



Core Best Practices in Inclusive Education

Inclusion Quiz: Yes? No? Maybe?

- All students with disabilities are fully included in general education classes but because their neighborhood school isn't accessible, they go to another school in the district.
- There are 4 teachers in school A's 2nd grade. One of them has all of the students with disabilities so that it is more efficient for the sped. staff to provide services.

Yes? No? Maybe?

- Every student with a significant disability who is included in a general education class is provided with a 1:1 aide.
- Three 1st grade students with disabilities are taught in small, skill-based reading groups 20 minutes a day. It is led by the special education teacher.
- A large metropolitan school district holds a prom just for students with disabilities.

Yes? No? Maybe?

- High school students with intellectual disabilities are pulled out of the general education classroom for instruction in life skills (with other students who have disabilities).
- Students with autism attend a social skills group with other students who have autism.

Yes? No? Maybe?

- There are no students with disabilities on the high school football team.
- There are no students with disabilities in the band.
- There are no students with disabilities in the drama club.
- There are no students with disabilities on the Student Council.

Yes? No? Maybe?

- A school has a learning center where students can come (voluntarily) for extra academic support. Most of the time it is students with disabilities who are in there.
- Every day at lunch the students from the 3rd grade general education class go to the special education room to socialize with students with disabilities.

Yes? No? Maybe?

- The school has a “Best Buddies” program that matches students with and without disabilities to partner up in Special Olympics.
- In the cafeteria all of the students with significant disabilities eat lunch together with their aides who assist with feeding.
- Placement in the general or special education class is based on parent choice.

