“Going to School—Ir a la Escuela”  
Movie Reflection

In the documentary “Going to School—Ir a la Escuela,” the unlawful segregation of students with disabilities is examined in the Los Angeles school district in California. The movie discusses the importance of inclusion of students with exceptionalities as well as the implications of following all the laws and guidelines outlined in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). During the introduction to the film, I was surprised by the statistic that at least a million children were not allowed to attend public school because of their disabilities. That is a shocking and appalling number of students who were excluded from school and I am glad that students are finally getting the justice and the education that they deserve.

While some viewers may have thought that the depiction of the Los Angeles school district was unfairly presented and was too harsh, I felt that the depiction was accurate and that since the school system was not following the laws, it was okay to expose their wrong-doings. I was appalled by the negligence of the school system. I am a total advocate for inclusion of students with disabilities and I think that it is imperative that students are given a proper education in the least restrictive environment. Obviously, this was not what the Los Angeles school district was doing, and I am happy that someone had the courage to point it out and to help correct it.

I was pleasantly surprised by the parents in this film. They were being great advocates for their children and were playing a key role in their child’s education. So many times parents are disconnected from their children’s school, but especially with children with exceptionalities,
it is important that parents are active in their children’s education and are involved in the school as much as possible.

I think that this was a wonderful movie to have teaching candidates watch. It is key that teaching candidates are advocates for their students and that all teachers approach inclusion with an open mind. As future teachers we need to be motivated and encourage our students to do their best. We need to participate in creating IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) for our students and we need to abide by the guidelines stipulated in them. One parent in the movie stated: “The IEP is a promise to the parents and to the child.”

This movie was completely fascinating to me, yet it was horrifying at the same time. If such a large school corporation was able to break laws and exclude children, imagine what the smaller school corporations could get away with. I know that when I am a special needs educator, I will be a huge advocate for inclusion and I will make sure that all students are included in the least restrictive environment.