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Educating Exceptional Children



15th
Edition

James Gallagher

Mary Ruth Coleman

Samuel Kirk

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Leadership and Legacy of Dr. Samuel Kirk and Dr. James J. Gallagher



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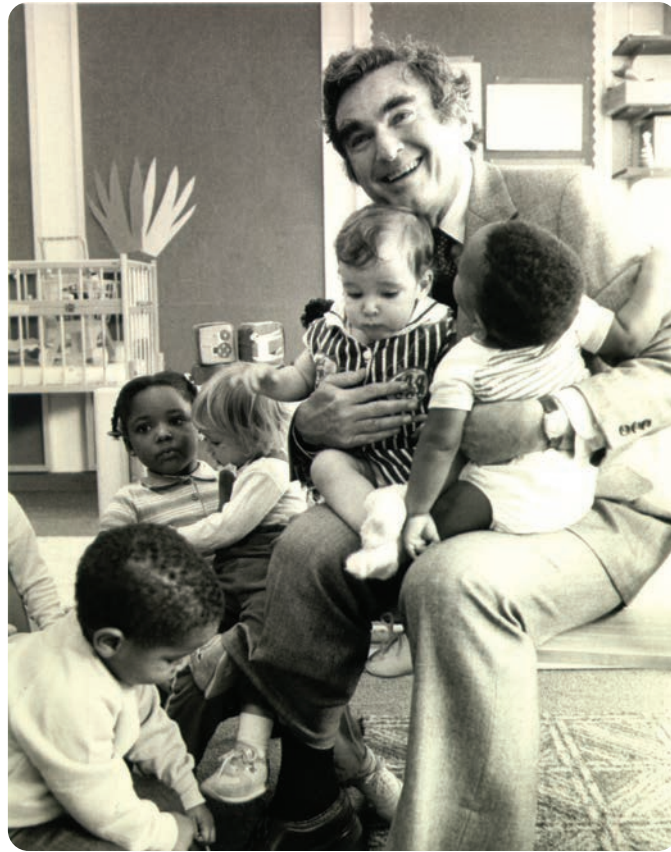
Dr. Samuel Kirk, founding author of *Educating Exceptional Children*

Educating Exceptional Children was first published in 1962 as the new field of special education was emerging and teachers needed to be prepared to work with children who were beginning to be included in public schools across the country. Dr. Samuel Kirk, the director of the Institute for Research on Exceptional Children at the University of Illinois, was the founding author of this text. In the first edition, he tackled the growth and development of chil-

dren with a range of exceptionalities and addressed identification and educational practices to meet their needs. Much has changed in the ensuing decades since the first edition, but the central issue at the heart of Dr. Kirk's concerns remain with us today: how can we best serve students with exceptional learning needs within our schools?

Dr. James J. Gallagher, a student and colleague of Dr. Kirk, came on board as co-author on the fourth edition of *Educating Exceptional Children*. Dr. Gallagher was the first Chief of the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped in the U.S. Office of Education. He was a pragmatic visionary working to making educational excellence for all children, a reality:

- He realized that the complex needs of a child with disabilities would require a unique educational response and the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) was born.
- He understood that a prepared workforce of teachers would be critical to students' success, and he wrote textbooks and created model demonstration sites.
- He knew that families were key to supporting child development and he advocated family-friendly practices.
- He believed that gifts and talents existed across all cultural and economic groups, and he advanced appropriate policies for identification and services.
- He saw that a strong infrastructure was critical for sustaining positive changes, and he developed a technical assistance model of support.



FPG Child Development Institute

Dr. James J. Gallagher, pragmatic visionary for children with exceptional learning needs.

Dr. Kirk and Dr. Gallagher helped build the field of Special Education. Both worked tirelessly to ensure that children with exceptionalities were not forgotten. Their leadership shaped the laws, policies, and practices of the field. Their work is not finished... their legacy lives on. If you are reading this textbook, you are part of this living legacy. Thank you for helping make the world a better place for children with exceptionalities, their families, and the professionals who serve them!

