Success Factors and (unintended) Consequences of Inclusive Education in the United States—Implications for the German Context

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Abstract (English)

The United States has long been considered a pioneer in the integration of children with special education needs, since 95% of all children learn in general school settings, regardless of their dis-/abilities. This chapter identifies four (unintended) consequences of the movement towards inclusion for the US education sector: 1) a significant increase in the number of children diagnosed with special education needs and increases in public spending for special education, 2) tremendous growth of the teaching workforce, 3) blurring of professional identities of general and special education teachers, and 4) educational triage & teaching to the test. In the final section of the chapter, the authors draw connections between these consequences and the German case arguing that schools and the teaching professions may face similar challenges during the implementation of inclusive education.

Abstract (deutsch)

Die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika werden seit Langem als Pionier im Bereich der Integration von Kindern mit sonderpädagogischem Förderbedarf betrachtet, da 95% aller Kinder – ungeachtet ihrer Fähigkeiten – gemeinsam im Regelschulsystem lernen. Dieses Kapitel identifiziert vier (ungeplante) Konsequenzen der Entwicklung zur Inklusion im US-amerikanischen Bildungssystem: 1) Anstieg der Anzahl der Kinder mit diagnostiziertem sonderpädagogischen Förderbedarf und Anstieg der öffentlichen Ausgaben für Sonderpädagogik, 2) enormes Wachstum der Lehrerprofession, 3) Verschwimmen der professionellen Identität der Regel- und Förderschullehrkräfte, 4) Bildungs-Selektierung und Unterrichten für standardisierte

Tests. Im letzten Abschnitt des Kapitels ziehen die Autoren Rückschlüsse aus diesen Konsequenzen für die Situation in Deutschland und die Entwicklung zu einem inklusiven Bildungssystem und weisen darauf hin, dass Schulen und Lehrkräfte dort vor ähnlichen Herausforderungen stehen wie in den USA.

Introduction

Ninety-five percent of all children living in the United States learn in general school settings, regardless of their dis-/abilities (US Department of Education, 2013b) and, hence, the United States has been considered a pioneer in the integration of children with special education needs. The "All Handicapped Children Education Act" (1975, today: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA) and the "Elementary and Secondary Education Act" (ESEA 1965), with its current reauthorization "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB, 2001), represent two instrumental pieces of legislation that set the stage for this development. However, most of the children and youth with special needs still spend parts of their day outside the regular classroom, thus, full inclusion has yet to be achieved (Powell 2011)[1]. Furthermore, the increased focus on inclusion has had some unintended consequences for the US education sector such as a tremendous growth of the special education teaching workforce (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2013). Nevertheless, the case of the United States provides an interesting example of the movement towards inclusive education and is, thus, the focus of this chapter.

In a first step, the significant pieces of legislation leading to inclusive education will be discussed. In particular we review the basic premises of IDEA and NCLB with a specific focus on their alignment. Thereafter, we outline key success factors for inclusion such as teacher attitudes towards inclusion and the role of the school principal. Furthermore, significant (unintended) macro- and micro-level consequences for the teaching profession and for schools following the movement towards inclusion will be discussed. For instance, both general and special education teachers need to realign the at times conflicting aspects of IDEA and NCLB, which may negatively affect teachers' professional identity and, thus, potentially inhibit

[1] Inclusion as understood in this chapter is defined as "the right of every child to be in the mainstream of education. Students do not have to 'earn' their way into the classroom with their behavior or skills. They are assumed to be full members – perhaps with modifications, adaptions, and extensive support – but they are members nonetheless" (Sapon-Shevin 2007: 6).

inclusion success. The final section of this chapter draws connections to the German case arguing that the teaching profession and schools in Germany may face similar consequences following the implementation of inclusive education.

Historical Context and Legislation toward Inclusion in the United States

Education is not particularly mentioned in the US Constitution and therefore falls into the area of responsibility of the states. However, during the past decades, the federal government has become more and more involved in education policies and Congress has substantial power in denying states the inflow of federal money, if they do not accept and implement federal education laws (Strax, Strax, & Cooper 2012). As such, federal legislation was essential in facilitating the inclusion of children with disabilities. Triggered by the civil rights movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Congress enacted the "Elementary and Secondary Education Act" (ESEA 1965), with its current reauthorization "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB, 2001) and the "All Handicapped Children Education Act" (EAHCA 1975) with its current reauthorization "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (IDEA 2004).

