

## Promoting Inclusion, Learning and Meaningful Relationships Using Peer Support Strategies

<b>Facilitator(s):</b>	Erik Carter
<b>Date:</b>	May 26, 2014
<b>Time:</b>	9:00 am – 3:30 pm
<b>Cost:</b>	\$100.00  \$75.00 (includes lunch only) (includes lunch and a copy of "Peer Buddy Programs for Successful Secondary School Inclusion")
<b>Location:</b>	Edmonton (ATA Barnett House) 11010 - 142 Street NW
<b>Session Code:</b>	14-IE-190



### Target Audience

School Leaders, Counselors, Learning Coaches, CTS teachers, Junior and High School (Secondary) Teachers and School Staff

- who are committed to expanding social and communication interactions between students with cognitive disabilities and their peers
- who work in a high school (Grades 7-12) where at least one student has a cognitive disability

### About this Learning Opportunity

*This learning opportunity includes similar outcomes when Dr. Carter was here in May last year. For this year's learning opportunity, Dr. Carter will share updates, new examples, activities and understandings around peer support.*

High schools can provide rich social and communication experiences. Ensuring that students with cognitive disabilities, autism and other developmental disabilities benefit from these opportunities is an important challenge.

This interactive workshop will address practical and promising approaches for developing supports and fostering relationships among students with and without significant disabilities both in the classroom and throughout the broader life of their schools.

Dr. Carter's projects have focused on:

- Implementing peer support strategies as an evidence-based approach for promoting curricular access and social interaction within inclusive classrooms and extracurricular activities, and
- Fostering natural supports as an avenue for promoting inclusion in service-learning, after-school, and community activities.

### About the Facilitator(s)

**Erik Carter** is an Associate Professor in the Department Special Education at Vanderbilt University. His research and teaching focuses on evidence-based strategies for supporting access to the general curriculum and promoting valued roles in school, work, and community settings for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He has published widely in the areas of educational and transition services for children and youth with significant disabilities. His most recent books are *Peer Support Strategies: Improving All Students' Social Lives and Learning* (Brookes Publishing), *Peer Buddy Programs for Successful Secondary School Inclusion* (Brookes Publishing), and *The New Transition Handbook: Strategies High School Teachers Use That Work!* (Brookes Publishing).

Dr. Carter joined colleagues at a Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) briefing on Capitol Hill on June 12, 2012 to showcase how funding for education research has improved academic, behavioral, and lifelong outcomes for children with and without disabilities.

Carter spoke at the briefing, "Driving Innovation, Improving Outcomes: Special Education Research Raises Expectations for Individuals with Disabilities," focusing his remarks on the importance and impact of evidence-based research for transition services and supports.

This workshop will highlight strategies learned through these projects, as well as ideas for launching extending efforts within inclusive schools.

Dr. Erik Carter recaps this briefing in this video:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-VfiuCvTLk&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k-VfiuCvTLk&feature=player_embedded)

**Learner Outcomes:** By attending this session, you will learn:

1. How peer support strategies are mutually beneficial, boosting the academic engagement, social skills, and peer relationships of students with disabilities and the peers who provide support.
2. How to recruit and match the students most likely to form mutually beneficial relationships.
3. How to develop effective strategies for promoting access to classroom learning and other school activities.
4. How to orient peers to their roles and provide the guidance peers need to approach their support roles with confidence and enthusiasm.
5. How to evaluate the social and academic impact of peer support arrangements in their schools.
6. How to access Alberta learning resources and course opportunities to support peer mentoring programs.

*This learning opportunity is being provided through funding from Alberta Education.*