Kathleen M. Whitbread, Ph.D.

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PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Educator, literacy specialist, researcher, consultant, and independent evaluator with extensive experience in reading instruction for students with intellectual disabilities. Former university faculty member with a sustained record of grant leadership, publications, and invited presentations focused on evidence-based practices in literacy and access to general education for students with disabilities.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2018–present **Research and Training Coordinator, Down Syndrome Association of CT (DS ACT), Meriden, CT.**
Coordinate research and teacher training for the DS ACT Literacy and Education Center, an after-school tutoring center providing literacy instruction for students with Down syndrome. Oversee curriculum development and coordinate instruction with local school districts and families.

2000–present **Independent Educational Consultant, Whitbread Educational Consulting, LLC.**
Educational consultant for school districts, families, and organizations, including teacher training, coaching, and independent educational evaluations. Specialize in literacy instruction for students with intellectual disabilities and access to the general education curriculum for students with complex disabilities.

2008–2012 **Program Director, University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT.**
Coordinated the special education team within the Education Department. Collaborated across departments on program development, service, and scholarship; wrote grants; directed research projects; and served as core faculty in the autism spectrum disorder program.

2000–2007 **Associate Director, University of Connecticut Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Farmington, CT.**
Directed grant-funded projects, supervised research staff, advised students, and taught coursework. Collaborated with state agencies, including the Connecticut State Departments of Education, Developmental Services, and Children and Families to conduct research and disseminate findings.

1993–2000 **Director, School Age Division, SARAH Tuxis Services, Guilford, CT.**
Provided training and technical assistance to schools, families and agencies on educational supports for children with intellectual disabilities. Wrote grants, coordinated training, supervised staff, and managed department budgets.

1995–1999 **Researcher/Writer, Pennycorner Press, Gilman, CT.**
Published four volumes of The Inclusion Notebook, an award-winning newsletter of educational research and practice. Traveled to 35 states plus Russia and Italy to research the education of children with disabilities in general education classes. Completed a multi-year study of middle school inclusive education.

1989–1998 **Educational Consultant, Private Contractor**
Designed educational programs for children with intellectual disabilities in general education classrooms. Evaluated young children with developmental disabilities in Russia as part of an interdisciplinary team and provided training and technical assistance to parent-teacher groups from the Netherlands to improve educational practices for children with disabilities.

1989–1993 **Special Education Teacher/Case Manager, Department of Developmental Services, Bridgeport, CT.**
Provided training and technical assistance to families and educators to facilitate the inclusion of children with intellectual disabilities in general education settings. Participated in the IEP planning process, collected and analyzed data, and provided special education instruction in school and home settings.

1987–1989 **Special Education Teacher, The Curtis School, Meriden, CT.**
Provided instruction and support services to public school students with social/emotional disabilities living in a residential treatment facility. Facilitated transition plans for students moving from the on-site school to local public schools. Designed and monitored positive behavior support plans.

1981–1987 **Special Education Teacher/Case Manager, SARAH, Inc., Guilford, CT.**
Taught vocational skills to young adults with intellectual disabilities in a community-based job training program. Completed assessments, provided direct instruction, and designed positive behavior support plans.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2020–2024 Adjunct Professor of Special Education, Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT.

2007–2018 Associate Professor of Education, University of Saint Joseph School of Education, West Hartford, CT.

2003–2007 Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, Farmington, CT.

2000–2003 Research Professor, University of Connecticut School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics, Farmington, CT.

EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

Ph.D. Educational Leadership, 1999, Union Institute and University, Cincinnati, OH.

M.S. Special Education, 1996, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT.

B.S. Special Education and Psychology, 1980, Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT.

Licensure and Certification

2012	Associate level certification, Academy of Orton Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, Board of Regents of the State University of New York.
2010	Connecticut Foundations of Reading exam.
1980	Connecticut Comprehensive Special Education License, Pre-K-12 (active).