The ESEA was the first concerted effort by the United States Congress that encouraged the states to provide education for students with disabilities (Powell, 2011). However, local school districts oftentimes did not open up their schools to children with disabilities leading individual citizens to file lawsuits against these states (Powell 2011, see Johnson, 2013 for an overview of these lawsuits). This situation changed with the passage of the EAHCA in 1975, which grants all children with disabilities the civil right of accessing the local public school. Before EAHCA, only one in five children with disabilities were integrated into the public school system, while educational services were oftentimes inadequate to address needs for these children (Office of Special Education Programs 2007). EAHCA was reauthorized in 1990, 1997 and 2004 under the title the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (IDEA) and is based on six principals: zero reject, nondiscriminatory evaluation, appropriate education, least restrictive environment (LRE), procedural due process and parent participation (see Table 1).

Table 9.1: Overview of Education Acts and Abbreviations

Abbreviation & Year	Education Act	Goals & Principles
ESEA (1965)	Elementary and Secondary Education Act	Congress: Encouragement of states to provide education for students with disabilities
NCLB (2001)	No Child Left Behind (reauthorization of ESEA)	Emphasis on standardized testing as part of the standard-based education reform
EAHCA (1975)	All Handicapped Children Education Act	Access to local public schools for all children with disabilities
IDEA (2004)	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (reauthorization of EAHCA)	Free appropriate public education to all students – tailored to individual education needs: • Zero reject • Nondiscriminatory evaluation • Appropriate education • Least restrictive environment (LRE) • Procedural due process • Parent participation

States are required to provide free appropriate public education to all students (no student can be deemed 'uneducable') that is tailored to their individual education needs (D'Alonzo, Giordano, & Cross 1995; Powell 2011). This education has to be provided to the maximum extent possible and appropriate for the individual child in the LRE. The LRE is not necessarily a full-day attendance of the general education classroom and might necessitate additional aides and services (McLaughlin & Jordan 2005). More concrete, "separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily" (20 U.S. Code § 1412). The LRE is a right not a privilege and therefore demands justification that a student could not be educated in the general education setting (US Department of Education 2000).

Speaking to this point, a large majority of all children (95%) in the United States are educated in the general school setting and 60.5% of children with disabilities spend 80% or more of their time in the general classroom (US Department of Education 2013b). The amount of time spent outside the general classroom varies and depends to a large extent on the particular disability (McLaughlin & Jordan 2005; US Department of Education, 2013b). Moreover, school districts have to provide individualized educational plans (IEP) targeted towards the individual child's

strengths and weaknesses. These plans outline the services that should be provided, the current performance levels, the extent to which these are affected by the child's disability, and indicate accommodations. General and special education teachers as well as school staff (e.g., school psychologists) jointly develop IEPs in addition to the participation of the parents (20 U.S. Code § 1412).

A focus on educational outcomes was specified in the 1997 amendment to IDEA, indicating that the improvement of "educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities" (20 U.S. Code § 1400). This focus on educational outcomes is part of the standards-based education reform, the current paradigm in the US education system, emphasizing that assessing student performance in a standardized way will ultimately improve the individual student outcomes (McLaughlin, Shepard, & O'Day 1995). This amendment eventually changed the emphasis of IDEA from providing access to an education to the requirement of traceable educational improvement (Daniel 2008).

States receive funds through NCLB, the current reauthorization of the ESEA, if they prove the development and implementation of student performance assessments. In particular, states are required to test students in reading and mathematics yearly in grades 3-8 and once in grades 10-12 as well as in science once in grade 3-5, 6-8, and 10-12 (National Coalition for Parent Invovlement in Education, n.d.), whereby all students receive the same test under identical conditions. All students with and without disabilities are entitled to and expected to meet the same high academic standards under the NCLB (Daniel, 2008) and schools have to set district-wide performance levels for each group to assure that the individual subgroups make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Only if AYP is made, schools receive continued funding (McLaughlin & Jordan 2005). NCLB aims towards increasing accountability to show that schools live up to the required state-wide standards (National Council on Disability 2004) and is specifically aimed to counter previous critiques of underdeveloped work and study skills and low test score results of students (Daniel 2008).

