



Meaningful Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

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Learning Intentions and Success Criteria

Learning Intentions

- Understand the definition of meaningful inclusion for students with disabilities and the Portrait of Meaningful Inclusion for Students with Disabilities
- Identify current myths and facts about inclusion for students with disabilities
- Understand what specially designed instruction is
- Identify a few inclusive practices that could be implemented in a school
- Learn about the Self Measurement Tool in the Implementation Guide
- Connecting how inclusion helps increase student outcomes post-high school for students with disabilities

Success Criteria

- Directors will be able to define meaningful inclusion for students with disabilities and the four elements in the Portrait of Meaningful Inclusion for Students with Disabilities
- Directors will identify the facts regarding inclusion for students with disabilities
- Directors will be able to identify what is and is not specially designed instruction
- Directors will be able to identify what some inclusive practices are for students with disabilities
- Directors will know how to access, use, and score the Self Measurement Tool found in the Implementation Guide
- Directors will understand how inclusive practices support student outcomes post-high school



Why Inclusion for Students with Disabilities?

“Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disability”

[20 U.S.C. Section 1400\(c\)\(1\)\(A\)](#)



What is meaningful inclusion for students with disabilities?

“Ensuring each student is valued as a visible member of the school community with equal opportunities to contribute by creating conditions for active, meaningful participation with:

- a) Interaction and engagement with age-appropriate **peers**;
- b) Systems that promote **high expectations** and **learner agency** for each student;
- c) **Grade/age-appropriate** core content standards, curricular materials, and resources; and
- d) Availability of **customized supports** including Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determined services across all educational settings, including extra-curricular activities,

(1) To the maximum extent appropriate in the **least restrictive environment**”

([SpEd Rules I.E.28.](#))



Portrait of Meaningful Inclusion (POMI) Manual



bit.ly/POMI



Portrait of Meaningful Inclusion (POMI)

Peers

- Each student has interaction and engagement with age appropriate peers
- Each student is valued as a visible member of their school community

System

- All stakeholders work to develop a system promoting high expectations and learner agency
- All stakeholders engage in the process of creating opportunities that empower each student to use their voice and contribute to their individual learning experiences (i.e., voice and choice)

Access

- Each student will be taught using grade/age-appropriate content standards, curricular materials, and resources
- Equal opportunities to grade/age level instruction are provided and all materials and resources are made accessible

Supports and Services

- Educators provide individualized support needed to fully engage students with disabilities across all educational environments
- Students with an individualized education program (IEP) receive specially designed instruction (SDI) and customized supports across all settings, including extra-curricular activities, to ensure equitable access and high achievement in their education



Myths About Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities

Myth: Inclusion of students with disabilities negatively affects students without disabilities and their teachers

- **Fact:** Research has shown that inclusive schools and classrooms benefit both students with disabilities and students without disabilities. The benefit depends on providing appropriate support and services in the classroom, along with properly trained personnel

Myth: Students with disabilities need to be “ready” for inclusion

- **Fact:** All students have the right to be educated in general education settings. Readiness should not be a prerequisite for inclusion

Myth: Inclusion of students with disabilities requires resources and personnel schools do not have. It is too expensive

- **Fact:** Studies show that inclusion is not more expensive than educating students with disabilities in special education classrooms. Further, the least restrictive environment (LRE) provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) indicate that cost cannot be a factor in deciding placement. Providing flexible services in the general education setting is not necessarily more expensive. It can help schools maximize resources to meet the needs of all students



Myths About Inclusive Education for Students with Disabilities, part 2

Myth: Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities need specially designed instruction that is impossible to provide in the general education classroom

- **Fact:** Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities benefit from inclusion in many ways. There is no requirement that they must keep up academically with everything the general education class is doing. Students should have the opportunity to learn far more than “functional academics”

Myth: Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities have too many challenges to benefit from inclusion in the general education classroom

- **Fact:** Supplementary aids, services, and appropriate staff development can address challenging behaviors. A universal design for learning (UDL) approach can make instruction more accessible and engaging



How is Inclusion Achieved?

