Trends and Issues Affecting Education and the Provision of Special Education Services

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Book 2: CASE Leadership Series for Special Education Administrators

About CASE

The Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc. (CASE) is an international professional educational organization affiliated with the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Members are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of each individual in society.

Those receiving special education services are individuals who possess basic rights and responsibilities and who command respect at all times. Special education embraces the right to a free, appropriate public education.

The mission of CASE is to provide leadership and support to members by shaping policies and practices which impact the quality of education worldwide.

About the Author

With more than 30 years of experience as an educational leader, William Bogdan, Ed.D., has served as a program consultant and supervisor, program coordinator and director, assistant superintendent, and chief operating officer within public education. Leading and supporting systems change at the school building and district level has been a focus of his career. Through a regional collaborative effort involving 49 school districts and 4 educational service centers, Dr. Bogdan has facilitated change efforts in Ohio.

Dr. Bogdan has been the recipient of state and national honors including the Outstanding CEC Leadership Award in 2007. He also received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Cincinnati College of Education. In 2010, Dr. Bogdan received the Walter B. Turner award from the Association of Educational Service Agencies for his leadership in the field of special education.

Dr. Bogdan received his undergraduate degree from Western Kentucky University and his Masters and Doctoral degrees in education administration from the University of Cincinnati. He is a past president of the Council for Exceptional Children and past chair of the Yes I Can! Foundation for Exceptional Children.

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Foreword

The role of special education leader is unique and distinguished within the administrative structure of public education. Building the bridge between district-level policies and procedures and services and programs delivered at the building level has been a hallmark and major responsibility for the special education/pupil personnel leader. The role of special education leader is dynamic and ever-changing and often includes comprehensive provisions of specialized and ancillary services within a public school district.

As a district special education leader, you assume the role of directing policy development and administrative procedures for special education services and, in many cases, in all pupil personnel-related services within your district. The role of special education leader seems to be more fluid and possibly more intense than other roles within a district's central administrative office. Knowledge of the law and practices in special education, as a primary job function, is often complemented by additional administrative duties. How often do special education administrative colleagues oversee related special education services, districtwide testing, guidance services, gifted and talented education, nursing, and health services?

In reality, public school districts are complex organizations meeting complex and diverse needs of children, youth, and families. At a time of diminishing financial and personnel resources, administrators are asked to assume much more responsibility than ever before. The role of district special education leader is more complex than in the past, and with its complexity, the leader has more effect on the outcomes of both student and professional performance.

No matter the size of your school district, you challenge the status quo. You lead district efforts to value all children and youth who enter your school buildings. You forge inter- and intra-district partnerships through positive and proactive collaboration. You hold yourself and your staff accountable for professional and student performance outcomes that improve not only the opportunity for students with disabilities to access the general curriculum but also for performance outcomes that promote success for all students in your school district. In many ways, you set the standard for uniquely designed educational services for *all* students.

To serve, you must be committed, passionate, and knowledgeable in your field. To lead, you must know the research, the evidence-based practices, the effects of federal and state policy on public education, and the

demographic, social, cultural, and economic trends that shape the lives of students, families, staff, and community.

Michael Fullan (2003) states, "As the main institution for fostering social cohesion in an increasingly diverse society, publicly funded schools must serve all children, not simply those with the loudest or most powerful advocates. This means addressing the cognitive and social needs of all children, with an emphasis on including those who may not have been well served in the past." At no time has the role of special education leader been more critical. Expectations are high that public schools prepare students to live and work in a highly competitive global economy. To that end, your role as educational leader transcends your day-to-day work in leading your district's special education programs and services.

Your role as special education/student services/pupil personnel leader is one that is being redesigned to meet the needs of the students and families served each day in your school district. It is your obligation to understand the trends in society, in the political arena, and in the practices within schools so that you, as leader, can assist your district with helping each student attain the skills he or she needs to be an active and contributing member of his or her community.

In this book, topics will be explored that have historically affected and are currently affecting the provision of services for students with disabilities. Societal trends, federal and state legislation, and instructional practices have dramatically changed the special education service delivery system.

At the end of each chapter, a set of questions will be posed for your consideration and may serve as a discussion prompt for your school or district. Consideration of these questions may inform, direct, and assist in your school district's planning in order to meet the needs of all students and, in particular, the needs of students with disabilities.

1 Societal and Economic Trends Affecting Public Education

Introduction

Throughout the history of public education, a question of balance has existed between what schools are expected to accomplish academically and the expectations the community holds for meeting the needs of their students. John Goodlad states in his foreword to Michael Fullan's book, *The Moral Imperative of School Leadership* (2003), "The people of a social and political democracy are held together in a moral ecology that transcends the different interests, economic stratifications, cultural origins, religions, ethnicities, and races it embraces."

