDICES

IEPs Codes

A. Assessment for IEPs and its alignment with standards for all students

      AX   general assessment issues
      A1   Alternate assessment
      A2   Educational Standards
      A3   Outcome assessment

B. Barriers to development of IEPs and ways of overcoming them

      BX   General barriers
      B1   Lack of training in processes and in relevant knowledge, Person-Centred Planning
      B2   Mass-produced, computer-generated IEPs
      B3   Time
      B4   Lack of assessment information
      B5   Excessive paperwork
      B6   Not used in practice

C. Collaboration, partnership in developing IEPs

      C1   Introduction: collaboration principles, equity, reciprocity, rights, choice, culture
      C2   Parents/families
      C3   Students
      C4   Regular education teachers
      C5   Special education teachers
      C6   SENCos
      C7   Other specialists/therapists/community agencies
      C8   Team composition in general
      C9   Discrepancies between collaborative intent and actuality

DX. Widespread use/ Terminology/Origins/ Purposes (e.g. funding)

E. Incorporation of evidence-based practices

      E1   Evidence-based programmes

F. Curriculum/Content

      FX   General curriculum issues
      F1   Curriculum goals (academic, other), individuation
      F2   Access to core curriculum
      F3   Careers
      F4   Peer interaction

GX. Transition plans

HX. Effectiveness of IEPs

I. The legal position of IEPs

        I1   IEP laws

J. Functional Behaviour Analysis & Behaviour Intervention Plans

        J1   FBA
        J2   BIPs

KX. Critique of underlying assumptions

LX. General guidelines

Annotated Bibliography

Summary of Studies of Individual Education Plans Arranged Alphabetically

Author(s)	Date	Place	Participants[1]	Focus	Type of Study	Major Findings
Agran & Wehmeyer	2002 A1 AX FX	USA	Students and Special Education Teachers	Access to the curriculum and assessment	Survey	• Majority of special ed teachers infrequently involved in curricular planning with regular teachers • Half of schools did not involve students in the general curriculum • Most teachers suggested students with disabilities should be assessed on criteria based on their IEPs, but it should be aligned with standards for all students
Alberta Teachers' Fed	2009 B1	Canada	General education teachers	Implementing IEPs	Analysis	• Many classroom teachers lack the training and knowledge to implement IEPs
Allen et al.	2001 C3	USA	Students with moderate mental retardation	Students' participation in IEP meetings after being taught a Self-Directed IEP package	Intervention with multiple baseline design	• Summarises IEPs, sometimes known as Family Support Plans, Inclusive Support Plans, Education Support Plans Negotiated Curriculum Plans, etc.
Ashman & Elkins	2009 DX	Australia	General	Overview text	Description	• Through a student-led IEP process, students develop a better understanding of their own strengths & needs • Transition outcomes are more meaningful • Students are coached by their special education teachers and classroom programmes designed to familiarise students with laws
Barrie & McDonald	2002 C3 GX	USA	Students	Administrative support for student led IEPs	Description	• Through a student-led IEP process, students develop a better understanding of their own strengths & needs • Transition outcomes are more meaningful • Students are coached by their special education teachers and classroom programmes designed to familiarise students with laws
Bauer et al.	2003 FX AX DX C2	Europe	General	Recommendations for SEN policy makers re inclusion	Survey of inclusion in Europe	• Access to appropriate forms of the curriculum planned for through IEPs • Assessment should focus on added value • Most countries make use of IEPs • Parent involvement seen as crucial

1 The terminology used in the original articles is retained.

Bevan-Brown 2006	C1	NZ Maori students	Culturally appropriate special	education services	Survey	• Need for culturally appropriate services • Describes strategies for encouraging greater Maori involvement in special education, including devolution ofdecision-making powers to Maori
Bolt & Roach 2009	AX A1	USA	Students with diverse needs	Alternate assessments for students with disabilities	Review of six states'provisions	• Overview of key concepts in understanding & implementing alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards in US
Brigham et al. 2004	B2	USA	General	Nature of IEPs	Analysis	• Many IEPs are mass produced and lack individualisation
British Columbia MoE	2010 C4 C5 C3 C7 DX GX	Canada	General	Manual of policies, procedures &guidelines	Description	• Specifies content of IEPs • Outlines transition plans • Explains roles & responsibilities • Outlines steps in developing IEPs
Browder & Cooper-Duffy	2003 E1	USA	Students with severe disabilities	Incorporating evidence-based practices in IEPs	Analysis and review of literature on evidence-based practices	• A snapshot of research-based practices • that are relevant to the NCLB focus on • accountability and AYP
Browder et al.	2004 A1 F1 FX	USA	General	Aligning alternate assessment content with academic and functional curricula	Survey of curriculum experts and educators	• Alternate assessments have a strong • focus on academic skills, but also reflect an additive curricular approach linking academic and functional skills • Specifying exact skills to be assessed is inconsistent with recommendations to personalise curriculum for students with severe disabilities through the IEP
Browder et al.	2003 A1 F1	USA	General students with severe disabilities	Curricular philosophies in states' alternate assessment indicators	Analysis	• Alternate assessment is creating an era in which curriculum may have a strong focus on academics • This has the potential of creating higher expectations for students with severe disabilities
Buck et al.	2000 J1 J2	USA	Students with Behavioural disabilities	Legal requirements for FBA and BIPs	Description	• Outlines elements related to BIPs with guidelines for school personnel
Callicott	2003 C1	USA	Families	Culturally sensitive collaboration within person-centred planning	Analysis with vignettes	• Describes process of person-centred planning in context of working with individuals and families of other cultures and languages
Campbell et al.	1995 F1	USA	Students with disabilities	Selecting curriculum goals to be used in IEPs	Description of an approach	• Describes use of a Team • Environmental Assessment Mapping System to develop an appropriate curriculum