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to students who have exceptional learning needs, to their families, and to the educators who work to ensure that each student's strengths are nurtured and that their challenges are supported.

Thank you!

Preface

More than sixty years ago, Sam Kirk, a brilliant scientist and educator, penned the first edition of *Educating Exceptional Children*. When the first edition of this text was published in 1962, the future for children with exceptional learning needs was just beginning to change. Still a decade ahead was the key legislation that promised children with disabilities a “free and appropriate public education” (FAPE). Still further ahead were the numerous court decisions that solidified the educational rights of these children with exceptionalities. The field has changed over the last decades and our understanding of how we can support student success has expanded and deepened. Each new edition of this textbook reflects our growing knowledge base on how to address the strengths and challenges of students so they can thrive. Each new edition, however, still holds to our original purpose: to help educators gain the knowledge and skills needed to support the success of students with exceptionalities in school and in life.

Overview of the 15th Edition

The fifteenth edition (15e) builds on the strong foundation of previous editions, while carrying this seminal text into the future. Throughout the 15e, we focus on the bioecological factors that influence outcomes for the child and their family across the lifecourse. In each chapter, you will meet students and their families to bring the content of the chapter to life. The 15e takes a strength-based approach to students and incorporates a wealth of instructional/curriculum strategies to support student’s success (including evidence-based teaching methods, Universal Design for Learning, High Leveraged Practices, and Differentiated Instruction). Each chapter discusses the importance of a collaborative team approach to student’s strengths and challenges using the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework to address the academic/cognitive and social/emotional/behavioral needs of students.

Each chapter has been thoroughly updated based on current research with over 420 new citations. In addition to the research update, new topics include: high leverage practices; developing cultural competence; addressing the challenges of disproportionate representation within special and gifted education (examining the roles of implicit bias and structural racism); using on online learning and lessons learned during the COVID-19 “pivot”; a focus on the importance of “belonging” which goes beyond inclusion; and strategies to enhance mindfulness within our classrooms and schools. We continue to address the important topics of genetics, neurology, assistive technology, and information processing, and to follow the CEC standards for knowledge and skills needed within the profession of special education.

Key to the 15e is understanding that “belonging” goes well beyond “inclusion” and that respecting and supporting each student and their family is critical to building a sense of community. As part of this community building, we have worked to honor the changing language within the disability community. Language is always evolving; our intent is that our words speak to the importance

of respect and that they foster the spirit of belonging. The ongoing conversations about terminology are reflected within this text. Most often in the text we use person-first language, saying “student with a disability.” This person-first language is meant to recognize the personhood as being first and foremost. However, some members within the disability community feel that their disability is a central and defining aspect of who they are and that person-first language fails to honor this belief. You will see this discussion in Chapter 5 as we look at the movement to use “Autistic student” rather than “student with Autism.” We see this idea again in Chapter 11 as we explore “Deafhood.” These conversations are important and ongoing.

We also see an evolution in language within our discussions of race and ethnicity. Terms are rapidly shifting, and throughout this text, we have tried to reflect these changes while maintaining respect for different preferences. When we cite specific research, we use the language that the researchers used; when we discuss specific issues, we use language that is respectful for the individual or the group. Our intent is to show the evolution of language while maintaining a deep respect for the individuals and groups impacted by the spoken and written words. As we do this, however, we are very aware that *language used is a personal preference*, and we encourage our readers to use the terms that people ask them to use because this is the best way to respect each individual.

Throughout the 15e, we address four themes:

- Bioecological factors that influence outcomes across the student’s lifecourse
- Culturally relevant and responsive teaching methods and school environments
- Collaborative and intensive supports and services to address the learning, social, and emotional requirements for each student’s success
- Strength-based approaches to students and their families.

