

INCLUSION BASICS

For over 30 years, the philosophy and practice of inclusive schools has grown from minimal awareness to a recognized bedrock component of schools around the globe that demands dual standards of excellence and equity for all students. Yet there is still confusion and widely varying definitions of the "inclusion." The lack of a common understanding of this important practice actually impedes further progress for students, their families, and the educators who teach them.

Simply stated, inclusive education means that all students are full and accepted members of their school community, in which their educational setting is the same as their nondisabled peers, whenever appropriate.

While federal legislation regarding education for students with disabilities does not include the terms 'inclusion' or 'inclusive education', the Least Restrictive Environment requirement from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, provides the basis for our understanding, practice, and legal interpretations.

[READ MORE ABOUT LEGISLATION REQUIREMENTS.](#)

IMPORTANT BASICS

- Inclusive education decisions must be based solely on the needs of the student.
- Labels, available space, and administrative convenience are not relevant to decisions regarding a student's appropriate educational setting.
- Schools or districts cannot make top-down decisions either to eliminate services in a setting, such as the general education classroom or in a traditional resource or self-contained setting. This is inappropriate and illegal practice as individual student needs are ignored in favor of an organizational decision.
- An appropriate IEP that is collaboratively developed by educators, parents, and if possible, the student, provides the blueprint for supplementary aids and services needed to provide an appropriate placement.
- In our planning, we are expected to use our expertise and our commitment to student-based decisions to identify the specific services and supports that will result in success in the general education classroom whenever appropriate.

Every day, educators, parents and administrators are gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to increase the impact of inclusive education services and the in-school and post-school success of students with disabilities!

The Inclusive Schools Network is providing the following free tools and strategies related to inclusive basics for your use. Please let us know if they are helpful to you in your efforts to improve inclusive education for all!

RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES



[12 Characteristics of Inclusive Education](#)



1 of 4 [Interactive Glossary of Inclusion Terms](#)



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CELEBRATE INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Texas 2014 Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Conference

2014 TCASE Interactive: Universal Design & Transition

National School Safety Conference

The Inclusive Schools Network and Stetson & Associates, Inc. compiled this glossary of commonly used inclusion terms.



10 THINGS NOT TO SAY IN AN IEP MEETING.PDF



As described on January 18, 2013 to "[The Mary and Melissa Show](#)," a call-in advocacy radio show by parents for parents raising children with disabilities.



CHARACTERISTICS OF INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS.PDF



As described on January 18, 2013 to "[The Mary and Melissa Show](#)," a call-in advocacy radio show by parents for parents raising children with disabilities.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

See our FAQs about inclusion for brief responses to typical questions.



MYTHS OF INCLUSION

This document captures several of the typical myths, or misunderstandings, about the practice of inclusive education. See if you recognize any of these. Let us know any myths that we should add to our list!



ROADMAP TO QUALITY INCLUSION: A CHECKLIST FOR CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

This self-check instrument was designed for principals and assistant principals with a simple way to review current successes regarding inclusive education. It is also a format for identifying any practices that you believe should be part of your future efforts toward continued improvement of services to students in inclusive settings. Parents and practitioners will also find this helpful in reviewing the status of inclusive practices and serving as active partners in this effort.



INCLUSION BASICS WEB COURSE

This online course can be accessed at no cost to members of the Inclusive Schools Network. It offers much of the information provided above in our brief article on Inclusion Basics and adds information about Necessary Conditions for Success with Inclusive Education and other links and resources. Use this new resource to develop your own shared definition of inclusive schools!



ARTICLE: INCLUSION BASICS

Inclusion requires leadership for shared ownership, multi-level instruction, a schedule and staffing process driven by student needs with protected time for teacher collaboration. Learn more about Inclusion from this in-depth look at the basics of this practice.



THE INCLUSIVE CLASS PODCAST

The Inclusive Class Podcast is an independently produced program on Blog Talk Radio. It is hosted by Nicole Eredics, founder of the online resource, The Inclusive Class (www.theinclusiveclass.com) and Terri Mauro, About.com guide to Parenting Children with Special Needs. Nicole is an elementary educator who has spent over 15 years teaching in inclusive classroom settings. Terri Mauro is one of the most recognized experts on special education and special needs parenting on the internet. She is the author of *50 Ways to Support Your Child's Special Education* and *The Everything Parent's Guide to Sensory Integration Disorder*. Together, Nicole and Terri interview expert guests to explore the issues around the promise and practice of inclusive education. You can tune into Blog Talk Radio at www.blogtalkradio.com every Friday morning at 9 AM EST and listen to The Inclusive Class Podcast.



Q&A WITH DR. STETSON ON THE MARY & MELISSA SHOW



Enjoy the interview with Dr. Frances Stetson, President of Stetson and Associates, Inc. and The *Inclusive Schools Network (ISN)*, global resources of professionals, families, schools and organizations focused on inclusive education

around the world.

The interview includes a discussion about what it means to be inclusive and highlights the ISN's training program for schools, professionals and parents.

PROFESSIONAL READING

Scheurich, J. & Skrla, L.; Leadership for Equity and Excellence, (2003). Corwin Press.

LINKS

WHAT IS AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL?

The term "inclusive school" can mean different things to different individuals and organizations. However, schools that successfully educate all children do share certain common philosophies, practices and characteristics that are summarized in this document. [Click here to read "What is an Inclusive School?"](#)

IMPROVING EDUCATION: THE PROMISE OF INCLUSIVE SCHOOLING

This is an excellent resource for educators looking to improve and expand inclusive educational practices in their schools. This document was developed by the National Institute for Urban School Improvement, a project funded by the United States Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and it includes examples of inclusive educational environments, assessment and observation tools, and guidelines for supporting inclusive practices. Read more about improving education [HERE](#).

CHAMPIONS OF INCLUSION

This inspiring article written by Bill Henderson, Principal of the [Patrick O'Hearn Elementary School](#) in Boston, gives numerous examples of teachers, students, parents, principals, janitors, and many others who are champions of inclusion. They connect, communicate, challenge, and collaborate appropriately when working with students who have disabilities. They are extraordinary individuals who demonstrate on a regular basis how ordinary it can be for students with disabilities to participate successfully in a wide range of activities with their peers. Read the article [HERE](#).

IMPACT: FEATURE ISSUE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Institute on Community Integration (UCEDD) and Research and Training Center on Community Living published a newsletter entitled "Impact: Feature Issue on Early Childhood Education and Children with Disabilities". In this publication, the following issue is addressed: How can early childhood professionals and families provide quality, inclusive early childhood education for young children with and without disabilities. In its pages, parents reflect on their experiences with early childhood education and inclusion for children, researchers and practitioners discuss strategies for identifying and providing quality, inclusive programs, and staff from inclusive early childhood programs around the country discuss their approaches. This issue is available online at <http://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/221/221.pdf>.

Inclusion

<http://www.stetsonassociates.com>

http://www.cec.sped.org/law_res/doc

Early Childhood Inclusion

<http://depts.washington.edu/hscenter/>

Other On-line Resources:

<http://www.eschool.news@eschoolnews.com>

<http://www.rtinetwork.org/>

National Websites:

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)
- [United States Department of Education](#)
- [United States Department Office of Special Education Programs](#)
- [United States Department Office for Civil Rights](#)

- [United States Department of Education What Works Clearinghouse](#)
- [Office for Civil Rights Section 504](#)

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