Carnine & Granzin	2001 A1 A2 A3 F1	USA	Students	Evaluation of instructional practices, curricula & educational practices	Description of model	• Describes a model to assist special educators to access practical & trustworthy information regarding educational tools & practices • Emphasises critical role of expectations • Outlines refinement to IEP process to establish assessment of individual learning
Catone & Brady	2005 F1	USA	High school students with reading difficulties	Adequacy of IEP goals for addressing word-level reading difficulties	Analysis of 54 high school students' IEPs	• Basic skills deficits that persist in upper grades are not sufficiently targeted for remediation
Clark	2000 C8 GX	USA		IEP as a tool for collaboration	Advice	• Discusses IEP team composition, parent participation, and student participation, including general and special educators • Provides indicators of effective collaboration • Describes transition plans
Clayton et al.	2006 F1 F2	USA	Students with significant cognitive disabilities	Accessing the general education curriculum	Description	• Describes a 4-step process for accessing the general education curriculum • Notes that in IDEA 2004 IEPs must include goals to enable the child to be 'involved in & make progress in the general education curriculum'
Collet-Klingenberg	1998 GX C2 C3	USA	Students	Transition-related practices and their effects on student experiences	Case study of one school	• A gap between expressed importance of student and parent involvement by school staff & service providers and actual degree of involvement in transition-related activities (e.g., IEP meetings) • Positive effect of school-based & community-based transition teams on transition practices
Cooper	1996 C2 C3 HX	UK	General	1. EPs in Code of Practice 2. Concept of IEPs 3. Assessment for IEPs	Analysis	• Effectiveness of IEPs depends on range and quality of data • Parents and students should be fullyinvolved & understand IEP • Evaluation process is important
Dabkowski	2004 C2	USA	Parents	Encouraging active parent participation in IEPs	Guidance	• Focuses on parent-teacher partnerships • Provides practical guidance
Dalley et al.	2008 C1 C6 C9	USA	High school resource room teachers	Perceptions of system-wide collaboration on students with IEPs	Survey	• Differences between perceptions of what was important in collaboration and what existed in schools
Davis	2008 C2 C4 C7	Australia	Schools and social resources in community	Collaboration and partnerships among parents, schools & community agencies	Description	• Describes how IEPs and ITPs provide the means to negotiate & review goals in partnerships with parents & social resources in community

Defur	2002 A2 F1	USA	Special education administrators	Education reform, high-stakes assessment and students with disabilities	Survey	• General support for the inclusion of students with disabilities in the standards movement, but cautions regarding unintended consequences • Educational standards must address competencies beyond academic skills & must educate beyond the classroom and into the community
Drasgow et al.	2001 C2 E1 I1 KX	USA	General	4. Relationship between IEP and FAPE. 5. IEP process in DEA 97. 6. Analysis of legal cases 7. Guidelines for legally correct & educationally appropriate IEPs	Analysis	• Importance of parent involvement • Important to adhere to IEP rules when designing programmes • IEPs should be based on researchbased educational programmes
Dufresne	2003 E1 KX	Canada	General	Critique of IEPs	Opinion piece	• Mentions that students with special needs count twice in schools' rolls • IEPs can lead to identification of more problems • Argues for data-driven IEPs
Eisenman &Chamberlin	2001 C3 B1	USA	High school students with and without disabilities	The implementation and assessment of self-determination activities	Participant observation, surveys, observations, interviews, student assessments	• Participants recognised that self-determination is valuable for all students • Students need multiple opportunities over time to develop skills in goal setting, plan development, monitoring and adjusting • Educators can help foster self determination by including students in IEP planning, implementation and evaluation
Eisenman et al.	2005 C3	USA	Students	Student-led IEPs	Participant observation	• Focus on supporting teachers to implement student-led IEPs • Teachers reported that even small implementation efforts had benefits for students and other IEP team members
Ellingson et al.	2000 J1	USA	General classroom teachers	Teachers' abilities to conduct functional assessments and functional interventions in classrooms with developmental disabilities & behaviour problems	Questionnaire	• Teachers without specialised training in ABA are able to carry out direct observations of behaviour problems, antecedents and consequences
Eltis	2003 B3 A3	Australia	Teachers	Outcome assessment & reporting	Analysis	• NSWDET limited its outcome statements to reduce the time required by teachers in interpreting and assessing student outcomes

Etscheidt	2006 J1	USA	General	Behavioural Intervention Plans (BIPs) developed by IEP teams	Analysis of statutes and hearings related to legal cases	Five themes related to development of BIPs: they must: • be developed as necessary • be based on assessment data • meet the individualised needs of the student • include positive behaviour supports & strategies • be consistently implemented and monitored
European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education	2010 DX C2 C3 C4 C5 F1 A1 KX LX A2	Various European countries	General	Description of various countries' provisions for assessment	Descriptions	Descriptions selected from Finland, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Sweden, Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Malta
Fish	2006 C2	USA	Parents of students with autism	Perceptions of IEP meetings	Survey	• Parents believed professionals did not value parents as equals or properly adhere to IEP objectives
Fish	2008 C2	USA	Parents	Perceptions of IEP process and outcomes	Survey	• Majority of parents had positive perceptions of IEP process & considered that educators treated them with respect
Fisher & Frey	2001 F2	USA	Students with significant disabilities	Access to the core curriculum	Three case studies of disabled students in general education classrooms	• Individualised, content-specific accommodations and modifications were made to help students access the core curriculum • Collaboration took place among the teaching team • Peers were involved • There was a disconnect between IEPs & curriculum and instruction
Flannery et al.	2000 B1 GX	USA	Transition-age students with disabilities	Impact of person-centred planning (PCP) on the content and organisation of individual supports	Interviews	PCP training associated with: • increased use of PCP procedures • increased number of written goals supported outside school-time • increased number of unpaid individuals to provide support • higher satisfaction with planning process
Fleming & Monda-Amaya	2001 C1	USA	Team members	Analyses process variables critical for team effectiveness	20 experts rated 109 items that support team efforts	• Critical to team effectiveness: team outcomes, team goals, & team cohesion. (Useful guide for IEP teams)

Ford et al.	2001 A1 A2	USA	Students with significant disabilities	Curricular relevance in an era of standards-based reform	Analysis of states websites' information on alternate performance indicators in social studies	• Every student should receive priority attention to the development of foundation skills • Individualisation is at the core of a good education • Respect students' membership in a learning community • Give students opportunities to experience a sense of mastery over tasks they undertake
Frankl	2005 C6 B3	UK	SENCos	Integration of planning for special educational needs into whole class planning	Case study	• Whole class planning was successful, freeing SENCos to emphasise their roles as consultants and coaches
Gallagher & Desimone	1995 B1 B3 B4	USA	Professionals and parents	Lessons learned from IEPs for IFSPs	Analysis	• Noted problems arising from limited assessment information, lack of training for teachers, demands on teacher time & lack of parent involvement
Gardner	2006 F3	Australia	A secondary school with 50 students with intellectual disabilities	Career education	Case study	• Not enough IEP outcomes related to career education
Garriott et al.	2000 C2	USA	Parents of studentswith disabilities	Perceived levels of involvement in and satisfaction with IEP conferences	Survey	• 89% of parents always attended IEP conference, but half of those that did assumed a passive, recipient stance
Gartin & Murdick	2005 B5	USA	General	The place of IEPs in IDEA 2004	Analysis	• IDEA 04 aimed to reduce paperwork in IEPs • Legislation attempts to bring IDEA and NCLB into better alignment
Geneen & Ysseldyke	1997	USA	Students with disabilities	Educational standards & assessment	Analysis	Defines six types of accountability systems • Total inclusion • Partial inclusion • Dual systems • Multiple systems • Total exclusion • System-based
Gelzheiser et al.	1998 F4	USA	Students with a range of disabilities in elementary, middle & high schools	IEPs and peer-interactions	Observations, teacher and student interviews, reviews of IEPs	• IEPs accurately described peer interactions of students with disabilities • Providing accurate information regarding peer interactions insufficient to ensure appropriate instructional practices • Teachers often saw proximity as sufficient to foster peer interactions • Assignment of one-to-one aides often acted as a barrier to the development of peer interactions

