

# The Role of Special Schools- A Crucible for the Support of the Inclusion Movement

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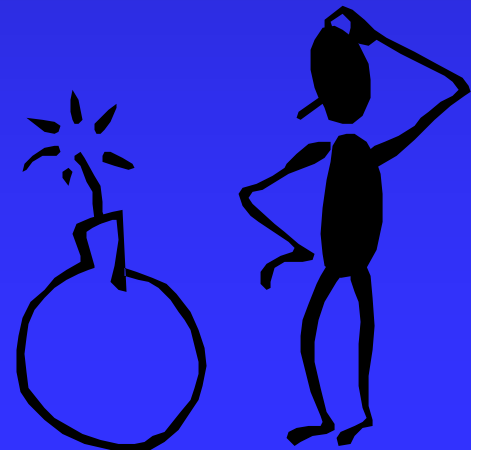


# A PERSONAL ODYSSEY



# Challenges for Special Education

- What is the role of the Special School?
- Transition Challenges
- Individual Education Plans
- Teacher training



# The Evolution of Special Education

- A range of educational options
- Polarisation of segregation – inclusion
- The *raison d'être* of segregation
- Forces for change
- Changing paradigms of disability
- Impact of advances in instructional technology

# Quality in Special Education

- Efficacy studies
- Lack of Australian data
- Evaluation model
- Success of IEPs as a quality measure





## Research – Ysseldyke's Reflections:

- Change is difficult and more political than data-based
- Expectations drive the assessment process and those assessments are far too low
- The assessment and decision-making process is still focused on search for pathology
- Purpose is critical, especially in the context of student assessments
- The link between referral and eligibility is too strong

# Research – Ysseldyke's Reflections Continued :

- The current classification practices are problematic
- It is critical to assess more than the student
- Direct and frequent measurement and formative evaluation are powerful measurement methodologies for improving student achievement
- High stakes accountability systems have unintended negative consequences



# Future Directions



- Focus much attention on implementation and intervention strategy
- Focus on accountability and value added measurement
- Educate journalists and the general public
- Increase attention to dissemination of theory and practice
- Increase application of a problem solving approach
- Collaboration and multidisciplinary efforts are critical



*Research is not a “lone ranger” exercise. I firmly believe that the most major advances in research in special education have come from funding of centres, institutes, and directed programmatic research efforts rather than from single investigations. The major problems in our discipline will not be solved in isolation. Rather, major contributions will come from collaborative multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary efforts (p.306).*

# The Special Educator as leader

## Skrtic's position:

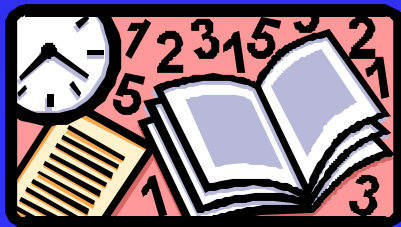
- Special education is based on an adhocratic organizing principle
- General education is based on professional bureaucratic structure

# Pervasive Influence of Neoliberal Economics

- Application of the practice of Total Quality Management
- Educational leaders have become “managers”
- Students have become “customers” or “consumers”

# The Special School in a Unified System of Education

- The entrepreneurial role of the special school
- Three case studies
- Maintenance and growth of professional skills



**Figure 1. Building an inclusive community through interagency cooperation**

