Kids Can Do It: Making Our School Accessible For All Kids

by Emily Wegener, 2013 CTI Fellow
Albemarle Road Elementary School

This curriculum unit is recommended for:
(Self Contained Special Education Classes and 3rd through 5th grade general education)

Keywords: (Special Education, Communication, Access, Disability, Cross Curricular)

Teaching Standards: See Appendix 1 for teaching standards addressed in this unit.
(Insert a hyperlink to Appendix 1 where you've stated your unit's main standards.)

Synopsis: A large group of students taught in schools around the country are students who have a disability of one kind or another. Another large group of students taught in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools and in schools around the country speak a language other than English at home.   Many of these students have at least two barriers to overcome in order to communicate easily, fluently, and functionally with their school community: language and a disability of some sort. I see the need for better access for all our students, including those with communication barriers, language barriers, and those with disabilities. When I say access I mean the feeling of belonging that comes when you can give a visitor a tour of YOUR school. Access is the ability to take ownership of the places in your life where you live, work, and play. When someone can effectively communicate and interact with their school and community life they are inherently more involved and feel more accepted. Access is a door that gives people who have disabilities opportunity. Students in our school will use critical thinking to make our school more accessible and a more communication free environment.

*I plan to teach this unit during the 2014-2015 school year in to (**20**) students in (**self-contained special education and 4th grade general education**).*

I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.

Kids Can Do It: Making Our School Accessible For All Kids

Emily Wegener

Introduction

Teaching academics in a classroom for students with significant disabilities is a relatively new concept. Not too many years ago students were only taught a functional curriculum leaving out any instruction in typical academic areas. The move to a fully academic based curriculum has brought about more equality in terms of the education given to students with and without disabilities. This school-based equality was hard won and is a move in the right direction for special education. That said, as a teacher working with kids with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities every day I see the need for a broader look at our students and their future. Kids with intellectual disabilities often lack the ability to pick up social cues that are the norm for a typically developing student. Kids with significant intellectual disabilities also seem to have much less autonomy in their everyday life, having decisions made for them and about them all the time. I want to see my students engaging in life with more choice and with more responsibility, as they are able. I would love to see them make friends and collaborate with typically developing kids; for the benefit of both but also to give my kids the skills they will need to be more independent as young adults.

For a child who has a significant disability, engaging in a meaningful way with the outside community and the people in it can be very difficult. In North Carolina public schools a student who is considered to have a "significant" disability has an intellectual disability that affects their ability to access the general curriculum at an age and grade appropriate level to such an extent that adaptations and modifications must be made to the curriculum in order for the student to begin to access the material and content. A student who falls under the eligibility category of intellectually disabled-mild (ID mild) has an IQ that is two standard deviations below the mean. To qualify under ID moderate the IQ is three standard deviations below the mean. And in order to qualify under the category of ID severe the IQ falls four or more standard deviations below the mean. The type of disability varies for each child with the main focus on the student's overall intellectual capability and performance. To achieve the goal of a higher level of engagement with the community and community members, kids with significant disabilities need supports that enable them to access the world around them to the best of their ability. In order for students who have disabilities to make more independent choices, take on more personal responsibility, and to make friends with typically developing peers, a universal system of support must be in place. Providing access to

education does not stop at teaching a high level of academics with care and rigor. Access is "the ability or right to approach, enter, exit, communicate with, or make use of" (Merriam Webster); taking this definition, it is our responsibility as educators to make the school and all aspects of the school accessible to all students no matter their cognitive level, language level, or physical needs. The feeling of belonging that comes with being part of a school community is something that you cannot teach. What we as educators can do is provide the best setting for learning for all students; knowing that each student experiences the world in a different way and allowing for those differences in the way we build our school community.

Background and Demographics

I am a self-contained special education teacher at Albemarle Road Elementary School in Charlotte, North Carolina. Albemarle Road Elementary School is an urban school in a neighborhood setting on the East side of Charlotte, NC. Many students live in apartments and houses that are very close to our school. Our school has been growing seemingly exponentially for the past five years or so. We have seen a huge increase in our student population each year, growing by more than a hundred students each year. Currently our school has a total of approximately 1,250 students. Needless to say our school was not built with this many students in mind. Overcrowding is a constant issue at Albemarle Road, whether it is making lunch schedules, playground use, teacher assistant schedules, assemblies, or something as common and everyday as the use of group bathrooms. Every one who works at our school takes a part in the organization and group efforts that keep everything running smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Even with caring staff members who work to make the overall operation of a large school possible, our severe overcrowding makes things a struggle for nearly everyone at some time or another.

