



# **Special Education**

**Special education** is the education of students with special needs in a way that addresses the students' individual differences and needs. Ideally, this process involves the individually planned and systematically monitored arrangement of teaching procedures, adapted equipment and materials, accessible settings, and other interventions designed to help learners with special needs achieve a higher level of personal self-sufficiency.

Common special needs include learning disability, communication challenges, emotional and behavioral disorders, physical disabilities, and developmental disabilities..

The opposite of *special education* is *general education*. General education is the standard curriculum presented with standard teaching methods and without additional supports.



Special education has been provided in one, or a combination, of the following settings:

- *Inclusion:* In this approach, students with special needs spend most or all of their time with non-disabled students. Inclusion has two sub-types: the first is sometimes called *regular inclusion* or *partial inclusion*, and the other is *full inclusion*.
  - In a "regular inclusion" setting, students with special needs are educated in regular classes for nearly all of the day, or at least half of the day.
  - Under full inclusion, by contrast, students classified as disabled remain in general classrooms virtually all the time.



- *Mainstreaming*: Regular education classes combined with special education classes is a model often referred to as *mainstreaming*. In this model, students with special needs are educated in regular classes during specific time periods based on their skills.



- *Segregation* in a self-contained classroom or special school: Full-time placement in a special education classroom may be referred to as *segregation*. In this model, students with special needs spend no time in regular classes. Segregated students may attend the same school where regular classes are provided, but spend their time exclusively in a special-needs classroom. Alternatively, these students may attend a special school.



- *Exclusion*: A student who does not receive instruction in any school is said to be *excluded*. It occurs when a student is in hospital, homebound, or detained by the criminal justice system. These students may receive one-on-one instruction or group instruction. Students who have been suspended or expelled are not considered excluded in this sense.

