

## Editorial

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In taking on the task of Editor of the Australasian Journal of Special Education, I have been forced to take a closer look at my knowledge base in the area, and to examine carefully my beliefs about special education. As I commenced the job of compiling this issue of the journal, it was quite apparent to me and possibly the readers of this journal, that my knowledge base about journal compilation placed me in a position of experiencing "difficulty", or as Ed Kameenui and Deborah Simmons from the University of Oregon would say, I was experiencing a "fundamental inadequacy" in terms of my immediate environment.

In compiling this issue of the journal I am very grateful to the work of the previous editor, Associate Professor Ken Linfoot. Ken was editor for five years and I would like to recognise his contribution to the journal by formally acknowledging his work on behalf of the Australian Association of Special Education and the New Zealand Special Education Association. The articles that make up this issue of the journal were all accepted under the editorial work of Ken.

The articles that are represented in this issue of the journal represent a number of issues in the area of special education.

Llewellyn, McConnell and Bailey discuss the development of a screening instrument for teachers to refer students with special education needs to therapy services is discussed. This instrument provides a base for further work in planning education programs for students requiring therapy services.

Sugai and Evans present data collected from teachers about the proportion of students in their classrooms at risk in the areas of academic, social and physical domains. It is concerning that teachers reported up to 45 percent of students are at risk in the area of reading. In terms of quality education programs there appears a need for strong curriculum and in some classrooms, effective instruction practices.

Feeney and Best discuss the transition of students with special education needs from

primary to secondary schools. Their findings indicate a need for further research in this area of education.

Centre and Freeman review a number of studies that support the SWELL program developed at Macquarie University. The SWELL program is closely aligned with the much publicised Success For All program directed by Professor Robert Slavin at Johns Hopkins University. The overview the authors give is underpinned by research they have conducted in schools, showing benefits to a range of students including those who often experience difficulty in the area of literacy.

In recommending the reading of the articles in this journal, I bring to the attention of readers of this journal the topic of an up-coming special edition of the journal. This edition, Volume 22 Issue 3 (late 1998), will focus on classroom-based studies investigating the education of students with special education needs. Studies to be included in this edition will be selected, following review, on the basis of clear demonstrations of positive outcomes of quality programs delivered to students, including students with special education needs. These studies need to address issues close to the those involved in delivering programs to students with special education needs. In the words of a parent I recently met in a research project, "...make sure research is grounded in reality...I am sick of promises which are broken because research projects bring additional funding which we cannot maintain when they are gone."

I look forward to contributions to the journal, in the way of articles for review, feedback on the content of material, and the manner in which the journal is set out.

David Evans PhD  
Editor