Generally, NCLB contributed to a shift in conversation from the necessity of inclusive education to developing quality programs that include students with disabilities (Cole, Waldron, & Majd 2004). Test results must be disaggregated making the progress for all subgroups transparent.

Many schools fall short of their AYP goals due to the academic performance of the special education subgroup. Critics therefore argue in favor of the exclusion of children with disabilities from the reporting requirement (Cole 2006). Even though inclusion is not particularly mentioned in the law, NCLB is generally aligned with inclusive education and proponents are pleased with the fact that students with disabilities are able to fully participate in assessments, indicating that IDEA and NCLB contributed to a change in attitudes and expectations for students with disabilities (Cole et al. 2004; Frieden 2004).

Scholars, however, rightly criticize the direct tension between the "NCLB's provision that the vast majority of students with disabilities meet age-based grade level standards [and] IDEA's emphasis on individualized educational services for students with disabilities" (Russell & Bray 2013: 3). Whereas NCLB focuses on standardization and demands more accountability from schools, IDEA emphasizes a pedagogical focus on individualization that mandates teachers to target education to the individual learning needs of students with disabilities (Bray 2014; Russell & Bray 2013). One illustrative example are IEPs that are meant to develop objectives that correspond to the individual strengths and limitations of the student with disabilities and, thus, could lay out lower criteria for academic success as compared to non-disabled children (Center on Education Policy, 2005). However, this essentially contradicts standardized assessments required by NCLB (Allbritten, Mainzer, & Ziegler 2004).

Policy makers attempted to mitigate some of these conflicts with the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. For instance, school districts are given the possibility to provide students with alternate achievement standards that assess their progress more appropriately (Daniel 2008). These alternate tests may be given to 2% of all the tested students, who have the potential to achieve high standards but who may need longer than their peers to reach grade level as well as to 1% of students with significant cognitive disabilities affecting about 30% of all students with disabilities; these alternative assessments are taken into account when calculating AYP (Daniel 2008; US Department of Education 2007). Despite these efforts, the curriculum and pace of instruction in general education classrooms is constantly increasing leading to inclusion being a "means of providing greater opportunity to learn important content as well as social and communication skills [and falls short on the promotion of] broader social goals by preparing all students for adult life in a diverse democracy" (McLaughlin & Jordan 2005: 108). Furthermore, research indicates that students with disabilities receive the same general instruction without

sufficient accommodations reflecting their individual needs (Bray 2014; Zigmond & Baker 1996). Consequently, full inclusion, implying that the regular classroom will adapt to the individual needs of the children (Stinson & Antia 1999), has yet to be achieved (Powell 2011). IDEA, hence, is often judged to be a failure rather than a success (Cuban 1996).

Whereas legislation paved the way for inclusive education in the United States as discussed, there are some other key success factors that contribute to a successful transition to inclusive settings. These are discussed next.

Key Success Factors

Research has identified some key success factors for the transition to inclusive settings. The most prevalent are teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, principals' support, and quality of interdisciplinary teamwork.

Teacher Attitudes

Research shows that the success of implementing inclusive education depends to a large extent on teachers' attitudes toward inclusion (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002) as well as their teaching skills (Gerber 2012). In fact, despite federal mandates to educate students with various disabilities in the LRE, teachers continue to have mixed feelings about their own preparedness to educate diverse students in the general education setting (Deutsch Smith & Tyler 2011; Taylor & Ringlaben 2012); despite the fact that a majority of teachers are supportive of the concept of inclusion (Berry 2010).

In-service teachers generally have more positive attitudes toward inclusion as compared to pre-service teachers (Berry 2010). Inexperienced pre-service teachers, regardless of their attitudes toward inclusion, are often nervous about their future tasks and show low self-efficacy (Berry 2010). Pre-service teachers, especially those who lack training in special education, tend to feel negative toward students with special education needs, which decreases the likelihood of inclusion success (Taylor & Ringlaben 2012). The situation is comparable for in-service teachers. Teachers, who lack knowledge in special education tend to have less positive attitudes toward inclusion and feel less self-efficacious to seek out resources that could enable them to implement inclusion (Campbell, Gilmore, & Cuskelly 2003; Norwich 1994). Generally, positive

beliefs regarding inclusion positively influence teachers' behavioral intention to teach children with special needs (MacFarlane & Woolfson 2013).

