Part I

Shift From Programs to Services

In Part I, we explain why and how to evolve from providing programs to providing services. In Chapter 1, we briefly describe the social and legal impetus behind such action. In Chapter 2, we then suggest three stages for moving from programs to services: stage one, asking critical equity questions; stage two, developing teams to respond to the questions; and stage three, describing how, when shifting from programs to services toward integrated socially just schools, educator roles must evolve to meet the needs of all students. Educators need support for these changes, and in Chapter 3 we discuss the significant role the school principal and the central office administrators, as leaders for social justice, must play in this educational shift.

1

Setting the Stage

The Social and Legal Impetus for Services Rather Than Programs in Integrated, Socially Just Schools

During the past twenty years, school districts across the country have homogeneously grouped into separate programs or tracked into separate classrooms those children who they perceived needed additional assistance. When organizing these programs or tracked classrooms, district administrators considered funding sources, legal parameters, and space. Educators developed programs for students with disabilities by categories (e.g., learning disabilities, cognitive disabilities, emotional disabilities). In addition, legislation began to emerge that was sometimes paired with funding sources for other "troubled" populations, resulting in segregated programs such as alcohol and other drug abuse, or AODA, Title I, English as a second language (ESL), students considered "at risk," teenage parents, students considered gifted, and homeless children. Specialized programs and tracked classrooms became a convenient way for adults to provide services.

Districts continue to administer each special program (e.g., ESL, at risk, special education, or even programs inside a program—for example, emotional disabilities) in isolation from each other, as if each program is an island by itself. Administrators, department heads, and coordinators are assigned the oversight of specific programs, and most often such program monitoring is completed in isolation from others. Therefore, each program evolves as an individual island of support; that is, each program has its own referral system, evaluation system, eligibility criteria, service parameters, and exit criteria. Often, programs set up parameters of "no service overlap"; that is, if students qualify for one, they may not receive services from any other. Special education and Title I services are examples of such programs. Parents, students, and even staff are forced to unravel the qualifiers around each program and to determine potential student referrals and eligibility.

Students challenge the programs and break the molds, general educators ask for increased support for behaviorally challenging students, and students are unable to meet

the rigorous academic standards unfolding in every classroom. Support personnel are frantically attempting to bandage systemic wounds with the only isolated service bandages they control on their island. It is not working. As shown in Handout 1.1, educators continue to set up a model of short-term fixes for systemic problems, which results in exactly that—short-term fixes—while the underlying wounds continue to ooze. Educators certified in "special areas" (e.g., at risk, special education, guidance, social work) are required to intervene after a student has experienced failure to resolve the issue or to put a modified bandage in place.

Typically, we meet the needs of students by building programs one by one instead of by moving together to develop a framework of services for all students (see Handout 1.2). Student needs increase, and we add more separate slots, programs, and tracked classrooms (see Handout 1.3). We need to admit that the short-term fixes do not work, never have and never will, and to take action toward remedying the underlying disease: education that does not work.

We identify six assumptions that many educators hold about separate programs (see Handout 1.4):

1. We can better serve students who struggle if they are separated from their peers.
2. We can only provide individual attention and support in a setting or situation separate from the student's peers.
3. Staff is incapable of teaching to a range of students.
4. Schools are incapable of changing to meet student needs.
5. The locus of student problems lies within the student; thus, we have no need to examine how the school's response to the child over the child's educational history has contributed to student struggle or how we might educate students in ways to avoid student struggles.
6. Students are more different than alike.

The research and our experience suggest at least eight major problems associated with these assumptions and with providing "programs" or tracked classrooms for students—programs and classrooms that are characteristically identified by requiring students to be isolated within their classroom, removed from their classroom, or removed from their school (see Handout 1.5). These programs can include separate ESL or bilingual education programs, schools-within-schools, alternative schools, and charter schools established for students considered at risk. These problems can be correlated with assumptions about the ways educators currently function when meeting student needs.

First, separate programs perpetuate tracking of students of color and students of lower social class. Usually, the demographics of students enrolled in alternative programs, special education, and at-risk programs are overrepresented by students of color and of lower social classes. Research on effective teaching shows that students in these programs often do not have access to high-quality teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & Falk, 1997; see also Chapter 6, this volume). Separate programs often limit these students' opportunities for further education beyond high school.