SELECTED GRANTS AND RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

2020-2022	**Co-Principal Investigator, Project MARC: Effects of a Multi-Component Reading Intervention on the Reading Comprehension of Students with Intellectual Disabilities.** Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Grant; partnership between Central Connecticut State University and Down Syndrome Association of Connecticut.
2017–2020	**Project Director, Open Books Open Doors**. Funded by the Global Down Syndrome Foundation and Down Syndrome Association of Connecticut; established an after-school tutoring program to advance literacy skills of Connecticut students with Down syndrome and other intellectual disabilities.
2012–2015	**Project Director, Improving Literacy Outcomes for Children with Down Syndrome**. Funded by Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress and a University of Saint Joseph faculty research grant; disseminated research-based information on effective reading instruction through articles, an online blog, and free literacy screenings.
2011–2013	**Co-Investigator, Assessing Bullying and School Climate in an Urban Elementary School.** Funded by the University of Saint Joseph; surveyed multiple stakeholders to develop interventions to reduce bullying and improve school climate in an urban elementary school.
2010–2012	**Project Director, Youth with Developmental Disabilities in Transition**. Funded by the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities; provided training to families and professionals to facilitate person-centered transition plans for students with developmental disabilities.
2009–2010	**Project Director, Fluency Instruction for Students with Down Syndrome: An Exploratory Study.** Funded by the Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress and the University of Saint Joseph.
2005–2007	**Project Director, Student Technical Assistance Response (STAR) Teams.** Funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education; provided training and technical assistance to increase access to general education for students with intellectual disabilities.
2005–2007	**Project Director, Instructional Coaches Academy**. Funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education; provided training to teachers and administrators on inclusive education.

2006-2007	**Project Director, Forty-Day Coaches Principal Training Project**. Funded by Stamford Public Schools; provided training and technical assistance to principals and assistant principals in twelve urban elementary schools.
2004–2007	**Project Director, Families as Partners: School-Family Collaboration in the Education of Students with Disabilities.** State Improvement Grant funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education.
2005–2007	**Principal Investigator, The Relationship between the Juvenile Justice System and Local Education Agencies: A Survey of Juvenile Probation Officers**. Funded by the University of Connecticut.
2003	**Principal Investigator, Teaching Reading to Children with Intellectual Disabilities: A Study of Programs and Practices in Connecticut Schools.** Funded by the University of Connecticut.
2002–2003	**Project Director, Individual Support Planning: Case Manager Training Curriculum**. Funded by the Connecticut State Department of Developmental Services.
2001–2005	**Project Director, Understanding Special Education; Parent/Professional Training**. Funded by the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities.
2001–2003	**Principal Investigator, Special Services in Bristol Public Schools**. Funded by Bristol Public Schools; conducted a study of parent satisfaction with special education services.
2000–2003	**Project Coordinator, Research and Training Center in Service Coordination**. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs; coordinated a national, multi-site research and training center.
1998–2000	**Principal Investigator, Inclusive Education in Connecticut: A Study of Teacher Attitude Toward Educating Children with Developmental Disabilities in Regular Education Settings.** Funded by the Connecticut Council on Developmental Disabilities.

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Refereed Publications:

Whitbread, K. M., Knapp, S. L., & Bengtson, M. (2021). Teaching foundational reading skills to students with intellectual disabilities. TEACHING Exceptional Children.

Nocera, E. J., Whitbread, K. M., & Nocera, G. P. (2014). Impact of school-wide positive behavior supports on student behavior in the middle grades. RMLE Online: Research in Middle Level Education, 37(8), 1–14.

Teffs, E., & Whitbread, K. (2009). Level of preparation of general education teachers to include students with autism spectrum disorders. Current Issues in Education, 11(10).

Nicoll-Senft, J., & Whitbread, K. (2007). The STAR protocol process: Facilitating collaboration between families and school district personnel. The Electronic Journal of Inclusive Education, 2(2).

Whitbread, K., Bruder, M., Fleming, G., & Park, H. (2007). Collaboration in special education: Parent professional training. TEACHING Exceptional Children, 39(4), 6–14.

Whitbread, K., Nicoll-Senft, J., & Pace, L. (2006). Literacy instruction and students with intellectual disabilities in Connecticut. Journal of the Connecticut Association of Reading Research 3, 15-22.

Bruder, M., Harbin, G., Whitbread, K., Conn-Powers, M., Roberts, R., Dunst, C., Van Buren, M., Mazzarella, C., & Gabbard, G. (2005). Establishing outcomes for service coordination: a step toward evidence-based practice. Topics in Early Childhood Education, 25(3), 177–188.