Research indicates that negative attitudes toward inclusion may be altered over time. For pre-service teachers, teacher education is one way to shape their attitudes toward inclusion (Sze 2009) and a reform of US teacher education is currently underway (US Department of Education 2012). For in-service teachers, the provision of professional development opportunities and the availability of adequate resources have been found most beneficial to positively influence their attitudes towards inclusion (Merz-Atalik, Hausotter, & Franzkowiak, 2010; Wolery, Werts, & Caldwell 1995).

Role of principals

Principals play an important role in school change, because their actions directly influence school improvement (Fullan 2002). For instance, principal support is necessary for the development of an organizational culture that supports teachers and their professional development as well as to provide opportunities for collaborative learning among school staff (Waldron, McLeskey, & Redd 2011). School principals, thus, set the tone for changes in schools and may ultimately influence the success of inclusive education (Billingsley 2012).

Riehl (2000) identifies three strategies that principals use to facilitate inclusion success: First, principals play an essential role in fostering new meanings about diversity. As leaders of schools they have the power to influence certain situations and their meanings. Second, principals can promote inclusive school cultures and instructional programs to positively influence teachers' self-efficacy and objectives for student achievement. In particular, principals are deemed effective, if they make cautious hiring decisions, provide new teachers with induction, provide feedback to all teachers, and help to establish rules for continuous improvements and the creation of a professional teacher community in the school. Third, effective principals build relationships between schools and communities to benefit from resources provided by a network of outside institutions and organizations.

Interdisciplinary Teamwork

Given the growing diversity in inclusive settings, general education teachers increasingly struggle to accommodate the diverse needs of individual learners (Sapon-Shevin 2007). The quality of interdisciplinary collaboration between different professions such as general and special education teachers and school staff, such as school psychologists and school social workers, has therefore been identified as another success factor for inclusive education (Avramidis & Norwich 2002; D'Alonzo, Giordano, & Vanleeuwen 1998). Individual factors such as time commitments and organizational factors such as school culture, shared leadership and technology-supported communication strategies influence the nature of interdisciplinary teamwork (Caron & McLaughlin 2002). Regular evaluations of the own roles and experiences in the classrooms are essential to ensure successful collaboration (Johnson 2013).

(Unintended) Consequences for Schools and Teachers

IDEA and NCLB are federal policies that have strong influences on how states manage their schools, however, "current incentives structurally induce behaviors that are inimical to broader notions of equity and fairness" (Booher-Jennings 2006: 761). This section explores some of the (unintended) consequences of these policies.

Increases in Special Needs Diagnoses and in Public Spending

Since the enactment of the laws that paved the road towards inclusion, the percentage of students with disabilities that are educated in the general classroom saw constant growth. Over time, the percentage served as part of the total enrollment grew from 8.3% in 1976/77 to 12.9% in 2011/12 (US Department of Education 2013a) with a 65% change in total number of children served between 1976/77 and 1999/2000 (Horn & Tynan 2001). Whereas the increase of students who are educated in the general classroom is generally appreciable, IDEA created the unintended incentive of labeling an increasing number of children as disabled and, thus, redirected large sums of public spending towards special education (Horn & Tynan 2001; Kavale 2002). One highly controversial example is the classification of children with a "specific learning disability", which led to an increase of 233% of classified children between 1976/77 and 1999/2000 as

compared to an increase of 13% of the other disability categories. Reasons lie in the broad definition of this disability category and a lack of clear diagnostic criteria (Horn & Tynan 2001).

A related consequence of the movement towards inclusion is the significant increase in spending on special education. IDEA grants appropriated to the states in 2014 ($11,472,848,000) amount to about 45.5 times the initially distributed value of $251,770,000 in 1977 (US Department of Education 2014). In the year 2000, the total spending for students with disabilities amounted to $77.3 billion or $12,474 per student. The per-student cost of special education is 2.08 times higher compared to regular education, whereby the additional expenditure for special needs students is $5,918 per student (Special Education Expenditure Project 2004). Rising costs may lead to decreased support for and public confidence in the special education system (Horn & Tynan 2001).