Special education, special programs (e.g., ESL, gifted education), and other alternative programs have become separate systems with separate funding, separate staff and materials, and a learning environment separate from other students. We advocate for "one system for all" because we believe that all students of all abilities (regardless of

social class or color) can be successful within one school system. We agree that "one size" of instruction does not fit all students. If we offer a differentiated curriculum, instruction, and a variety of assessments and other creative strategies, however, as explained throughout this book, we can meet the needs of students of all abilities. Too often, we use the phrase "one system cannot do it all" as a reason to segregate students (often by social class, race, or severity of disability) into separate programs. We can meet students' needs without establishing entirely separate systems.

Second, providing separate programs is quite costly fiscally, often pitting program advocates against each other over scarce resources. For example, special programs cost 130% more than general education; that is, if a school district spends $5,000 per student, then each student labeled for special programs costs the district $11,500 (Odden & Picus, 2000). A separate program means that students often require separate space, separate materials and infrastructure, a separate teacher, and an administrator not only to manage the program, but also to spend time and money on organizing the program.

Third and relatedly, educators then spend an inordinate amount of time and resources deciding exactly for which program a student may qualify. In one school district, for example, it cost more than $2,000 to evaluate one student to determine eligibility for special education. A district of 4,500 students averages 225 (5%) evaluations per year for a total of $443,713 spent on evaluations (see Handout 1.6). Other data confirm the cost differences between serving students within general education and serving them within separate programs. Chambers, Parrish, Lieberman, and Wolman (1998) report that total instructional expenditures for students at the elementary/middle school level who are served in the general education classroom are $3,920. If we serve these same students 25% to 60% outside the regular class, then the cost increases to $5,122. If we provide a program for these students in a separate public facility, like many charter and alternative schools, then the cost increases to $6,399 per student. We do not make this point about cost to imply that the major reason to move from programs to services is cost savings. For example, if we meet students' diverse learning needs by providing services, then we will need all the staff who previously served separate programs to make this a reality. Reallocating staff and resources into excellent instruction for all students in integrated environments will bring about a much greater return on our education investment.

Fourth, separate programs result in some students receiving services and other students not. One parent shared with us her frustration of the school slotting her child for special programs yet ignoring his needs at the same time:

> I have an 8-year-old now in second grade . . . who is still struggling as a reader. I was totally frustrated with the school's approach—essentially, that he needed more time—and our family was not needy enough for him to merit specialized services such as Reading Recovery. Throughout first grade (which was totally miserable for him), he was read to by volunteers, and he was part of Title I and hated it because of the self-esteem issue and essentially made no progress. Even though the Title I teacher has a master's degree in reading, he was just receiving "more of the same type of instruction" as in the classroom, when what he needed was another multisensory approach heavy in phonetics. We even paid to have an evaluation done that showed a mild learning disability, but the school ignored this. We were forced to use an outside reading tutor who in 3 months brought our child up to grade level and will probably have to do this again at the end of second grade since he is not receiving specialized reading instruction in school. I really feel for those families without the resources to do this.

As we can see from this example, students labeled with disabilities receive services, and students labeled as gifted receive services. Students who do not receive a formal label, however, do not receive services, or else we slot the students into "options" (e.g., volunteer tutors, Title I) that do not meet the students' individual learning needs.

Fifth, separate programs fragment a student's day. The students who often need the most structure, routine, consistency, and predictability in their day are often the students who must leave in the middle of a class to attend a special program.

Sixth, establishing separate programs not only drains the energy of staff, but, in so doing, also conveys to an entire generation of students over and over again that they do not fit our system, not that the system has missed the mark with them. The National Research Council (NRC, Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) agrees:

> Evidence from case study evaluations of children referred for special education indicate that instructional histories of the children are not seriously considered. . . . Rather, when teachers refer students for special services, the "search for pathology" begins and assessment focused on the child continues until some explanatory factor is unearthed that could account for the observed difficulty. (p. 27)

We as educators tend to focus on what is wrong with students rather than on what the school can do differently. Then, we assume that we must diagnose students and separate them from their peers or pull them out of class for special instruction. We do this even when, by doing so, we teach students that they are different, that they do not fit in, and that they will never be successful, compared with those students whom we have not categorized.