Theme 1: Bioecological Factors that Influence Outcomes Across the Student’s Lifecourse

A child’s development takes place within the context of the family, neighborhood, school, and community. Their development is influenced by the dynamic interactions, over time, that take place across this system. The child, in turn, influences the system itself, changing the way interactions take place and how resources are used. In addition to the immediate context of the child and their family, the greater system of social structures (e.g., laws, policies, values, beliefs) work to shape the outcomes of the individual across their lifecourse. We discuss these bioecological factors using Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Theory of Human Development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) to explore how we can better support positive outcomes for students (Waski & Coleman, 2019). We also use this approach to explore the impact of structural and systemic racism on student outcomes.

Theme 2: Culturally Relevant and Responsive Teaching Methods and School Environments

Both special and gifted education continue to face challenges of disproportionate representation of students of color and of economically disadvantaged students. Within special education we see an over-representation of Black, brown, and economically disadvantaged students in many categories of disability; we see an under-representation of these same student groups within gifted education. Every chapter addresses appropriate identification and the disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically different, and economically disadvantaged, students within special and/or gifted education. We also tackle specific challenges like the role of implicit bias in decision making, the need for family-centered interventions and culturally resonant practice in early intervention, the increasing identification of Latinx youth as learning disabled, the need for bilingual/bicultural approaches for students who are Deaf, and the underrepresentation of students of color within gifted education. We further examine how

developing cultural competence can support culturally relevant and responsive teaching methods and learning environments. In many of the chapters, we have gone directly to the “experts” to ask them how we can better address these needs within our classrooms and our programs (see special new special feature “Ask the Experts”).

Theme 3: Intensive and Collaborative Supports and Services to Address the Learning, Social, and Emotional Requirements for each Student’s Success

The key to success for students with exceptionalities is that they receive appropriate supports. Indeed, Schalock, Luckasson, and Tasse (2021), when discussing students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID), put it this way “...the most relevant difference between people with ID and the general population is that people with ID need different types and intensities of supports to fully participate in and contribute to society...” (pp. 64–65), and we could not agree more! In each chapter, we discuss the types and intensity of supports needed to help students thrive in school and in life.

Addressing the strengths and challenges of students with exceptionalities often requires deep collaboration across multiple stakeholders. This collaboration begins with strong family partnerships during the initial recognition of need for additional support, it deepens with the development of the Individual Education Plan, and it continues across the lifecourse of the student as they learn to “adult.” We discuss collaborative, family-centered earlier intervention and transition planning for young children. We explore the role of multidisciplinary teams in the IEP process. We use the Multitiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to show how this collaboration can be supported within the K–12 environment, and we look at the transition process for post-secondary success of students. Collaboration between educators and family members is central to this support, but comprehensive support often must go beyond the school and family. We discuss “wrap-around” supports that may include mental health, medical support, parental education, job-coaching, and building social networks within neighborhoods and communities. This level of collaborative and intensive support is essential for student success. Positive outcomes for students with exceptionalities hinges on our ability to provide the supports and services needed for their success.

Theme 4: Strength-based Approaches to Students and Their Families

Every student has strengths and all families have assets. Too often when we look at how we can support student’s success, we focus only on their areas of challenge, ignoring their strengths. Too often when we work with families, we fail to identify and connect with their assets. At times, we may even view students and family members through a deficit lens that fosters negative beliefs about what our students can do and undermines our ability to build the strong partnerships needed for positive outcomes. When we use a strength-based approach, we intentionally look for, engage with, and enhance the abilities of our students, and we focus on the many ways that families can (and do) contribute positively to their child’s success. The use of a strength-based approach is central to everything we do to support students with exceptionalities and their families. This strength-based philosophy is integrated throughout each chapter. In the new feature, “remember our superpowers,” students remind us of what they are good at; the updated Information Processing Models now incorporate areas of strength; in each educational response section, we address the strengths of the students, and whenever we discuss working with families, we do so from a strength-based, family-centered, culturally responsive framework. Using a strength-based approach is not “just a nice thing to do” ... it is a foundational mindset that is essential to supporting the success of students with exceptionalities.

