

FINAL REPORT ON INCLUSION PROCESS IN MISR LANGUAGE SCHOOLS-AMERICAN DIVISION

PART I: INTRODUCTION

A survey was conducted by the department to assess the effectiveness and level of success of its pilot project initiated in the academic year of 2004-2005. The department has launched its inclusion project both in the elementary and middle/high school stages. There are a total of 11 students in the elementary stage that exhibit various disabilities, and 9 students in the middle/high school stage. The school has allocated one resource room in the elementary stage headed by the Elementary Resource Room Coordinator, Dr. Doa'a El Hadary, and another resource room in the middle/high school headed by Ms. Dina Rashed, Middle/High School, the Resource Room Coordinator.

A preliminary evaluation was conducted by Dr. Hala Abdel Hak (Educational Psychologist) during the months of December and January 2004-2005, to determine the level of success of the inclusion system applied in MLS-American Division. Dr. Hala's results indicated that the parents of special needs are generally satisfied with the overall process. On the other hand, Dr. Hala Abdel Hak several suggestions regarding the project such as teacher training, more staff members and specialists, and IEP objectives correlating with what's being taken in the general education classroom (for more information, please refer to Dr. Hala's Action Plan).

Another evaluation was conducted by the department during the months of April and May of the academic year of 2004-2005 to assess the level of success and effectiveness of the process of inclusion, by receiving feedback from parents, parents of non-disabled students, and all staff members working in the American division. A separate questionnaire was devised for each group of people (staff members, parents of special needs students, and parents of non-disabled students. Randomized sampling of parents of non-disabled students was conducted and a total of 68 people were selected to fill out the questionnaire in the elementary section. Moreover, 62 people were selected

to fill out the corresponding questionnaire in the middle/high school section, calculating to a total of 130 people. A total of 72 questionnaires (56% of all questionnaires) were filled out and returned to the department.

The questionnaire was divided into 8 sections that included 1) general status, 2) special education services, 3) resources offered, 4) physical presence, 5) learning objectives, 6) academics, 7) social and communication, and 6) administration. A total of 10 to 15 items were devised for each category mentioned above, and some items were intentionally repeated for validity and reliability purposes.

PART II: RESULTS/ANALYSIS OF PARENTS OF SPECIAL NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRES:

A total of 9 questionnaires have been filled out and returned to the department out of a total of 21 questionnaires. The results have all indicated in favor of inclusion. 7 out of a total 9 (one refrained from answering) parents felt comfortable and satisfied with their child's learning in school. All 9 parents were satisfied with how staff members treat their children, and 8 out of 9 (one again refrained from answering) were satisfied with the inclusion process as a whole. Moreover, 8 out of 9 parents were satisfied with the quality of special education in the school, which includes the amount of pull-outs, development of the IEP, placement options, the amount and type of information received during the IEP meeting, their child's progress regarding annual goals and short-term objectives stated in the IEP, and the collaboration between staff members, specialists, and administrators. On the other hand, scores were dispersed on the last item of special education services which stated whether they are satisfied with the frequency of contact between home and school.

As for overall resources provided by the school to students with special needs, 6 out of 9 (one refrained from answering) were satisfied with the overall availability of resources, utilities, and facilities offered by the school. Only 5 out of 9 were satisfied with the amount of specialists (psychologists, resource room teachers etc.) recruited by the school. Moreover, 6 out of 9 were satisfied with the level of professionalism of specialists recruited by the school, and 5 out of 9¹ were satisfied with the level of professionalism of resource room teachers. Moreover, all 9 parents were satisfied with

¹ One parent refrained from answering, that results to 5 out of 8 parents in total.

the level of resourcefulness, collaboration, and cooperativeness of resource room teachers recruited by the school.

All parents were satisfied with the overall environment of the school, and did not seem to have problems with the overall physical environment of the classrooms, except for one parent. That parent was somewhat dissatisfied with the level of participation, and overall attentiveness of his/her child in the classroom.