Seventh, special programs often serve an enabling function; that is, educators look to these special programs for solutions to "fix" students rather than examine more deeply how they can prevent student learning problems. As long as special programs exist, educators need not look at their own roles, policies, and practices in educating students and therefore need not make any changes. University training programs often reinforce this enabling function by emphasizing the "coordination of special programs" or understanding the intricacies of programs (e.g., AODA programs) or roles (e.g., guidance counselors) without offering tools or viewpoints to question and look beneath these programs and roles. As a result, administrators can end up working very hard making special programs more efficient or more coordinated without questioning the need for the programs in the first place. Tomlinson (1999) agrees and explains:

> Schools have tried to meet the needs of struggling and advanced learners by pulling them from regular classrooms for part or all of the school day. They were assigned to special classrooms with similar students and teachers who have the knowledge and skill to meet their unique needs. In full accord with common sense and classroom experience, much of the best research suggests that for struggling learners, such homogeneous learning experiences go awry. . . . Too often in these settings, teachers' expectations for the struggling learners decline, materials are simplified, the level of discourse is less than sterling, and the pace slackens. Too few students escape these arrangements to join more "typical" or advanced classes. In other words, remedial classes keep remedial learners remedial. (p. 21)

An eighth and related problem with special programs is the lack of transfer of educator and student knowledge and skills from the separate program back to the "local" setting (the classroom, the school, the community). We do not deny that exciting teaching and learning can sometimes occur in separate programs but, as discussed here, at a high social, financial,

and emotional cost for all involved. Some of the most promising teaching strategies for the success of each student in integrated environments have derived from specialists in special education, gifted education, multicultural education, and reading who have discovered that their expertise can be used to the benefit of all students, not just a select few.

The lack of transfer from separate programs back to integrated environments results in students who fail when they return to integrated environments. For example, if some students thrive in smaller learning communities, then what can be done at the school to create such learning communities? If some students feel safer in separate settings, then what can schools do to ensure that all students feel safe? Moreover, educators learn that they, too, can succeed with a wide range of students, and that success is not dependent on a few specialists who engage in some esoteric teaching "magic" with a few students. Indeed, Newmann and Wehlage (1995) learned in their study of separate programs for at-risk students that educators could provide all aspects of these programs in integrated environments.

Many well-meaning educators who are often advocates for students who struggle in school can become trapped in the enabling aspect of special programs. We were discussing with one school administrator the growing number of alternative schools in his part of the state. He agreed, "There is nothing that the alternative schools are doing that couldn't be done in the local high schools. But the high schools are not doing that, so we have to do something." We agree that "we have to do something" to meet the needs of students who are struggling in school. Simply to close down the alternative schools without changes in the local high school would not be fair to anyone involved. As long as the alternative schools or other separate programs exist, however, this situation provides little incentive for the schools to change to meet the needs of students of all abilities. We discuss in Chapter 8 ways educators can take a dual approach to change—that is, strive to meet the needs of students of all abilities now while working proactively on changes in the school such that these separate programs will not be necessary in the future.

The federal government has recognized the problems with separate programs. The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1997 states:

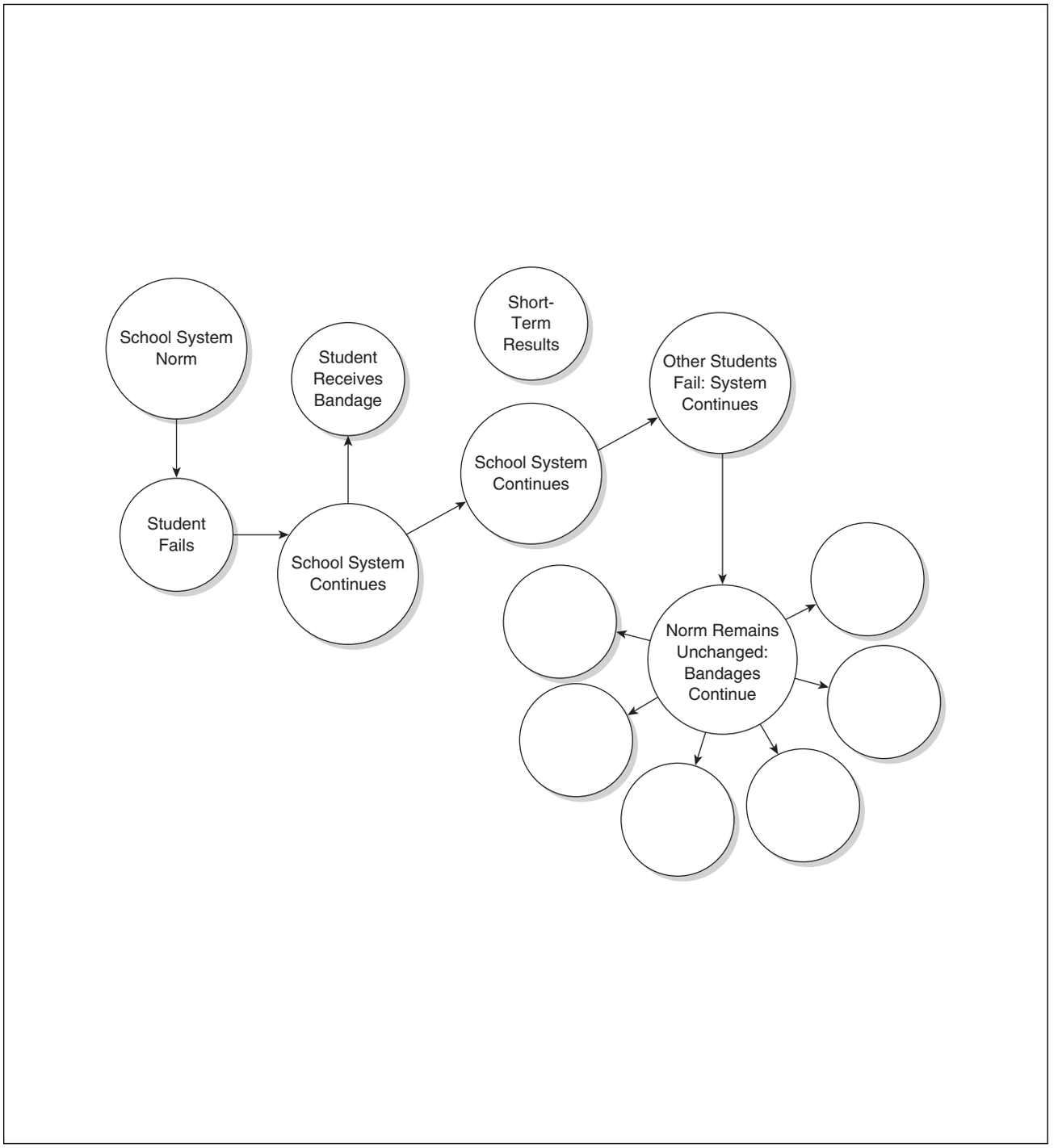
> The education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by . . . coordinating this Act with other local, educational service agency, State, and Federal school improvement efforts in order to ensure that such children benefit from such efforts and *that special education can become a service for such children rather than a place where they are sent* [italics added].

To avoid the problems of separate programs and to capitalize on these federal initiatives, schools must move from a program-based model to a service delivery model; that is, educators must provide services across children and environments in contrast with programs that are often set up specifically for a subgroup of children in a specific location.