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Value & Dignity

Presuming Competence

Membership in General Education Class & Reciprocal Social Relationships

I count

I belong

I have friends

Participation in General Education Instruction

Academics

Social & Other

Learning

Gen Ed Curriculum

Life Skills

Everything Else

Collaborative Teaming & Administrative Support

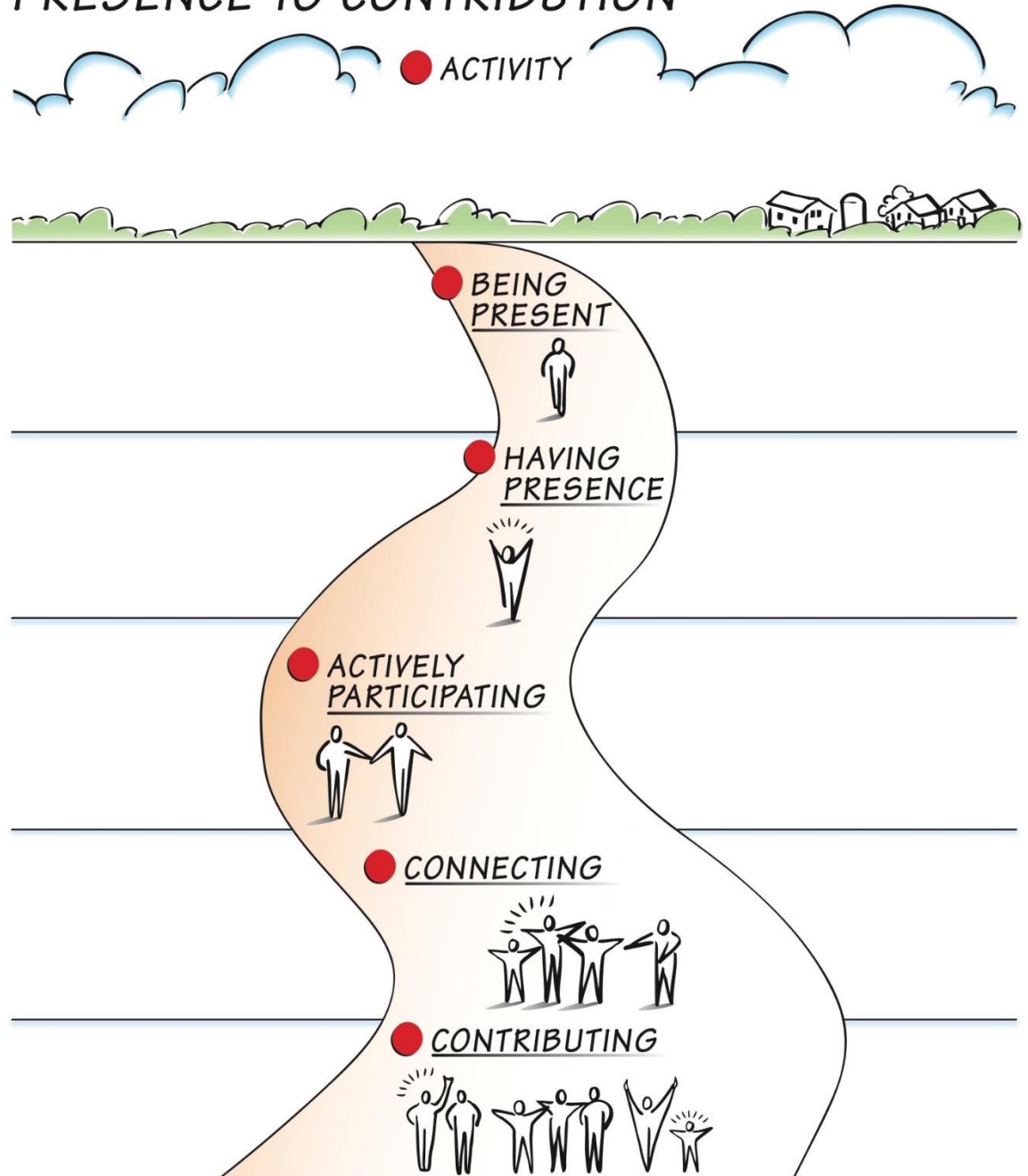
Value & Dignity

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Education
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Author

Mom of
Maggie

PRESENCE TO CONTRIBUTION



One-Page Profile for Maggie Hickey

What we like and admire about Maggie

She is fun to be with

She is optimistic and
cheerful

She is confident in herself

She is authentic

Her persistence; she insists
on making it right for HER

Her resourcefulness; she
will always find something
interesting to do

Her confidence asking for
the help she needs and
declining the help she
doesn't need.

Her skills on an iPad



What is important to Maggie

Being with her friends and
family

Being in control of her own
body, including being able to
move around

Always having her iPads

Having many choices,
including the option "none of
the above"

Not having to prove herself or
repeat herself



How you can best support Maggie

Make videos of whatever you want Maggie to understand or pay
attention to and let her watch them on her iPads.



Learn how Maggie communicates what is
important to her

Communicate with her with your body and voice as much as your
words. Verbalize what she is communicating to you.
Explain what you are doing and why. Be concise!

Don't ask Maggie to look and listen at the same time.
Let her take breaks to rest her body, her vision and her hearing.

What We Like and Admire About James

- Determined
- Curious
- Attracts both girls and boys as friends
- Persists until we understand what he is trying to communicate
- Caring
- Intuitive about others' feelings
- Knows a lot about space science

What Is Important to James

- Being around friends all the time
- Space, spaceships, space travel
- Having apps and games on his iPad that other he and other kids like to play
- Getting out of his wheelchair several times a day
- Giving him space to just sit back and observe several times a day

How We Can Best Support James

- Listen hard to what he is trying to communicate.
- Don't put words into his mouth but give him choices about what he wants to communicate.
- Tell him when we are going to move his body.
- Tell him what we know he has a lot to say and is smart and that we are trying our best to give him a way to communicate.
- Make sure that his friends are involved in updating his iPad with games and apps.
- Include his parents and grandmother in problem-solving.
- Make sure that information is sent home over the weekend so that family can preview upcoming books and lessons.
- Encourage his interest in space.

