

**PRACTICAL POINTERS**

**AND**

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

**FOR**

**SUCCESSFUL INCLUSION**

**IN**

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Region 10 ESC, Richardson, TX  
Adapted P.E. Department  
(972) 348-1624

# ? ? ? WHAT IS INCLUSION ? ? ?

Inclusion is the practice of educating **all** students, including students with disabilities, in regular education. It means providing all students with appropriate educational programs geared to their abilities. Inclusion within the physical education environment means students with disabilities are educated along side their peers as part of the day to day educational process. The rationale for inclusion goes well beyond the confines of the school environment. Inclusion provides opportunities for all students to develop the necessary attitudes to learn and live together in all aspects of life.

## **GENERAL OBJECTIVES FOR INCLUSION**

### **Maintain High Level of Participation**

All students, including those with disabilities should be an active participant in 4 out of every 5 minutes of physical education. Being active does not mean standing in the outfield waiting to touch the ball, waiting in line, waiting to bat or run, or sitting on the floor during attendance or verbal instructions.

### **Create Successful Experiences**

All good physical education is adapted or modified to allow **all** students to achieve some measure of success. To find the proper balance between being challenged and achieving success is the ultimate goal for every physical education teacher. Successful experiences allow students to feel good about themselves and serves as a motivator to move forward to new and more complex challenges.

### **Maintain Dignity of Students with Disabilities**

At no time should any student with or without a disability be ridiculed in the physical education environment. Being blamed for a team losing, feeling ashamed to even attempt certain skills because they will not come close to approximating the performance of their peers, and being continually told they can not participate in activities, are all issues which should be avoided through peer education and game organization.

## **BENEFITS OF INCLUSION FOR: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

- Opportunity to learn appropriate social skills in a more natural environment. (Social skills may include appropriate conversation skills, dress, and age-appropriate behavior.)
- Opportunity to learn physical and motor skills through observation of peer role models.
- Opportunity for participation in more age-appropriate physical and recreational activities.
- Increased self-esteem if students with disabilities find success in the inclusive environment.
- Potential for increasing circle of friends with peers who do not have disabilities.
- Increased awareness and acceptance of students with disabilities by both regular education students and teachers.
- Increased desire to learn because the environment is more motivating and stimulating.
- Higher expectation for students with disabilities when placed in an inclusive environment.

## **BENEFITS OF INCLUSION FOR: STUDENTS WITHOUT DISABILITIES**

- Increased knowledge, awareness, empathy and acceptance of students with disabilities.
- Opportunity to learn how to teach students with disabilities through various verbal and physical cues.
- Assist in breaking down barriers and prejudices later in life.
- Assist in choosing possible career paths which includes service to individuals with disabilities.
- Begin to build a sense of giving of yourself to causes believed to be noble and worthy.

## **INCLUSION IS NOT...**

### **❑ Dumping All Students With Disabilities Into Regular Physical Education**

Each student with a disability should be assessed relative to their physical, motor and behavioral skills. Based on the assessment data, along with a variety of other factors, an appropriate placement should be made. Each student should be placed in an inclusion setting based on individual strengths and needs relative to physical education.

### **❑ Having All Students Achieve the Same Educational Goals**

All students should be in a program geared to their abilities and needs. Each student is unique in what they bring to the physical education environment and consequently will need different challenges and different supports for safe and successful participation.

### **❑ Watering Down Activities So No One Has Fun**

In order to maintain a stimulating and motivational physical education environment, the class must be challenged or have fun during all activities. If games and activities are simplified to the point they become boring for the majority of student, few students will stay engaged or learn.

### **❑ Segregating Students With Disabilities On A Daily Basis**

Inclusion only occurs when all students are being educated along side each other. If a student with a disability simply arrives in the physical education environment with his class but does not participate, or participates with a peer off to the side, successful inclusion is not taking place.

### **❑ Planning An Entire Curriculum Around One or Two Students With Disabilities**

Because you have a visually impaired student in the physical education class, not all activities and games have to be geared purposely for visually impaired students. Do not eliminate all activities in which visually impaired students cannot participate successfully. Every student with a disability does not have to participate in every unit of instruction or in every portion of the days activities. Students with disabilities can be given supplemental activities to perform which address the current unit of instruction or meet a specific need of that student.