Our school has a very high population of English as a second language learners or ESL students. Many children are first generation Americans, refugees, or were born in another country and are recent arrivals to the USA. Currently our school has 720 students enrolled in Kindergarten through fifth grade who speak a language other than English in the home. Of those students 600 children are identified as limited in their English proficiency. Looking at our Pre-K population, approximately 100 children speak a language other than English in the home. That brings the total of non-native English speakers to approximately 820 children. This number is well over half of our total student population which currently sits at 1,250. Teaching students who are not fluent in English both receptively and expressively is the norm at our school. Our school culture reflects a very accepting attitude towards all kids, parents, and families. Kids often learn English at a faster pace than their parents making the teacher to parent language barrier a constant challenge. The teachers at ARES work to send home translated forms, to have translators at meetings, and to provide a welcoming atmosphere to all families from all

backgrounds. Parents are an integral part of education at any school and a language barrier does not stop our parents from becoming a vital part of our school culture. Many families work long hours and attend ESL night classes held at our school to increase their proficiency in English. Classes like these, dual language presentations, and annual cultural events keep teachers, staff, kids, and parents connected.

In terms of demographics for Albemarle Road, we have a majority of Hispanic students at 47% of the total school population. African American students are represented at 41% of the school population. Asian students are 7% and Caucasian students are 4% of the total student body. Students falling under the "other" category in terms of ethnicity are represented at 1% of the population of ARES. As the demographic break down suggests Spanish is the most common language after English spoken at our school. Though only 7% of the total population is of Asian decent, many languages are represented throughout these students and their families. Students with significant and profound disabilities, who are the students I teach within the self-contained program make up less than 1% of the total population of students who are enrolled in Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools.

Another factor that impacts life, instruction, and who we are at Albemarle Road is the high number of economically disadvantaged students who attend our school. A total of 93% of our student body falls into the economically disadvantaged category, meaning that these students qualify for free or reduced lunch through the state and federal school lunch program. Knowing that our students live in poverty is a factor that impacts many aspects of our school. Planning field trips that all kids can access, thinking of the transportation needs of our families, considering parent involvement during work hours, and many other issues are considered throughout grade level planning. That said, our students are given a high quality of education and the same high-level expectations that all children should receive in the public school system. Poverty is something that our children live with and experience on a daily basis but it is not what defines them or who they will be or what they can achieve.

Rationale

I have taught at Albemarle Road for six years. During those six years I have taught in the self-contained special education program, called SAC. SAC stands for Specialized Academic Curriculum, meaning that our curriculum is a modified and adapted version of theCommon Core Standards. Our standards are an extension of the common core and reflect the need to adapt and modify everything that is presented to our students; they are officially referred to as the Extended Common Core State Standards of North Carolina or

the ECCSS. All students in my class have an Individual Education Plan or IEP that details areas of need in terms of academic and functional instruction. Students in North Carolina who are taught in a self contained setting are being taught in the most restrictive setting a typical public school provides. That restrictive setting means that all my students have an intellectual disability that is significant enough to warrant a highly modified instruction, curriculum, and teaching methods in all academic areas.

Students in my classroom have varying needs in terms of access to academics, their school, and their disabled and non-disabled peers. Many students are non-verbal; they use sign language, a picture based communication system[1], or more likely; a total communication approach to interact with the world around them. Though the significant deficits seen in all areas of age and grade level academics is a prominent aspect of a student who has an intellectual disability, the inability to communicate effectively could possibly be the most restricting aspect for these students.

Looking at our school's demographic breakdown, it is a given that many of my students who fall under the EC or Exceptional Children's category also speak a language other than English in the home. This means that my students have at least two barriers to overcome in order to communicate easily, fluently, and functionally with their school community. Through the years of working at a school with a high ESL population and specifically working in a classroom for students with significant disabilities I see the need for better access for all our students. When I say access I mean the feeling of belonging that comes when you can give a visitor a tour of YOUR school. Access is the ability to take ownership of the places in your life where you live, work, and play[2]. When someone can effectively communicate and interact with their school and community life they are inherently more involved and feel more accepted. Access is a door that gives people who have disabilities opportunity.