Giangreco	1997 C2	USA	Families	Involvement in IEPs	Description and advocacy	• Important to involve families as participants in collaborative teams
Goddard	1997 KZ	UK	General	Critiques assumptions underlying IEPs, particularly their origins in behavioural theory	Analysis & critique	• Argues for a constructivist approach and a more qualitative focus on school life
Grigal et al.	1997 GX	USA	High school students with a range of disabilities	Transition components in IEPs	Transition components ofIEPs rated	• Majority of transition components in IEPs lacked many of the essential elements reflective of transition best practices. • Students often 'pigeon-holed' by disability
Guskey & Jung	2009 A2	USA	Students with disabilities	Grading and reporting in a standards-based environment	Analysis	• IDEA '97 and 04 requires that IEPs show how progress will be monitored and communicated for students with disabilities. • Despite this requirement, evidence indicates there is less compliance with appropriate progress monitoring than with any other requirement (see Etschedt, 2006) • IEP teams should determine whether or not each student should be held to grade-level standards or to modified standards • See also Jung & Guskey
Hanson et al.	1990 C1	USA		Honouring the cultural diversity of families when gathering data	Analysis & advice	• Discusses different cultures' views of children & childrearing, disability and its causation, change and intervention, family and family roles, medicine and healing…
Harry et al.	1995 C2	USA	Parents	African American parents of preschoolers with mild disabilities in special ed programmes: involvement in special education	Interviews and observations in a longitudinal study	• Pointed out the untapped potential of parents in decision-making • Absence of meaningful communication throughout the assessment and placement process • Parents concerned about stigmatizing effects of labelling
Holburn et al.	2000 E1	USA	Planning teams serving people with mental retardation	Quantification of the process and outcomes of Person-Centred Planning (PCP)	Instrumentation	• Technical information on three instruments and their implications for intervention, programme evaluation and organisational performance
Hornby & Lafaele	In press	NZ	Parents	Barriers to participation in education	Analysis	• Gap between rhetoric & reality • Presents a comprehensive model
Horrocks	2001 DX	Australia	Key stakeholders	Evaluation of South Australia's Negotiated Curriculum Plan	Analysis	• Establishes value of consulting with key stakeholders • Education plans are key documents for providing curriculum access and participation • Cultural & linguistic issues need to be taken into account • Presents an historical perspective on individualised planning

Huefner	2000 B5 F1 KX	USA	General	Risks & opportunities of IEP requirements under IDEA 97	Analysis	• Extra paperwork required • Presumption in favour of general curriculum and general education settings may provoke a backlash • Concern at micromanagement of special education by Congress
Hughes & Carpenter	1991 C2	UK	Parents	Active partnerships in Annual Reviews	Analysis	• Describes a Parent's Comments Form to help parents prepare for Annual Reviews
IHC	ND LX	NZ	Parents	Guidance on IEP process	Advice	• Defines IEPs, schools' responsibilities, parents' roles
Isaksson et al.	2010 AX KX	Sweden	Students with special educational needs	Assessment and categorizing processes in Sweden	Interviews in two schools	• Overall aim was to examine how schools 'socially construct' students with special educational needs • Categorisation is primarily rooted in a biomedical model, with disabilities related to individual characteristics • School difficulties are largely reduced to individual characteristics of the students and less on school organisation, teaching and other environmental factors
Jenkins	2002 BX	Australia	General: inclusive education	Use of IEPs	Analysis	• Refers to the desirability of outcome statements becoming "dog-eared, rolled up, coffee-ringed sheets that are taken on picnics, consulted by the students and checked with messy notes as student progress is observed in the field" (p.68)
Johns et al.	2002 LX	USA	Students with emotional and behavioural disorders	Guidance on IEP process	Advice	• Specific and detailed advice
Jones & Swain	2001 C2	UK	Parents	Parents' perceptions of their involvement in the process of Annual Reviews for pupils with Statements of SEN	Questionnaire and interviews	• While parents' views might be valued in principle, they can be devalued in practice • Need to (a) help parents prepare for Annual Reviews and (b) to make Statements detailed and specific
Jung &Guskey	2007 A2	USA	Students with Disabilities	Standards-based grading and reporting	Analysis and advice	Presents a 5-step model: • Determine whether an accommodation or modification is needed for each grade-level standard • Establish appropriate modified standard for each area requiring • modification • Outline any additional goals • Apply equivalent grading practices to the appropriate standards • Clearly communicate the grades' meaning

Kalyanpur & Harry	1997 C1 C2	USA	Professionals & parents of culturally diverse backgrounds	Describes an approach, the posture of reciprocity, to enable professionals acquire cultural awareness	Analysis	Describes 5 key features of a the posture of reciprocity: • It goes beyond awareness of difference to self-awareness • It aims for subtle levels of awareness of differences • It has universal applicability • It ensures that both parents & professionals are empowered • It avoids stereotyping
Kalyanpur et al.	2000 C1 C2	USA	General	Equity and advocacy expectations of culturally diverse families' participation in special education	Analysis	Poor parent-professional collaboration may be because • the values of equity, individual rights and freedom of choice are antithetical to beliefs of many diverse families • professionals' positivist model of western rationalism are incompatible with parents' often anecdotal and subjective approach
Kamens	2004 B1	USA	Pre-service teachers	Teaching pre-service teachers how to write IEPs	Description	Encourages pre-service teachers to • view IEPs as relevant, purposefuldocuments • reflect on their own learning styles • consider impact of IEP on the learner
Karvonen & Huynh	2007 A1 FX	USA	Students with significant cognitive disabilities	Relationship between IEP characteristics & test scores on an alternate assessment	Coding of IEPs	• Average IEP emphasises speaking & writing and objectives required simple recall skills • Half of IEPs contained no reading comprehension objectives • More than a third did not align with number system skills • Objectives should include higher order thinking skills
Katsisyannis & Maag	2001 E1 I1	USA	General	Examines court rulings relevant to IEPs	Analysis	Courts tend to examine each case to determine whether • an IEP is procedurally & substantively appropriate • there is evidence demonstrating a student's need for a certain type of methodology
Katsiyannis & Zhang	2001 GX	USA	General	Effective transition planning	Description	Transition planning should • start early • involve students and families • identify clear outcomes • include interagency collaboration • emphasise the integral relationship between IEPs and the transition process
Karvonen & Huynh	2007 FX A1	USA	Students with significant cognitive disabilities	Relationship between IEP characteristics & test scores on an alternative assessment	Analysis of 292 IEPs and alternate assessment scores	• Average IEP emphasised speaking & writing, with objectives primarily requiring simple recall skills. • More than one-third of the IEPs did not align with number skills • Special ed teachers require professional development on state academic standards, alternate assessment & curriculum design that goes beyond functional domains i.e., standards-based IEPs