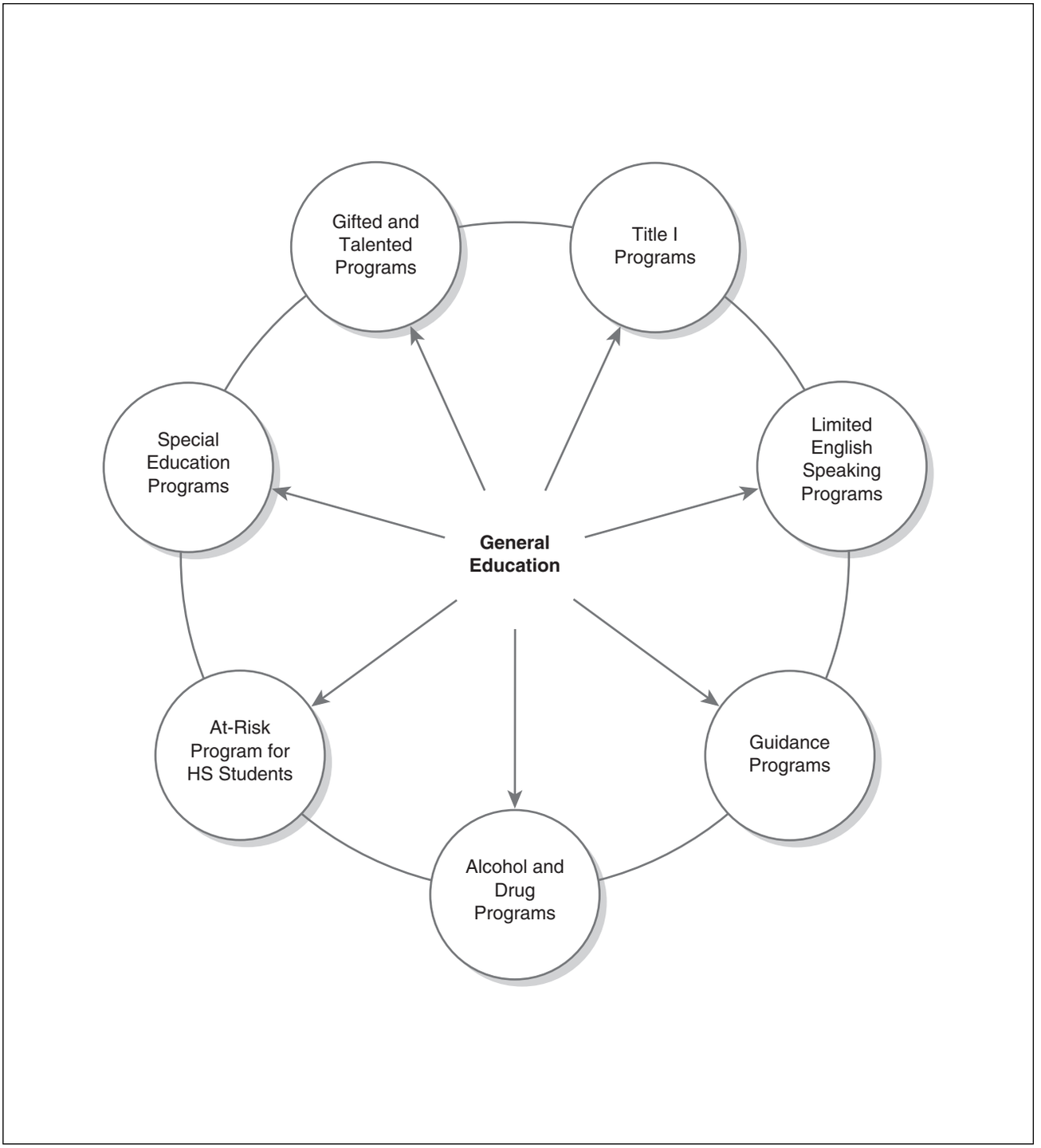
When we meet the needs of students of all abilities by providing services rather than by establishing separate programs, we set the stage for a broad range of children to learn together, but even more so, we set the stage for a broad range of teachers to teach together. Thus, we bring together teachers with a range of expertise to share their strengths related to good teaching (see Chapter 6). In so doing, we are better able to meet the needs of students who did not have their needs met in separate programs and tracked classrooms. Essentially, we build a system that is naturally supportive of Response to Intervention legislation.

Now that we know the problems with program-based models and the advantages of providing services to students, in Chapter 2 we describe how schools and districts can move toward analyzing and determining the necessary steps to provide services as a means toward integrated, socially just schools.

