Inclusionary Practices Professional Development Project

The body of research consistently supports the positive link between access to core instruction in general education settings and improved outcomes for students with disabilities\(^1\). Inclusion is the belief and practice that all students have the right to meaningfully access academic and social opportunities. In Washington State, only 56 percent of students with disabilities are included in general education settings for 80-100% of the school day\(^2\). During the 2019 Washington Legislative session, Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1109 (ESHB 1109) passed, which provided $25,000,000 to OSPI over fiscal years 2020 ($10M) and 2021 ($15M) to implement professional development in support of inclusionary practices, with an emphasis on coaching and mentoring.

OSPI Special Education is excited to partner with our Inclusionary Practices Project Lead, Nasue Nishida, Executive Director for the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession (CSTP). CSTP is an independent nonprofit that competitively bid on the RFQQ and was selected to assist OSPI in planning and coordinating the Inclusionary Practices Professional Development Project. CSTP has worked at the state level for over 15 years and assisted other divisions of OSPI in moving initiatives and bodies of work forward. Educator and stakeholder engagement is an important tenet of CSTP’s mission and organizational work and a key component of the expertise they bring to the project. You can find out more about CSTP on their website or by contacting their Executive Director, Nasue Nishida, for additional information.

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Project values

- Students first, always
- Respect all perspectives and viewpoints
- Provide the most opportunities for input to those most impacted

\(^1\) National Center for Learning Disabilities, *Forward Together Helping Educators Unlock the Power of Students Who Learn Differently*, 2019

\(^2\) OSPI. November 2018 Child Count Data.
Statewide Placement and Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Data

According to the National Council on Disability 2018 report, *The Segregation of Students with Disabilities*, Washington State “falls in the most restrictive quartile” with respect to placement in general education settings. For the Inclusionary Practices Professional Development (PD) Project, statewide building-level placement data were analyzed, along with additional factors including student outcomes, student success indicators, designated building supports identified under the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF), and district feeder patterns.

**Data Analysis and Logic Rules:**

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) data are a measure of the percent of a school day a student with a disability spends in general education settings. While there are multiple measures included in LRE calculation, for the purposes of the Inclusive Practices PD Project, data analysis focused on:

- **LRE 1:** Placed in general education for 80-100% of the school day
- **LRE 2:** Placed in general education for 40-79% of the school day
- **LRE 3:** Placed in general education for 0-39% of the school day

The most current statewide placement data show that LRE 1 is 56%; LRE 2 is 29%; and LRE 3 is 13%. To assist with identification of potential pilot sites, the logic rule applied for the initial data analysis focused on the following data logic: **LRE 2 data > LRE 1 data OR LRE 1 < 50% AND LRE 2 > 40%**.

**Cohort Groups:**

Over 160 buildings have been identified as potential pilot sites, encompassing a student population of 97,000, of which over 12,000 are students with disabilities. The aggregate LRE for the entire group of schools is as follows: LRE 1 is 32.8%; LRE 2 is 53.9%; and LRE 3 is 12.8%. OSPI has also disaggregated three years of LRE data, by grade level and district trends.

The data analysis process identified several cohorts groups, based on 2018 building-level LRE data:

- **Cohort A:** 130 schools that met the data logic and their feeder schools
- **Cohort B:** 23 alternative schools that met the data logic
- **Cohort C:** 8 small n-size schools (n<20) that met the data logic
- **Cohort D (Draft):** 19 schools with higher rates of LRE 3 (potential partnerships with TIES Center)

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4 [https://www.k12.wa.us/washington-school-improvement-framework-wsif](https://www.k12.wa.us/washington-school-improvement-framework-wsif)
5 OSPI. November 2018 Child Count Data.
Research on Inclusive Practices

What is inclusion?

Inclusion is realized when all students, regardless of their designation to receive special education services, are provided with targeted interventions and accommodations; allowing them to learn in the general education classroom and engage the core curriculum⁶. Inclusion is the belief that all students have a right to meaningfully participate in the general education setting, both academically and socially⁷. Inclusive instruction rebukes the problematic perspective that students receiving special education services need to ‘fit in’ or ‘earn their way’ into general education classes⁸. 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 students receiving special education services are marginalized and devalued as a result of their environmental segregation⁹.

Legislative Foundations

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires students with disabilities be educated in the LRE. For nearly all students the LRE mandate means that students receiving special education services be educated in the general education classroom to the maximum extent possible. Regarding LRE, IDEA states, “The placement of children in special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular education environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily–34 C.F.R. § 300.114(a)(2)¹⁰.”

