

Developing a Sense of Belonging for Each and Every Student in our Schools

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Objectives

1. Understand Inclusion as a cultural shift, not as a special education initiative
2. Make connections between inclusion and equity in our schools
3. Strategies to support schools to commit to a culture of belonging for students with disabilities.

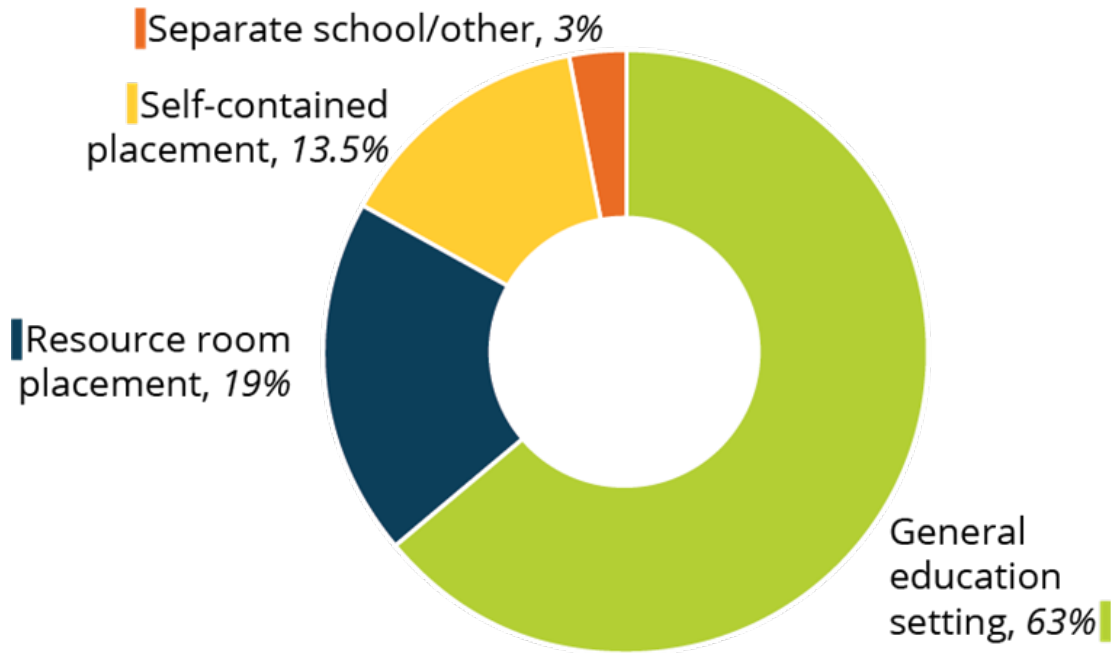
What does it mean to be included?

- Our personal and professional stories, experiences and relationships
- Research on how inclusive education benefits every student
- A commitment to justice and equity
- Community belonging and self-determination as a priority

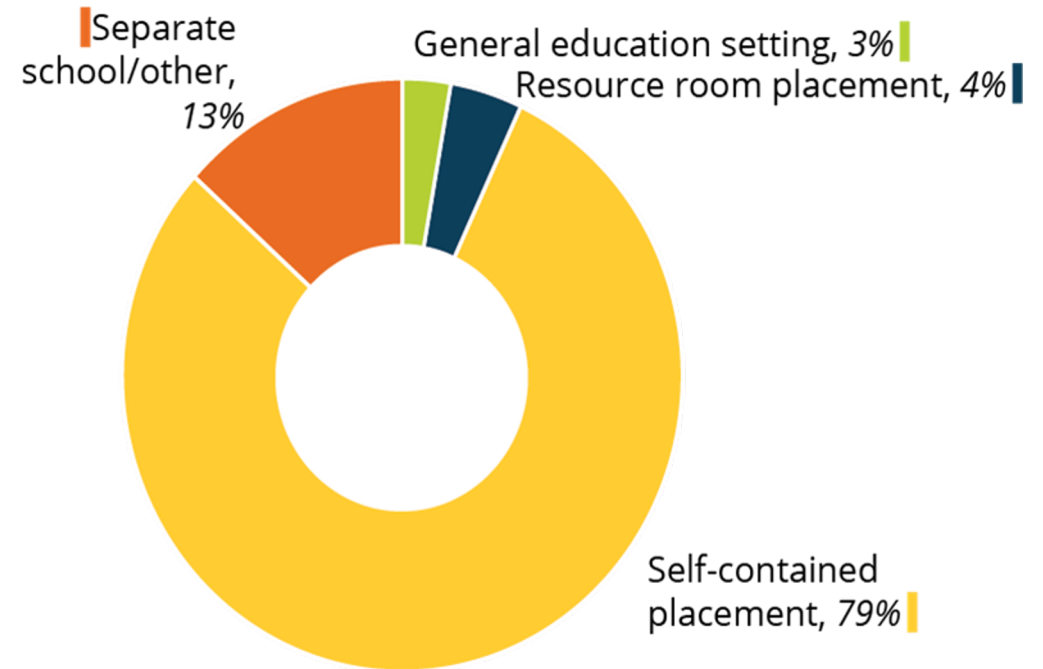
We all have a role to play in dismantling barriers and creating inclusive school cultures.