Kelly	2003 DX FX GX KX LX A3 C3	NZ	General	Review of literature	Review	• Comprehensive review of NZ & international literature
Kennedy et al.	2001 B1	USA	General education teachers	Facilitating general education participation by students with behaviour problems through Person-Centred Planning (PCP)	Three case studies	• Combined use of positive behaviour supports and PCP can increase general education participation and decrease problem behaviour
Ketterlin- Geller et al.	2007 A1 B6	USA	Teachers	Testing accommodations in IEPs compared with teachers' recommendations and student performances	Analysis of 38 IEPs, plus survey of teachers' recommendations for accommodation	• Inconsistencies between accommodations listed on IEPs & teachers' recommendations. • Similar results occurred when comparing either IEPs or teachers' recommendations with student performances
Keyes & Owens- Johnson	2003 B1	USA	Parents and professionals	Person-Centred	Planning Description Presents 4 recommendations for improving IEP writing:	• Focus on strengths & talents of student • Increase student levels of responsibility for IEPs • Develop a checklist to show how goals & plans inter-relate • Involve peers and community members
Killu	2008 J1	USA	General	Interventions that appropriately, effectively and efficiently address the relationship between learning and behaviour problems	Advice	• Discusses the relationship between functional behaviour assessment and behaviour intervention plans and how this can be developed and monitored
Kluth	2007 C2	USA	Families of children with disabilities	Stories of families who move to seek inclusive education for their children with disabilities	Interviews focused on story-telling	• Families experienced both frustration and relief
Kroeger et al.	1999 C1	USA	General	Creating a sense of ownership in the IEP process	Advice	• Explores ways of participants in IEP meetings developing a sense of ownership
Lazarus et al.	2010a AX A1 A2	USA	Students with disabilities	Participation in states' assessments based on modifies academic achievement standards: Policies	Survey of states' accommodation policies	• Outlines accommodation policies and compares them with regular assessment policies in 9 states • Wide variability across states • 95% of all accommodations were the same for regular assessment sand alternate assessments based on modified academic achievement standards

Lazarus et al.	2010b AX A1 A2	USA	Students with disabilities	Participation in states' assessments by taking assessments based on modifies academic achievement standards: Guidelines	Survey of states' accommodation guidelines	• All students, including those with disabilities must be included in state accountability systems • Since 2007 states have the flexibility to offer Alternate Assessment based on Modified Achievement Standards for some students with disabilities • By 2009 14 states have published guidelines • All of them required that the student must have a current IEP
Lehmann et al.	1999 GX	USA	High school students with disabilities	Participation in transition-related activities	Interviews and observations of 12 students plus their parents and teachers	Recommendations include: • assist students to be independent • make students more aware of what is being done for them • present students with a wider array of post-school options • invest more time in teaching social skills
Lee-Tarver	2006 C4	USA	Regular education teachers	Teachers' perceptions of the utility of IEPs for students with disabilities in inclusive classrooms	Survey	• Most teachers perceived IEPs as useful tools in curriculum preparation and were active participants in the Process • They wanted additional training
Liberty	1998 KX	NZ	Inclusive education	Focus on inclusive processes	Opinion piece	• Discusses confusion between individualised education & one-to-one instruction • Critiques the problem-solving approach, with the child as the problem and education as the solution
Lingard	2001 C6 KX	UK	SENCos	Does the Code of Practice help secondary SENCos improve learning?	Questionnaire	• Describes excessive time commitment for IEP preparation • Argues that schools should have discretion to decide how individual needs could be met • Would whole school strategies be more effective and efficient than current individualised system?
Lohrmann-O'Rourke & Gomez	2001 GX B1	USA	Students with severe disabilities	Integrating students' preferences assessment data within the transition process	Detailed description of transition planning process	• Advocates person-centred planning as a framework, taking account of the changing nature of preferences, ways of incorporating individuals with severe disabilities, family and cultural issues, interacting with the community and the role of • Professionals
Lynch & Adams	2008 A2	USA	General	Developing standards-based IEP objectives for students with significant needs	Analysis	• IEPs must use appropriate & valid assessment strategies for evaluating differentiated goals, while accounting for student progress within prescribed and undifferentiated statewide accountability systems under NCLB • The development of standards-based objectives can be a means of reconciling all of these requirements and should be supported in IEPs

Lynch & Beare	1990 F1	USA	Students with mild mental retardation & behavioural disorders	The quality of IEP objectives & their relevance to instruction	Analysis of IEPs and classroom observations	• Although IEPs contained some appropriate practices, their emphasis was almost entirely on academic skills, to the exclusion of vocational, leisure & community integration • Little relationship between written IEPs and instruction
Lytle & Bordin	2001 C1 C2	USA	Parents and professionals	Practical strategies for helping parents become part of the IEP team process	Advice	• Focus on collaboration, parity and common goals
Maag & Katsiyannis	2006 J1 J2	USA	Students with emotional and behavioural disorders	Legal and practical considerations in Behavioural Intervention Plans (BIPs)	Analysis of law and evidence-based practice	• Summarises IDEA 2004's requirement that positive behaviour interventions be included in students' IEPs if their behaviour impedes their or others' learning • This requires schools to conduct an FBA & to develop a BIP
McArthur etal.	2003 AX A1 A2	NZ	General	Chapter on assessment to support student learning	Literature review	• Noted Christchurch College of Education study (2003) showing that teachers reported individuals progress through IEPs, also reported by Salend (2000) • Recommends ensuring that IEPs document how a child's educational programme & learning will be assessed & ensuring that IEPs are based on quality assessment data
McCartney	2009 KX	NZ	A single disabled child Outlines tensions between deficit discourses and inclusive education	Case study	Critique	• Negative assumptions & discourse about disability can create barriers to inclusion • The classroom teacher should be the central professional
McGahee-Kovac	2002 C3	USA	Students	A guide for students on how to participate in IEP meetings	Advice	• Specific suggestions to students
McLaughlin & Jordan	2005 DX F1	Canada & USA	General	Description of IEPs in inclusive settings	Description	• Notes differences between US & Canada's use of IEPs • Notes need to access general curriculum in US
McMenamin et al.	2004 A1 A2 F1	NZ	Students with high & very high needs	Curriculum and special ed support	Survey	• IEPs formed cornerstone of curriculum planning & reporting Students did not participate in any national assessment programme: 'a nonsense' to do so or they would 'skew the results' • Teachers saw it as important to relate • IEP goals to curriculum goals • At secondary level, participation in NCEA was seen as problematic: some could achieve NCEA with support, for others alternative assessment was more appropriate