# **PLANNING FOR INCLUSION**

## **☐ Make Sure Students With Disabilities Are Appropriately Placed In The Physical Education Environment**

Physical education teachers may have no control over decisions regarding which students with disabilities are placed on their class rosters. If not, find out how you can be part of the process, either by completing an assessment on the student, or by becoming part of the interdisciplinary team. Being proactive in this process can save time and tears down the road.

## **☐ Once Student Is Placed, Obtain As Much Information On The Student As Possible**

Based on assessment, determine the student's present level of performance and prioritize goals and objectives. Seek information from student's parents or guardians regarding student's physical interests and capabilities outside the school environment.

## **☐ Analyze Physical Education Curriculum**

Determine which activities are appropriate, based on the student's goals and objectives and interests. Determine which units of instruction or specific activities may be inappropriate or contraindicated.

## **☐ Determine Modifications and Or Instructional Strategies Needed For Safe and Successful Participation in Physical Education**

Determining the appropriate types of modifications and instructional strategies will be essential to the overall success of the inclusionary experience. Both modifications and instructional strategies will be specifically addressed later in this document.

## **☐ Determine How Much, If Any, Support Is Needed For The Student With Disabilities In Physical Education**

Does the student need only extra verbal cues or does the student need a peer helper to simply provide verbal or physical prompts. A peer helper can be assigned to assist the students with the disability or a paraprofessional can be assigned to accompany the student at all times.



### **Prepare Physical Educator**

Determine type and amount of assistance available to support the physical educator. The special education teacher can provide valuable input regarding behavioral and social issues affecting student with disabilities. An adapted physical education specialist can also provide technical assistance in many areas.

### **Prepare Regular Education Students**

If peer “helpers” or adult aides are provided to support a student with disabilities, provide these individuals with sufficient knowledge and expectations to ensure they can provide the highest quality of support. Decide and communicate with these helpers and aides the proper protocols to follow given different situations which may arise.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSION**

### **Do Not Allow Elimination Games**

Elimination games not only reduce the level of participation for **all** students, but especially those who are not as athletically gifted as others. Included in those who are usually eliminated first are the students with disabilities. Ultimately, this limits their time on task and the number of repetitions they are allowed.

### **Evaluate What Positions Would Increase Level of Participation**

Based on student’s strengths and limitations and the specific game or activity, determine where in the game would best fit the student’s capabilities:

- with limited mobility skills, could a student play goalie instead of in the field
- provide a “safe zone” in the field to allow participation in a safe, but meaningful way
- allow student to roam the sidelines during certain games in order to keep from being hit, yet participate in other aspects of the game

### **Use Buddy System**

Much can be accomplished if a peer helper or adult aide can be provided for a student with more moderate or severe disabilities. This allows students to stay on task, be more mobile, and not have to worry about comprehension of rules and strategy.

## **Modify Equipment, Environment and Rules**

A variety of modifications can be made relative to equipment, the environment, and the rules of a game activity. These modifications are specially addressed in the next session.

## **De-Emphasize Skill As A Criteria For Finishing First**

Many tag and relay games result in a student or a team finishing first. This can have a negative impact on students with disabilities if they felt they were the cause of their team not finishing first. By incorporating dice, cards or a spinner, the element of “luck” becomes an integral part of the game and the skill level of individuals or teams become a non-factor.

## **Equalize Competition**

A concept used to equalize teams (relay squads) so each team has the same chance to finish first. If a student in a wheelchair is the third individual in squad one, then every third person in every other squad will be placed on wheels (scooterboard, chair with wheels, or old wheelchair). If the student in the wheelchair has to be pushed then every student placed on wheels will have to be pushed by a peer helper. This same type of equalization among teams can occur for students with visual impairments or those on crutches/walker.