Objectives

I have two broad objectives for this unit. First and probably foremost for me is to create a situation for communication, collaboration, and interaction among students with and without disabilities. Sometimes giving kids knowledge, teaching them about what makes other people who they are, gives them the freedom to understand and embrace the differences in others. We as teachers have to trust that children can be empowered with knowledge about disabilities. When kids have a basic understanding of why a student needs a wheelchair or what happens in the body when someone has a seizure the lingering questions and stares aren't needed, they now know! After kids know and are given information they quickly move on to seeing a kid as a kid and their particular

disability is just a part of who they are. Setting up this unit so that kids with disabilities and their non-disabled peers are working collaboratively on a single project allows both groups to see each other as equals and to have more meaningful relationships.

Second, I would like to see this group of students think critically about making Albemarle Road Elementary accessible to all students no matter their abilities or inabilities. Encouraging and fostering a feeling of ownership for our school and for every student in our school is a very important aspect throughout this unit. Using an inquiry based approach, students will learn about access and what it means to have real and equitable access to school, the playground, the library, and all those places that make a school a school. I want to see kids push beyond the model of the teacher supplying information and the student receiving the information. I want to see the kids looking at our school and thinking of all they have learned about disabilities and the right to have access; and then using that knowledge to find areas of our school where, for example, picture symbols can be added to more effectively communicate information to students with intellectual disabilities. Working through a problem and using an inquiry-based approach is a 21st century skill that all students need to be successful in their later lives.

At the conclusion of my unit I would like the participating students to walk away with knowledge of the various disabilities and the many abilities of their peers who have those disabilities. I want students who have disabilities to be able to communicate with a non-disabled peer in a meaningful manner about a school project or personal interest. I also want students to complete the unit with an understanding of the term access, and what it means to them personally to have access to a school that is welcoming to all. Students will disabilities will work with their peers to choose picture symbols that better explain the common areas of our school. Since kids with disabilities use these picture symbols everyday to communicate they are a primary source of knowledge. Both groups of kids should take ownership and pride in their task to make Albemarle Road even more welcoming.

Strategies

A task analysis is a method of teaching where a skill is broken down into small steps that are easier to teach[3]. This method of instruction is often used in a special education setting where students need more explicit instruction to complete a task that requires multiple steps. A task analysis has been used for years in special education to teach life skills such as making a sandwich, dialing a phone, or cleaning a room. More recently the use of the step-by-step teaching method that the task analysis provides has been used in the academic setting. Browder, Trela, and Jimenez[4] used the task analysis method of

instruction to teach and engage middle school students in grade level literacy. In my own classroom I use a task analysis to teach story-based lessons. The task analysis for teaching story-based lessons is a systematic method of introducing, reading and generating student interaction during a read aloud or story based literature lesson[5]. The teacher presents the material in the same manner every lesson, allowing the element of predictability that assists students with special needs in participating more independently. Students know what to expect and are able to follow a dial and predictable routine in order to more successfully participate in the lesson. A systematic story based lesson begins with an anticipatory set that creates interest, sparks recognition and front loads students with information that is relevant to understanding the material that will be covered[6]. A prediction question is then asked to all students based on the anticipatory set. Throughout the reading of the text a repeated story line is used as a way to catch the attention of students, allow for more interaction from non-readers, and as a way to emphasize a major plot point or fact from the text. Comprehension questions are built into the story and utilize the illustrations, repeated story line, and repetition of the lesson to support students who may not normally have consistent recall[7]. A task analysis will be used in this curriculum unit as a means of evaluating our school's accessibility step by step. Because students with disabilities often lack the pre-requisite academic skills that a typical student may learn quickly in pre-K or kindergarten, more direct and explicit instruction in how to learn are needed.

Adapting and modifying text is another teaching strategy that will be used as a means of connecting to students with significant disabilities. Any text presented, from picture books to vocabulary will be paired with picture symbols to better support the learning needs of all students involved in this unit. Picture symbols are widely used in instruction targeted at special education students and more recently students who are English language learners[8]. Picture symbols can be used as a way to increase comprehension with non-readers, to increase communication with students who have speech impairments or who are non-verbal, and as a way to prompt correct behavior. Picture symbols vary greatly depending on their intended use[9]. In this unit text will be adapted and modified to include picture symbols that support comprehension and recognition of content for non-readers. Adapting a text allows access for students with disabilities as well as access for their typically developing peers.

A pre-planned system of communication is a valuable teaching strategy when a mixed group of students are the target audience. Because many of my students cannot speak or have minimal vocabulary knowing how they will communicate with a typically developing peer is essential. Partner assisted scanning is a method of augmentative and alternative communication that allows a person with intellectual disabilities, severe speech impairments, or overt motor impairments to communicate[10]. A non- disabled peer or a peer who has the ability to access picture symbols at a more independent level and

are cognizant enough to complete the process scan through response options while their partner indicates their desired response option. Partner assisted scanning may be visual, auditory, or a mixture of both. Students who benefit from partner assisted scanning may have visual impairments, physical disabilities, hearing issues, problems communicating, or struggle to use other types of devices[11]. Partner assisted scanning is perfect for this project, as a main focus is on collaboration and communication amongst children with varying abilities. Using this method of communication gives the student who has delays in key communication areas the opportunity to speak for themselves to the largest extent they are able as well as providing the peer helper a chance to take on a responsibility that in turn helps another. For many students this method allows a more diverse set of communication options.

Activities

The following activities are presented as five separate lessons that build knowledge for participating students with each lesson presented. By the end of the unit learning goals for students involved include the following:

1. An increased ability to communicate, collaborate, and interact with students who have disabilities, students who communicate in an unconventional manner, and students who are typically developing.
2. Understanding of the meaning of the term "access".
3. The ability to think critically about our school and accessibility throughout our building.
4. Knowledge of disabilities or other reasons that may impede access to our school.

The five lessons are intended for a group of students who have significant intellectual disabilities that are in third through fifth grades and a group of general education students also in third through fifth grades. The grades included for students with disabilities range between third and fifth, as this is a typical class arrangement within the self-contained special education programs at Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools as well as other school systems around the state and nation. It would be ideal to have one to two general education students per each student who has a disability; these student teams would work as partners throughout the unit. The idea is to garner communication and collaboration amongst all the kids, having too many students per group may impede genuine communication exchanges and ideas shared. Scheduling is always an issue when working with multiple classrooms and more than one teacher. Developing classroom partnerships at the beginning of the year that encourage interaction with projects and lessons is a way to have a routine in place that allows the students to work together across

classes and grades. A good way to integrate a lesson like this would be with the social studies curriculum where many connections to the common core can be found. Special class projects can also be done during a silent reading period that most general education students have once a day. Collaboration and comparing of schedules is a must! General education students are a part of the lessons within this unit though the extensions of the common core, which is used within self-contained special education classrooms, is the primary source of standards addressed. The lessons will note the connections to the general education common core standards but these are not the driving force behind the unit as the intended audience follows an extended version of the common core.

The lessons are presented in a linear format, meaning the information learned builds with each lesson. At the end of the unit students will implement what they have learned by making changes around the school that reflect their understanding of the need for equal access by everyone. These lessons may take anywhere from one to two hours to complete and may occur across multiple days. The need for flexibility when implementing these lessons is crucial as working with multiple class schedules can be hard to coordinate. Understanding the typical lesson progression for students in the self contained program which generally includes a slower pace of instruction needed, the need for repetition, the increased time to communicate, and the need for constant adaptation and modification when working with students who have intellectual disabilities is a must. Lessons may need to be repeated or divided into two sessions as needed based on the particular needs and situation of students involved.

Lessons

Lesson 1A
This is a mini lesson designed only for students in the general education classroom. Because many students in the general education classroom are unfamiliar with students who have disabilities and may have questions, this mini lesson is built in as an opportunity for the general education students to ask questions and for the teacher to explain the role of the general education students.

I will begin this mini lesson by asking the students what disability means. I will present the YouTube clip "Kate's Disability Awareness Video" through you tube as a means of building background knowledge and beginning the discussion. (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0fs9650Vz8) I will ask students to share their ideas verbally and I will make note of their ideas on a KWL chart presented on the SmartBoard. Students will also have their own copy to keep in a notebook to be used throughout the unit.

Topic: _____Date: _____		
What I know: K	What I wonder: W	What I learned: L

Allowing students to ask questions and to encourage them to be inquisitive is a vital part of this experience. I will lead the discussion and ask students to each write down a question they might have regarding the unit, disability in general, or their role as a peer partner. I will always keep the idea in mind that I am informing students about all types of disability as a mean to teach them inclusivity and to encourage them to see another kids' disability as just another part of who that kid is. After taking notes and answering questions I will read two picture books that emphasize an inclusive environment of kids with and without disabilities at school. I will read "Friends at School" by: Rochelle Bunnett and "We Can Do It" by: Laura Dwight. At the conclusion of the lesson I will answer any questions posed under the "I Wonder" column of the KWL chart and explain the unit's goals and objectives.

Lesson 1- Who Are We?
The first lesson in this unit is an opportunity for the two groups of students (those with and without disability) to meet one another and share information about themselves. This is important for the aims of the unit, as sharing and understanding each other will allow the students to think critically about access for our school and for all types of people.

I will begin the lesson by letting each student introduce themselves to the group and each other. Students who need support to communicate will use an Adapted Augmentative Communication or AAC device to communicate.   These devices range from high to low tech and vary with each student's particular needs. Students with disabilities will be encouraged to share their name, grade, and something about themselves, as they are able.

Adapted methods of communication will be used by most of the students, including electronic big macs, GO Talk 9's, paper POD's, and sign language. I will use this as an

introduction in the communication methods of the students with disabilities. I will place the students in small groups of two to three students; this will be their work group for the duration of the unit.

I will display the "Who I am" worksheet on the SMARTboard and describe how the students should fill out the sheet with information describing themselves. I will explain how the students with disabilities should show the general education peer partners how to use the picture symbols on the bottom to supplement written information. I will also explain ways the general education peer partners can support the other students by assisting in cutting or gluing as needed.

At the conclusion of the lesson all students will have filled out the "Who am I?" document with words and pictures. The groups will share aloud with the support of all students using a variety of methods of presentation. The finished products will be displayed on a bulletin board in the self-contained classroom as a means of tracking the progress of the unit visually.

Lesson 2- Access is Everything

The focus of this lesson is to begin the discussion of access and to define access in kid friendly terms. I will define access as "how much a place or a thing can be used by as many people as possible". I will begin this lesson by presenting a simple PowerPoint slide show that discusses the various ways access affects our life; this slide show will focus on kids and their typical activities throughout home and school life. A learning goal for each student is to understand that access can make school easier to understand and take part in for all kids. As background information for this portion of the unit it is helpful for teacher to research the Symbols Inclusion Project based in England. Their goal is to use picture based additions and communication friendly systems to remove barriers to communication and provide an accessible learning environment for everyone.

After the slide presentation I will read aloud the book "Arnie and the New Kid" by: Nancy Carlson. I will present this book using the Story Based Lesson Task Analysis created by Diane Browder of UNCC (insert note). I will begin the lesson with an anticipatory set that includes a presentation from our physical therapist. The physical therapist will lead a wheelchair information session using a real wheelchair and walker. Students will be allowed to investigate the chair and all its components while asking questions to the physical therapist. I will make notes on the board of all observations and questions posed. This presentation will lead into the read aloud of "Arnie and the New Kid". Throughout the book comprehension questions will be imbedded and presented with support from the illustrations in the book. General education peer partners will practice partner assisted scanning which involves assisting a student with a disability choose an answer from an array of picture cues.

At the conclusion of the book, I will ask students to think about ways that our school would give great access to the "new kid" from the book and ways our school could do better in providing access to the "new kid". Students who are able to write independently will record this information on a T-Chart. Students who are unable to write will use a green dot painter to indicate yes and a red dot painter to indicate no.

To conclude the lesson I will review the definition of access and the main points of the power point slideshow. I will also have one group share from their T chart a way that our school does a great job of providing access and a way our school can improve access.

Lesson 3- Let's Take a Look
The focus of this lesson is to examine our school through the lens of access for everyone. I want the students to tour our school using the knowledge they have learned from the previous lessons and closely examine the ways in which our school provides access for all and the ways they see that our school can improve access for all. I plan to focus this

lesson around a group scavenger hunt through the school. In order to provide scaffolding for all learning levels represented by the students I will give index card prompts that give ideas of places to look and what to look for. The cards will serve as a guide and will give students a direction when they are out in the school. Students will have the option of drawing, writing, or taking a picture of the areas throughout the sch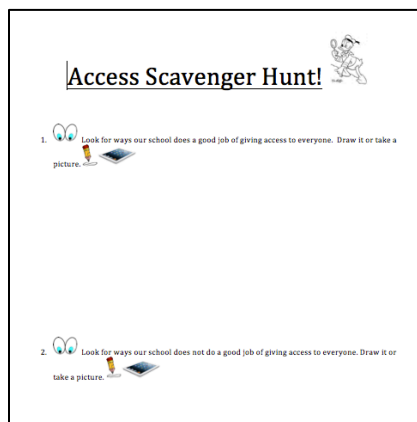ool they see as needing more access or as having great access. This will be the beginning of their group collaboration on ways to improve and heighten access for all.

o Check out the library.
o Are there enough pictures to tell what books are in what sections?
o Can all kids reach the books?

o What about the office?
o Can everyone figure out who works where?

 I will begin the lesson by explaining that a scavenger hunt is a game where you look, find, and record information that you will share with the group. Students will be sent to different locations throughout the school and told to take notes on their scavenger hunt form.

Access Scavenger Hunt!

1. Look for ways our school does a good job of giving access to everyone. Draw it or take a picture.

2. Look for ways our school does not do a good job of giving access to everyone. Draw it or take a picture.

Students will be given about thirty minutes to explore the school and note areas they would like to discuss with the group. I will visit the groups throughout the school along with my teacher assistant to provide feedback and prompting and to facilitate their discussion of access. I will encourage the general education peer buddies to ask their student partners probing questions to assess the accessibility of locations around the school. Examples include "Do you know who works in this office?" "Where do you go for a fire drill?" "What is taught in this classroom?" "Where do you go if you feel sick?" I want to guide the students in thinking about how other students who have varying differences interact with our school.

At the conclusion of the scavenger hunt students will share with the group what they saw and recorded on their scavenger hunt forms. I will guide the discussion and narrow down the information from the groups into a cohesive list that we will work with during our next lesson. My goal is to see the kids come up with at least 10 areas in the school that we can adapt, modify, or update to allow more accessibility for all students.

Lesson 4- What Can We Do?
Now that the students have met their peers, learned what the term access means, and gotten a chance to explore our school with access in mind it is time to narrow down our focus and look at real changes our group can make within the school. To begin this lesson students will explore adapted books, communication devices, picture symbol labels around the classroom, and the website for the "Symbols Inclusion Project". (http://www.widgit.com/resources/curriculum/school-environment/cfe-guide/index.htm)

I will talk with students while they explore the materials to best assist them in understanding the impact that visual supports can have on access for students with communication differences, visual impairments, and other disabilities. I want to spur the general education students to think about their surroundings in a different way and I want students with disabilities to be able to have a say in what they find fits best for them at their school.

I will ask general education students:
1. How do you think these books help kids who are not able to read independently?
2. Do you think these picture pages and signs would be helpful for someone who could not speak? Why?
3. What did you see around the school that gave you an idea for better access? How would you change it?

I will ask the students with disabilities:
1. How do you think we should use pictures at our school?
2. What area would you like to change at our school? What would you add?

At this point in the unit students have learned about disabilities, access, methods and modes of adaptations, communication barriers, and have explored our school with access in mind. Now I will assist the students in bringing what they have learned together so they can make a change in our school using what they have learned.

I will guide a group discussion using these talking points as a starting point. I will make notes on the SMARTboard using pictures, words, and images of our school (taken on the scavenger hunt) to illustrate the students' ideas of better access for Albemarle Road Elementary. Students will break into pairs with the instruction to choose one or two areas of our school they identified on the scavenger hunt as an area that could use an access update. After making their choice students will brainstorm art, images, and pictures that could be used to make a part of our school have better access. They will use a graphic organizer as a guide to create their access adaptation.