- Design a culture supporting inclusion
- Intentionally plan educational experiences, embed high-quality instruction and expectations for all students
- Appropriately allocate funding, resources, and staffing
- Strategically design schedules
- Consistently implement specially designed instruction, accommodations, and supports
- Establish communication and feedback loops
- Align school-wide initiatives with inclusive practices

(USBE Meaningful Inclusion Manual, page 14)



To Be Open to Inclusion, We Need to Understand Specially Designed Instruction

- There is a common misunderstanding of who can provide special education services or specially designed instruction (SDI) and where special education services or SDI can be provided
- Most educational partners outside special education do not understand what SDI is and how it relates to the delivery of special education services



Specially Designed Instruction

SDI means adapting, as appropriate the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction

(i) to address the unique needs of a child that result from the child's disability; and

(ii) to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum, so that the child can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the public agency that apply to all children
[§300.39(b)(3)]



Adapting as Appropriate

Content	Methodology	Delivery
What?	How?	Who? Where? When?
<p>The core standards, learning objectives, and individual student goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Move the learner beyond the basics and encourage higher level thinking• Engage students to apply what they learn• Content and context are consistent with the theme	<p>The process through which academic instruction, social instruction, and behavioral instruction and interventions are developed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instructional design model• Content sequencing and evidence-based practices• Instructional strategies and learning activities• Reflective practice	<p>The repertoire of resources, supports, and technologies used to communicate and interact with students related to individualized academic and behavior content to support student learning and engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resources (i.e., personnel, materials, technologies, manipulatives, etc.)• Supports (i.e., additional time, group size, multiple representations, etc.)• Delivery technologies, assistive technologies, and accommodations• Reflective practice

Methodology and Delivery are often intertwined



SDI is vs. SDI is Not

SDI is...

- A **service**, in addition to core instruction (supplemental)
- It is something the **teacher does**, based on teaching **specific skills** a student **does NOT** have to access and make progress in the general curriculum
- It involves **unique instruction written into the IEP** provided to the student to progress towards annual goals(s)
- It is **specific to the student** (individualized).
- SDI is instruction that allows a student to make progress in the general education curriculum and **close the gap in academic performance** as compared to his/her general education peers

SDI is not...

- A replacement of core instruction (supplant),
- A commercial program, a place, or a schedule
- Restating the **academic content standards** being taught (overview)
- SDI is **NOT** an excuse for **setting low expectations** or **teaching below grade level** (not making grade level content available/accessible to students with disabilities)



Who Can Deliver Specially Designed Instruction?

- Teachers with a special education license
- General education teachers, in collaboration with special educators
- Teachers dually certified in general and special education. Related service providers with specialization in the area of need
- Paraeducators can assist in providing SDI to a student under the direct supervision and training by an appropriately licensed teacher or related service provider who has prepared the programming for the student



Why Inclusive Practices Should be Put into Place?

Inclusive practices aim to minimize or **remove barriers** to learning and support the social, academic, and physical **success of all learners** while ensuring that teaching **standards are not compromised**



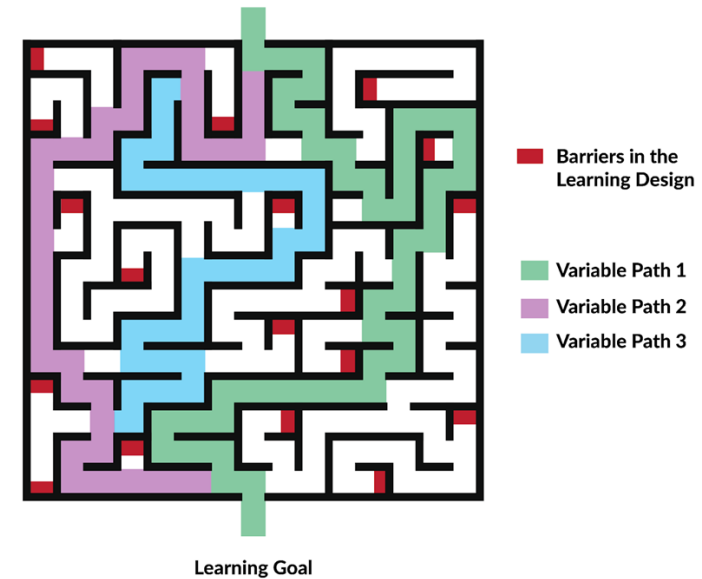
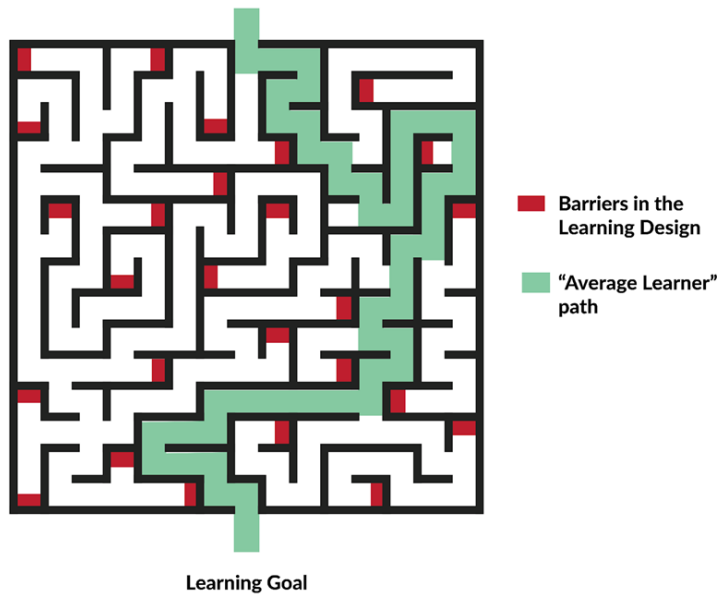
Build a School of Belonging