Ballooning

Another, less frequently cited, unintended consequence relates to the changes in the overall teaching workforce. Recent research, using large-scale national survey data of representative teacher and administrator samples, indicates a transformation of the teaching workforce over the past 25 years (Ingersoll & Merrill 2013). Teachers are currently the largest occupational group in the United States (app. 4 million teachers) and this occupational group is likely to continue to grow. Interestingly, the rate of teacher increase has outpaced the rate of the student population growth: whereas student enrollment went up by 19.4% over the period, the supply of teachers increased by 46.4%. Ingersoll and Merrill (2013) refer to this effect as 'ballooning'. Even though some of this effect can be explained by differences in school types (e.g., the ballooning effect is larger in private schools) or by decreases in workloads (e.g., reduction in class sizes, work hours, classes taught per day), the data indicate that a far more significant source of the ballooning has been the growth of special education, which is linked to changes in IDEA. The number of teachers with college majors in special education increased by 102% compared to 33% for general elementary school teachers. Since special education classes average about half the size of typical classes in elementary and secondary schools, the increase in special education teachers alone accounts for almost as much of the entire increase in the teaching force as does that of elementary teachers (Ingersoll & Merrill 2013).

Blurring of professional identities

Before the passage of IDEA and NCLB, general and special education in the United States had long and distinguished histories without many points of contact (Zigmond & Kloo 2011). After the passage, however, general education teachers play a more dominant role in teaching students with disabilities in the general classroom (in particular through IDEA) and students with disabilities now receive a majority of their daily instruction from general education teachers (Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie 2007). To make the transition to inclusive education, general educators frequently express the need for support from special education teachers (D'Alonzo et al. 1998). Since inclusion can only successfully happen through collaborative efforts (Avramidis & Norwich 2002), special education teachers work alongside general educators in the general classroom. Even though co-teaching, the joint delivery of instruction while sharing responsibilities (Friend & Cook 2000), is regarded as the best practice, special education teachers merely assist general education teachers and observe students' progress, thereby playing a rather passive role in the classroom (Baker & Zigmond 1995). Oftentimes, tensions between the two teaching professions emerge due to differences in the perceived roles, teaching styles and pedagogical as well as philosophical orientations (Walther-Thomas 1997). Moreover, the significant differences between NCLB and IDEA provide possibilities for incoherence in teachers' interpretations and responses (Russell & Bray 2013).

Aligning the at times conflicting requirements of IDEA and NCLB is especially difficult for special education teachers due to the opposing theories that they represent (IDEA: individualization; NCLB: standardization; Russell & Bray 2013). For instance, recent research indicates that students with special education needs only rarely receive the appropriate modification necessary to facilitate the LRE (Bray, Mrachko, & Lemons 2014). Since special education teachers have a specific educational background and constitute a professional community of practice (Louis, Marks, & Kruse 1996), they experience conflicts between their new work tasks in a high-stakes testing environment and their professional identity and professional ethics. Special education teachers, thus, feel forced to engage in educational practices that seem meaningless to them and may be even harmful to the students (Russell & Bray 2013). These tendencies led scholars to criticize the "deliberate blurring of the identities of special and general education" (Zigmond & Kloo 2011: 160).

Educational Triage & Teaching to the Test

In response to the high pressure of improving test scores emphasized by NCLB, some schools were identified to apply a sorting practice of students into 'safe cases', 'cases suitable for treatment', and 'hopeless cases' (Booher-Jennings 2006). This practice has been labeled 'educational triage' and is used by schools to improve their test scores. Children who fall along thresholds of passing the tests receive more resources and attention as compared to children, who are farther away from these thresholds (Booher-Jennings 2005). Contrary to the intention of IDEA, this practice solely focuses on improving student outcomes while disregarding the individual needs of students, in particular for those with disabilities (Cole 2006). Simultaneously, teachers who refuse following this practice as set forth by the school leadership are denounced bad teachers and labeled "traitors to the school's effort to increase scores" (Booher-Jennings 2006: 758), which may ultimately lead to the risk of losing their jobs if their schools should constantly fail to make AYP.