If we accept that it is the responsibility of public education to lead the effort in improving the academic performance of all students, should we not also accept that public education is required to fully embrace all of the gifts, talents, challenges, and needs faced by children and youth in society today? What responsibility does the public school system assume in supporting the health and wellness of all of its students, not simply focusing on their academic progress? What critical role does public education play in the growth of each child's mind, spirit, and body?

It is important for educational leaders to be aware of, understand, and respond to societal shifts impacting the lives of children, youth, and families. In light of the complex needs of children, it often seems that the special education administrator, working in conjunction with central office and building-level administrators, is expected to lead the coordination of districtwide efforts to support the needs of each student entering school today.

To better understand the pressures public education leaders face today, a review of demographic and social trends is in order.

Demographic and Population Shifts

The U.S. population has grown steadily over the past century. The 2000 U.S. Census reported a population of 281.4 million people. In the 2010 U.S. Census, the population had grown to approximately 310 million people. The growth in population means little if not understood in the context of regional population density and shifts in household membership. We find that as the overall U.S. population grows, some segments of the population have grown more than others.

Population Shifts by Geographic Region

Those who analyze the shifts and movements of the U.S. population recognize that the West and South have grown in population while the Northeast and Midwest have consistently lost population over the past decade.

Hobbs and Stoops (2002) identified shifts in population centers that have occurred over time (between 1900 and 2000). Downward shifts are evident in the Midwest (11.8 percent decrease) and Northeast (8.7 percent decrease), and significant increases in population have occurred in the West (17.1 percent increase) and South (3.3 percent increase). These demographic changes might suggest shifts in voting patterns, tax revenue generation, enrollment in public schools, and distribution of federal and state funding for schools.
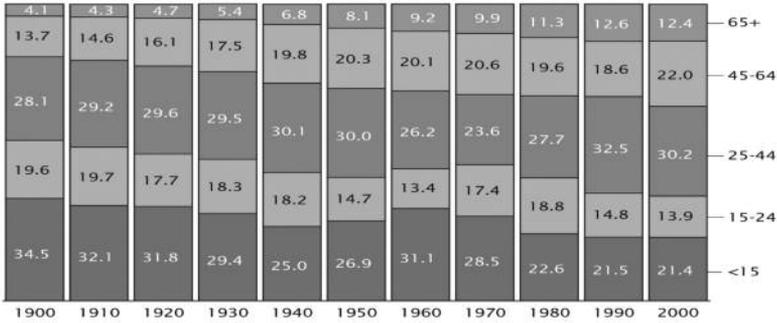
Nonetheless, public school districts maintain the responsibility for educating all students in a time when student needs are becoming progressively more complex.

Population Shifts by Age

As the U.S. population changes in number and regional distribution, it is also a fact that the U.S. population is aging. As seen in the chart on the next page, the number of persons 65 years and older continues to grow while the number of Americans below the age of 15 continues to shrink (Hobbs & Stoops, 2002). As these population shifts continue, what impact will they have on the public education system?

According to Dixie Griffin Good, "In 2011, the first of the Baby Boomers will turn 65, and within 17 years, 70 million people will follow suit. The 'new' seniors are expected to be wealthier and more inclined to exercise political clout than their predecessors" (1999). As the U.S. population continues to age, the needs of the U.S. public education system continue to grow. With the crumbling physical infrastructure of so many public schools in the country, will the public be as willing to increase their support for improving or building new schools? Will school districts be required to build new and unconventional alliances with other school districts, community and state agencies, unions, and community business leaders in order to survive in an era of reduced financial support for public education at the federal, state, and local levels?

**Percent Distribution of the Total Population
By Age: 1900-2000**

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	
	4.1	4.3	4.7	5.4	6.8	8.1	9.2	9.9	11.3	12.6	12.4	65+
	13.7	14.6	16.1	17.5	19.8	20.3	20.1	20.6	19.6	18.6	22.0	45-64
	28.1	29.2	29.6	29.5	30.1	30.0	26.2	23.6	27.7	32.5	30.2	25-44
	19.6	19.7	17.7	18.3	18.2	14.7	13.4	17.4	18.8	14.8	13.9	15-24
	34.5	32.1	31.8	29.4	25.0	26.9	31.1	28.5	22.6	21.5	21.4	<15

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census of population, 1900 to 2000.

