

Riding the Crest of the Wave: Inclusive Education in New Zealand

Authors : Barbara A. Perry

Abstract : In 1996, the New Zealand government and the Ministry of Education announced that they were setting up a "world class system of inclusive education". As a parent of a son with high and complex needs, a teacher, school Principal and Disability studies Lecturer, this author will track the changes in the journey towards inclusive education over the last 20 years. Strategies for partnering with families to ensure educational success along with insights from one of those on the crest of the wave will be presented. Using a narrative methodology the author will illuminate how far New Zealand has come towards this world class system of inclusion promised and share from personal experience some of the highlights and risks in the system. This author has challenged the old structures and been part of the setting up of new structures particularly for providing parent voice and insight; this paper provides a unique view from an insider's voice as well as a professional in the system.

Keywords : disability studies, inclusive education, special education, working with families with children with disability

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