A related consequence of NCLB is teaching to the test, where teachers narrow the skills and content they teach to reflect what will be measured on standardized tests (Guilfoyle 2006). Teaching to the test is defined as "preparing students for high-stakes tests by focusing instruction on test content and skills or, more explicitly, by devoting class time to teaching test items and test-taking strategies" (Menken 2006: 526). Even though this practice has been found to increase test scores, it overemphasizes basic skills and trivial problems while disregarding high-order thinking and problem solving skills (Posner 2004; Volante 2004). Similarly, the pressure to constantly improve student outcomes might even lead to incidences of teacher cheating on standardized tests. For instance, evidence of cheating was found in up to 5% of the classrooms (grades 3 to 8) in the Chicago Public School System (Jacob & Levitt 2003).

Implications for the implementation of inclusive education in Germany

This section intends to draw connections to the German context, where the movement towards inclusive education is a relatively new phenomenon. The German government ratified the UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2009. Until then, the German educational system was one of the most separated in the world. According to the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the German States (*Kultusministerkonferenz,*

KMK), inclusion allows all children and youth equal access to education, whereby potential barriers inhibiting this access have to be mitigated (Kultusministerkonferenz 2011).

Germany is a federalist country and educational policy lies in the responsibility of the states (Merz-Atalik et al. 2010). Therefore the implementation of inclusion is highly heterogeneous in the sixteen states as indicated by the varying rates of students with special education needs that are currently educated in the general school system. For instance, the integration rate in 2011/12, defined as the percentage of all students with diagnosed special education needs attending a general school in comparison to all students in primary and secondary education, varied from 0.9 % in Rhineland-Palatinate (*Rheinland-Pfalz*) and Hesse (*Hessen*) to 3.5% in Berlin (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013b).

In the following, we are investigating to what extent, if at all, the consequences following IDEA and NCLB can be found in the German context.

Increased Special Needs Diagnosis and Increased Spending

Similar to the trend in the United States, the number of children and youth with diagnosed disabilities increased from 5.1% in 1999/2000 to 6.3% in 2011/12 and 6.6% in 2012/2013 (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2014; Dietze 2011; Statistisches Bundesamt 2013b). These numbers reflect students served in the special education system as well as the general school system, an overall population of 494,744 in 2012/2013 (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2014). Furthermore, the share of children receiving a special education diagnosis has seen a 10% increase in the past five years (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2014), especially in the area of intellectual development, emotional and social development, and language (Bildungsberichterstattung 2012). This picture is even more concerning, since the overall population of students decreased in the same time span due to changes in the demographic setup: Whereas 805,543 children started school in 2002/2003, only 711,040 were enrolled into first grade in 2011/2012, resulting in a decrease of 11.73% (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013b).

Despite the fact that the number of children served in the general education system has been growing in the past years (especially since the ratification of the UN convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities), the rate of children attending special needs schools stayed largely the same (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013b). The inclusion rate, defined as the share of students with

special education needs that are educated in the general school system, increased from 18.4% in 2007/2008 to 28.2 % in the academic year 2012/2013 (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2014). Similar to the integration rate, the inclusion rate varies between states; whereas Bremen reports a rate as high as 63.1% Lower Saxony (*Niedersachsen*) has an inclusion rate of only 14.7% (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2014).

Originally the implementation of inclusion was estimated to cost 660 million euros, however, this number was based on stagnating rates of new diagnoses. Given the increase in new diagnoses of students with special education needs (that is likely to continue in the future), costs will exceed the original estimation (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2014). Ultimately, the implementation of inclusive education does not affect the special education school system, and—as argued by the Bertelsmann Stiftung (2014)—threatens the change of the German school system. The preservation of a separate special education school system ties significant sums of financial and personal resources that are needed to finance and staff an inclusive general school system.

Regardless of the differences in the educational system in the US and Germany, there seem to be similar tendencies when considering the rate of students receiving new diagnoses as well as an increase in public spending that is necessary to fund an inclusive system alongside a special education school system in Germany.

Ballooning

Recently published statistics indicate a mixed picture when looking at the changes in teacher population between 1992 and 2012 (see Table 2). Whereas there is a reduction in full-time employment for both teacher groups, this reduction is less severe for special education teachers (- 14.75 %) as compared to general education teachers (- 37.12 %). The reduction in full-time teachers might be partially due to increasing retirement rates; 460,000 teachers are expected to retire until 2020 with only 26,000 new hires every year (Klemm, 2011). This proportion is among the highest of the OECD members countries (OECD, 2004).