Why is this important?

All students with Disabilities



Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities



Why is this important?

- Over 80 Years of research that tells us inclusion works for everyone ([Carlberg & Kavale \(1980\)](#) 50 research studies from 1932 – 1970, [Gee, Gonzalez, & Cooper \(2020\)](#) **Outcomes in inclusive vs. separate placements**)
- Social justice implications...separate is not equal, all means all, presuming competence, students with ScD educated by certificated teachers.
- Inclusionary instruction rejects the problematic perspective that students with disabilities (SWD) need to 'fit in' or 'earn their way' into general education classes.
- The belief that general education instruction is not malleable and that students should be making adaptations to be included in the general education setting has contributed to the continuation of two parallel systems of education in which SWD are marginalized and devalued as a result of their environmental segregation.
- The social emotional needs of our students are greater than ever. Feelings of membership and community are essential to making social-emotional growth progress.

Inclusion as a Cultural Shift

Inclusive education requires a cultural shift in philosophy and practice.

- If we approach inclusive education as a special education initiative, we will never make the changes in teaching and learning to make every student a valued member of their school community.

Questions: Was this school created with me in mind? How do I see myself represented in my school? Do I have a sense of belonging?

- “Nothing about us without us” the ways we tell our stories can provide a transformational learning experiences
- Every school is engaged in effective inclusive practices and supports that can be shared with others and recognizing what a school does well is a great catalyst for change.
- All schools are on a path of continuous improvement.
- Strong sustainability is promoted through strong partnerships with key stakeholders.
- Innovative site-based leadership leads to increased effectiveness.

Inclusion Framework

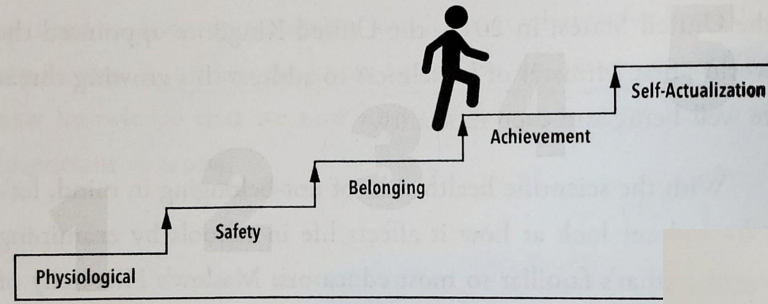
Guiding Questions:

Example, PBIS – Social Emotional Learning: How is social emotional learning framed and implemented within classrooms, the school-wide community, and with families? How does the school's social emotional approach support each student's ability to develop meaningful relationships and self-determination skills? How are we working to identify the ways the curriculum reinforces ableism and racism? How are we working to understand and honor the diverse ways students engage in relationships and self-determination?

Relationships	In place 3	Approaching 2	Emerging 1	Challenging 0	Evidence
Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social Emotional Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sense of Belonging	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Peer Relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
					Score: /12

Belonging and Social Emotional Learning

Figure 3.1 Stairs to Fulfilling Potential



Source: *Belonging through a Culture of Dignity* (2019)
by Floyd Cobb & John Krownapple, p. 44
Adapted from Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Figure 3.2 An Indignant Hierarchy of Needs

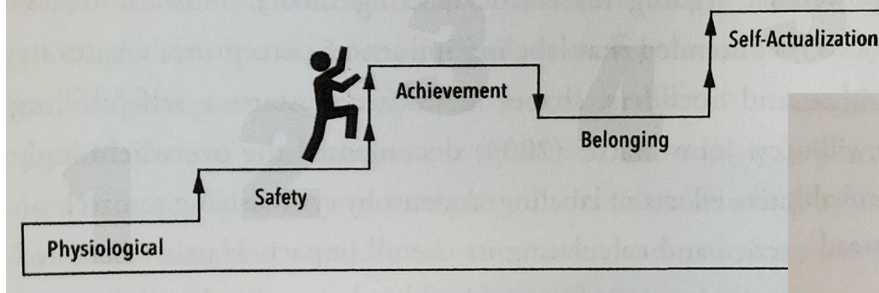
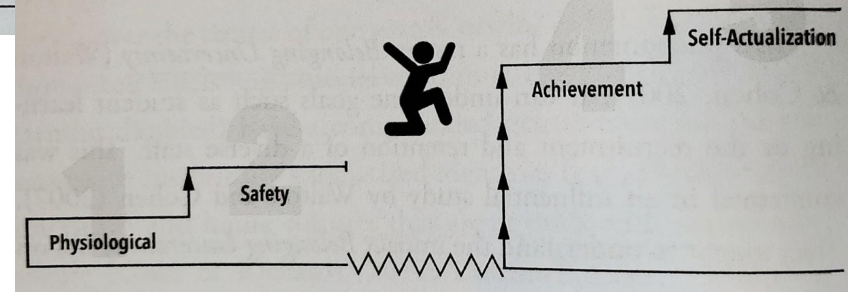