Vision of an Ordinary and Inclusive Life

CHARTING the LifeCourse

Life Trajectory Worksheet: Family

Everyone wants a good life. The bubbles on the right will help you think about what a good life means for you or your family member, and identifying what you know you don't want. You can use the space around the arrows to think about current or needed life experiences that help point you in the direction of your good life.



VISION for a GOOD LIFE

Community:
Familiar, understood,
supported

**Friendships & social
networks, recreation**

Autonomy:
communication, housing,
education

Employment

What I DON'T Want

Isolated & lonely
Unknown & scary
People to fear her

Bored
Passive



The most important thing for us is for Andrew to have friends, not “special” buddies. Andrew loves his friends and when he is with them he thrives. He communicates more, learns more, and feels a real sense of belonging. Yes, academics are very important too, but without friends, Andrew’s school experience and his adult life will be filled with loneliness. We want Andrew to be involved in all of the same classes and extracurricular activities that other 7th graders are.

James has great strengths and challenges. As parents we have some practical tools and suggestions for successful inclusion for James and we hope the team will be supportive of these suggestions. As parents we hope that the whole team has the right attitude, and that James' team is fearless, creative, acknowledge his challenges, and will not be afraid to make mistakes, forgive any behaviors of James, understand why he has a behavior, and celebrate his success.

We would like to see Belinda communicate effectively – to be able to express her novel thoughts and knowledge. We feel it is important for the team to foster social interactions with peers, and for Belinda to be in the general education all day every day.

Our daughter learns best when the expectations are kept high and we support her abilities and encourage her. We believe the same plan can work at school. We would like Katelyn to regain her love for learning, so she will become a life-long learner. We want her to be exposed to all content areas in high school and to improve her reading and writing skills. These are areas she will need during her adult years. We envision her living as independently as possible with supports and assistance. She wants to go to college and with the number of programs being developed for students like her this is a very achievable goal. She also wants to work with animals, be employed in a dental office, or work at the library. We hope you will join us in supporting our daughter's hope and dreams to help her achieve them.

Erin McKenzie



OUR DREAM...VISION...

Opportunity to Have an Ordinary Life

- Erin will have a life in a community that values diversity and accentuates strengths and she will share her gifts and talents with that community.
- Erin will have reciprocal relationships with friends. She will communicate and advocate for herself.
- Erin will have the same opportunities to learn and participate in typical classroom, extra curricular, and community activities when they would typically happen. Erin will graduate from high school in 2004 with her class and have continued post secondary educational opportunities and a career that interests her.

DREAM...VISION...

Opportunity to Have an Ordinary Life

I am in 10th grade at Westerville South High School.

I ride bus 47 in the front.

I like music, plays, movies, restaurants, going on trips and doing things with my family and friends.



I want to be like Christine from "Phantom of the Opera" and sing like an angel. I also like being an usher and taking tickets and giving programs at the auditorium. Then I get to sit with the audience and watch the play. I will work for Drama Club. I will sing gently in Choir and for the concerts.

DREAM...VISION...

Opportunity to Have an Ordinary Life



I will do things with my friends in school. One of my friends put "Go South" tattoos on my arm in Choir. I talk with friends in English, American Literature. My lab group in Physics measured outside. I washed a big truck at the Drama Club car wash. I go to Drama Club meetings.



Tiffany helps me with Sign Language after school and I see her at the football games and in Global 1. Kathy helps me with Sign Language too and is in Drama Club.

DREAM...VISION...

Opportunity to Have an Ordinary Life

When I go home I will do my homework. I will relax and sing along with my CD's and watch movies. I will do things with my family and with my friend Lacey. I will organize my clothes and my things in my room.

Maybe next year I can get a job as an usher or at Dairy Queen or at Target like my brother Chris did. Maybe I can go to college like Chris too. I will work hard and have fun and be happy!



RELATIONSHIPS...Learning with Each Other...Gathering Friends For the Journey

- Other Parents
- Other Dreamers – Marsha Forest, PEAK, University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability...
- Neighborhood School
- Educators – General and Special
- Sharing stories – Reflections
- Friends



DREAM...VISION...