Inclusion Benefits Everyone

Extensive research on the efficacy of inclusion shows that inclusive instruction yields significant improvements in the academic performance of students receiving special education services—in all subjects—and improvements in social and emotional outcomes¹¹ as compared to teaching in separate settings¹². Students who received special education services, who spend 80-100% of their time in the

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regular classroom, develop better working habits, improved self-esteem, are more attentive, have improved social competencies, and have more diverse friendship networks\(^{13}\). Students who do not have an identified disability or an individual education program (IEP) also see improved academic outcomes as the high-leverage teaching techniques used in inclusive classrooms [e.g., multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), universal design for learning (UDL), specially designed instruction (SDI), and culturally responsive teaching (CRT)] help all students learn in ways that work best for their individual styles and needs\(^{14}\). These students also see improved social outcomes as they learn to see beyond people’s disabilities and develop a greater appreciation for diversity\(^{15}\).

**Coaching/Mentoring Supports**

The Washington State Standards for Mentoring “are designed to help both new and veteran mentors in various job settings to assess their current level of understanding and abilities, and to create actionable steps to improve”\(^{16}\). The Standards for Mentoring include Learning-Focused Relationships; Reflective Practices; Adult Learning; Equitable Practices; Curriculum; and Connection to Systems and Learning Communities. Lipton and Wellman (2009) considered coaching along a continuum of interactive supports or stances, including coaching, collaborating, consulting, and calibrating\(^{17}\).

Research on how schools can successfully implement inclusionary practices continually cite professional development for educators as an essential component\(^{18}\). Providing an inclusive environment for students means that educators collaborate frequently and have a strong grasp on how to differentiate general education lessons to accommodate all students learning styles and needs. This means that inclusionary professional development must focus on building collaboration skills and how to utilize high-leverage practices [i.e., MTSS, UDL/SDI, CRT]\(^{19}\). When professional development is done correctly and administrative leadership is dedicated to a culture of inclusion, educators are shown to have positive feelings about inclusion and feel confident in their ability to teach all students\(^{20}\).

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\(^{16}\) https://www.k12.wa.us/educator-support/beginning-educator-support-team/washington-state-standards-mentoring


\(^{18}\) Costley, K. C. (2013). Ongoing Professional Development: The Prerequisite for and Continuation of Successful Inclusion Meeting the Academic Needs of Special Students in Public Schools. Online Submission.


Resources on Inclusive Practices

➤ **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) Data**
  - State: [OSPI Special Education Annual Performance Report](#) (see Indicators 5 and 6)
  - District: [OSPI Special Education Data Performance Profile](#) (see Indicators 5 and 6)
  - Building: OSPI Building-Level LRE Data Report (provided to district special education directors, spring 2019)

➤ **Needs Assessments in Support of Inclusive Systems**
  - [WestEd District-Level LRE Self-Assessment](#)
  - [NIUSI Inclusive School Improvement Survey](#) (and [Toolkit instructions](#))
  - U of VT: [Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals](#)
  - [Department of Education, Massachusetts–Inclusive Practice Tool: Self-Assessment Form](#)
  - [ECTA Center–Local District Preschool Inclusion Self-Assessment](#)
  - Stetson and Associates, INC.–[Quality Standards for Inclusive Schools Self-Assessment Instrument](#)
  - [Great Lakes Equity Center–Creating Safe and Inclusive Schools: A Framework for Self-Assessment](#)

➤ **Inclusionary Capacity Building: Leadership and Systems Change**
  - [IRIS Center–Creating an Inclusive School Environment: A Model for School Leaders](#)
  - [CEEDAR Center–School Leadership for Students with Disabilities](#)
  - [CEEDAR Center–Principal Leadership: Inclusive and High-Achieving Schools for Students with Disabilities](#)
  - [CCSSO–PSEL 2015 and Promoting Principal Leadership for the Success of Students with Disabilities](#)
  - [National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI) Principals of Inclusive Schools](#)
  - [CCSSO–Promises to Keep: Transforming Educator Preparation to Better Serve a Diverse Range of Learners](#)
  - [CCSSO–Leadership Competencies for Learner-Centered, Personalized Education](#)
  - [NCLD–Roadmap for School and District Leaders](#)

➤ **Inclusionary Practices Supports**
  - [CAST–The Universal Design for Learning Guidelines](#)
  - [CEEDAR Center–High-Leverage Practices in Special Education](#)
Research Articles

Inclusion, Exclusion, and Ideology: Special Education Students’ Changing Sense of Self

Segregated Programs versus Integrated Comprehensive Service Delivery for All Learners: Assessing the Differences

Outcomes for Students with Learning Disabilities in Inclusive and Pullout Programs

Inclusion as Social Justice: Critical Notes on Discourses, Assumptions, and the Road Ahead

Making Inclusion Work in General Education Classrooms

Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching

People with Intellectual Disabilities—Critical Supports that Promote Independence, Full and Lifelong Community Inclusion

The conflict within: resistance to inclusion and other paradoxes in special education

A Longitudinal Study to Determine the Impact of Inclusion on Student Academic Outcomes
Inclusionary Theory of Action (Draft)

Data analysis and problems of practice laid the foundation for development of a theory of action toward meaningful inclusion for all students. This theory of action identifies the needed inputs to support inclusive activities, focused on positive outputs and outcomes—across settings, content areas, and stakeholder partnerships—for sustainable systems change.