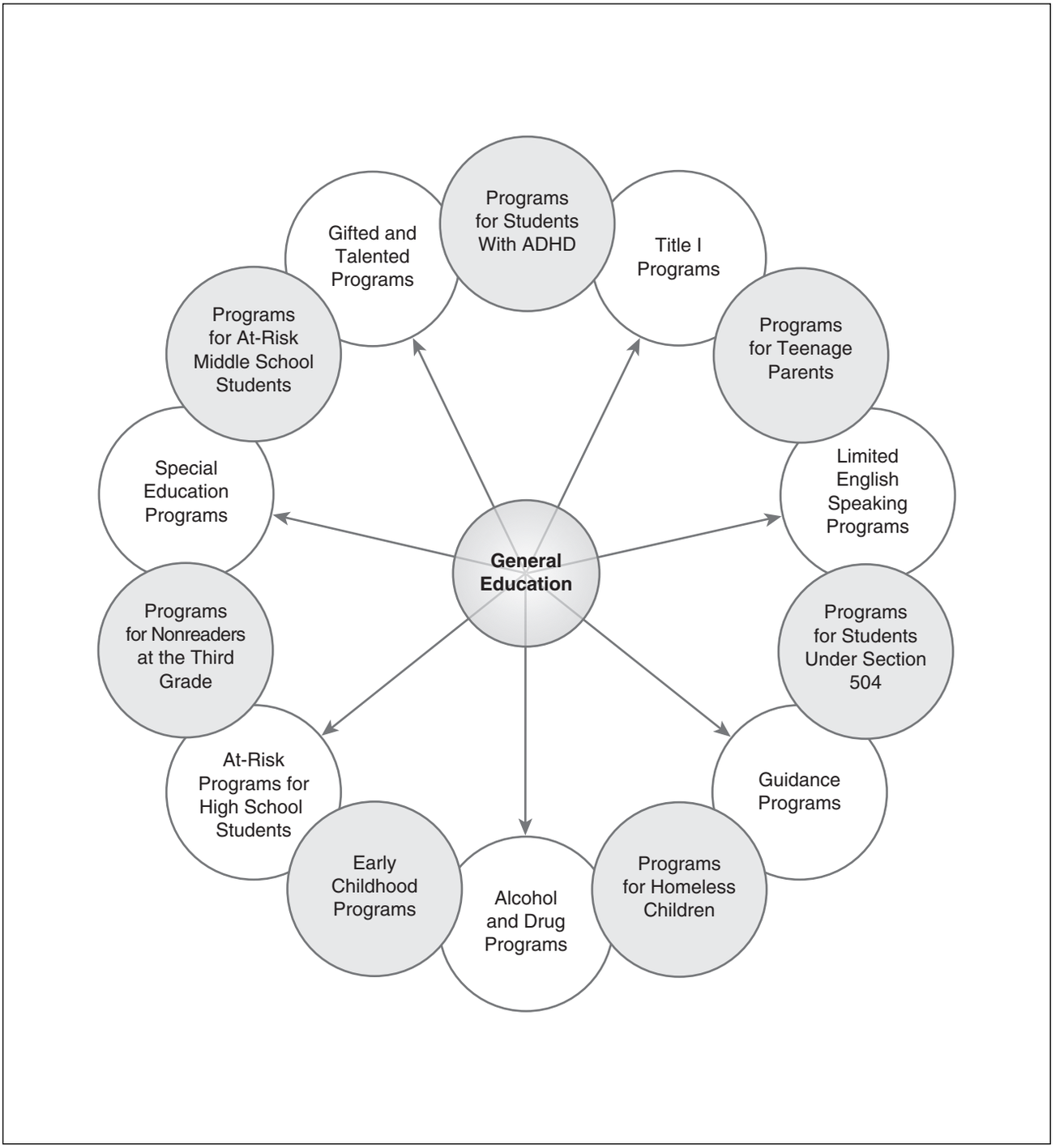
HANDOUT 1.1 Short-Term Fixes



HANDOUT 1.2 Program Model



HANDOUT 1.3 Continuation of the Program Model



HANDOUT 1.4 Key Assumptions About Separate Programs

1. We can better serve students who struggle if they are separated from their peers.

2. We can only provide individual attention and support in a setting or situation separate from the student's peers.

3. Staff are incapable of teaching to a range of students.

4. Schools are incapable of changing to meet student needs.

5. The locus of student problems lies within the student; thus, we have no need to examine how the school's response to the child over the child's educational history has contributed to student struggle or how we might educate students in ways to avoid student struggles.