## **Do Not Patronize Students With Disabilities**

Students with disabilities do not always have to score a run, be safe (not out), or get first place. These students, like all other students, need to experience all facets of the game or activities. This includes being tagged out, finishing last, etc. Learning how to emotionally deal with these concepts become an important outcome of physical education.

## **Give All Students A Choice During Certain Points of An Activity**

Too often, students with disabilities are singled out as having to do something “different” than the rest of the class. (Batting off of a tee while everyone else hits a ball that is tossed). By giving all students a choice of the tee or a pitched ball, students with disabilities feel more comfortable. By providing various ways to achieve a single task, (for arm-shoulder strength - use push-ups, hand weights, theraband) students with disabilities will not “stand out” in the class.

## **Do Not Set Students Up For Failure**



Use knowledge of your students to protect them from sure failure. (Don't put a student identified as emotionally disturbed in a game which encourages physical contact). Changes in the organization of certain games will protect students who are slower, less skilled, etc.

# MODIFICATIONS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Modifications can be made in many areas. Equipment modifications, changes in the physical environment, modification of rules and changes in the movement requirements can all be utilized to provide a more active and successful experience in physical education.

Modifications should address the following questions:

- Will the modifications increase the students level of participation?
- Will the modifications create a safe environment for both the students and the remainder of the class?
- Will the modification change the essence or nature of the game?
- Will the modifications help the student with disabilities blend in more or stand out even more than before?
- Will the modifications create a successful experience for **all** students?

Modifications can be made for certain deficiencies, for specific motor and fitness skills or for sports skills. Following are examples of each of these areas:

## **For a student with limited strength:**

- a) shorten distance to move or propel object
- b) use lighter equipment
- c) use shorter and lighter striking implements
- d) allow students to sit or lie down while playing
- e) allow students to monitor their own fatigue
- f) use deflated balls or suspended balls
- g) change movement requirements

## **For a student with limited speed:**

- a) shorten distance or change distances for different students
- b) change locomotor pattern
- c) equalize competition among teams
- d) make safe areas in tag games

## **For a student with limited endurance:**

- a) shorten distances and a playing field
- b) allow more rest periods
- c) change movement requirements to reduce activity time
- d) allow student to sit while playing

**For a student with limited balance:**

- a) provide chair, bar or buddy for support
- b) teach balance techniques (widen base, use arms)
- c) increase surfaces to be walked
- d) use carpeted areas rather than slick surfaces
- e) teach student how to fall
- f) lower center of gravity

**For a student with limited coordination and accuracy:**

- a) use stationary objects for kicking/striking
- b) decrease distance for throwing, kicking and striking
- c) make targets and goals larger
- d) use scarves, balloons, bubbles to enhance visual tracking skills
- e) increase surface of striking implements

# **MODIFICATIONS FOR FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR PATTERNS**

**Catching** - Use scarf, balloons, bubbles to increase visual tracking.  
Use suspended objects to begin simple grasp activities.  
Use velcro mitts or gloves as means to successfully catch objects.

**Throwing** - Use smaller objects to grasp.  
Push ball down ramp or off of lap tray.  
Use trigger type gun to shoot velcro darts.  
Use large and colorful targets.

**Kicking** - Use large, lightweight objects, such as balloons or beach balls.

**Striking** - Strike large ball or balloon off of table with hand, then add small lightweight implement.  
Strike suspended ball.

**Running** - Push student in wheelchair.  
Place student on scooterboard.

**Jumping/Hopping** - On all fours, jump hands over line or rope.  
Have student swing rope.

**Galloping/Skipping** - Move student's arms up and down while being pushed in wheelchair.

**Equilibrium** - Work on sitting balance.  
Four point balance (hands and knees).  
Prone balance over wedge.  
Standing with support from chair, wall or bar.

**Body Awareness** - Accept tactile input.  
Imitate simple movements.

**Endurance** - Tolerate continuous activity.  
Move body parts repeatedly.

**Strength** - Use theraband, small weights.  
Tug of war activities or isometric activities.

# **MODIFICATIONS FOR GROUP GAMES AND SPORTS**

## **Vary Purpose or Goal of Game**

Some students play to learn complex strategies while others play to work on simple motor skills.

## **Vary Number of Players**

Use smaller size teams to increase participation and isolate students in certain groups, if needed.

## **Vary Movement Requirements**

Some students can walk while others run.

Some students can hit off of tee while others hit balls tossed.

## **Vary Field of Play**

Use shorter distances.

Set up safety zones for those with mobility difficulties.

Make field narrower or wider.

## **Vary Objects Used**

Use lighter balls, bats.

Use larger or smaller balls.

Use lower net or basket.

## **Vary the Rules/Expectations**

Vary number of turns each student receives.

Evaluate what positions students with disabilities will find success.

Use “luck” as means of de-emphasizing skill.

# **MODIFICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SPORTS**

**(Examples taken from Marten E. Block “A Teachers Guide to Including Students With Disabilities in Regular Physical Education”)**

## **Basketball Shooting:**

### **General**

- Use larger or smaller balls
- Use playground balls, Nerf balls, or punch balls (large balloons)
- Vary distance required to shoot
- Vary height of basket
- Vary size of basket (use large box for basket or hang hula hoop on wall)

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (typical upper body strength)

- Encourage student to find best way to shoot (overhead v. chest v. sidearm)
- Use soft ball (Nerf ball) for safety as needed

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (limited upper body strength and control)

- Use soft ball (Nerf ball) for safety
- Push ball down ramp into box
- Push ball off lap into box
- Swing arm and hit ball held by peer into box
- Kick ball into box if legs have more control than arms
- Hit ball off tee (or held by peer) with head into box

### **Students With Visual Impairments**

- Use soft ball (Nerf ball) for safety
- Use verbal cues to tell student where to shoot
- Give student specific verbal feedback to tell him/her how close his/her shot was to the basket
- Use physical assistance to instruct student
- Tie string to ball and to student's wrist so that ball is easy to retrieve
- Place radio under basket to cue student
- Put bells or beeper in ball

### **Students With Mental Retardation/Learning Disabilities**

- Use soft ball (Nerf ball) for safety
- Use physical assistance when teaching skill
- Place hand prints on ball to show proper technique
- Encourage proper technique



## **Soccer Game**

### **General**

- Encourage students without disabilities to develop modified rules that will be fair for everyone, including student with disabilities
- Set up special zone for student where only he/she can play ball
- Allow student to shoot at wider goal
- Allow student to sue different ball when it is his/her turn to dribble or shoot
- Make rule that no student can steal ball when student is dribbling
- Make rule that no student can block or interfere with student's pass
- Have student play a wing position away from fastest action
- Match student with disability against lower-ability student without disabilities
- Give student a peer to assist him/her during game
- Allow free substitution for student if he/she tires easily
- Give student's team extra player (12 v. 11 game)
- Allow student to play only offense or defense if he/she has limited mobility
- Split the class and allow skilled students to play competitive, full-field games while allowing less-skilled players (including student with disabilities) to play slower, less competitive games (half-field, 6 v. 6, keep-away games, cooperative games)
- Play lead-up soccer games

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (typical upper body strength)

- Caution peers about wheelchair
- Have student play goalie (requires less mobility) and make rule that skilled students cannot shoot from closer than 20 yards out

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (limited upper body strength and control)

- Provide student with peer to assist him/her
- Allow student to use adapted equipment practiced during skills (ramps)
- Allow student free shot at goal from close distance

### **Students With Visual Impairments**

- \* Have peer guide student around field
- \* Have special zone for student marked with rope or cones where only he/she can play ball (make rule that ball should be played into zone every 2-3 minutes)
- \* Have teammates give extra verbal cues to student to describe where he/she is, where teammates are, and where opponents are
- \* Use ball with bell
- \* Use brightly colored ball
- \* Place radio in goal
- \* Have teammates wear brightly colored pinnies
- \* Allow student free shot from penalty line at least once during game

### **Students With Mental Retardation/Learning Disabilities**

- Provide student with peer to assist him/her
- Give student extra time to pass and shoot with being defended
- Give student occasional free shot





## **Badminton Skills**

### **Forehand**

#### **General**

- Use larger birdies
- Use lighter and softer birdies (Nerf balls, balloons)
- Use shorter, lighter racquets (panty-hose racquet)
- Use racquets with larger heads
- Vary distance requirements (stand closer to net)
- Vary speed required (slow down the birdie)
- Lower the net or do not use net
- Practice with suspended ball

#### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (typical upper body strength)

- Encourage student to find best position to hit forehand
- Hit birdie off tee
- Encourage student to work on maneuvering wheelchair and then hitting birdie

#### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (limited upper body strength and control)

- Strap racquet to player's hand
- Hit or push birdie held by peer, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Hit or push birdie off lap tray, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Hit or push birdie down ramp or across table, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Use legs or head if student has better control with these body parts, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Provide physical assistance as needed
- Allow student to touch birdie, then have peer pick it up and hit it to other teammates

#### **Students With Visual Impairments**

- Use brightly colored birdies
- Have peers tell student which direction to stand and where to hit birdie
- Provide physical assistance as needed
- Put bells or beeper in birdie
- Put radio by net for direction
- Suspend birdie from string with Velcro so that birdie releases when hit
- Place birdie on tee
- Allow student to self-toss and then hit birdie
- Attach string to student and to birdie so that student can quickly retrieve birdie

### **Students With Mental Retardation/Learning Disabilities**

- Allow student with limited coordination to hit suspended birdie
- Allow student with limited coordination to hit birdie off tee
- Have peer assist student (extra verbal and physical cues)
- Encourage proper technique

### **Serving**

#### **General**

- Use larger birdies
- Use lighter and softer birdies (Nerf balls, balloons)
- Use shorter, lighter racquets (panty-hose racquet)
- Use racquets with larger heads
- Vary distance requirements (stand closer to net)

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (typical upper body strength)

- Encourage student to find best way to serve (overhand, sidearm)
- Serve birdie off tee or have birdie tossed to person to serve

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (limited upper body strength and control)

- Strap racquet to player's hand
- Hit or push birdie held by peer, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Hit or push birdie off lap tray, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Hit or push birdie down ramp or across table, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Use legs or head if student has better control with these body parts, then have peer pick up birdie and hit it over net
- Provide physical assistance as needed
- Allow student to touch birdie, then have peer pick it up and hit it to other teammates

### **Students With Visual Impairments**

- Use brightly colored birdie
- Have peers tell student which direction to stand and where to hit birdie
- Provide physical assistance as needed
- Put bells or beeper in birdie
- Put radio by net for direction
- Allow student to hit birdie off of tee

### **Students With Mental Retardation/Learning Disabilities**

- Allow students with limited coordination to hit birdie off tee
- Toss the birdie to student if this is easier for him/her
- Have peer assist student (extra verbal and physical cues)
- Encourage proper technique



## **Badminton Game**

### **General**

- Allow student to hit to wider court while opponent hits to narrower court
- Match student with less-skilled student without disabilities
- Play lead-up games rather than regulation games
- Lower net or play game without net
- Play doubles and allow team with student to have extra player (3 v. 2)
- Play modified or lead-up games

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (typical upper body strength)

- Allow student to serve ball off tee or have ball tossed to person to serve

### **Students Who Use Wheelchairs** (limited upper body strength and control)

- Give peer assistant
- Make special rules that if birdie is hit a certain distance, it counts as over the net.

Then, peer assistant can hit birdie over net to opponent

- Allow student to use adapted equipment

### **Students With Visual Impairments**

- Use brightly colored birdies
- Have textured markers on court or guide wires so that student knows where he/she is on court
- Have peers tell student in which direction to stand and where to hit birdie
- Provide physical assistance as needed
- Put bells or beeper in birdie
- Put radio by net for direction
- Allow student to hit birdie off tee for serving
- Allow student to bounce birdie then hit it

### **Students With Mental Retardation/Learning Disabilities**

- Allow students with limited coordination to hit birdie off tee for serving
- Toss the birdie to student if this is easier for him or her when serving
- Have peer assist student