Organization of the 15th Edition

This book is divided into three major sections. Part One provides the history and foundations of special education. Part Two deals with high-incidence exceptionalities (those experienced by more than 1 percent of the population). Part Three addresses low-incidence exceptionalities where students, whose needs are often quite complex, make up less than 1 percent of the general population.

We have intentionally structured Chapters 3–13 to build from understanding the students and the identification process through the educational supports and services needed to address their strengths and challenges. Each chapter introduces the reader to a few students whose strengths and challenges exemplify the chapter's area of exceptionality. We follow these students within the chapter to explore their needs and how we can support their success. In the educational response sections of the chapter, we see how specific strategies apply to these students. Our Educational Response shares the organizational structures (e.g., a continuum of services and MTSS) to support students. We also share specific curriculum and instruction strategies (e.g., Universal Design for Learning, High Leverage Practices, Evidence-Based Practices) to support student access to content standards. Please see the detailed table of contents for more information about text and chapter organization.

What's New in the 15th Edition?

With each edition, we get the chance to incorporate new features that can enhance learning for the reader. We are very excited about the new features for the 15e! Each new feature has been carefully chosen to bring an important perspective to the content in the chapter while updating the information with current knowledge, expertise, and understanding. The following are new features for the 15e:



Ask the Experts—within each chapter, an expert within our field addresses a hot topic and shares their wisdom with the next generation of teachers. These essays are written in a conversational tone, inviting the reader to explore key ideas and to learn from the best of the best. Experts include:

- Dr. Cathy Kea—Developing Cultural Competence
- Dr. Kristina Collins—Addressing Systemic Racism
- Dr. Kelly Carrero—Working with Young Culturally/Linguistically Diverse Learners
- Dr. Kristin Bjornsdottier—Setting High Expectation for our Students and Our Selves
- Ms. Tammy Day—Exploring College Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities
- Dr. Jennifer Nietzel—Supporting Families of Students with ASD
- Dr. Susan Boutilier—The Neurology Behind Learning Disabilities
- Dr. Emily King—Moving Beyond Checklists to Identify the Strengths and Needs of Students with ADHD
- Dr. Dennis Cavitt—The Importance of Self-determination
- Dr. Beverly Gerber—The Importance of the Arts as a Key Part of Services
- Dr. Dina Castro—Working with Culturally/Linguistically Diverse Families
- Ms. Liz Parrot—How Important a Personal Relationship with The Speech Language Therapies Can Be for a Child
- Dr. Tarek Grantham—Upstanders Confront Anti-Black Racism and Close Excellence Gaps for Gifted Black Males
- Dr. Elaine Gale—Infusing Deaf Adults in Early Intervention for Families
- Dr. David Edyburn—Using Technology to Support Students
- Dr. Joy Banks—Intersectionality and Hope for a More Inclusive Society

Each of these essays is designed to invite further conversation and provide a jumping off point for in class or online discussions and further investigations of the topics addressed.

High Leverage Practices—All of the new High Leverage Practices (HLP) (CEC/CEEDAR) have been included in the 15e. Each HLP appears within the chapter and topic where its application can best be seen. The full list of HLPs, and the chapter in which it appears, is included in the back of the text cover. Readers can refer to this list to see where in the text each practice is addressed. High Leverage Practices can be incorporated within classroom discussions and lesson-planning activities to explore their application in practice.



Remember Our Super Powers!!!—This feature captures the voices of students with exceptionalities as they share their “super powers.” So often we focus on the challenges that students face without taking time to celebrate their strengths. This feature also provides a jumping off point for discussions of what happens when we think about students’ strengths instead of focusing on their deficits.



Reaching and Teaching Students in Virtual Learning Environments—We have learned many lessons from the rapid pivot to online learning that resulted from COVID-19. In these short essays, Dr. Jennifer Job shares lessons from this pivot that we may want to carry forward; sharing ways we can incorporate more online learning opportunities for our students.