Martin et al.	2003 AX A3	UK	Autistic students	Use of standardised tests	Review of reports of 75 students with autism	39% had no standardised assessments before provisions - only 9% had follow-up assessments - concludes that students with autism in UK rarely have sufficient - assessments to allow an objective evaluation of their progress - recommends development of a standardised assessment protocol to prescribe & evaluate interventions
Martin et al.	2004 C3 C4	USA	Students, parents special education teachers, general education teachers in secondary schools	Participation in IEP meetings & understanding of the IEP process	Survey	- Varied according to who participated in IEP meetings - Special educators talked more than all others in team - Students knew less than others about the reasons for meetings - Students' and general educators' participation added value to team, especially parents
Martin et al.	2006(a) C3	USA	Students, parents special education teachers, general education teachers in secondary schools	Student participation in IEP meetings	Observation of IEP meetings	- Special educators talked 51% of time, family members 15%, general educators 9%, support staff 6% & students 3% - Students need to be taught meeting participation skills
Martin et al	2006(b) C3	USA	Students	Increasing student participation in IEP meetings using a self-directed IEP to teach IEP meeting skills	Treatment and control groups	The Self-Directed IEP had a strong effect on increasing the percentage of time students talked, started, and led meetings
Mason et al.	2004 C3	USA	Teachers, administrators & related service professionals	The relationship between self determination training and students' participation in the IEP process	Web survey	Respondents highly valued student involvement in self determination skill training and IEPs, but only 8% were satisfied with their teaching of self determination and 34% with level of student participation in IEP meetings
Mason et al.	2002 C3	USA	High school students with mild learning disabilities	Student-led IEPs: students' and teachers' reactions	Interviews and observations	- Students were able to describe their disabilities, their rights and the purpose and benefits of IEPs - Logistical dilemmas need to be resolved, e.g., finding time for student preparation, especially in inclusive settings - Self-determination and skills in leading IEPs should be an integral part of the curriculum for students with disabilities

Mazza-Davies	2008 F1	NZ	Young gifted readers	Efficacy of using IEPs as an assistive tool towards differentiation of reading programmes for gifted children	Participant observation and interviews	• The IEP has great promise as a differentiation tool for gifted readers
Menlove et al.	2001 C4 IX	USA	General education teachers	Discrepancy between ideal and reality in IDEA '97 requirement for general education teachers' participation in IEP process	Analysis and guidance	• Summarises legal requirements of IDEA '97 for general education teachers to participate in IEPs – at least one subject teacher in high schools • One study found that 51% of IEP meetings were routinely attended by general education teachers
Millward et al.	2002 DX E1 HX	UK	General	Traces the origins of IEPs and their use in different education systems. Analyses what factors have influenced the effectiveness of IEPs as a means of supporting progress of pupils	Literature review	• Danger of a restricted curriculum, targets too low & minimal compliance aimed at • Difficult to develop reliable systems to monitor effectiveness of IEPs because of variability of IEP formats & reporting mechanisms
Ministry of Education (NZ)	1998 LX BX C1	NZ	General	IEP guidelines	Description	• Emphasises that IEPs are founded on principles of NZ Curriculum Framework • Describes core IEP team, format of IEP meetings, the nature of the IEP plan (e.g. aims, focus areas, records of current skills and needs, objectives, expected learning outcomes roles & responsibilities, the role of assessment data) • Barriers are outlined, including time required, disempowerment of parents, cultural insensitivity…
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports (Japan)	Nd DX	Japan	General	Describes Special Support Education in Japan	Description	• Refers to 'Individual Supervisory Plans' (p.50)
Minnema et al.	2004	USA	General	Out-of-level testing	Case study	• Refers to standards-based instruction as being the most comprehensive educational reform in recent years • Large-scale assessments are used for accountability purposes • Federal law requires that all students with disabilities participate in standards-based assessments at their grade-level • However, some states have added 'out-of-level' testing for students with disabilities i.e., at their instructional level

Mitchell	2008 C1	NZ	General	Reviews literature on collaborative teaching	Review	Reviews six forms of collaboration: • Co-teaching • Consultation • Partnerships with paraprofessionals • Partnerships with specialists • Partnerships with parents • School-wide teams
Moltzen	2005 DX KX C1 A3 LX F1	NZ	General	Review of literature	Review	• Reviews a range of topics, with an emphasis on summarising NZ documents
Morningstar & Mutua	2003 GX	USA	Youth with disabilities	Transition process	Description	Four key components of transition planning: • individualised planning. • family & support networkinvolvement • community outcomes • interagency collaboration
NAREM Associates	2005 AX A1 FX	Non-European countries	Assessment issues	Review of literature	Review	• Reviews assessment policies & practices in Australia, Canada, South Africa, USA, NZ • Discusses alternate assessment andlinking it to IEPs
National Council for Special Education (Ireland)	2006 LX DX GX C2 C3 F1 FX	Ireland	General	Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan process	Description	• Education for Persons with Special Education Needs 2004 Act requires the preparation & implementation of IEPs • Emphasises the educational purpose of IEPs • IEPs are intended to document that which is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum plan already in operation; they are therefore not a substitute for the curriculum • Recognises that the organisational approaches to IEPs will differ • between the primary and post primary sectors • Sets out the principles of IEPs, the processes to be followed, and their content, with examples
Nayler	2006 F1	Australia	Special School	Meeting curriculum challenges in a special school without using elaborate form of IEPs	Description of a school programme	• Move away from IEPs is liberating as it assisted teachers to broaden their framework of teaching & learning

Noell et al.	2002 J2	USA	Students with disruptive behaviour	Consultation, follow-up & implementation of behaviour management interventions in general education	Case studies of 4 general education teachers & 8 regular education students: graphed results	• Teachers may not sustain implementation of a programme in the absence of structured follow-up • Performance feedback is effective for sustaining implementation by teachers
NSW Public Education Inquiry	2002 DX	Australia	General	Review of education	Analysis	• IEPs closely tied to supplementary funding processes
Ochs & Roessler	2001 GX F3	USA	High school students in general and special education	Career developmental levels	Career Decision-making, Self-efficacy Scale, & Identity Scale scores compared	• Both groups had optimistic career outlooks, but special ed students scored lower on career decision making self-efficacy, career outcome expectations, career explorations intentions & vocational identity • Implications for IEP development outlined: career-related assessment & instructional efforts
OECD	1999 AX A1 A2 DX	International	General	Sustaining inclusive education	Country reviews	• Assessment should be individualised & support the development of improved pedagogies, curriculum differentiation • Decisions are made as to which students requiring IEPs should be placed in special schools • Increase in students with IEPs: UK 2.1% to 2.9% (1992-97), US 7% to 12% (1990-97) • Using nationally standardised assessment can militate against inclusive education
OECD	2003 DX FX	International	Diversity, inclusion & equity	Analysis of international data	Analysis of 8 countries responses	• IEPs was one of the important practices for making inclusion work • Curriculum development is a key area in sustaining inclusion & meeting diversity
OECD	2009 DX	International	General	Review of national policies in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan & Tajikistan	Review	• Kyrgyzstan employs IEPs
Olson et al.	2002 AX A1	USA	Students with significant disabilities	Standard-setting method for alternate assessments	Rationale & description of process	• Federal law requires that state assessment systems include all students in one of 3 ways: assessment with or without accommodations, or alternate assessment • Assessments must align with content standards • This study looked at one specific approach to standard-setting: 'a body of work approach'
Parette et al.	2007 B2	USA	General	Interpreting data trends for making decisions about assistive technology	Illustrated advice	• IDEA requires that AT devices be 'considered' when developing IEPs • Progress with and without AT devices should be monitored
Patterson	2005 IX	USA	General education teachers	What classroom teachers need to know about IDEA '97	Analysis and advice	• Summarises IEP requirements, e.g. 7 steps: pre-referral, referral, evaluation, eligibility, development of IEP implementation, annual review