Opportunity to Have an Ordinary Life

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL
GENERAL ED CLASS
NATURAL PROPORTIONS
FULL MEMBERSHIP



BUILDING ON STRENGTHS &
INTERESTS
INCLUSION FACILITATOR
NATURAL SUPPORTS –
ADDITIONAL AS NEEDED

Presuming Competence

Presuming Competence

*It is the **least dangerous assumption** to presume that all students are competent to learn & communicate about age-appropriate general education curriculum content in the general education classroom.*

Least Dangerous Assumption

“The criterion of least dangerous assumption holds that in the absence of conclusive data, educational decisions ought to be based on assumptions which, if incorrect, will have the least dangerous effect on the likelihood that students will be able to function independently as adults” and “problems of student learning are presumed to be problems of instruction.”

Anne Donnellan, 1985

#1 Why Presume Competence

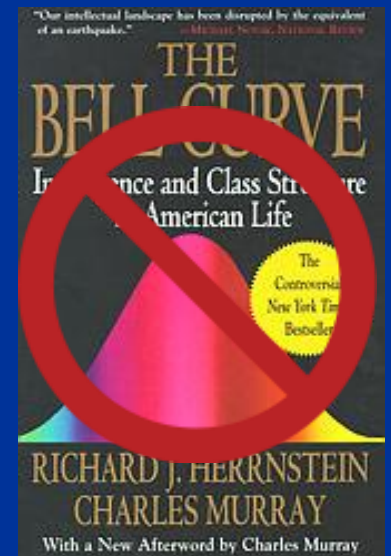
"Simply put, when teachers expect students to do well and show intellectual growth, they do; when teachers do not have such expectations, performance and growth are not so encouraged and may in fact be discouraged in a variety of ways."

James Rhem on the "Pygmalion effect."



#2 Why Presume Competence

Traditional assessments of people with disabilities are seriously flawed. Those that purport to measure students' intelligence and adaptive behavior usually measure what they **can't** do, rather than what they **might** be able to do with the right supports.

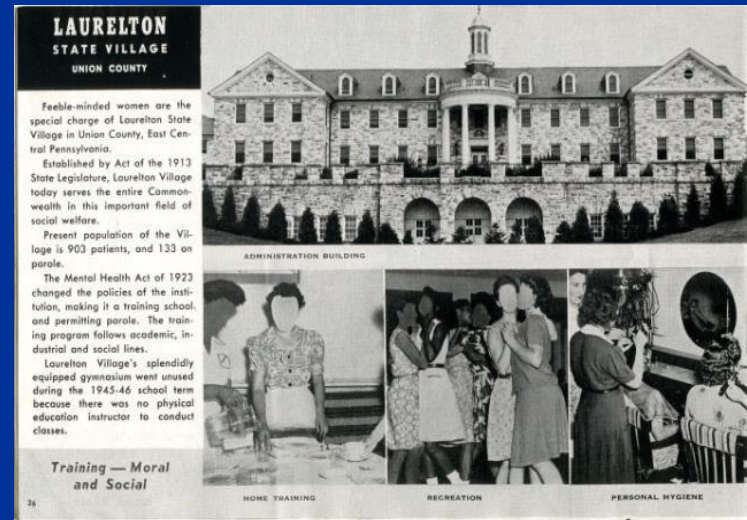


#3 Why Presume Competence

Research shows that a
growing number of children
labeled “retarded”
show they are competent
when they have a means
to communicate.

#4 Why Presume Competence

To presume *incompetence* could result in harm to our students if we are wrong.



#5 Why Presume Competence

Even if we are wrong about students' capacities to learn general education curriculum content, the consequences to students of *that* incorrect presumption are not as dangerous as the alternative.



Operationalizing Presuming Competence

- Presuming competence is a belief, an attitude.
- Translating that belief into action requires that we take action to intentionally construct a student's competence.
- How might we do that?

