



Introduction

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The first edition of *Medical Problems in the Classroom: The Teacher's Role in Diagnosis and Management* was published in 1975. The book was intended for all teachers, both in regular and in special classes. It was also designed for teacher educators as they provided preservice and in-service education for the novice as well as the experienced teacher. In addition, it was developed for school administrators as they sought to better serve the students in their care. It was anticipated that the book would alert readers to the possible existence of various medical problems that may be discovered in the classroom, especially those conditions affecting learning and behavior and the real possibility that the educator might significantly participate in the diagnosis and/or management of the student.

The purpose of this book has not changed over the succeeding 40 years. What has changed are the significantly complex and new medical and social challenges that teachers encounter. Who would have predicted the escalating incidence and various forms of autism, adolescent suicide, bullying, childhood and adolescent obesity, or the seriousness of concussion in the elementary school or adolescent student? For these reasons, the fifth edition of the book has been retitled *Medical and Psychosocial Problems in the Classroom: The Teacher's Role in Diagnosis and Management*, which more accurately reflects what every teacher will encounter during the course of her or his career.

Each chapter in the current edition highlights the important role that the teacher might play in interacting with the health-care team



in identifying students with potential serious disorders or working with those professionals to enhance the affected pupil's learning in the classroom. For example, what role might the teacher and school administration play in working with an obese student and family to deal with the problem? What facts should the educator know about a pupil with epilepsy? Is it possible that the child's declining academic performance is due to the medication used to prevent seizures, or are there associated behavioral issues that are interfering with concentration and alertness? What role can the teacher and coach assume in the management of an athlete with significant memory and related symptoms following a concussion during football practice? What steps can the classroom teacher take in assisting the hard-of-hearing student or the child with diabetes mellitus? And what measures might the teacher and school administrators take to prevent school violence and bullying, which unfortunately have become national "epidemics" with frightening consequences?

I am most grateful to each of the authors, all of whom have contributed significantly to the book. Their sharing of experience and knowledge is unparalleled. I am confident that their input will provide the teacher with a valuable resource when encountering a student with one of the disorders covered in this edition.