Pawley & Tennant	2008 C3	UK	Students and SENCOs	Students' perceptions of their IEP targets	Interviews	• Few students could communicate a clear understanding of IEPs and few of their stated targets matched those in their IEPs • The number of students with IEPs in any one school should be limited
Pearson	2000 KX	UK	Schools	The relationship between school culture and IEPs	Action research in one secondary school	• Schools should recognise that IEPs are not solely concerned with individual pupils meeting prescribed targets, but also with the encouragement of a collaborative approach to CWSN
Perner	2007 A1 A2	USA	Students with most significant cognitive disabilities	Issues of assessment in NCLB	Analysis, with examples	• Under NCLB, state departments of education have to specify what all students must achieve through state standards, and for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities alternative standards must be defined • Examples of the latter are provided
President's Commission	2002 DX B5 C2 GX C3	USA	Review of US special education, including IEPs	Review of many issues	Interviews, analysis of documents etc.	• pp.16-18: IEPs not designed or used for individualised education, but are focused on legal protection & compliance • p.11: Rec: simplify IEPs to focus on substantive outcomes • p. 40: IEP process can be overwhelming for parents: recommended training for skilled facilitators to run IEP meetings to avoid conflict & reach agreement • p.43: Transition services should be closely linked to the goals in each student's IEP • p.46: It is *always* appropriate for students with disabilities to be invited and present at IEP meetings • p.49: Parents should be involved in transition planning
Pretti- Frontczak & Bricker	2000 B1	USA	Early childhood teachers	Effects of training teachers on writing IEP goals and objectives, using a curriculum-based measure from ages 3-6	Results of a 2-day training analysed	• Significant difference between pre and post-training
Prince Edward Island DoE	2005	Canada	General	IEP guidelines	Policies	• Comprehensive guidelines on all aspects of IEPs
Pruitt et al.	1998 C2	USA	Parents of disabled students	Parents' views of their interactions with special educators	Interviews	• Parents said: listen to us, develop effective communication with us, increase your knowledge of disabilities, demonstrate sensitivity, demonstrate respect for my child, and improve the IEP process
Queensland Dept of Education & Training	2006 LX	Australia	General	Outlines the IEP process	Advice	• Advice to all participants re principles and procedures for IEPs

Quenemoen et al.	2003 AX A1	USA	Students with significant cognitive disabilities	Measuring academic achievement, through alternate scoring criteria	Analysis	Description of 5 states' approaches • States use different alternate assessment approaches, including portfolio assessment, performance assessment, IEP-linked body of evidence, & traditional test formats • Surprising degree of commonality in the way states define success for these students
Rabinowiz et al.	2008 AX A1 FX	USA	Special ed students	Alternate assessments	Review	• In 2003 the US Department of Education allowed states to developalternate standards & assessments for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities (no more than 1%) • This study reviews alternate assessment policies & practices in 5 states • One size alternate assessment will not fit all students
Riddell et al.	2006 DX I1 AX A1 FX	Scotland	Pupils with addition al support needs	Literature review of different countries' definitions, placements, curriculum & pedagogy	Review	• In Europe identification of SEN is often done through individuals education planning • In US, unlike UK, IEPs are legally binding documents • In US 11% have IEPs • Under development in England & USA are systems which will bring students with SEN into an overall accountability & school improvement framework
Riddell et al.	2002 HX	UK	General	Relationship between IEPs and raising attainment	Questionnaire surveys in special and mainstream schools	• Policy makers, administrators and professional agreed there was a link between IEPs and raising attainment, but there was no shared understanding of the nature of this link
Riffel &Turnbull	Nd J2	USA	Educators	IEPs as essential elements of individual support within schoolwide PBS	Advice	• Summarises SWPBS • Recommends preparing in advance of IEP meeting, connecting and getting started, sharing expectations, reviewing FBA, sharing concerns, developing goals & objectives, developing a Behaviour Intervention Plan …
Robinson & Rathbone	1999 C1	USA	Persons with mental disabilities	Impact of race, poverty & ethnicity: calls for cultural competence	Analysis, based on historical perspective & current research	• Cultural competence is defined & described, with 14 strategies outlined
Rock	2000 C2	USA	Parents	Parents as equal partners in the IEP process	Advice	• Details advice to educators on how toinvolve parents in IEPs
Rodger	1995 KX BX DX	Australia	General	Review of literature on IEPs	Review	Many deficiencies in IEPs identified, including: • problems with content across disability groups, settings and age groups • parent involvement and training • communication • planning & monitoring specifically • designed instruction

Rodger et al.	1999 C7 C2 C4 B3	Australia	Parents, special ed teachers, therapists, teachers aides, etc	Perceptions of IEP process	Interviews with 45 IEP team members	• Therapists did not have detailed knowledge outside their areas of expertise • Some team members restricted parents' role to the formulation of goals • Parents had limited awareness of classroom implementation strategies • Parents and professionals sometimes had conflicting views on prioritisation of goals • Few teacher aides aware of IEP goals • Parents wanted appropriate venue & flexible times for IEP meetings • Barriers included: lack of time, inadequate teamwork, discontinuity.
Roeber	2002	USA	Significant cognitive disabilities	Alternate assessments	Review	• Discusses challenge of setting standards for alternate assessments • Great variability: checklists, observations, performance assessments, samples of work, portfolios\All need to be scored & assigned proficiency levels • Technical & practical considerations need to be taken into account
Rosas	2009 C4 I1	USA	Teachers in an inclusive high school	Assessment of compliance of IEPs in a high school with requirements of IDEA 2004	Survey of selection of IEPs adherence to IDEA	• Additional training needed for general education teachers to be successful, active, equal participants with special ed peers in IEP process
Rose et al.	1999 C3	UK	Students with severe learning difficulties	Development of procedures for the assessment of 'pupil readiness' for full involvement in the targetsetting process	Small scale action research	• The project increased staff awareness and a framework in which students played a more active role in their assessment & learning
Salend	2008 AX A1 FX	USA	Students with significant cognitive disabilities	Determining appropriate testing accommodations	Review	• NCLB mandates that most students with disabilities will participate in highstakes testing programmes aligned with statewide learning standards & take the same general grade-level assessments as their classmates without disabilities • From 2007, students with significant cognitive disabilities may be allowed to complete alternative assessments, based on alternative achievement standards • These regulations are summarised • Types of accommodations are outlined: presentation mode, response mode, timing & scheduling, setting, linguistic • Outlines a process for evaluating testing accommodations