In addition, all parents were satisfied with the learning objectives stated in the IEP for their child in the school. Only 2 parents were somewhat dissatisfied with daily informal assessments conducted, and their child's overall involvement in learning activities monitored in the classroom. Two parents wanted to receive more information on how to assist their children in learning. 7 out of 9 parents were satisfied with their child's learning in school, and two parents were somewhat dissatisfied with their children's computer skills, and the training received by teachers in the school.

In the *Social and Communication* category, parents were mostly satisfied with their children's social interaction level in the school. Only two parents were somewhat dissatisfied with the amount of friends their children have in school. They also felt that the school was considered to be a safe environment for their children. None of the parents had concerns concerning the administration's role in the inclusion process, except for one parent that was somewhat dissatisfied with the school's expectation for students' behavior, and their overall involvement in the school.

PART III: SCORES/ANALYSIS OF PARENTS OF NON-DISABLED STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES:

Questionnaires were distributed to parents with non-disabled students whose peers are disabled in order to determine whether they are satisfied with our program or not. Most of the questionnaires that the department has received were from parents whose children are in the elementary stage. 18 out of a total of 39 questionnaires have been returned back to the department. The results were positive, as most parents did not think that the behavior of disabled students affect their own children's behavior. This indicates that the inclusion process in the school for the academic year 2004-2005 has been a success. A more detailed analysis is state below.

On the general status category, all parents were satisfied with their children's learning process in the school. Only five parents were dissatisfied with their children's computer skills. All parents agreed that the school does provide clear expectations for students' behavior. As for inclusion, 15 out 18 parents disagreed with the items stating that the presence of a student with special needs affects the education of their children. 14 out 18 parents stated that their children do not imitate the behavior of a student with special needs. 12 out 18 parents felt safe putting their children in classrooms that included students with special needs. Moreover, 14 out 18 parents felt comfortable having their children interacting with students with special needs. To the department's surprise, 12 out 18 parents thought that their children might have socially developed as a result of including students with special needs in the general education classroom. As for the concern that including students with special needs in the general education classroom would affect their children's learning process, 15 out 18 parents disagreed with that statement. Last but not least, 9 parents would like to see the inclusion process continuing on next year as opposed to only 8 who did not think that the inclusion process should continue on next year. In other words, the inclusion process has proved to be a success during its first academic year 2004-2005.

PART IV: SCORES/ANALYSIS OF STAFF MEMBERS QUESTIONNAIRES

A total of 68 staff members working in the American division were selected to fill out the School Staff Survey. These staff members included all teachers, teacher assistants, resource room teachers, headmistresses, resource room coordinators, academic advisors etc. The department received a total of 44 questionnaires out of 68 from staff members. Some teachers refused to fill out the questionnaire stating that they have been recruited recently and are not still familiarized with the inclusion process. Others refused to fill out the survey due to the fact they have no special needs students in their classroom, and therefore haven't been exposed to the process. Again, we see that the results generated from the survey are in fact in favor of inclusion as will be stated below. Please note that no all teachers and staff members have answered all items stated in the survey.

In the *General Status* Category, 37 out of 44 staff members were satisfied with the student with special needs' learning in the school. As for the inclusion system as a

whole, 33 out of 44 staff members were satisfied with the system, which constitutes 75% of all staff members. This is a good percentage for the first year of the program. 35 out of 44 staff members were satisfied with the level of human and social development of students with special needs. Moreover, staff members were content with the amount of help that the students with special needs are receiving from specialists and psychologists, as 36 out of 44 staff members' answers ranged from satisfied sometimes to satisfied all the time. On the other hand, most staff members were dissatisfied with the amount and level of parents' involvement in their children's learning process (for more information, please refer to the survey attached). Moreover, 37 out of 44 staff members were satisfied with the effort exerted by the department's staff members to include students with special needs.