Harbin, G., Bruder, M., Adams, C., Mazzarella, C., Whitbread, K., Gabbard, G., & Staff, I. (2004). Early intervention service coordination policies: National policy and infrastructure. Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 24(2), 89–97.

Whitbread, K. (2004). The physician's role in educational planning for students with developmental disabilities. Connecticut Medicine, 68(7), 515–519.

Whitbread, K. (1999). Inclusion: Making it work. Middle Ground: The Magazine of Middle Level Education, 2(4), 10–16.

Non-Refereed Publications:

Knapp, S., & Whitbread, K. (2012). Creating fluent readers. Connecticut Down Syndrome Quarterly, 23(1), 8–9.

Whitbread, K., Feinstein, A., & Kechijian, L. (2007). The relationship between the juvenile justice system and public schools in serving children with disabilities. Data Report. Farmington: UCONN Center on Developmental Disabilities.

Treimanis, A., & Whitbread, K. (2006). IEP and Inclusion Tips for Parents and Teachers. WI: Attainment Company.

Whitbread, K. (2000). Policy effects on teachers' attitudes about inclusion: A multi-school system study. Gilman, CT: Pennycorner Press.

Selected Presentations:

Whitbread, K. (2025, July). Teaching reading to students with intellectual disabilities. PaTTAN Conference: Bridging Knowledge to Know-How: Empowering Educators and Partners, University Park, PA.

Whitbread, K., & Treimanis, A. (2024, March). Teaching reading to students with intellectual disabilities. COPAA Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.

Whitbread, K. (2023, November). Teaching reading to students with intellectual disabilities. PaTTAN Helix Conference: High Expectations for Students with Low Incidence Disabilities, Lancaster, PA.

Whitbread, K., & Bengtson, M. (2020, January). Reading instruction for students with Down syndrome: Tools for the journey. Club 21 Learning and Resource Center, Pasadena, CA

Whitbread, K. (2019, March). Literacy instruction for students with intellectual disabilities. Council of Parent Advocates and Attorneys Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.

Whitbread, K., & Treimanis, A. (2017, March). Improved literacy outcomes for children with intellectual disabilities. COPAA Annual Conference, Dallas, TX.

Whitbread, K. (2016, March). Teaching reading to children with Down syndrome. Teacher Training, Down Syndrome Association of Greater Charlotte, NC.

Whitbread, K. (2014, July). Teaching reading to children with Down syndrome. Keynote address. National Down Syndrome Congress Annual Convention, Indianapolis, IN.

Whitbread, K. (2013, November). The literate lives of children with Down syndrome. Invited presentation. Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress Regional Educators Forum, Boston, MA.

Whitbread, K. (2013, March). Open Books Open Doors: Improving literacy outcomes for children with Down syndrome. Featured presentation at the Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress Annual Conference, Boston, MA.

Whitbread, K., & Pollard, Mallury P. (2013, March). Envisioning possibility: The literate lives of children with Down syndrome. Presentation at the University of Saint Joseph Research Symposium, West Hartford, CT.

Whitbread, K. (2013, February). Great Expectations. Keynote presentation at the Down Syndrome Foundation of Southeastern New Mexico Educator Conference, Roswell, NM.

Whitbread, K. (2012, August). Legal issues in the education of children with autism spectrum disorders. Keynote presentation, Annual Autism Institute, West Hartford, CT.

Whitbread, K. (2012, July). Teaching Reading to Children with Significant Disabilities [Radio Interview]. The Inclusive Class at Blog Talk Radio.

Barrett, K., & Whitbread, K. (2012, April). Collaboration and research: Assessing and fostering healthy school climate in an urban charter school. Presentation at the annual Faculty Symposium Day, University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT.

Whitbread, K. (2011, December). Reading instruction for students with significant disabilities. Invited lecture, Pace University, New York City, NY.

Whitbread, K. (2011, January). Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders. Seminar for parents and professionals of children with autism spectrum disorders. Sponsored by African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities (AFCAMP), Hartford, CT.

Treimanis, A., & Whitbread, K. (2009, November). Reading instruction for students with significant disabilities: Let's raise the bar. Poster Presentation at the Annual Conference and Convention of TASH, Pittsburgh, PA

Whitbread, K., & Treimanis, A. (2009, January). Inclusive education: From law to implementation. Opening seminar in series on educating children with Down syndrome. Sponsored by the Dallas Down Syndrome Guild, Dallas, TX.