- Talk to students as if they understand.
- Don't use "baby talk" – i.e., speak in a high pitched voice.
- Ask about and honor their preferences and choices.
- Fully include students in general education classrooms.
- Teach students the general education curriculum.
- Provide students with a way to communicate about all the same things that their classmates do.

- Support students to achieve their dreams.
Don't assume that something isn't possible.
- Don't talk about students to a third party
when the person is right there.
- Don't overly exaggerate things like
handshakes, praise, pats on the back.
- Respect students' privacy and their right to
control their own bodies.

Membership in General Education

Membership Indicators

- The student attends the school he/she would attend if he/she did not have a disability.
- The student is a member of an age-appropriate general education class.
- The student's name is on all class lists, lists of groups put on the board, job lists, etc.
- Related services are delivered primarily through consultation in the classroom.
- The student receives the same materials as students without disabilities, with supports (i.e., accommodations and adaptations) provided as necessary.

Membership Indicators

- The student passes classes with other students, arriving and leaving at the same time.
- The student has a locker/cubby alongside students without disabilities.
- The student rides the same school bus as his/her peers without disabilities.

Adapted from: McSheehan, M., Sonnenmeier, R.M., & Jorgensen, C.M. (2008). Membership, participation, and learning in the general education classroom for students with autism spectrum disorders who use AAC. In P. Mirenda & T. Iacono (Eds.), *Autism spectrum disorders and AAC* (pp. 413-442). Baltimore: Paul A. Brookes.

Reciprocal Social Relationships

Relationships:

Our goal is to get to the top

Students have reciprocal relationships at school and at home that are based on common interests and activities



Students participate in shared activities at school



Students have “peer buddies” or “helpers”



Students have little to no contact with peers without disabilities

All students can have real friends when we address the attitudinal and systemic barriers that keep students apart.



Barriers to Social Relationships

1. Students being “partially included”
2. Not presuming competence
3. Over-reliance on 1:1 assistants
4. Mistaking peer support for friendship
5. Creating “friendship programs”
6. Seeing disability as “deficiency”
7. Parents and educators not working together
8. Thinking that friendship isn’t the responsibility of schools
9. Fewer opportunities as students get older
10. Inaccessibility of transportation and public spaces
11. Implementing strategies before eliminating barriers

Participation in General Education Instruction

Participation Indicators

- The student participates in classroom and school routines in typical locations, such as the Pledge of Allegiance, lunch count, jobs, errands, eating lunch in the cafeteria, etc.
- The student participates in school plays, field trips, and community service activities.
- The student participates in classroom instruction in similar routines as students without disabilities; for example:
 - whole class discussions
 - at the board
 - in small groups
 - when called on by the teacher

Participation Indicators

- The student has a way to communicate the same academic messages that are expected of other students in the above instructional routines. For example:
 - Whole class discussions: brainstorming, calling out answers, taking notes, social side talk
 - At the board: writing answers, drawing figures
 - In small groups: commenting to classmates, sharing information, taking notes, socializing
 - When called on by the teacher: sharing information

Participation Indicators

- The student completes assignments and other work products (with adaptations and modifications) as students without disabilities.
- A high school student engages in outside-of-school, age-appropriate, and inclusive environments (e.g., service learning) in the same proportion as classmates without disabilities.

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Collaborative Teaming

General Education Staff Role Changes

General Education Teacher for Some Students
General Education Teacher for ALL Students



Reading Specialist for Some Students
Reading Specialist for ALL Students



Title I Teacher/Tutor for Title I Students
Supplemental Instruction for ALL Students




Guidance Counselor for Some Students
Guidance Counselor for ALL Students




Special Education Staff Role Changes

Learning Disability Teacher  Learning Specialist

Self-Contained/Life Skills Teacher  Inclusion Facilitator

SLP and OT from 1:1 Therapist 
Facilitator of communication, literacy, and movement within
general education lessons and other inclusive activities