Mindfulness Matters—This special feature reminds us of the importance of the emotional climate of our schools and classrooms for supporting student success. Each chapter incorporates specific and practical strategies to nurture mindfulness. These strategies addresses: Mindful Listening; Mindful Learning Environments: From Chaos to Calm; Supporting Mindfulness with Young Children; Supporting a Calm Focus; Identifying Feelings; Managing Impulsivity; Calming the “monkey mind”; Dealing with Anger; Moving Beyond Words; Understanding the Neurology of Mindfulness; Connecting with Others; Using Sound to Focus the Mind; and Mindfulness of Personal Autonomy. The practice of mindfulness for students and teachers helps to create an environment of calm which supports learning. The concrete strategies offered in this section are designed to be implemented within a typical classroom and school.



Key Features Retained in the 15th Edition

In addition to the new features, we have kept our best loved features for the 15e. These features include:

Exceptional Lives Exceptional Stories—These vignettes share the experiences of children with exceptionalities and their families giving readers an important glimpse of what daily life maybe like for students and their families.



Moral Dilemmas—These short vignettes present the reader with issues that teachers often face and ask them to think about how they would handle these difficult situations. There are no “right” answers to these dilemmas, but in reflecting on them, the readers can clarify their own beliefs and values.



Future Challenges—The field of Special Education continues to evolve, and while we have made great strides, there are many challenges that we still face. This section shares some of these remaining challenges with the reader in hopes that they will help to address these challenges as they enter the field of special education.



Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Strategies for Content Standards—Chapters 3–13 share tables linking UDL strategies to content standards, showing how students can gain access to grade level curriculum benchmarks.

Information Processing Model—In the 15e, we continue to emphasize the information processing model (IPM) to show the key elements of learning: taking information in (input), thinking about it (central processing), and using it in some way (output); information processing also includes decision making (executive function) which oversees the learning process. All of this information is placed within the emotional context which influences how we process information (i.e., how we learn). Understanding how a child processes information allows educators to adapt learning environments, teaching strategies, and curriculum to address the child’s strengths and challenges. Chapter 1 gives a detailed description of information processing model and Chapters 3–13 use the IPM to show the strengths and challenges for students within each area of exceptionality.



Multitiered Systems of Support (MTSS)—We use the MTSS approach (formally RtI) to show how coordinated services can be organized to facilitate greater collaboration between general and special education through tiered supports and services. MTSS is designed to strategically match supports and services with the intensity of student’s strengths and challenges. Using this framework, we can provide extra support for students who do not need the intense and full services we provide through special education. We can also provide additional enhancements for children who need them. We present a three-tiered model: Tier I, focuses on solid supported access to the general curriculum to help students reach grade level benchmarks and enhanced experiences for students who have met benchmarks; Tier II, offers students targeted instruction, often using standardized materials and interventions, when they need additional support and or enhancements to meet with success; and Tier III is intensive and more individualized support and or enhancements for students. Many students with exceptionalities spend a large part of their school day within the general education classroom and tired services help to foster the collaborative support they need. Chapter 2 offers a full description of MTSS, and this model is used within the Educational Response sections of Chapters 3–13.



Diversity and Disproportionate Representation—Disproportionate representation of racially, culturally, and linguistically different, and economically disadvantaged, children within special and gifted education is a pernicious and persistent challenge. Within special education, we see an overrepresentation of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and economically disadvantaged students in many areas of disability. This pattern is reversed within gifted education, where the same children are markedly underrepresented. Poverty, while certainly contributing to these patterns, does not fully explain them. In other words, the intersectionality of race ethnicity, language, culture, and gender all make unique contributions to the patterns of disproportionate representation that poverty alone cannot account for. In Chapter 2, we explore deeply the impacts that structural and systemic racism and implicit bias can have on decisions to identify, place, and discipline students. Within each chapter, we address the specific issues related to appropriate identification and services for students of color. (Please see our earlier discussion of respect for evolving language preferences.) We discuss the social, as well as educational consequences of policies and practices, and explore the role of culturally inclusive curriculum and family-centered approaches to create culturally responsive services for all children. In many chapters, we have invited experts to share their wisdom on how we can solve these pernicious problems. Because we have integrated this content within each chapter, throughout the book, we have placed a special icon showing where this important information is located within each chapter.