Whitbread, K. (2008, April). Friendship development in elementary school-aged children with disabilities. Annual Convention of the Council for Exceptional Children, Boston, MA.

Whitbread, K., & Treimanis, A. (2008, March). Reading for students with significant disabilities: Let's raise the bar. Annual conference of the Council on Parent Advocates and Attorneys, Orange County, CA.

Whitbread, K., & Treimanis, A. (2007, December). Reading instruction for students with significant disabilities: Let's raise the bar. Annual Convention of TASH, Seattle, WA.

Whitbread, K., & Fleming, G. (2007, November). Together we're better: Forging new partnerships to increase access to the general education curriculum. Presentation at the Annual Conference of Association of University Centers on Disability, Washington, DC.

Whitbread, K., & Nicoll-Senft, J. (2006, November). Using the collaborative consultation process to resolve disputes in special education. Presentation at the TASH Annual Conference, Baltimore, MD.

Whitbread, K. (2006, October). Forging new partnerships to increase access to general education for students with disabilities. Poster presentation, annual conference of the Association for University Centers on Disabilities, Washington, DC.

Whitbread, K., & Nicoll-Senft, J. (2006, May). Reducing conflict through collaborative consultation. Presentation at the annual conference on dispute resolution in education, Quinnipiac University School of Law, Hamden, CT.

Whitbread, K. and Treimanis, A. (2006, May). One-hundred-twenty-seven tips on building an inclusive education program. Presentation and book signing at the Mamapalooza Festival, Valhalla, NY.

Whitbread, K. (2006, April). Building an inclusive education program: Tips for families and advocates. Presentation at COPAA (Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates) Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ.

Whitbread, K., & Treimanis, A. (2006, March). Advocating for your child with a disability: What parents need to know. Moms Gone Mad [Television broadcast]. Danbury, CT: Comcast Cable Network.

Whitbread, K. (2005, November). Understanding special education: Parent professional training. Sponsored by African Caribbean American Parents of Children with Disabilities, Hartford, CT.

Whitbread, K. (2005, April). High school inclusion: From law to implementation. COPAA (Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates) Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA.

TEACHING

- Educational Assessment
- Research in Special Education
- Children with Low Incidence Disabilities
- Positive Behavior Intervention and Support
- Laws and Special Education
- Universal Design for Learning
- Collaborative Consultation for School Personnel

SERVICE

University Service

2014–2018	Promotion and Tenure Committee
2008–2018	Undergraduate Award Committee, Chair
2015–2017	Faculty Grievance Committee
2011–2014	Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

2011–2012	Grants and Contracts Planning Committee, Co-Chair
2011–2012	Institutional Review Board
2009–2011	Special Education Accreditation Coordinator
2008–2011	Special Education Program Director
2008–2011	Secretary/Treasurer, Faculty of the Whole
2010-2011	Autism Institute Executive Committee

Community Service

2007–2014	Education Advisor, Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress
2010–2012	CEU Coordinator, Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress
2011–2012	Reading Tutor, Hartford Public Schools
2011–2012	Newsletter Editor, Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress Quarterly

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND AWARDS

2022–2024	Reviewer, TEACHING Exceptional Children
2009–present	Member, Kappa Delta Pi, International Honor Society in Education
2004–present	Lifetime Member, TASH
2001–present	Member, Council for Exceptional Children
2011–2012	Reviewer, Current Issues in Education
2011	Outstanding Professional Service Award, Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress
2010	Panelist, Praxis Series Standard Setting Study, Education Testing Service
2003–2007	Connecticut Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)
2003	Educator of the Year Award, Connecticut Coalition for Inclusive Education
2002–2003	Coordinator, Statewide Network on Inclusive Education
1999	Media Award, The Inclusion Notebook, CT Coalition for Inclusive Education
1997–1999	Advisory Board, Yale New Haven Children's Hospital Sibling Committee
1996–1999	Delegate, Russian-American Child Study Team, The Institute for World Affairs, Washington, DC. Traveled to Russia as part of a transdisciplinary evaluation team to assess children with developmental disabilities