The graphic organizer will serve as a scaffold to assist the students in coming up with a design that they would like to add to an area of our school that makes access more equal and fair. The idea here is to allow the students the time and to give them the support to come up with a plan that they care about, have researched, and have planned as independently as they are able.

When the students complete the graphic organizer they will present their ideas to the other students and myself. The next and final step in the curriculum unit is the actual artwork and images the students would like to add around the school. The final lesson should be fun and allow the students the independence to create something that has meaning for both the general education students and the students with disabilities.

Access = Everyone

UNITY

1. We choose _____.

gym   front office   fire drill   library   hallway   cafeteria

2. We will _____.

draw a picture   take a photo   paint a picture   make a step by step list

Some ideas:

A visual lunch menu

Lunch Time

Step by step picture guide

The School Rules.

Visual rules for school

Pictures to explain a fire drill

Lesson 5- Let's do it!

To cap off the unit the students, who have been studying access and what it means to all people, will implement their own changes in their school. Using their graphic organizers from lesson 4 the students will create art, take photos, make step-by-step guides, or draw pictures to make a more communication friendly environment for all people.

To summarize the unit with the students and to point them in the right direction for making what they have learned real I will refer back to the website for the "Symbols Inclusion Project". This is a good way to show how their ideas and work thus far can turn into a reality.

Giving the students materials and independent time is important for this lesson. I want the work to be meaningful to both students with and without disabilities. As the teacher I will walk around the groups and monitor their progress. I may need to step in to assist with adaptations that will help students with disabilities participate to the fullest such as modified and adapted scissors and adapted art supplies.

When students complete their art the group will take a walk around the school to add their work to the specific areas chosen for access modification. This should be a student-centered time where students can display their work and explain to administration, other teachers and other students the meaning of their access work.

Bibliography for Teachers

Ali, Emad, Stephanie Z. MacFarland, and John Umbreit. "Effectiveness of Combining Tangible Symbols with the Picture Exchange Communication System to Teach Requesting Skills to Children with Multiple Disabilities including Visual Impairments. *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities* 46, no. 3 (2011) 425-435. http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ942511.
This article gives excellent information on the use of picture symbols in instruction for students with disabilities.

"Boardmaker Achieve Activities." DynaVox Systems LLC.
http://www.boardmakerachieve.com/You/Home (accessed October 8, 2013).
This website provided me ideas and templates that can be used to make visual adaptations for students with various communication needs.

Browder, D, K. Trela, and B. Jimenez. "Training Teachers to Follow a Task Analysis to Engage Middle School Students with Moderate and Severe Deveopmental Disabilities." *Focus Autism Other Developmental Disabilities* 22 (Winter 2007): 206-219. doi: 10.1177/10883576070220040301

This article details exactly how to use a task analysis within academic instruction.

Browder, Diane, Pamela J. Mims, Fred Spooner, Lynn Ahlgrim-Delzell, and Angel Lee. "Teaching Elementary Students With Multiple Disabilities to Participate in Shared Stories." *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities* 33 (2008) 1-12.

This article provides examples of how to effectively use stories and story based lessons to gain the attention and encourage interaction from students with significant disabilities.

Burkhart, Linda J., Gayle Porter. "Partner Assisted Scanning Strategies for Youth Who Face Multiple Challenges". Pre-Cinference instructional course presented at the ISAAC Conference, Düsseldorf, Germany, 2006. http://www.lburkhart.com/Isaac_instructional_06.pdf

This article details the assisted scanning method of communication that is useful when working with students of varying abilities.

Szidon, K., & Franzone, E. (2010). Task Analysis: Online Training Module. (Madison, WI: National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders, Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin). In Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI). *Autism Internet Modules*. www.autisminternetmodules.org. Columbus, OH: OCALI.

This online training module gives an in depth look at the use of a task analysis within education.

Riddoch, Jane V., Russell F. Waugh. "Teaching Students with Severe Intellectual Disabilities Non-Representational Art Using a New Pictorial and Musical Programme." *Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability* 28, no 2 (2003) 145-162. doi: 10.1080/13668250310001470085
This article helped me explore the use of art with students who have disabilities.