Seligman	2000 C2	USA	Parents & professionals	Key components of IEPs, especially the IEP conference	Description	Analyses difficulties confronting parents: • logistical issues such as transport and childcare, • communication problems, and • their lack of knowledge.
Serfass & Peterson	2007 B2	USA	General	Surveys literature on computerised IEP systems	Literature review	• Very little published information • Computerised IEPs have potential to benefit all concerned: they create reports in a timely & efficient manner
Shaddock	2002 F1 B3 C3	Australia	A personal history in the use of IEPs	Lists questions and research issues to do with IEPs	Reflections	Issues include: • how do we reconcile individual planning model with school-based • curriculum & approaches that focus on group instruction in inclusive settings? • how do we respond to the fact that individualised planning requires some people to undertake a great • deal of extra work? • how can individualised planning be improved so that it actually guides service delivery & produces good outcomes? • how should professionals respond when individuals with a disability say they do not want to participate?
Shaddock & Bramson	1991 DX	Australia	General	Policy-practice gap with IEPs	Analysis	• Many IEPs are incomplete and/or poorly implemented
Shaddock et al.	2009 DX HX C3 C2 B3 F1	Australia	General	Discusses individual plans	Literature survey plus recommendations	• IEPs widespread in Western world • Little research on effectiveness of IEPs for improving learning outcomes Problems: 8. classroom teachers lack training & knowledge to develop or implement plans 9. students may not be involved 10. insufficient support for parents. 11. time-consuming, therefore often shortcuts are taken 12. poor implementation 13. balancing individualisation and inclusion 14. multiple purposes, mainly legal and administrative • Presents suggestions for improving individual planning
Shriner	2000 C3	USA	Students with disabilities	Examines legal perspectives on school outcomes assessment	Analysis	• All students are part of the learning community & should be included in assessments of progress toward learning goals • Policies regarding assessment of students with disabilities have outpaced practices

Simon	2006 C4 C2 D	USA	Teachers & parents in IEP teams at preschool, elementary & high school	Perceptions of the IEP requirements	Questionnaire	• Teachers expressed more positive perceptions of the IEP process than parents • Suggestions for improving team members' perceptions of the IEP process are made
Skrtic	2010 F1 KX	USA	General	IEPs & notion of individualisation in institutionalised structure of US schools	Analysis	• IEPs are more symbolic & ceremonial than real • They don't actualise the intent of the law
Smith	1990 KX	USA	General	Analysis of compliance of IEPs	Review of research	• History of IEP inadequacies and passive compliance • Need for a 'vigorous revisitation' of the IEP'
South Australia Department of Education and Children's Services	2010 LX	Australia	General	Negotiated Education Plan (NEP)	Description	• Detailed outline of NEP requirements
Spann et al.	2003 C2	USA	Parents of children with autism	Examines parents' involvement in and perceptions of their children's special education services	Telephone survey	• Majority of parents believed they were moderately to highly knowledgeable & involved in theirchild's IEP process, but schools were not doing enough to address their child's most pressing needs
Spencer & Sands	1999 C3 GX	USA	Students	Participation in transition planning	Description	• Recommends involvement of students in transition planning
Stephenson	1996 C2 B1	Australia	Parents of students with severe intellectual disabilities	Participation in IEP planning	Interviews and observations	• Parents & teachers reported varying levels of satisfaction with the IEP process • Parents not viewed as equal partners in the IEP process • Need for training about potential roles
Stoner et al.	2005	USA	Parents of young children with autism	Perceptions of interactions with professionals	Interviews, questionnaires, document analysis	• Interactions between parents & professionals is a dynamic, complex process
Stroggilos & Xanthacou	2006 C1	UK/ Greece	Students with profound & multiple learning difficulties	Collaborative IEPs	Document analysis, interviews, observations & questionnaires	• IEPs are not used as a collaborative tool between teachers, parents & other professionals
Sullivan	2003 F1 F2	USA	General	Connecting IEP objectives in general curriculum and instruction	Description	• IEP objectives should augment the general curriculum, rather than replacing it • Recommends a 7-step process, including the integration of IEP objectives into regular classroom activities and the general curriculum

Taylor	2001 C2 C1	USA	Parents	Involvement in writing IEPs	Description	• Parents may encounter logistical difficulties in participating in IEP meetings and may lack knowledge about IEP procedures • Educators should involve parents in culturally sensitive training programmes
Tennant	2007 C6	UK	Mainstream secondary schools	Discusses 3 methods for writing IEPs	Description	Explores 2 contrasting possibilities: • Abandoning the assumption that students with SEN should have IEPs & decide to leave it to schools to decide how to organise their SEN provisions • Make available training courses for SENCos & others based on good practices in successful schools
Test et al.	2004 C3	USA	Students	Involving students in their IEPs	Literature review of 16 studies	• Students with widely varying disabilities can be actively involved • Curricula designed to teach skills to student to enhance their participation & person-centred planning strategies can increase involvement
Thompson & Thurlow	2000 AX A1	USA	Students with disabilities	Development of alternate assessment	Review of all states provisions	• Divergence in who was involved in development of alternate assessment • Most prevalent alternate assessment approach was collection of a body of evidence that assesses functional indicators of progress toward state standards using a variety of performance-based assessment strategies
Thomson & Rowan	1995 DX C2 C4 C5 F1	NZ	General	Use of IEPs in NZ schools	Analysis of 159 IEPs, plus 2 teacher and 2 parent focus groups & interviews	• Teachers viewed IEPs process as an administrative task, rather than as a tool for developing effective instruction & learning • Only 55% of IEPs involved parents • Class teachers attended 60% of IEPs, special education teacher 43% • Key requirements of IEPs often missing or unclear • Many objectives not realistic, functional or measurable • Only 53% of teachers had received IEP training • Parents unsure of role in meetings • Wide variety of formats • Limited focus on teaching strategies to promote inclusion • Little consideration of the general curriculum.
Thomson et al.	2002 C4 C3 D	Canada & Scotland	Professionals and students	Developing IEPs using a decision making model	Case study	• Pupils were happy to participate in the development of their IEPs and appreciated the opportunity to discuss their concerns with a teacher • Time was a constraint for teachers
Thorburn	1997 LX	NZ	Regular teachers	Guidelines in inclusive settings	Description	• Good teachers have long used the principles of IEPs, the IEP process being merely an organised and accountable approach • Detailed practical guidelines for regular teachers are provided