Part-time and hourly employment for both groups increased dramatically over the past decade, even more so for special education teachers as compared to general education teachers (Statistisches Bundesamt 2013a). For instance, the share of special education teachers in part-time employment increased 164% as compared to a 90% increase for part-time general

educators. This increase might partly be related to women choosing part-time employment over full-time work, because teaching provides the flexibility to align family and work responsibilities (Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft 2013).

Table 9.2: Teaching professions over time

Teaching Profession	1992	2012	% change
Special Education Teachers			
Full-time	16,582	14,134	- 14.76 %
Part-time	967	2,557	164 .43%
Hourly employees	764	1,307	71.07 %
General Education Teachers*			
Full-time	174,207	109,549	- 37.12 %
Part-time	12,823	24,355	89.93 %
Hourly employees	18,515	21,331	15.21 %

Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2013a), % change: own calculations
Note: *contains primary and secondary schools (*Grundschulen, Hauptschulen, Realschulen, Gymnasien*).

Given the fact that overall student enrollment is decreasing due to changes in the demographic set up, we see tendencies of ballooning in Germany. However, these tendencies are only visible in part-time and hourly employment for both teacher groups indicating less secure employment options that provide lower pay and benefits for these teachers (Gewerkschaft Erziehung und Wissenschaft 2013).

Blurring of Professional Identities

General and special education teachers face fundamentally altered work characteristics due to the implementation of inclusive education (Walk et al. 2014). The role of general educators shifts from being central figures with full authority to being a mentor that guides students to enable them to make their own decisions. Special education teachers are frequently delegated from their home school to work in a regular school, where they are no longer responsible for their own classes, but serve as consultants for general education teachers or work with individual students outside the general classroom. Consequently, both teacher groups have to rethink their

pedagogical philosophies and their role in the classroom (Soukup-Altrichter 2007; Stangier, Thoms & Amrhein 2011; Walk et al. 2014) that may ultimately alter both teacher professions. Similar to the US, special education teachers are at risk of losing their professional identity (Benckmann, Chilla, & Stapf 2012). Since there is evidence that changes in work tasks and identity construction reinforce each other (Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann 2006), future research is needed to investigate this relationship among the teaching professions in Germany.

Educational triage & teaching to the test

International tests such International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) give important indication about the competitiveness of the German education system (Pfahl & Powell 2005). Since the first PISA results were published in 2000, German education policy increasingly moved toward a test-result-driven outcome-focused perspective to improve quality management (Maier 2008). Consequently, the ministers of cultural and educational affairs decided to introduce nationwide education standards in order to achieve comparable performance across states (Kultusministerkonferenz 2006). To assess the achievement of these education standards, a standardized test was introduced (*Vergleichsarbeiten*, VERA). Students in grades 3 and 8 are assessed annually in all schools in the 16 states since 2008 and 2009 respectively in at least one subject such as reading/writing, mathematics or foreign language. VERA aims to support individual schools in their development, particularly focusing on teaching improvement. To achieve this goal, individual schools get access to their results, whereby these results are not published and individual schools cannot be identified (Kultusministerkonferenz 2012). VERA also aims to gather feedback about the acquired competences of students to improve the individual support of students (Dedering 2012). Overall, VERA represents an important measure for standardization and accountability that aims to improve school performance over time (Kultusministerkonferenz 2006). It is unclear to what extent teachers, in fact, utilize VERA results to inform their own teaching practice, since VERA is oftentimes perceived as external control mechanism that implicitly evaluates their work (Dedering, 2012; Maier, 2008). Moreover, despite the fact that VERA intends to trigger education and school development as well as teaching improvement, only some schools strategically utilize the results to inform their practices (Bach et al. 2014). Even though, there is a growing focus on standardized testing, it still seems not as prevalent in Germany as compared to

the United States. Reasons may lie in the absence of sanctions for schools in the German system as compared to the requirement of making AYP in the US (Bach et al. 2014).

