

Making Inclusion Work for All!

It's not just about meeting the 10%!

Supporting the Young Learner with Special Needs Summit

April 5 and 6, 2016

Presenters

- ▶ Amy Curtiss-ESS Program Specialist, Florence Unified School District #1
- ▶ Heather Davis-Florence Head Start Site Manager
- ▶ Who are you and how do you feel about inclusion?



Agenda

- ▶ Brief overview of ADA and IDEA (and other acronyms!)
- ▶ Stance on inclusion from Division of Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- ▶ Head Start
- ▶ Define Inclusion-Access, Participation and Supports
- ▶ Challenges and Rewards of Inclusion
- ▶ Case Example-Thaysa
- ▶ Strategies to promote inclusion
- ▶ Conclusion

ADA

- ▶ Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990
- ▶ Civil Rights Legislation
- ▶ “Equal Opportunity” law for people with disabilities
- ▶ Disability, as defined by ADA, refers to as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities
- ▶ Provides access and reasonable accommodations

IDEA

- ▶ Special Education Law
- ▶ Reauthorization in 2004 included important guidelines on inclusion and the term least restrictive environment (LRE)
 - ▶ Children ages 3-21 are entitled to free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. LRE requires that, to the extent possible, children with disabilities should have access to the general education curriculum, along with learning activities and settings that are available to their peers without disabilities.

Least Restrictive Environment

- ▶ **Least restrictive environment (LRE)** means that any student who has a disability should have the opportunity to be educated with non-disabled peers to the greatest extent appropriate. They should have access to the general education curriculum or any other program that non-disabled peers would be able to access. The student should be provided with supplementary aids and services necessary to achieve educational goals if placed in a setting with non-disabled peers.
- ▶ Must look at the **WHOLE CHILD**
- ▶ Focus on the strengths of the child
- ▶ Who determines LRE?
- ▶ How often is LRE determined?

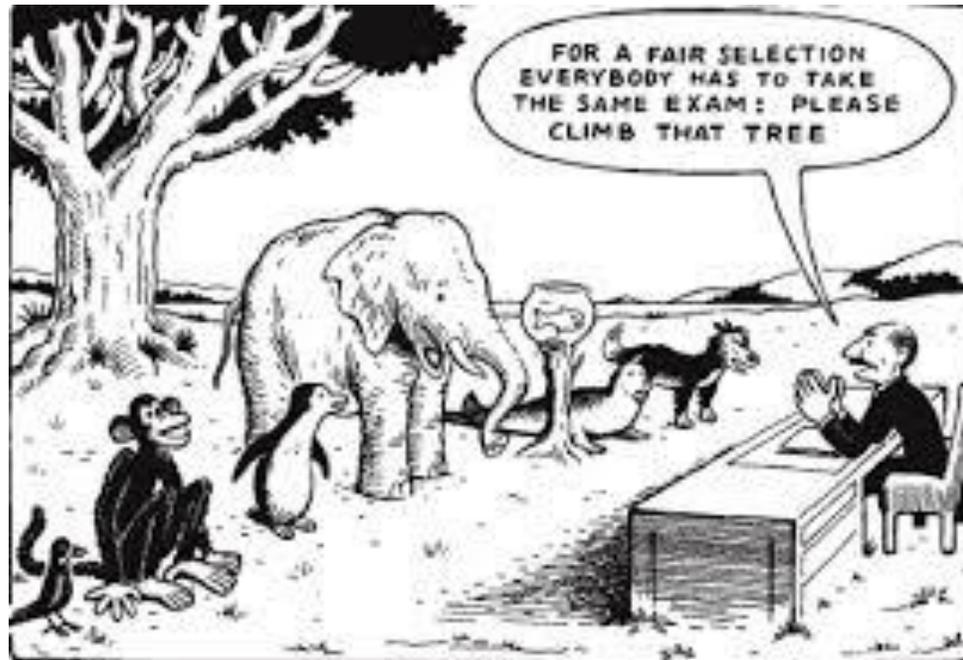
Joint Position Statement (DEC & NAEYC)

Definition of Early Childhood Inclusion

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young 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 that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.