A culturally-responsive approach centers the experiences of students with disabilities and their families, particularly students of color and groups who have traditionally been denied a voice in decision making.

The Inclusionary Practices Theory of Action maps out the wide variety of resources and activities that support stakeholder partners with implementing inclusive learning environments.

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Inclusionary Logic Model and Driver Diagram (Draft)

If we provide statewide support to target audiences consistent with these priority areas:

- Coaching/mentoring
- State and local capacity to demonstrate positive peer relationships
- State and local capacity to utilize the expertise of WA public education faculty, staff and leaders
- Strengthen and align existing professional development and support activities
- Engaging parents and families
- Building student independence

Educators will be able to increase access to grade level core instruction through the inclusion of students eligible for special education services in general education classrooms.

Resulting in improved LRE data, graduation rates, English Language Arts and math proficiency growth, and schools quality or student success indicators for students statewide.

By Spring 2022, we aim to increase access to grade level core instruction through the inclusion of students eligible for special education services in general education classrooms, and result in LRE data, as defined by Indicator 5 in the Annual Performance Report (APR) from LRE1 56.6% to LRE1 58-60%, and improved outcomes as measured by the Washington School Improvement Framework (WSIF), specifically in graduation rates, English Language Arts and math proficiency and growth, and school quality or student success indicators (SQSS).

The primary inclusionary drivers identified and mapped onto the Inclusionary Logic Model and Driver Diagram include:

1. Demonstration sites
2. Pilot District Cohorts
3. Statewide Professional Development
4. TIES Center Support (pending selection and acceptance)
5. Local Professional Development
6. Parent and Family Engagement supports
Project Implementation Work Plan/Timeline

Summer 2019:

- Analysis of statewide placement data and draft list of potential demonstration and pilot sites.
- Recruitment of Project Lead and team members; project work plan drafted for 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- Ongoing development of internal and external stakeholder directory.
- Resource mapping of agency & partner initiatives in support of inclusionary practices.
- Review of the research on inclusionary practices, evidence-based interventions & outcomes.
- Initial reviews of statewide placement data for students with disabilities.

Fall 2019:

- [Request for Proposals (RFP)] for statewide coaching/professional development support, closes 9/23/19.
- Develop project press release and pilot invitation materials (including notice of potential impact to MOE)
- Launch project funding application form package for selected pilots.
- Schedule webinars and/or in-person opportunities for input statewide.
- Selection/adaptation of inclusionary practices local self-assessments.
- Submission of TIES Center (University of Minnesota) application for intensive support for inclusive policies and practices for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Spring 2020:

- Official launch of inclusionary demonstration sites, including visitation schedules.
- Schedule webinars and/or in-person opportunities for updates and input statewide.
- Series of regional pilot site check-ins, including fiscal and program updates.
- Release of any additional form package funds for voluntary project sites.

The project work plan and timeline will be updated and expanded frequently.
Stakeholder Partnerships

Internal OSPI Divisions:
- Assessment & Student Information
- Career and Technical Education (CTE)
- Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL)
- Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS)
- Educator Growth and Development (EGAD)
- Federal Programs
- Learning and Teaching
- Migrant and Bilingual Education
- Office of Native Education
- Office of System and School Improvement (OSSI)
- Special Education
- Student Supports

External Partners:
- Arc of Washington and King County
- Association of ESDs (AESD)
- Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)
- Autistic Self-Advocates Network (ASAN)
- Black Education Strategy Roundtable
- Center for Change in Transition Services (CCTS)
- Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR)
- Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)
- Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)
- Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)
- Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC)
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- Educational Opportunity Gap and Oversight Committee (EOGOAC)
- Educational Service Districts (ESDs)
- Inclusion for ALL
- Institutes of Higher Education (IHE)
- State Legislature: Education and Budget Committee leadership, committee staff, and partisan staff
- National Center for Pyramid Innovations (NCPMI)
- National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)
- National Center on Intensive Intervention (NCII)
- Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO)
- Open Doors for Multi-Cultural Families
- Partnerships for Action, Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)
- Roots of Inclusion
- Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)
- Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL)
External Partners (continued):
Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)
State Board of Education
State Ethnic Commissions
State Needs Projects (funded by OSPI with special education funds)
State Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) Inclusion Committee
TASH Disability Advocacy (TASH)
Washington Assistive Technology Act Program (WATAP)
Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA)
Washington Education Association (WEA)
Washington Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
Washington School Counselor Association (WSCA)
Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA)
Washington State Special Education Technology Center (SETC)
Washington State Teacher Leader Fellows’ Network

Partnership Input:
We envision this section of our webpage will reflect information, input, and feedback from our valued stakeholder partners. With permission, we will include letters of support, items of concern, and suggestions for next steps and future initiatives.

- State application for intensive technical assistance from the TIES Center (University of Minnesota) in support of inclusive policies and practices for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Joint statement from the Investing in Student Potential Steering Committee regarding the use of funds to promote inclusionary practices
- Washington State Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Resolution 18.30, Access to General Education for Students with Disabilities

Contact us! We want to hear from you!

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