Figure 3.3 Belonging Gap



Immediate next steps towards an inclusive culture

- **All students are general education students**, some general education students receive special education services
- Create community and belonging *in and out of school*
- Connect to **equity work** happening in the district/schools
- **Normalize and celebrate disability** by talking about your child's disability with the class. Encourage your school to consider representation.
- Ensure there are a variety of ways your child's school **communicates and engages with families that is representative of all.**

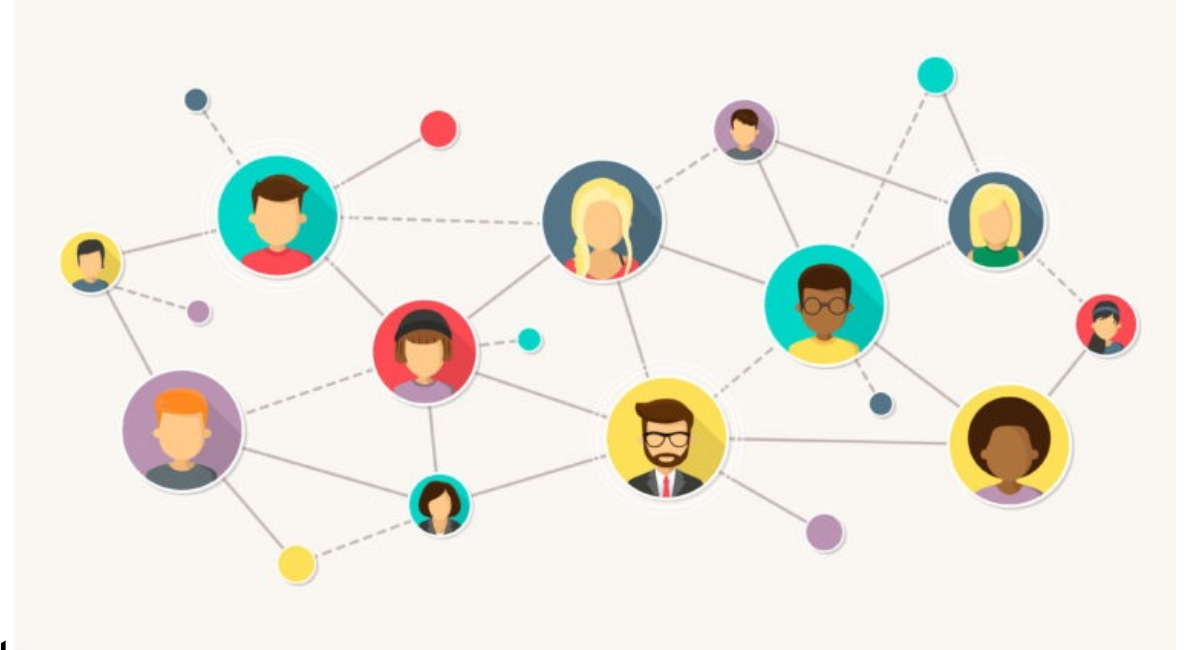


How to continue advocating for Inclusive Education


- Ask how we are **prioritizing** this - what is your school's improvement plan? How are we considering inclusion here?
- **Invite general ed colleagues and parents to join in these conversations.** Inclusion is not a special education initiative, but rather a moral imperative
- Explore and share resources about inclusionary practices that show how we can better implement these **across all settings, in and outside school**
- Share some of the resources with your child's school, recommend they visit a WA state IPP Demonstration Site - organize a group to **learn from an WA IPP Demo Site**
- Use the **framework and guiding questions** we reviewed earlier to engage in conversations about equity, instruction, and relationships with your child's school

Prioritize these Focus Areas

- Center racial equity and intersectionality with disability
- Engage families as decision makers and co-designers
- Include student voice and opportunities for self-advocacy across our general education system
- The inclusion of students with more significant disabilities in general education context and content
- Build Professional Networks.



Myths and Facts about Inclusive Education



Special education has its fair share of myths and facts about inclusion for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This resource was developed to challenge those myths and highlight the facts of why inclusionary practices work for each and every student.

- MYTH #1: COSTS OF INCLUSION
- MYTH #2: WHO CAN PROVIDE SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION?
- MYTH #3: READINESS FOR INCLUSION
- MYTH #4: CURRICULUM & STANDARDS
- MYTH #5: PARENTS & INCLUSION
- MYTH #6: DISABILITY & PLACEMENT
- MYTH #7: ASSESSMENT & ACADEMICS

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References/Resources

[Intentional Language Tip Sheet](#) - IPP Demo Sites Team

[Building a Culture of Belonging](#) - Dr. Carol Quirk

[Inclusion is a Right, not a privilege](#) - UW Demo Sites

[Proactively building Inclusive Special Education Services on Solid Ground](#) - Giangreco

OSPI's MTSS Series - First video, [Overview of MTSS](#)

[Comprehensive Inclusive Education Program and the Inclusive IEP](#)

[Inclusive Placements, Kathleen Gee](#)

[Inclusive Principles and Practices](#) - IPP Demo Sites Team

Questions

THANK YOU!

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