Paraprofessional from Individual Student Support 
Whole Class Support

Role of General Education Teacher

- Welcomes all students into the classroom
- Presumes all students' competence and actively constructs it
- Teaches using principles of Universal Design for Learning
 - Varies the materials, instructional methods, and assessments to address diverse learning styles
 - Embraces technology that contributes to accessibility

Role of General Education Teacher

- Uses RtI and PBIS models of prevention, intervention, and support
- Collaborates with other staff (special educators, SLPs, OTs, reading specialists, guidance counselors) to meet all students' learning needs
- Works in partnership with families and the community

“I no longer have the students with the most significant needs missing the most instruction... wasting so much time in transition, missing valuable core curriculum. Now these services are brought into the classroom seamlessly and everybody benefits... . Let's not forget the social stigma associated with pullout programs. These kids now finally belong somewhere... all day long.”

Elementary teacher in an inclusive school.

Role of the Learning Specialist

- Serves as co-teacher with general education teachers
- Teaches at all levels/tiers of RtI: Level 1 (Universal), Level 2 (Additional instruction/support), and Level 3 (Intensive instruction/support)
- Takes responsibility for “formal” special education paperwork and processes
- Is assigned to classrooms, grade levels, teams, and departments

Role of the Inclusion Facilitator

- Supports teams to implement best educational practices for students with significant disabilities related to their membership, relationships, participation, and learning of the general education curriculum in inclusive classrooms in neighborhood schools.
- Is particularly skilled in using assistive technology, augmentative communication, adapting materials, conducting functional behavior assessments, facilitating social relationships, and collaborating with community organizations and agencies.
- Is assigned very small caseloads (5-8 students) of students across grades, usually within one building.

Role of the Inclusion Facilitator

- Leads the IEP teams of students in a building with the most significant developmental disabilities such as autism, intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, deaf-blindness, and traumatic brain injury.
- Facilitates instructional planning meetings, coordinates the input of related service providers, provides professional development, and co-supervises paraprofessionals (with classroom teachers).
- May provide whole class instruction, small group instruction, and direct instruction to students within general education classrooms.

Role of the Speech-Language Pathologist

- Presumes all students are competent to communicate and that there are no pre-requisites for communication supports and technology.
- Writes IEP goals and objectives that support students to communicate about age-appropriate general education academic and social content.
- Assures that every student has a means to communicate all day long.
- Provide training to students, parents, students without disabilities, and staff about how to communicate with students who use technology to communicate.
- Integrates communication and literacy supports within general education instruction and inclusive social activities.

Role of the Occupational Therapist

- Presumes all students are competent to participate in all school activities.
- Writes IEP goals and objectives that support students to fully participate in academic, social, and extracurricular activities through adaptations to the physical and sensory environment, equipment, tools, etc.
- Builds or acquire sadaptive devices for mobility, typing, browsing the web, doing lab experiments, participating in sports activities, etc.
- Provides training to students, parents, students without disabilities, and staff about how to provide physical and sensory supports to students.
- Integrates movement and sensory supports within general education instruction and inclusive social activities.

Role of the Paraprofessional

- Provides supports to students to enable them to fully participate in general education instruction directed by general education teachers.
- Collaborates with other staff to support students to achieve the goals of their IEPs, to develop and sustain typical social relationships and participate in social activities, to learn and maintain appropriate behavior, to make smooth transitions from year to year, and to graduate to typical adult roles in the community.

Role of the Paraprofessional

- Facilitates students' self-advocacy, self-determination, and independence
- Facilitates social interactions between students with and without disabilities without “hovering”
- Makes instructional materials under the supervision of professional staff

Administrative Support

- Lead the school to establish an inclusive mission
- Support the work of an inclusive education implementation team
- Communicate inclusive vision to the community, including the school board
- Hire adequate numbers of highly qualified staff in both general and special education

- Build common planning time into the school schedule
- Provide ongoing job-embedded professional development related to inclusive pedagogy
- Evaluate teachers based on the quality of their inclusive practice
- Budget for curricular and technology resources that create access for all students