As for the *Special Education Services* category, 38 out of 44 staff members were satisfied by the quality of special education and related services offered by the department. 36 out of 44 staff members were satisfied with the assessment and evaluation methods used by the department. 32 out of 34² staff members were satisfied with the development of the student's IEP. Furthermore, staff members were satisfied with the amount of pull-outs, placement decision, their level of input regarding the students' weaknesses and strengths, the amount and type of information they received during the IEP meeting, counseling services offered to students, the amount of interference shown by the department towards issues such as bullying, teasing etc., level of collaboration between teachers, resource room teachers, administrators, and professionals, and the overall students' progress achieved during the academic year (for more information, please refer to the survey attached). On the other hand, 9 out of 39 staff members (which is the largest number of dissatisfaction) in this particular category were dissatisfied with the support the student with special needs is receiving in the general education classroom.

Although, the majority of staff members' answers lie in the range of satisfied sometimes to satisfied all the time on the Resource Offered by the School column, there are still numbers that are relatively larger than what has been received in other columns of the survey. For instance, 11 out of 42 staff members are dissatisfied with the overall

² 10 staff members did not respond to this item, as some did not get involved in the IEP process.

availability of resources, utilities, and facilities offered by the school for students with special needs. 8 out of 44 staff members were dissatisfied with the amount of specialists recruited by the school. 12 out of 39 staff members were dissatisfied with the amount of resource room teachers recruited by the school. Moreover, 8 out of 39 were dissatisfied with the amount and quality of resources offered to students with special needs.

On the contrary of what parents have indicated regarding the physical environment of the school, staff members' scores indicate a slight dissatisfaction of the overall school physical environment. 18 out of 41 staff members were dissatisfied with the physical environment of the classroom (lights, chairs, desks, etc.), as opposed to only 7 staff members who were dissatisfied with the physical environment of the resource rooms. 29 out of 35 staff members were satisfied with the amount of visual and auditory support that the student with special needs is receiving in the general education classroom. Although, a relatively large number of staff members were dissatisfied with the overall physical environment of the classrooms, a large number of them (34 out of 38) indicated that they are satisfied with the friendliness of the physical environment of the school.

On the column designated for the learning objectives given to students with special needs, scores indicate that staff members are overall satisfied with the development of the IEP, agreed that the short-term objectives and annual goals suit the students' needs, and were satisfied with the modifications conducted in the curriculum and the accommodations set for the student with special needs in the general education classroom. Only 7 out of 37 staff members were dissatisfied with the level of the student's understanding with the learning material given in the classroom. 5 out of 35 staff members are dissatisfied with the quality and amount of learning that students with special needs are receiving in school.

Scores were more dispersed in the *Academics* column than in the *Learning Objectives* column, whereby it indicates that teachers have issues concerning the students with special needs' writing and reading skills. For instance, 12 out of 41 staff members were dissatisfied with their students' writing and reading skills. 9 out of 39 staff members were dissatisfied with the time and effort exerted by teachers for students with

special needs. 5 out of 36 staff members were dissatisfied with the academic performance of their students with special needs.

Concerning the items listed under the column of *Social and Communication*, results indicated that most staff members are satisfied with the opportunities given for students with special needs to socially interact with their peers. Moreover, 37 out of 41 were satisfied with the opportunities that the students have to ask for help from teachers, administrators, and specialists. As for any concerns regarding administrative policies, most staff members are satisfied with administrators participation in solving problems and eliminating barriers to inclusion. 7 out of 39 staff members are dissatisfied with the school's expectation for students' behavior, and school rules (please refer to the survey for more information).

In conclusion, the survey results on inclusion conducted during the academic year of 2004-2005 indicate that inclusion is successful for its first year. Staff members and parents, on the other hand, would like to see more specialists such as psychiatrist, psychologists etc, more training for teachers, increase of school materials and supplies, increase in social skills training and behavior skills, and more collaboration between administrators, parents, teachers, and professionals (specialists). In other words, people involved in the inclusion process, would like to see the inclusion process excelling to meet the students' needs. The department finds it crucial to increase the amount of training and workshops to teachers and staff members on inclusion. Moreover, the increase of staff members is absolutely necessary to accommodate the increase of the students with special needs population as some have been identified during this academic year, and others would like to enroll for the next academic year.