Specific Chapter Updates in the 15th Edition

Each chapter has been thoroughly updated reflect current research and practice. Here are the highlights for individual chapters:

Chapter 1: Children and Youth with Exceptionalities and Their Families

In Chapter 1, we meet students with exceptionality within the context of their families. We explore child development across the lifecourse and examine the role of families in supporting their child's success. We discuss importance of cultural competence to building strong family partnerships and look at how school and family relationships were impacted by the COVID pivot to online learning. The challenges of disproportionality of students of color in identification and services are discussed in-depth.

Chapter 2: Children and Youth with Exceptionalities and Social Institutions: Government, Courts, and Schools

This chapter examines social and cultural influences on student outcomes within a bioecological focus of human development. The predominant influences from society come from the institutions of government, the courts, and the schools and each of these plays a role in shaping student outcomes. We have added deep discussion of how structural racism and implicit bias can impact students with exceptionalities and their families. We present ways to organize schools around a strength-based approach that moves from "inclusion" to "belonging" across a continuum of supports and services (including Multitiered Supports and Services).

Chapter 3: Early Intervention Supports and Services

In Chapter 3, we explore the importance of early intervention supports and services to optimize outcomes for children. We have extended our discussion of family-centered culturally responsive practices to build strong partnerships, specifically with bilingual families. We have expanded our focus on early childhood mental health care and the use of MTSS frameworks to address social and emotional needs of young children and added a discussion of the impacts of early trauma on child development. We have also added a new section on the Division of Early Childhood (CEC) recommended practices.

Chapter 4: Children and Youth with Intellectual Disabilities

Chapter 4 has been refocused with a strength-based approach to supports and services and the setting of personally challenging learning objectives for each student. The new AAIDD definition and classifications of support are presented and an in-depth discussion of the role of cultural biases in interpreting "adaptive behaviors" has been added. Instruction sections include all new evidence-based practices and strategies for acquisition, fluency, maintenance and generalization

of knowledge and skills. A new discussion of the role of person devices (e.g., cell phones, tablets) as part of assistive technology has been added.

Chapter 5: Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Chapter 5 opens with a conversation about the changing preferences for terminology within the ADS community... person first or Autism first? The chapter has been refocused around strength-based approaches to supports and services for student's success. An all-new evidence-based practices section drawing on the National Clearinghouse on Autism has been included and research-based predictors of successful transition to postsecondary experiences have been added.

Chapter 6: Children and Youth with Learning Disabilities

Chapter 6 takes a new look at the neurological differences in structure and function of the brains for students identified with learning disabilities. We discuss the appropriate identification of student who are emergent English speakers. In the educational response section, we examine the interrelated relationship between academic and social/behavioral supports to the success of students with LD. Sections on accommodations and modifications; assistive technology; evidence-based practices; and transition services have all been updated.

Chapter 7: Children and Youth with Attention Deficit/Hyperactive Disorders (ADHD)

In Chapter 7, we take an updated look at the role of executive function in students with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorders (ADHD) and the neurological differences in structure and function of the brain. We look at the patterns of identification across gender, race, and ethnicity and discuss the comorbidities often associated with ADHD. In the educational responses section, we discuss multi-modal treatment options to support students.

Chapter 8: Children and Youth with Emotional and Behavior Disorders

The strength-based focus of Chapter 8 includes a new look at the bioecological context on human development and the correlated constraints that influence the lifecourse of students with EBD. We discuss the problems inherent in the IDEA definition of EBD and the role implicit biases can play in identification. We have added a discussion of the importance of developing positive self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy within a wrap-around approach to supporting students with EBD.

Chapter 9: Children and Youth with Communication, Language, and Speech Disorders

In this chapter, we examine how the strengths and challenges of children can be addressed through collaborative interdisciplinary teaming. Special emphasis is given to the bilingual and bicultural needs of children with language differences and the cultural competence needed to work with their families. Updated sections