Abstract

Inclusive Education - A Journey Worth Fighting For - Lessons Learned from New Brunswick Canada

New Brunswick is a Canadian Province that has implemented system wide inclusive education over the last 35 years. Most recently, while he was Minister of Education in 2013, Mr. Carr enacted the Province’s first Inclusive Education Policy 322, based on a human rights framework to quality education. All children attend their neighbourhood school and the presumption is placement of all students in the “common learning environment”. Variation from the common learning environment can occur with justification, including the provision of a Personalized Learning Plan. There are no special needs schools or special classrooms. Also, there is no mention of special needs or diagnosis in the Education Act. Mr. Carr will share some lessons learned since implementing Policy 322 in 2013 and new legislation in 2014, including perspectives on the challenges working with concerned parents, teachers unions and colleagues in his own cabinet.

Short Bio

Jody R. Carr, BBA, JD
Former Minister of Education and Post-Secondary Education
New Brunswick, Canada

Mr. Carr has nearly 25 years’ experience in political, government, and legislative policy development and implementation. He is from the Canadian province of New Brunswick. He was first elected in 1999 at age 23, one of the youngest in the province's history. He retired from political office in September 2018. He served as Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development between 2010-2013 and Post Secondary Education, Training and Labour in 2006 and 2014. These mandates included responsibility for early childhood learning, public schools, universities and colleges, labour, training and the human rights commission.

Mr. Carr championed and directed the implementation of new classroom resources for universal learning and piloted the integrated services model. He provided progressive legislative changes, including the development of Policy 322 - inclusive education, that aligns education practices with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Policy 322 received the international Zero Project award in 2016 for best inclusive education policy in the World. The New Brunswick integrated services model received national recognition in 2017.

Mr. Carr has a passion for dynamic, inclusive education where all children learn together in common learning environments as a means to achieve better outcomes for all students, regardless of background and diversity.
Mr. Carr completed a juris doctor degree in law in 2018 and was called to the New Brunswick Bar in June 2019. Mr. Carr has spent numerous hours researching the POLICY, PROCESS and PRACTICE of transitioning to inclusive education. He developed 12 essential elements for an inclusive education legislative framework and is currently validating and developing a tool/database in this regard.

He is a member of Inclusion International's expert advisory panel for Catalyst in Inclusive Education and is an Associate with Inclusive Education Canada. He has traveled the world sharing his experience and research in various countries including Australia, Czech Republic, United Arab Emirates and Argentina.