Population Shifts by Ethnicity

The U.S. population is becoming more ethnically diverse. In 2000, 81 percent of the population was identified as white, 12.7 percent as black, 3.8 percent as Asian, and 2.5 percent as all other races. As schools become more diverse both culturally and linguistically, school and district programs must understand and embrace the cultural and linguistic diversity of their student population and the positive impact diversity has on the school culture itself.

The following data suggest dramatic shifts in the population of the United States:

- Most diverse states: California, New Mexico, Texas.
- Hispanic population in 2009: 48.7 million, 15.7 percent of the U.S. population.
- Hispanic population growth from 2000 to 2009: More than 3.5 percent annually.
- Median household income for the United States has either declined or stagnated.
- The "face" of the United States continues to change as more people arrive.
- Asian population growth from 2000 to 2009: 3.4 percent annually.
- Multiracial population in 2009: 9.1 million, almost 3 percent of U.S. population.
- Multiracial population growth from 2000 to 2009: 3.2 percent annually.

Note: Adapted from *Demographic Trends Changes in the U.S. Demographic Landscape*, ESRI 2009/2014.

Projected U.S. Population by Race: 2000 to 2005

Population	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Total	282,125 (100.0)	308,936 (100.0)	335,805 (100.0)	363,584 (100.0)	391,946 (100.0)	419,854 (100.0)
White alone	228,548 (81.0)	244,995 (79.3)	260,629 (77.6)	275,731 (75.8)	289,690 (73.9)	302,626 (72.1)
Black alone	35,818 (12.7)	40,454 (13.1)	45,365 (13.5)	50,442 (13.9)	55,876 (14.3)	61,361 (14.6)
Asian alone	10,684 (3.8)	14,241 (4.6)	17,988 (5.4)	22,580 (6.2)	27,992 (7.1)	33,430 (8.0)
All other races 1/	7,075 (2.5)	9,246 (3.0)	11,822 (3.5)	14,831 (4.1)	18,388 (4.7)	22,437 (5.3)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. Interim Projections by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin," Internet release data: Mar. 18, 2004, at [http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/usinterimproj/].

Author's Note: The figures (in 000s) project the population of the United States in the decades to come and indicate the shift in ethnic diversity within the country.

Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Population in the U.S. by Race: 2000

Race		Hispanic or Latino			Not Hispanic or Latino		
		Number (in 000s)	Percent of Hispanics	Percent of Total	Number (in 000s)	Percent of non-Hispanics	Percent of Total
Total		35,306	100.00	12.55	246,116	100.00	87.45
One race		34,814	98.61	12.37	242,710	98.62	86.24
	White	32,529	92.13	11.56	195,576	79.46	69.50
	Black	1,391	3.94	0.49	34,313	13.94	12.19
	Asian	232	0.66	0.08	10,357	4.21	3.68
	American Indian	566	1.60	0.20	2,097	0.85	0.75
	Hawaiian	95	0.27	0.03	367	0.15	0.13
Two races		434	1.23	0.15	3,144	1.28	1.12
Three or more races		57	0.16	0.02	262	0.11	0.09

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Modified Race Data Summary File.

Households by Type
One final demographic trend that impacts the public school system is the shift in the distribution of household types. Over fifty years, households with a married couple have dropped from 78.1 percent to 51.7 percent of total households. One-person households have risen from 9.5 percent to 25.8 percent. Other, nonfamily households have risen from 1.1 percent to 6.1 percent (e.g., foster parents). And other family households have increased from 11.3 percent to 16.4 percent (e.g., grandparents, extended family, same sex partner households).

With a shift from the traditional two-parent households to those representing alternate family structures and housing arrangements, school districts are compelled to better accommodate the needs of their students and families, no matter how those families are defined by society and the family itself.

The shifts in population demographics within the country have a direct impact on the organization and management of public school systems. With a population that is more diverse and more mobile, school systems must plan thoroughly and carefully to meet the needs of their students, families, staff, and community.

Social and Cultural Changes

As with the demographic shifts occurring within the U.S. population, societal and cultural changes are occurring simultaneously. Van Damme (2009) summarized the following social and cultural changes that will impact education in the years to come:

- More people are mobile, and the population is becoming more diverse.
- The number of foreign-born persons in the U.S. has grown by 13 percent.
- The annual net migration per 1000 people (from 1990 to 2004) is 13 percent.
- The annual number of marriages ending in divorce per 1000 of the population has grown to 3.8 percent, resulting in more single-parent households.

The predicted demographic shifts and social and cultural changes within society raise the following questions for public school administrators.

