

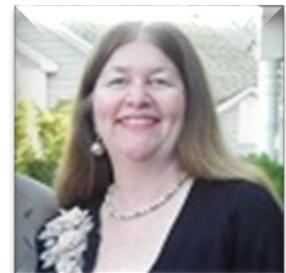
# Inclusive Education Summit 2014 Final Report



The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Inclusive Education Summit sponsored by the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities was held on Thursday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 in Boise, Idaho. Forty-one people braved the cold, wind, and snow to attend the entire event. Representatives attended from each higher education institution in Idaho, as well as the following school districts: Weiser, Boise, West Ada, Vallivue, and Caldwell. Parents with children with disabilities from Moscow and Boise were also in attendance as were representatives from the State Department of Education, Idaho Parents Unlimited, the Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities, and adults with disabilities from Boise.

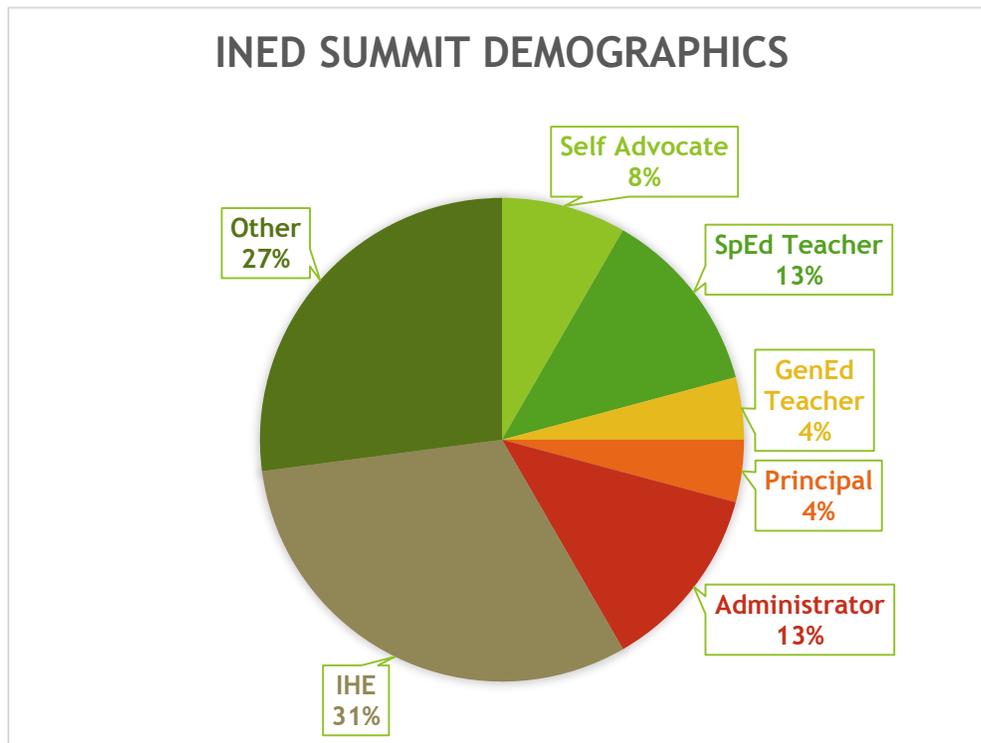
## Agenda Thursday, November 20, 2014

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|-----------------|--|
| 9:00am-10:00am  | Welcome & Introductions  |
| 10:00am-12:00pm | Dr. Debi Gartland: EESE Program Presentation, Towson University, Maryland<br><i>"How one University achieved the merged education degree and its impact on students"</i>           |
| 1:00pm - 1:45pm | SpEd Services in Schools Today: A panel presentation by Self-Advocates--Ian Bott, Crystal Kepner-Roberts, Kristen Beaver and Tom Ball  |
| 1:45pm-3:30pm   | Barriers and Strategies for Introducing the Merged Ed Degree in Idaho: Small groups discuss questions and strategize whether a merged education degree would be effective in Idaho |
| 3:30pm-4:00pm   | Video: <i>SWIFT Knowledge Development Site--Dr. William W. Henderson Inclusion Elementary School, MA</i> ; Closing, ICDD ED  |



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48 people participated in all or part of the Summit with the following demographics:

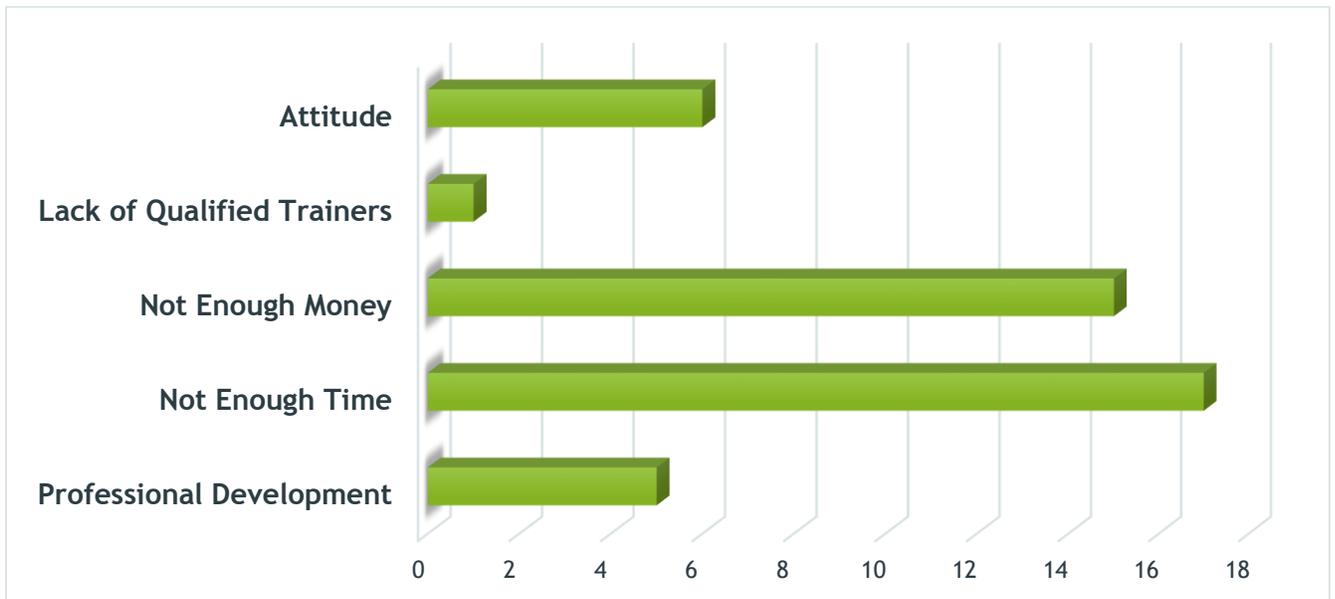


In a survey distributed prior to the Summit, Seventy-five percent of Summit attendees responded they have taught in a K-12<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. Thirty percent of those have been educators in Idaho for two years or more. Fifty percent of the professionals attending the Summit received one or more of their degrees from an Idaho institution. Forty percent of Summit attendees report that they took three or less classes/credits in exceptionalities during their pre-service teaching experience.



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Summit attendees identified the following areas as reasons why classroom teachers do not receive more training on educating alternative learners:



During the panel discussion portion of the Summit, four adults with disabilities were asked a series of questions by a moderator and each responded based on their



individual school experiences. Participants in the Summit reported a high level of satisfaction from the opportunity to learn from adults with disabilities about their education experiences. Teachers were extremely interested in Ian Bott's (pictured holding the mic) life experience that involved specific support he received to

work through aggressive and challenging behaviors. In one especially insightful moment, Tom Ball (pictured on the far right), left the stage and asked a Summit participant to participate in a role play about how to help students feel comfortable with the accommodations they may need in order to have a successful school experience. All of the presenters felt that school is difficult for most every student, but including each student as a full and equal part of planning their education is key to the student taking charge of his/her education. The Council values and strives to consistently learn from people with disabilities as we move forward with any initiative. A highlight at the Summit for Council staff was observing Summit participants acknowledge this value as well. The Council will continue to seek guidance from students and adults with disabilities as we move forward with this objective.

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Sixteen Summit attendees expressed the desire to continue the work towards more inclusive schools:

- Nine expressed interest in becoming a member of the Inclusive Education Task force (sponsored by ICDD)
- Eight would like to become a member of a consortium of Higher Ed professionals who would work on the merged degree
- Two believe they can talk to Legislators about the importance of inclusive practices
- Five feel confident they can talk to professionals in their area about the merged degree and also the importance of teaching inclusive education practices.



As a result of the work of InEd Task Force, at least one Idaho higher education institution (BYU Idaho) has plans to increase the number of course credits in exceptionalities that will be offered to general education pre-service teachers beginning in the next school year. Additionally, outreach to colleges and universities within Idaho continues. Council staff is making contact with Boise State University, which houses the only blended EEd/SpEd degree option in Idaho. The intention is to gather data and information based on the experiences of Idaho students who have graduated from or are currently enrolled in this program in order to research the benefits and drawbacks of this degree. Assistant Professor, Lisa Beymer and Dr. Jennifer Snow (Associate Dean of College of Ed at Boise State) recently conducted a study of the field experience component of the dual degree/endorsement program at Boise State. The InEd Task Force strives to partner with Boise State in their efforts to expand their program and also bring them into the discussion about ways in which all students can be meaningfully included within the general education classroom.



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Small group discussions at the Summit generated the list below as potential next steps for the merged EEd/SpEd degree concept:

## NEXT STEPS:

- The creation of an IHE Coalition/Consortium for alignment among programs that includes government officials and Deans from IHE's
- Funding and support for further training for current teachers
- Develop ways for faculty at IHE's to 'buy-in' to the merged degree concept (i.e. collaboration between departments)
- Develop education materials for community members regarding the benefits of a merged program (including School Boards). Consider including information about the growing demand for teachers in Idaho as a talking point.
- Develop education materials for district leaders about the benefits of inclusive practices (i.e. increased job satisfaction, higher test scores, higher retention rates, more prepared teachers)
- Work with IHE's on identifying ways in which collaboration between IHE's, IHE's and schools could occur.
- Explore whether IHE's could meet the needs of this degree in creative ways (i.e. asking seasoned school personnel to teach courses)
- Consider whether internship could be paid; loans forgiven or other incentives that would draw students into the merged pre-service degree program
- Work with SDE as a possible 'mentor' role and ~~also work with them~~ on certification process
- Explore incentives for IHE's to buy-in? Course release? Stipends?
- Collaborate with auxiliary services (OT, PT, SLP) and include those schools in the discussion about the inclusive school environment

There are two new Inclusive Education Task Force members: Melissa Blood from Caldwell School District and Barb Dickens also from Caldwell. There will be a follow-up phone call with Dr. Debi Gartland January 6, 2015 at 10am (MST) and a Task Force Meeting scheduled for February 19, 2015 beginning at 8:30am in Boise. Any and all Summit attendees are welcome to attend either meeting.

Many thanks goes out to everyone who attended the 1st Annual Inclusive Education Summit. The energy around this initiative continues to grow and we are looking forward to more collaboration between all Summit attendees in the near future.

