

SSLC Inclusion Policy

Stepping Stones Learning Center of Littleton adheres to practices that support the right of every child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. The defining features of inclusion are access, participation, and supports.

Access: Providing access to a wide range of learning opportunities, activities, settings, and environments is a defining feature of quality early childhood inclusion. In many cases, simple modifications can facilitate access for individual children. If a child or family member needs altered access, we will have a meeting with relevant staff and family members to assess what is needed, and we will make every attempt to provide accommodations, within reason and to the best of our ability.

Participation: Even if environments and programs are designed to facilitate access, some children will need additional individualized accommodations and supports to participate fully in play and learning activities with peers and adults. Adults promote belonging, participation, and engagement of children with and without disabilities in inclusive settings in a variety of intentional ways. Depending on the individual needs and priorities of young children and families, implementing inclusion involves a range of approaches—from embedded routines based teaching to more explicit interventions—to scaffold learning and participation for all children. Social-emotional development and behaviors that facilitate participation are critical goals of high quality early childhood inclusion, along with learning and development in all other domains. We will utilize observation and assessment with every child, and this will enable us to individualize participation, and aide in further decision-making, as well as identifying challenges and goals to support each child. We use authentic observation, and record progress in relation to Colorado’s Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines, as well as utilizing the ASQR-3 assessment, which is detailed more in our curriculum and family engagement policies.

Supports: Family members, teachers, and administrators should have access to ongoing professional development and support to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to implement effective inclusive practices. Because collaboration among key stakeholders (e.g., families, practitioners, specialists, and administrators) is a cornerstone for implementing high quality early childhood inclusion, resources are needed to promote multiple opportunities for communication and collaboration among these groups. Specialized services and therapies must be implemented in a coordinated fashion and integrated with general early care and education services. We will keep resource lists available, along with materials, that aide in locating supports for each child, family member, teachers, etc. We will also set up regular conferences with all families, so we may collaborate, review assessments, and perhaps identify other areas where support is need. Furthermore, we agree to help families locate assistance, and work with assistance programs on site, such as therapists, assessors, etc. If a child has an IEP or individualized care plan, we will go over this plan with all stakeholders, and will regularly communicate on the child’s health, well-being, and progress

Every child has the right to be in a safe, welcoming environment, where the staff has high expectations for each child, regardless of ability, to reach his or her full potential. We are committed to this philosophy, and our role in promoting inclusion.