Inclusive education, as understood in the German context, recognizes the standards and objectives for the general qualifying certification and, simultaneously, the individual capabilities of the learners (Kultusministerkonferenz 2011). Similar to the US context, scholars criticize the opposing forces of individualization and standardization (Pfahl & Powell 2005; Schuck 2014). However, students with special education needs, especially those in special education schools, were for the longest time not assessed in standardized tests such as PISA, which prohibits scientific claims about the achievements of students with diagnosed special education needs (Pfahl & Powell 2005). This changed only recently; the latest PISA assessment included a sample of special education students. Findings from this assessment are expected to be published by the end of 2014 (Kultusministerkonferenz 2013). Therefore, it is not possible to make any claims about an existing educational triage in the German context. However, there is anecdotal evidence from the state of Saxony (*Sachsen*) that schools discourage the enrollment of students with special education needs in the general school system in order to improve their performance scores (Kailitz 2011).

The lack of longitudinal data prevents to investigate if tendencies of teaching to the test exist in the German context. The KMK, however, is aware of the potential negative effects of teaching to the test and emphasizes that a development towards a narrow education that is targeted towards the requirements of standards has to be prevented (Kultusministerkonferenz 2006). Since VERA is distributed and evaluated by teachers, teachers—in theory—have ample opportunity for potential cheating. To our knowledge, there is no study that has investigated teacher cheating in Germany yet.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we reviewed the significant pieces of legislation leading to inclusive education in the United States. We especially elaborated on the basic premises of IDEA and NCLB with a focus on their alignment. Three main success factors for inclusive education were discussed; in particular we highlighted teachers' attitudes, the role of principals, and interdisciplinary teamwork. The main focus of the chapter was the compilation of significant (unintended) macro-

and micro-level consequences following the movement towards inclusion for schools and the teaching profession. The four consequences identified were 1) the significant increase in the number of children diagnosed with special education needs and increases in public spending for special education, 2) ballooning of the teaching workforce, 3) blurring of professional identities of general and special education teachers, and 4) educational triage & teaching to the test. In the final section, we drew connections between these consequences and the German case arguing that schools and the teaching professions may face similar challenges during the implementation of inclusive education.

This chapter provides interesting insights into the state of inclusion in the United States and illustrates the (unintended) consequences of IDEA and NCLB, the two laws that paved the way towards an inclusive school system. The United States is still a pioneer in inclusive education, considering that 95 % of all children are educated in the general school system. However, inclusion in its current state merely provides children with disabilities the opportunity to learn side by side with their non-disabled peers and are oftentimes not provided with the necessary adaptions as required by the LRE (McLaughlin & Jordan 2005; Zigmond & Baker 1996), thus, applying a narrow interpretation of the inclusion concept. The broader interpretation, in contrast, implies the adaption of the regular classroom to the individual needs of all the children in the general classroom (Stinson & Antia 1999) and emphasizes the preparation of all students for their future life in a diverse society (McLaughlin & Jordan 2005). The German educational system and the way inclusion is implemented in the German context differ from the United States. Nevertheless, the comparison provided in this chapter leads to some important implications for policy and practice.

First, it should be further investigated why an increasing number of children in Germany receive special needs diagnoses. Similar to the US case, there might be financial benefits of diagnosing (and labeling) children as having special educational needs to receive additional support (e.g., through special education teachers). Second, inclusion is only feasible financially, if the special education system is successively reduced. However, special education schools have stagnating - not reduced - enrolment rates. The funding of the implementation of inclusive education in Germany should therefore be critically investigated to ensure sustainability. Third, both teacher groups, but more so for special education teachers, show tremendous increases in part-time and hourly employment over the past years. Whereas these employment options provide them with

the flexibility of aligning family with work responsibilities, part-time teachers receive lower pay and benefits. Fourth, similar to the US case, the professional identities of the teaching professions seem to be blurring. Longitudinal research is necessary to investigate the long-term effects of inclusive education on teachers' professional identities. Finally, reliable and valid longitudinal data is necessary to discover incidences of educational triage and teaching to the test. Here, we agree with Klieme (2004) that the German education system lacks systematic research and evaluation in particular related to the relationships between standards, school development, and accountability and the individualized and targeted education of children with special education needs. Nevertheless, as indicated in this chapter, the case of the US gives some indication of the potential developments in Germany. We strongly encourage policy makers to pay attention to our findings in order to prevent the alarming tendencies as outlined from (further) developing, since these may ultimately have negative effects for teachers and their work in schools and, most importantly, the children they educate.

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