Access

- ▶ Access-Provide access to a wide range of learning activities, settings, and environments.
- ▶ In many instances, simple modifications can facilitate access.
 - ▶ Removal of physical or structural barriers
 - ▶ Use of technology
 - ▶ Universal Design for Learning



Universal Design For Learning

► [UDL Video](#)



Universal Design for Learning Guidelines



Participation

- ▶ Participation-some children will need additional supports and individual accommodations
 - ▶ Accommodations and supports that children need to fully participate in a meaningful way in play and learning activities
 - ▶ Routines-based teaching
 - ▶ Tiered Levels of Supports



Tiered Levels of Support

TIER 3

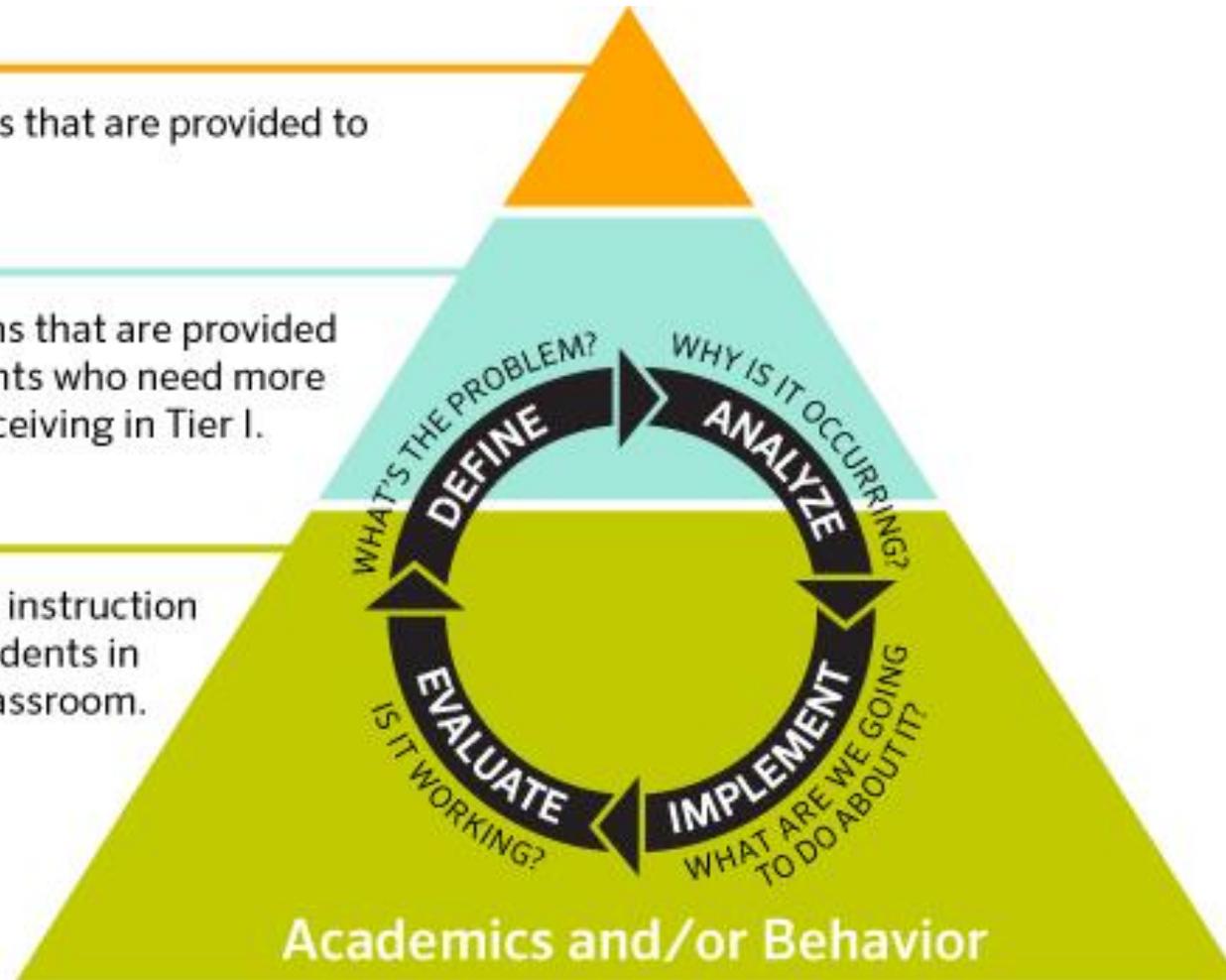
refers to the interventions that are provided to individual students.

TIER 2

refers to the interventions that are provided to small groups of students who need more support than they are receiving in Tier 1.