- How do schools cope with an increasingly diverse student population?
- Does a district's core curriculum need to adjust to the changing social needs of its community?
- How would national core standards support student needs at the local level?
- Do services to students and families need to be intensified in order to accommodate the more complex needs of children, youth, and families?
- Do communities and schools need to do a better job working collaboratively and more seamlessly with other school districts, social service agencies, and business partners in an effort to build community, school-based services?

Economy

Recent changes in the economic stability within and across countries have added to the tremendous stress placed on public sector agencies responsible for serving citizens with many more needs. For public education, economic factors continue to dramatically impact its ability to meet the needs of all students and families.

Housing Changes
- The housing market downturn is now affected by the economic downturn.
- Foreclosures were up 81 percent in 2008, with sharp increases since January 2009.
- The 2009 median home value was $162,000, down 11.3 percent from 2008.
- The 2008–2009 median home value declined in more than two-thirds of U.S. counties.
- At 66.2 percent, the 2009 rate of homeownership was slightly less than in 2000.

Economic Trends
- Recession since December 2007.
- Unemployment rate up to 10.6 percent (not seasonally adjusted).
- Job loss at 5.6 million in 2009.
- Economy slowed by job loss, housing slump, credit crunch.

Income Trends
- No growth in median household income (U.S. median: $54,700).
- Median household income decline in 37 percent of U.S. counties.
- Median net worth decline by 7.6 percent to less than $98,000.

Note: Lists adapted from *Demographic Trends Changes in the U.S. Demographic Landscape*, ESRI 2009/2014.

Sean Cavanagh (2011, p. 6) states:

> Officially, the Great Recession—the economic free-fall that shredded state and local budgets as the century's first decade neared its close—ended about 18 months ago. The picture in the nation's schools tells a very different story. States and school districts have seen their tax bases wither over the past two years, and the financial picture looks bleak for the years to come. . . .
>
> And while political leaders traditionally are loath to cut education programs, even during tough economic times, the downturn's severity has forced state and local officials to make deeper

reductions in jobs, programs, and services than they would have contemplated only a few years ago.

Poverty

Poverty levels in the United States continue to rise. Families are struggling to meet their basic needs: nutritious foods, clothing, and shelter. More and more pressure is placed on public schools to provide these basic needs. According to CNN, "The nation's poverty rate jumped to 14.3% in 2009, its highest level since 1994. The 43.6 million Americans in need is the highest number in 51 years of recordkeeping. The Office of Management and Budget defined the poverty threshold level as less than $21,954 for a family of four in 2009 and $10,956 for an individual. The poverty rate increased for all racial groups except Asians" (CNN Money, 2010).

The National School Lunch Act (1946) created the modern school lunch program. By the end of the first year, approximately 7.1 million children were participating in the National School Lunch Program. By 1970, 22 million children were participating. By 1980, nearly 27 million children participated. In 1990, over 24 million children were provided a lunch through the federal program. And in 2009, more than 31.3 million children received their lunch through the National School Lunch Program (Food and Nutrition Service, 2010).

In U.S. public schools today, it is rare to find a school district that does not provide some level of support for students whose only substantial meal is provided through their school lunch program. Much attention is being given to the quality and nutritional health of the meals provided through school lunch programs.

Summary and Considerations

Consideration must be given to an ever-changing context, a dynamic shift in demographic conditions and economic forces that impact the way in which a society lives and the manner in which the public school system supports its students, families, and professionals. The call to do more with fewer resources is never-ending. As school districts work to support the many needs of the children, youth, and families living within their communities, they are also compelled to do more with less. School districts provide a comprehensive instructional program and, in many cases, services that go far beyond the traditions of public education.

The expectation is that all professionals be informed, embrace and support the children and youth entrusted to them, create and sustain comprehensive services, and do so with far fewer resources available to

them than they have had available in the recent past. The federal financial commitment to public education in the United States currently stands at $79.3 billion (K-12). Dependency on state and local funding for public education continues to rise.

Public education officials must do more with far fewer resources. So, how do the outcomes of the U.S. public education system compare to the outcomes in other countries? This question will be explored in Chapter 2.

Questions for Consideration, Discussion, and Planning

What demographic, cultural, social, and economic changes in family and student populations have occurred in your school district and local community?

What impact are these changes having on the manner in which you provide educational services to your students and families?

Are programs and services designed so that each family is supported and respected for its ethnic culture and linguistic background?

Do your schools fully reflect the diversity of their students and families within the curriculum, the instructional program, support services, extracurricular activities, and the staff?

In consideration of the demographic and social trends affecting your school district, what actions are needed to best meet the needs of all students and families? Use the following chart to plan for the future at the building, district, and community levels.

Action Strategy	Building Level	District Level	Community Level