Thorp	1997 C1	USA	Culturally & linguistically diverse families	Increasing opportunities for partnerships	Advice	• Few teachers are prepared for diversity • Families' have prior negative experiences • Over-representation of minorities in special education • Stereotypes about family participation • A strategy for improved participation, including recognising the potential for cultural conflicts
Tisdall & Riddell	2006 DX	UK	General: policies	Critical examination of array of policy approaches to special needs education in Scotland	Analysis	• IEPs and Personal Learning Plans have potential to involve parents & children, but they do not provide procedural legal rights as do Records of Needs
Tod	1999 DX	UK	General	Relationship between IEPs and inclusion	Analysis	• Traces history of IEPs in UK • Many features of effective IEPs mirror conditions for inclusion • Outlines positive features of IEPs and areas of concern
Turnbull	2010 C1	USA	Parents and professionals	Ceremony, partnerships and power in IEPs	Theory	• Ceremony (i.e. in IEP meetings) imbues those with power with even more power • Authenticity – genuine partnerships – is essential to any policy and practice • All participants need to be trained to be partners • 7 elements to parent-professional partnerships: communication, competence, commitment, respect, equality & advocacy + trust • Argues that there is a power imbalance, tilted in favour of professionals
Turner et al	2000 A1	USA	Severe disabilities	Relation of a state-wide alternate assessment for students with severe disabilities to other measures of instructional effectiveness	Observations and analysis of assessment data	• Significant relationship between overall programme quality and resulting alternate assessment scores, but not between the assessment scores and IEP quality
Valenzuela & Martin	2005 C1	USA	Culturally and linguistically diverse secondary students	Relationship between self-directed IEPs, cultural values, self determination and transition		• The self-directed IEP process is a tool for cultural sharing and meets the needs, preferences, and interests of culturally and linguistically diverse students
Van Dyke et al.	2006 C3	USA	Students	Student participation in IEP meetings: legal obligations	Advice	• General advice. Refers to Martin et al. (2006)
Victoria Department of Education & Training	2010 LX	Australia	General	IEP guidelines	Policy	• Outlines purposes of IEPs, underlying principles, privacy issues, & planning sequence

Walker	2010 DX	Romania	General	Inclusive education in Romania	Description of system	• Uses Personalised Intervention • Programme
Ware	1999 C2	USA	Parents of students with disabilities	Collaboration and decision-making	Interviews with 8 parents	• Parents critical of lack of collaboration & joint decision-making and thought IEPs were rarely implemented in practice.
Watkins	2007	Europe	General	Assessment in inclusive settings	Reports from countries	• Examines how assessment policy and practice supports effective teaching & learning • Presents innovative examples • Considers how assessment is influenced by IEPs & other pupil target-setting approaches
Watkins & D'Allesio	2009 A1 A2 A3	Europe	General	Assessment of students with special needs	Analysis of country reports	• Assessment represents a crucial element to increase the participation of all pupils in the process of learning, including those pupils with special educational needs, and consequently, for the development of inclusive education
Wedell	2001 & 2002 C6 B3	UK	SENCos	Views of secondary school SENCos	SENCo forum discussion	• Too much time devoted to IEPs in secondary schools, especially resulting from need to consult several subject specialists • IEPs should be used more sparingly, allowing schools' flexibility in responding to pupils' individual needs
Wedell	2003 A2	UK	SENCos	Do SATs harm children?	Opinion piece	• Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs), particularly at Key Stage 1 upset many SEN children • Challenges educational value of SATs
Weishaar	2001 C4	USA	Regular educators	Regular educators' role in IEPs	Advice	• Provides best practice with a focus on secondary schools
Werts et al.	2002 B1	USA	Pre-service teachers	Introducing pre-service teachers to IEP meetings	Description of programme and follow-up interviews	• Positive responses, but too early to tell if the programme had long-term impact
Wikipedia	2010 LX	USA	General	Comprehensive summary of IEPs: definition, components, procedures, implementation	Advice	• Specific guidelines
Williams & O'Leary	2001 GX	USA	Secondary students with disabilities	Implementation of transition plans in IEPs across states	Analysis of OSEP monitoring reports	• Transition services provisions pose continuing difficulties to agencies. • Full implementation remains elusive • Need for focused professional development, technical assistance and monitoring activities at all levels
Wolfe & Hall	2003 F1	USA	Students with severe disabilities	IEPs and a cascade of integration options for inclusion	Example of IEP	• Illustration of an IEP for inclusion

Wrightslaw	2010 LX	USA	General	Summarises IEPs	Description	• FAQs, IDEA 2004 & IEPs, IEP tactics and strategies, special ed cases
Wylie	2000 DX C2 B3	NZ	General	Review of special education	Critique	• Three-yearly reviews of OTRS required student's 2 most recent IEPs; i.e. IEPs used for funding • Allocation of TA hours 30% under amount recommended in IEPs in one area • Some IEPs had no parental input • Some used standard formats, with little linkage to actual provision • Parents need clearer information about IEPs
Yell et al.	2000 J1 J2	USA	General	FBA & IDEA '97: legal and practice considerations	Analysis	• IDEA specifies certain conditions in which an FBA must be prepared • Personnel involved in implementing FBAs must have the necessary training and expertise • FBAs and BIPs must not rely on punitive reductive procedures, but should provide skill-based programming
Yell et al.	2003 I1 HX E1	USA	Students with ASD	Developing legally correct & educationally appropriate IEPs	Guidelines based on ASD litigation	• Reiterates IEP requirements under IDEA • Recommends that school districts should access professionals with expertise in ASD to conduct assessments • School districts should adopt empirically validated instructional • strategies • IEP teams should collect meaningful data to document students' progress toward IEP goals
Yssel et al.	2007 C2	South Africa & USA	Parents	Parents' perceptions of IEPs	Focus groups & individual interviews	• Similarities across the two countries • Parents often felt disenfranchised: 'you against them' • Professional jargon & processes not fully explained in IEP meetings • Empty promises were made
Ysseldyke et al.	2004	USA	Students with disabilities	Consequences of high-stakes testing	Review of literature	• Reviews increased participation in assessment, raised expectations, assessment accommodations, alignment of IEPs to standards & assessments, improved access to general education, improved instruction, changes in promotion & grade advancement, & improved educational outcomes • Concludes that raising expectations for students with disabilities can set off a continuous chain of positive results • Praises data-based decision-making by IEP teams

Zatta & Pullin	2004 AX A1 FX B3	USA	Students with significant cognitive disabilities	Alternate assessments	Overview of states' efforts to provide alternate assessments, with a detailed example from Massachusetts	• State & federal mandates for educational reform call for increased accountability, including for students • with disabilities • For these students, the implementation of alternate approaches to accountability is increasing • Describes how alternate assessment as part of standards-based education reform impacts students with significant cognitive disabilities
Zhang & Bennett	2003 C1	USA	Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) families	Facilitating meaningful participation of CLD families in IEP process	Review of literature	• Barriers and facilitating approaches are summarised
Zickel & Arnold	2001 C3 B1	USA	Students with moderate learning disabilities	Involvement in IEPs	Description of teaching programme on IEPs	• Many students never see their IEP or understand it • A teaching programme is described which aims to teach students about IEPs: it increased their self-advocacy skills & fostered ownership of the process