By researching and sharing our findings with educators and relevant agencies across Canada and around the world, we can empower them to provide the best educational experience for all students, including those with exceptional needs.
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A. Active Involvement of Members with Centre Work, 2022

**Mission:** The Centre’s purpose is to create knowledge and disseminate it across Canada and around the world to ensure successful academic and social outcomes for *all* students, including those with exceptional needs. This is accomplished through research, and knowledge exchange or mobilization activities. Highlights of member involvement in these activities in 2022 are described in this section.

**Note:** A complete list of members of the Centre appears in Appendix A. In the Appendices, and throughout this Annual Report, faculty members’ names are bolded, and graduate students’ names are underlined.

**Ongoing Research Projects.** Refer to Section E in this Annual Report for a detailed list of Funding.

- **Beginning Teachers Study.** In 2022, concept-mapping analysis continued with interview data from the study that identified contributors to instructional practices, and to efficacy. This analysis complements the results of an examination of contributors to beginning teachers’ beliefs about inclusive education which was published in the *International Journal of Inclusive Education* in late 2020. Graduate students who are participating in the analysis and writing are Jessica Delorey, Petra Owusu, and Evan Charles, supervised by Dr. Jacqueline Specht.

- **Collaboration with European Partners.** Dr. Donna McGhie-Richmond from University of Victoria and Dr. Jacqueline Specht have partnered with Dr. Susanne Miesera from Technical University of Munich in Germany to compare beginning teachers in Canada and Germany regarding their views on experiences that contribute to the development of inclusive practice.

- **Let’s Chat...About Inclusive Education.** Dr. Specht and collaborators from Inclusive Education Canada, Inclusion Canada and Inclusion International continued work on this video series funded by a SSHRC Connection Grant. Graduate student Sydney Bota is working on this project under Dr. Specht’s supervision.

- **School Leadership.** Dr. Steve Sider together with other Centre members have been investigating the experiences of school principals with inclusion over the last few years. The most recent SSHRC insight grant is led by Dr. Sider and includes centre members Drs. McGhie-Richmond, Specht, Maich, and MacCormack as co-investigators, with Drs. Bennett, Rousseau, and Somma, as collaborators. This grant builds on previous work and explores the “critical incident” experiences of principals as they support students with special education needs in inclusive schools in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

- **International Outreach – Haiti.** Western University, through the Centre, along with four other Canadian universities and three partner organizations from Haiti are developing a partnership between the two countries to strengthen research and teacher education on disability and inclusion. Led by Dr. Sider, project co-investigators from the Centre are Drs. Specht and Maich.
International Outreach – Ghana. A team of Canadian and Ghanaian academics/stakeholders has assembled as part of a SSHRC Partnership Development Grant, sharing indicators of successful inclusive education in Ghana and providing resources to promote inclusive education for Ghanaian students. Led by Dr. Magnus Mfoafo-M’Carthy, project co-investigators from the Centre are Drs. Specht, Sider, and Maich.

International Outreach – St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Four team members of the Centre are researching and consulting for the ministry of education in this country under a Human Development Service Delivery Project grant for in-service teacher training. They are Drs. Sheila Bennett, Monique Somma, and John Freer. The focus of this project is on strengthening pedagogy through in-service teacher professional development. Between 2019 and 2022 the team provided an inception report, training modules, regular progress reports, and a final evaluation report. These are listed in Appendix B.

B. Value of Involvement for Members

Note: References and additional co-authored publications and presentations appear in Appendix B.

Faculty Research Collaborations: Many of the members of the Centre are renowned for their expertise in specialized areas of inclusion and inclusive education research. For this reason, they were invited to collaborate on research projects such as the Beginning Teachers Study. Some researchers have established a relationship with the Centre to expand the scope and reach of their expertise. Their expertise provides a multi-perspective approach to addressing policy and practice. Research collaborations within the Centre expand knowledge on a variety of topics and issues concerning the provision of an optimal educational experience for all students. The following are some examples of these collaborations, and the value of these for members:


- International perspectives on inclusive education. Through the outreach activities, and the comparative study with Dr. Miesera at the Technical University of Munich, members of the Centre team have gained insight through sharing knowledge and perspectives with the global community of inclusive educators and researchers.

C. Academic Impact

Open access journal hosting. The Centre publishes an online journal titled Exceptionality Education International (EEI). Centre members, Drs. Specht and de Lught are editors, and Dr. Monique Somma is an associate editor. Exceptionality Education International provides a forum for research and dialogue on topics relevant to the education of people with exceptionalities and how barriers to the full participation...
of all people in education can be reduced or removed. Journal articles are available through open access after one year. More information about EEI may be viewed [HERE](#).  