Smith, Rachel E., Tara Buchannan "Community Collaboration, Use of Universal Design in the Classroom" *Journal of Post Secondary Education and Disability* 25, no. 3 (2012): 259-265. http://eric.ed.gov/?q=access+and+disability&ft=on&id=EJ994291.
This article helped me look at the use of universal design in planning better modes of access for all students around our school. This takes a look at physical adaptations as well as general thoughts on thinking in an inclusive manner.

Socia, Deb. "Why We Need New Symbols For Education." *The Noun Project* (blog). http://thenounproject.tumblr.com

This blog entry describes ways in which symbols can effect the interaction that many groups of people feel when using a public space.

"Symbols Inclusion Project." Symbols Inclusion Project (SIP) Resources and strategies
for supporting inclusion. http://www.symbolsinclusionproject.org/. (accessed
October 16, 2013).

> This website is an excellent place to start researching the need for communication
> friendly environments and is a real world resource of how this can work in
> schools and public spaces.

Reading List for Students

Burnett, Rochelle. *Friends at School.* Cambridge, MA: Star Bright Books, 2006.

> This book explores daily life in an early elementary classroom, the images show
> the various ways students with a variety of disabilities access their classroom.

Dwight, Laura. *We Can Do It.* Cambridge, MA: Star Bright Books, 1998.

> This book is full of images and is a simple way to discuss differences and
> similarities among all kids from all over the country.

Carlson, Nancy. *Arnie and the New Kid.* New York: Puffin Books, 1992.

> This book tells a story about a new student who uses a wheelchair.

List of Materials for Classroom Use

SMARTboard, KWL chart, pencils, scissors, paints, camera, crayons, paper, whiteboard,
glue, AAC devices, computer with you tube access, power points, ipads, tape, paint
brushes, worksheets, student books, large paper, dot paint.

Notes

[1] (Emad Ali, Stephanie Z. MacFarland and John Umbreit 2011) p.427

[2] (Deb Socia 2013)

[3] (K. Szidon and E. Franzone 2010) p. 3

[4] (D. Browder, K. Trela, and B. Jimenez 2007) p.210

[5] (D. Browder, K. Trela, and B. Jimenez 2007) p. 213

[6] (Diane Browder, Pamela J. Mims, Fred Spooner, Lynn Ahlgrim-Delzell and Angel Lee 2008) p. 4

[7] (Diane Browder, Pamela J. Mims, Fred Spooner, Lynn Ahlgrim-Delzell and Angel Lee 2008) p. 7

[8] (Boardmaker Achieve 2013)

[9] (Symbols Inclusion Project 2013)

[10] (Linda J. Burkhart, and Gayle Porter 2006) p. 4

[11] (Linda J. Burkhart, and Gayle Porter 2006) p. 8

Appendix: Implementing Common Core Standards

- SS.3.C&G.2 Understand how citizens participate in their communities.
  Students will demonstrate how young citizens can contribute and influence the well being of their community by working on a school-based project to make a positive impact.

- EX.K.E.1 Identify needs of individual and family.
  Students will describe what they need to best access their school; they will list their needs and how to achieve better access for themselves and others.

- EX.K.C&G.1 (1st - 2nd) Understand expectations of participating in a group.
  Students will follow group rules and expectations while contributing to the group's project and working together towards a common goal.

- EX.1.G.1 Identify locations within the school environment.
  Students will map out the school with access in mind during the access scavenger hunt. Students will use their knowledge of the school building as a way to make changes that will impact the communication environment for all students.

- EX.3.C&G.2 Understand how citizens participate in their communities.
  Students will gain an understanding about how all people can better participate in school life by thinking in a different way about access and what that means for many types of people.

- EX.4.C&G.2 (4th – 5th) Understand the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
  Students will look at their school with the idea that all citizens have the right to access no matter their ability or disability, language, or communication method.

- EX.5.G.1 Understand how human activity has and continues to shape the environment.
  Students will reflect on their contribution of improving access and be able to describe in detail the impact they have made.

- ELA- SL.3.1 (3rd- 5th) Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 3 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
  Students will work with a diverse group on a collaborative access project.

- ELA- W.3.7 (3rd -5th) Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
  Students will guide this project using knowledge learned throughout the lessons.