TIER 1

refers to the high quality instruction that is provided to all students in the general education classroom.



Supports

- ▶ Supports- “In addition to provisions addressing access and participation, an infrastructure of systems-level supports must be in place to undergird the efforts of individuals and organizations providing inclusive services to children and families” (DEC & NAEYC, 2009)
 - ▶ Ongoing professional development
 - ▶ Collaboration among key stakeholders
 - ▶ Specialized services and therapies that are integrated into education services
 - ▶ Blended early childhood programs





- ▶ Head Start is a comprehensive, quality and unique program designed for eligible 0-5 year old children and their families. We meet the needs of children and families through the content areas of: Early Childhood Development, and Health Services, Family and Community Partnerships, Program Design and Management. We specialize in family oriented services, developmentally appropriate practices, culturally diverse activities, advocacy and community involvement. We believe that families are the foundation of our communities, and we believe in the betterment and enrichment of children in society.

Access, Participation, Supports

- ▶ Activity 1
- ▶ Debrief
 - ▶ What did you feel?
 - ▶ What did you learn?
 - ▶ How can you apply this in your work with students?

Key Points on Inclusion

- ▶ Children with Disabilities and their families are full members of the community
- ▶ Inclusion reflects a public reaction against educational practices that separate and isolate children with disabilities.
- ▶ Inclusionary programs provide access, participation, and supports for all learners
- ▶ Access, Participation, and Supports are necessary components

What are some challenges and rewards of inclusion?



Challenges

- ▶ Children with disabilities may be at an increased risk of rejection from peers when in an inclusive setting
- ▶ Lack of resources
- ▶ Lack of knowledge
- ▶ Safety

Rewards

Students With Disabilities

- ▶ Children with disabilities may be more capable than you think
- ▶ Research shows that children with special needs in inclusive settings have more positive peer interactions, more vocalizations toward peers, and more social participation
- ▶ Increased achievement
- ▶ Increased parent participation
- ▶ Increased collaboration
- ▶ Carry over to the community

Students Without Disabilities

- ▶ Meaningful friendships
- ▶ Increased acceptance of differences
- ▶ Increased acceptance of diversity
- ▶ Respect
- ▶ Prepares students for participation in society
- ▶ Increased achievement
- ▶ More resources

Focus on the strengths of every student



Case Example-Thaysa

► <https://vimeo.com/43931633>



Video-Part 1

- ▶ What are the challenges you see?
- ▶ What is your initial reaction to Thaysa? How would you feel about having this student in your class?
- ▶ What resources would you need? Who would you talk to?

Video-Part 2

- ▶ Have your feelings changed after viewing Thaysa's story?
- ▶ What are some ways the staff responded to Thaysa?
- ▶ What are some rewards you saw not only for Thaysa but for her teachers, parent, and peers?

Strategies to Promote Inclusion

- ▶ Collaboration is Key! (work with parents, staff, and students)
- ▶ Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- ▶ Use technology
- ▶ Combine resources-blended programs
- ▶ Membership is a key component of inclusion. Engage all students in group activities, classroom jobs, school-wide activities, and privileges
- ▶ Engage students in activities to promote friendship and group membership
 - ▶ I like my friends
 - ▶ Web of friends
 - ▶ Making new friends

Strategies to Promote Inclusion

- ▶ Have high expectations
- ▶ Have a mission or philosophy on inclusion in your program/school
- ▶ Tiered levels of support
- ▶ Establish a continuum of services
- ▶ Integrated professional development

Develop Sensitivity

Help Children Develop Sensitivity

Activity

The German Test and Test Your Awareness



Conclusions

- ▶ Inclusion is a philosophy that incorporates societal values
- ▶ It's the law (IDEA, ADA) and position of DEC and NAEYC
- ▶ Inclusion has benefits for all learners, for families, and for the community not just children with disabilities
- ▶ Focus on the strengths of all students
- ▶ Access, Participation, and Supports are Key Components
- ▶ Just because it is right does not mean it will be easy. Collaboration is key!

References

- DEC/NAEYC. (2009). *Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.
- Mickel, J & Griffen, J. (2007). Inclusion and disability awareness training for educators: in the kids like you, kids like me program. *Beyond the Journal: Young Children on the Web*. NAEYC. July, 2007
- National Center on Universal Design for Learning: <http://www.udlcenter.org/>