**National and International Reports.** In 2022 Drs. Specht and Sider were contributing authors to Chapter 3.6 titled “Identifying and Supporting Children with Learning Disabilities”, part of the report for the UNESCO International Science and Evidence-based Education (ISEE) Assessment. [International Science and Evidence based Education Assessment | Science of learning (unesco.org)](https://www.unesco.org/)

**International Outreach.** Drs. Specht, Sider, Maich continued their partnership with academics and stakeholder groups in Ghana, Haiti and in Canada to share knowledge and to provide resources for educators to promote the inclusive education of students. Drs. Bennett, Freer and Somma provided their expertise to the ministry of education in St. Vincent and The Grenadines on strengthening pedagogy through in-service teacher professional development.

**Media.** The SSHRC-funded video series, *Let’s Chat...About Inclusive Education* aired as a webcast production in 2022. The series presents informed and diverse perspectives on the challenges, the progress and the issues related to the development of inclusive education in Canada. Guests include researchers, educators, parents and advocates who are engaged in a specific aspect of inclusive Canadian schooling. The series consists of 30 one-half hour chats, which are available at [https://inclusiveeducation.ca/2022/01/14/lets-chat/](https://inclusiveeducation.ca/2022/01/14/lets-chat/). The series was advertised nationally via the websites and social media of the Centre and project partner Inclusive Education Canada. Dr. Specht’s graduate student Sydney Bota transcribed and coded the chats to create themes that pertain to her research question, “How do experts in the field conceptualize the current state of inclusive education across Canada?” The themes identified will provide clarity on best practices in the classroom, implementation strategies based on the views of these experts, and areas of future research.

**Graduate Student Research Awards 2022.** The Inclusive Education Research Award is funded by Foundation Western and administered by the Canadian Research Centre on Inclusive Education. Each year, up to three awards of $750 each are granted to graduate students in education to recognize exemplary research that addresses an issue concerning the inclusion of students who represent a diversity of backgrounds or learning needs. A committee of Centre members reviews the applications and selects the recipients. In 2022, awards went to:

- Shamiga Arumuhathas: *Is there adversity in diversity? Racialized international students’ experiences at Ontario universities.*
- Julia Ranieri: *An exploration of the facilitators and barriers of inclusion and participation for children with intellectual and developmental disabilities in informal educational settings.*

**D. Knowledge Mobilization**

**Knowledge exchange and mobilization.** Despite the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, Centre members were able to collaborate to share research in a variety of formats:
Book Chapters. Team members Whitley, Specht, Matheson and MacCormack extended their research on the impact of COVID-19 on parents and a publication in the Canadian Association of Principals Journal in late 2021, by collaborating on a chapter in a book in 2022 edited by Ruby Turok-Squire. Also in 2022, team members Sider and Maich edited a book of cases highlighting leadership for inclusive schools. The authors invited nine members from the Centre to provide case commentaries, including Drs. Bennett, MacCormack, McGhie-Richmond, Parekh, Rousseau, Somma, Specht, Villella, and Young. Dr. Timmons served as a reviewer. Citations for book chapters such as these and others published collaboratively by team members appear in Appendix B.

Professional Journals. Team members collaborated on several articles which were published or submitted in 2022. See Appendix B for details of this articles in these journals.

Website. The site was revamped and re-launched in late 2021, featuring key information about the team, the research projects underway, and some useful resources for parents, educators, and school leaders. In 2022 it was maintained by Dr. Specht’s graduate student Petra Owusu. Visit www.inclusiveeducationresearch.ca

Twitter. Graduate student Petra Owusu also maintained the Centre’s twitter account @inclusiveed. Through this medium the Centre was able to promote its research through links to articles and information, and to recruit participants for research project participation, such as sharing COVID-19 experiences, and concept mapping activities for beginning teachers. The Centre has established and maintained contact with active stakeholders in inclusive education. Currently the Centre is following 538 such groups or individuals and has 407 followers.

E. Funding -Secured or Maintained, 2022:


A team of Canadian and Ghanaian academics and stakeholders will determine indicators of successful inclusive education in Ghana.

Sider, S., (Principal Investigator), McGhie-Richmond, D., Specht, J., Maich, K., & MacCormack, J., Co-investigators; Bennett, S., Cobb, C., Morvan, J., Rousseau, N., & Somma, M., Collaborators (2019-2024). Canadian school principals’ support of students with special education needs: An examination of critical incidents as a form of professional learning. SSHRC Insight Grant. $215,569

To explore the experiences of principals as they support students with special education needs in inclusive schools in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador.

Sider, S., (Principal Investigator), Specht, J., & Maich, K., Co-applicants. (2021-2024). Supporting inclusive education in Haiti: Developing a Canada-Haiti partnership for research and teacher education on disability and inclusion. SSHRC Partnership Development Grant. $200,000
This project brings together a Haitian and Canadian team of researchers, teachers, and those from disability rights organizations to build inclusive education training networks in Haiti.

Specht, J., (Principal Investigator), with 23 faculty members of the Canadian Research Centre on Inclusive Education as Co-investigators (2015 –2022). The development of inclusive educational practices for beginning teachers (Beginning Teachers Study). SSHRC Insight Grant. (Note: This study was extended into 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.) $488,800

We follow beginning teachers throughout their program and into their first years of teaching to determine how new teachers develop their practice to teach in diverse classrooms.