6. Students are more different than alike.

HANDOUT 1.5 Eight Major Problems With Providing Separate Programs

1. Separate programs track and marginalize students of color and students of lower social classes.

2. Separate programs are costly.

3. Separate programs require personnel to expend a tremendous amount of resources in determining eligibility.

4. Separate programs result in some students receiving services and others being denied.

5. Separate programs fragment a student's day.

6. Separate programs blame and label students.

7. Separate programs enable educators and students not to change.

8. Separate programs prevent transfer of educator and student knowledge back to integrated environments.

HANDOUT 1.6 Cost Analysis of a Single Individual Evaluation*

Specialist	*Assessment ($/hr)*	*Observation ($/hr)*	*Write-up ($/hr)*	*Meeting ($/hr)*	*Total ($)*
Psychologist	49.56 (2)	49.56 (2)	49.56 (1.5)	49.56 (3)	485.94
Special educator	49.56 (2)	49.56 (2)	49.56 (1.5)	49.56 (3)	485.94
Occupational therapist	49.56 (2)	49.56 (2)	49.56 (1.5)	49.56 (3)	485.94
Physical therapist	49.56 (2)	49.56 (2)	49.56 (1.5)	49.56 (3)	485.94
Speech and language	49.56 (2)	49.56 (2)	49.56 (1.5)	49.56 (3)	485.94
General educator	49.56 (1)	49.56 (2)	49.56 (2)	49.56 (2)	485.94
Administrator				62.08 (3)	186.24
Other					
Total					3,016.13

NOTE: A district of 4,500 students averages 225 (5%) evaluations per year to total $678,629 per year.

*An average experienced teacher in the Midwest at Master's + 15 credits on the salary scale receives $50,471 per year, with a $24,859 benefit package. Total salary for the teacher of $75,331.20 divided by 190 days, 8 hours per day, provides the reader with the hourly salary. An administrator's salary of $86,541 plus a benefits package of $42,611 for a total salary of $129,126 divided by 260 days, 8 hours per day, provides the reader with the hourly salary.

HANDOUT 1.7 Chapter 1 Self-Evaluation: Leading Beyond Inclusion

Directions: Complete the following Likert-type scale by rating the level of success, as well as delineating strengths/limitations, the next steps that should be taken, and what the timeline might look like.

5 = How we do business; 4 = Increased comfort level; 3 = Beginning implementation;
2 = Emerging through conversation; 1 = Yet to acknowledge as a need

Focus Area *Chapter 1: Setting the Stage*	*Likert-Type Scale*	*Strengths/ Limitations*	*Next Steps*	*Timeline*
Major area of emphasis:				
1. We acknowledge the need for assessing how students receive services.	5 4 3 2 1			
2. We understand that separate programs perpetuate tracking of students of color and students of lower social classes.	5 4 3 2 1			
3. We understand that programs are not cost-effective.	5 4 3 2 1			
4. We conduct an ongoing cost analysis of special programs in our school/district.	5 4 3 2 1			
5. We conduct ongoing cost analysis of evaluation and placement of students in special programs.	5 4 3 2 1			
6. We recognize that the eligibility requirements of programs require a tremendous amount of time and resources that could be used differently.	5 4 3 2 1			
7. We understand how separate programs result in some students having access to some services and others not and understand the implications of this.	5 4 3 2 1			
8. We understand how separate programs fragment the students' day.	5 4 3 2 1			
9. We have conducted an analysis of how our programs impact the time students spend at school, paying careful attention to where they spend that time and transitions.	5 4 3 2 1			
10. We understand how separate programs convey to students that they do not fit our system and have confronted the implications of that message.	5 4 3 2 1			
11. We acknowledge the ways separate programs can enable educators and students not to change.	5 4 3 2 1			
12. We acknowledge how university training can reinforce enabling and separate programs.	5 4 3 2 1			
13. We recognize that separate programs can inhibit student and educator transfer of knowledge and skills.	5 4 3 2 1			

Comments: