



LAU
الجامعة اللبنانية الأمريكية
Lebanese American University

Consult

**SPECIAL EDUCATION IN K-12 SCHOOLS:
THE INCLUSION APPROACH**

INTRODUCTION

Students with special needs are a diverse group. Some learn quickly and easily while others have great difficulty. Some have sensory or physical impairments, while others stand out because of their speech, language or communication difficulties. Despite their special needs, such students can and do learn. However, more than typical students, they require evidence-based strategies for learning and more individualized attention and support to succeed in general-education classrooms.

Inclusive education refers to the meaningful participation of students with learning and behavioral challenges and other special needs in general-education classrooms and programs. Although we believe that all students should be participating in the general-education experience, we also contend that the nature and extent of participation should be determined on an individual basis. No one program, placement or service arrangement meets the needs of all students.



INCLUSIVE VS. SEGREGATED ENVIRONMENTS

There has been a significant policy change in special-education systems toward the adoption of inclusion. The teacher's role in creating inclusive learning environments is essential. But inclusion is a team sport. Its success depends on the proper training of both teachers and administrators (including school principals), and on spreading awareness regarding what students with special needs can accomplish given the proper support.

Research indicates that general-education teachers do not consistently accept students with learning and behavioral challenges. They are more likely to ignore social interactions initiated by students with learning disabilities, be more critical of their behavior, provide less praise, and consider them less desirable as students.

When rejected by teachers and peers, students with special needs may perform more poorly, both socially and academically. Simply including students with learning and behavioral difficulties in general-education classes does not

guarantee their social acceptance or their social-skill development.

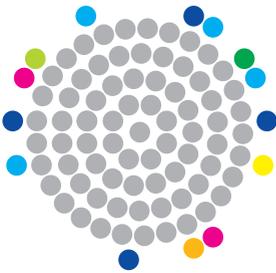
Teachers need training to assess student needs and accommodate, modify and adapt instruction based on them, manage behavior, promote social acceptance and coordinate the learning environment of the classroom. These skills are simply good teaching procedures that can be used with either typical or special-needs students. Good teaching skills focus on the needs of the student, rather than on their disability, and are based on the following four assumptions:

- All students can learn.
- Learning is determined by changes in behavior that can be closely monitored.
- Teaching involves arrangement of the environment to maximize the occurrence of desired behaviors.
- Data collection increases teaching efficiency, from assessing learning needs to selecting the appropriate strategy, and from evaluating to modifying instruction.

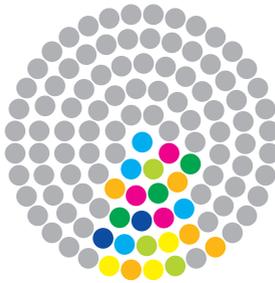
THE INCLUSION APPROACH

Inclusion can be defined as the placement of learners with academic and behavioral challenges in regular classes on a full-time basis, and, of course, with proper support. This support could take the form of being placed in a room that has two co-teachers, perhaps one regular educator and one special educator. In this model, special-education support can be given inside the regular classroom, and usually benefits all students, not just those with special needs.

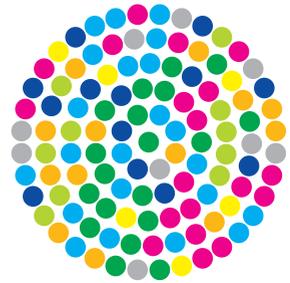
Children with academic and behavioral challenges need support and confirmation from their teacher that their own learning disability or learning disorder is not a problem related to intelligence. Inclusion is a constructive step in the acceptance of students with special needs into the regular classrooms of their local schools.



EXCLUSION



INTEGRATION



INCLUSION

LAU CONSULT INCLUSION PROGRAMS

LAU Consult has developed three programs to incorporate the Inclusion Approach in K-12 schools:

- Program 1: K – Grade 3
- Program 2: Grade 4 – 9
- Program 3: Grade 10 – 12

The purpose of these programs is integrating learners with academic and behavioral challenges and those without learning difficulties to enhance reading comprehension in mixed groups.



INTEGRATING THE INCLUSION APPROACH IN YOUR K-12 SCHOOL

To integrate the Inclusion Approach in your K-12 school, LAU Consult has developed a set of seven modules for each of the three programs listed above.

Each of the seven modules lasts 10 contact hours and targets grade-level teachers and coordinators of all subjects. What follows is a short description of what each module entails.

- **Module 1:** Identification Methods of Learning Difficulties I
- **Module 2:** Identification Methods of Learning Difficulties II
- **Module 3:** Psycho-educational Screening of ADHD, Behavior Disorders and Emotional Disturbance
- **Module 4:** Psycho-educational Screening of Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia and Dyslexia
- **Module 5:** Positive Discipline and Classroom Management
- **Module 6:** Learning Strategies and Differentiated Instruction for Students with Academic and Behavioral Challenges and ADHD
- **Module 7:** Planning Instruction and Differentiation



1

Identification Methods of Learning Difficulties I

Module 1 focuses on the major areas of learning difficulties and student diversity, addressing the nature, causes, characteristics and educational needs of students with learning difficulties.

Upon completion of the module requirements, participants will be able to identify methods that can effectively focus on the needs of students with academic and behavioral challenges; identify the causes and the indicators of various learning difficulties; examine diagnoses of various academic, emotional and behavioral challenges; and identify factors that may influence the ability of students to process information.



2

Identification Methods of Learning Difficulties II

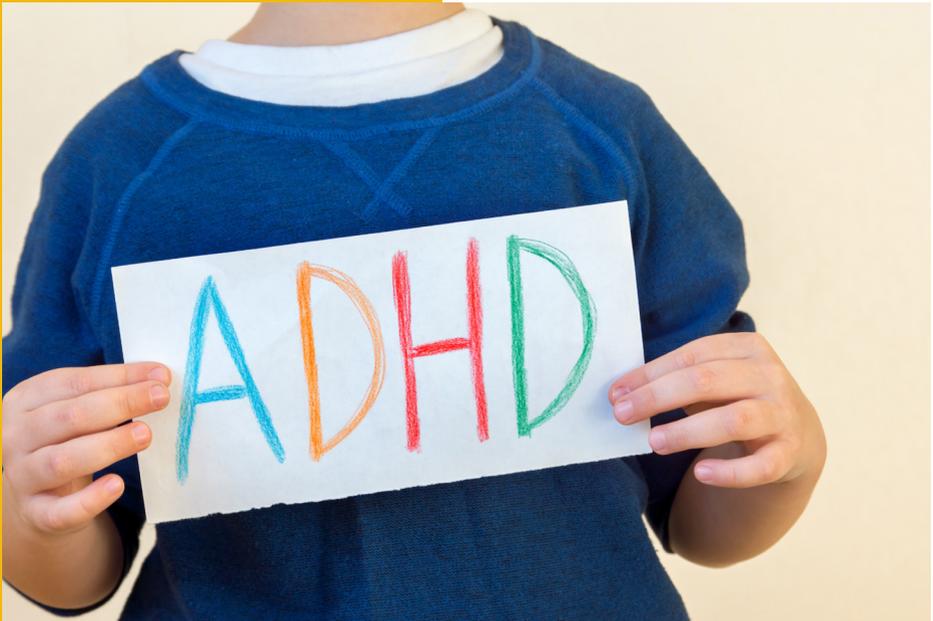
Building on the fundamentals of Module 1, Module 2 engages participants with general methods, strategies and settings for meeting the social and educational needs of students with various learning difficulties, utilizing different teaching strategies for students with academic and behavioral challenges, and identifying factors that may influence the ability of students to process information.



3

Psychoeducational Screening of ADHD, Behavior Disorders and Emotional Disturbance

Module 3 provides psycho-educational screenings that help teachers understand student performance, and trains teachers to complete such screenings if they detect academic and behavioral challenges. It also helps teachers identify strengths and weaknesses to develop a plan to help students succeed in the classroom, and provides them with the tools for the screening of ADHD, behavior disorders and emotional disturbance.



Module 4 enables teachers to carry out psycho-educational screenings in collaboration with a special-education specialist. This module details a set of tests, observations and history tracking that teachers should undertake in order to help students process information and improve their skills. It also helps teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses and develop plans to help them succeed in the classroom. Module 4 provides teachers with the tools and knowledge needed to help special-education specialists with the psycho-educational assessment of dyscalculia, dysgraphia and dyslexia.

4

Psycho-educational Screening of Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia and Dyslexia



5

Positive Discipline and Classroom Management

Module 5 enables teachers to create motivating, supportive and safe classroom environments that ensure equal opportunities for participation and success. It includes an overview of the strategies for dealing with discipline and problematic behavior.

Participants will:

1. Understand positive discipline
2. Analyze their own repertoire of responses to student misbehavior
3. Create responses and activities that help eliminate causes of misbehavior
4. Evaluate their own habitual responses to misbehaving students
5. Seek School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS)
6. Integrate support systems of Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavioral and Intervention Supports (PBIS), thus highlighting the connectedness between academic and behavioral challenges.



6

Learning Strategies and Differentiated Instruction for Students with Academic and Behavioral Challenges and ADHD

Module 6 relates learners' prior experiences, dispositions and skills to the new learning experience. It focuses on how teachers can differentiate instruction by content and process to help students with academic and behavioral challenges, and to ensure the inclusion of all learners. Furthermore, this module reveals how modifications for learners identified as exceptional should be provided.



7

Planning Instruction and Differentiation

Module 7 enables participants to design coherent yearly, monthly and weekly instructional plans based on their school curriculum. In addition, this module focuses on lesson planning and alignment of teaching points, instructional activities and resources needed for implementation, as well as assessment and evaluation techniques and tools. Participants devise sample instructional plans for curriculum organization in various subject areas,

taking into consideration learning styles, multiple intelligence levels and levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Topics may include: Universal Design for Learning (UDL), technology, response to intervention and differentiated assessment strategies, instructional support strategies for differentiated instruction, and cognitive strategy instruction.



LAU Consult
University Enterprise Office
Lebanese American University

Byblos Campus
P.O. Box: 36
Byblos, Lebanon
Tel: +961 9 547 254 ext. 2242
Fax: +961 9 944 851

Beirut Campus
P.O. Box: 13-5053
Chouran Beirut 1102 2801
Lebanon
Tel: +961 1 786 456 ext. 2242
Fax: +961 1 867 098

**New York Headquarters
and Academic Center**
211 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017
United States
Tel: +1 212 203 4333
Fax: +1 212 784 6597

<http://consult.lau.edu.lb/>
consult@lau.edu.lb