Specht, J., (Principal Investigator), Carr, K., Porter, G., & Richler, D., Collaborators (2021-2022). Let’s chat about inclusive education. SSHRC Connection Grant. $33,697

Production of a series of 30 video discussions with researchers, parents of children with disabilities, advocates, educators, and leaders concerning how to improve inclusive education systems.

F. Funding - Seeking, 2022:

Specht, J. (Principal Investigator); Maich, K., McGhie-Richmond, D., Mfoafo-McCarthy, M., Morvan, J., Parekh, G., Preston, J., Shah, V., Sider, S., Somma, M., Co-applicants (2022-2025). Collaboration for inclusion. SSHRC Race, Gender, and Diversity Initiative. $448,175.

Collaboration for Inclusion. The objective of this partnership is to capitalize on the lived experiences of the stakeholders within the special education system as we work to remove the barriers of ableism, racism, and classism that continue the inequity of outcomes for those who are not within the normative cultural standards and are therefore seen as deficient (Annamma et al., 2013). DeMatthews et al. (2021) and Parekh and Brown (2019) illustrate the importance of an intersectional approach to disability which addresses aspects of racism and other forms of discrimination.

The overall goal of this research partnership is to harness the expertise of our partners across Canada to foster inclusive education. We will work collaboratively to produce and mobilize research-informed knowledge that enables educators in Canada to implement the most powerful tools to teach all learners about including and valuing every member of our diverse Canadian society.

In 2022 this application was not successful. Collaborators reviewed the assessment results from SSHRC; a decision is pending concerning re-submission of the funding application at a future date.
Appendix A
Members of the Centre

Faculty and Staff at Western University, ON

Jacqueline Specht  Professor and Director of the Centre
Nicole Neil  Associate Professor, Associate Dean, Research
Grace Howell  Assistant Professor (LD/PT), Centre Co-ordinator

Graduate Student Research Assistants at Western University, ON (unless otherwise noted)

Sydney Bota  M.A. candidate
Evan Charles  Ph.D. candidate
Jessica Delorey  Ph.D. candidate
Tsz-Wing Zita Lau  Ph.D. candidate (Awarded December 2022)
Petra Owusu  Ph.D. candidate

Research Centre Associates at Post-Secondary Institutions across Canada

Angèle AuCoin  Associate Professor, University of Moncton, NB
M. Lynn Aylward  Professor, Acadia University, NS
Sheila Bennett  Professor, Brock University, ON
Jenn de Lugt  Associate Professor, University of Regina, SK
Tara Flanagan  Associate Professor, McGill University, QC
John Freer  Professor, St. Clair College, ON
Tiffany Gallagher  Professor, Brock University, ON
Nancy Hutchinson  Professor Emerita, Queen’s University, ON
Linda Ismailos  Professor, Niagara College, ON
Jennifer Katz  Associate Professor, University of British Columbia, BC
Mireille LeBlanc  Professor, University of Moncton, NB
Tim Loreman  President and Vice-chancellor, Concordia University of Edmonton, AB
Jeffrey MacCormack  Assistant Professor, University of Lethbridge, AB
Kimberly Maich  Professor, Memorial University, NL
Ian Matheson  Assistant Professor, Queen’s University, ON
Donna McGhie-Richmond  Associate Professor, University of Victoria, BC
Jamie Metsala  Professor, Mount St. Vincent University, NS
Gillian Parekh  Assistant Professor, York University, ON
Sharon Penney  Associate Professor, Memorial University of Newfoundland, NL
Nadia Rousseau  Professor, University of Québec at Trois Rivières
Steve Sider  Associate Professor, Wilfrid Laurier University, ON
Linda Siegel  Professor, University of British Columbia, BC
Monique Somma  Associate Professor, Brock University, ON
Scott Thompson  Professor, University of Regina, SK
Robert Thomson  Educational Consultant
Carolyn Thorne  Assistant Professor, University of Prince Edward Island
Vianne Timmons  President and Vice-Chancellor, Memorial University, NL
Jessica Whitley  
Professor, University of Ottawa, ON

Gabrielle Young  
Associate Professor, Memorial University of Newfoundland, NL
Appendix B
Activities, Products, and Impacts of Collaborations

Selected Journal Articles


Specht, J., Fairbrother, M., Gallagher, T.L., Ismailos, L., Villella, M., & MacCormack, J. (submitted). Learning from what my mentor teachers were doing in the classroom to include diverse learners: Experiences that contribute to inclusive instruction in pre-service teachers. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education.*


Books and Book Chapters


Villella, M. (2022). Commentary on Chapter 4, Case 2: “Albert”. In S. Sider & K. Maich (Eds.), *Leadership for inclusive schools: Real cases from real leaders* (pp. 41-49). Rowman and Littlefield.


**Reports**


**Theses**

Selected Presentations