- Ensure your vision and mission statement reflect the belonging of all students, including those with disabilities
- Create classroom cultures where students are valued, feel seen, and encouraged to use their voice, fostering relationships between students with and without disabilities
- Ensure all staff and educators use inclusive language of students with disabilities, and encourage to invite families into conversations on preferred terminology
- Provide opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in discussions, assignments, and tasks by having accessible resources and materials, using assistive technology, etc.



Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational **framework** that guides the development of **flexible** lessons and systems that **encourage variability**, **minimize barriers**, and **develop agency** for all





UDL Design Process

1. Set clear, rigorous goals:

Ask: What is the goal?

2. Anticipate variability:

Ask: What are the barriers?

3. Design options to minimize the barriers:




Ask: What options are there to minimize the barriers?



UDL Guidelines 3.0: Options to Minimize Barriers

The Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

The goal of UDL is **learner agency** that is purposeful & reflective, resourceful & authentic, strategic & action-oriented.

	Design Multiple Means of Engagement 	Design Multiple Means of Representation 	Design Multiple Means of Action & Expression 
Access	Design Options for Welcoming Interests & Identities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimize choice and autonomy Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity Nurture joy and play Address biases, threats, and distractions 	Design Options for Perception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support opportunities to customize the display of information Support multiple ways to perceive information Represent a diversity of perspectives and identities in authentic ways 	Design Options for Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vary and honor the methods for response, navigation, and movement Optimize access to accessible materials and assistive and accessible technologies and tools
Support	Design Options for Sustaining Effort & Persistence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify the meaning and purpose of goals Optimize challenge and support Foster collaboration, interdependence, and collective learning Foster belonging and community Offer action-oriented feedback 	Design Options for Language & Symbols <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify vocabulary, symbols, and language structures Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols Cultivate understanding and respect across languages and dialects Address biases in the use of language and symbols Illustrate through multiple media 	Design Options for Expression & Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use multiple media for communication Use multiple tools for construction, composition, and creativity Build fluencies with graduated support for practice and performance Address biases related to modes of expression and communication
Executive Function	Design Options for Emotional Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize expectations, beliefs, and motivations Develop awareness of self and others Promote individual and collective reflection Cultivate empathy and restorative practices 	Design Options for Building Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect prior knowledge to new learning Highlight and explore patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships Cultivate multiple ways of knowing and making meaning Maximize transfer and generalization 	Design Options for Strategy Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set meaningful goals Anticipate and plan for challenges Organize information and resources Enhance capacity for monitoring progress Challenge exclusionary practices




bit.ly/UtahUDL

[UDL Guidelines 3.0](#)



Using Co-Teaching as an Inclusive Practice

Co-Teaching: The instructional arrangement in which a general education teacher and a special education teacher deliver core instruction and specialized instruction, as needed, to a diverse group of students in a single physical space. Co-teaching partnerships require educators to make joint instructional decisions and share responsibility and accountability for student learning.





Co-Teaching Is and Is Not...

Co-Teaching Is...

- Joint responsibility for planning, instruction delivery and classroom management
- A component of a continuum of services for students with disabilities
- Carefully matched professionals to ensure success for all students
- Both professionals present in class every day
- Both professionals planning lessons to meet the needs of ALL learners
- Both professionals being responsible for ALL students

Co-Teaching is Not...

- One teacher maintaining all planning and instruction
- Having a “smaller” class in a large classroom
- Two professionals providing instruction to a homogenous group of students
- An extra set of hands in the classroom
- One paraprofessional and one professional instructing
- A special educator working only with students with disabilities



Resources



<https://tinyurl.com/POMIPADLET>



Self Measurement Tool

Here is a self-measurement tool to collect and reflect on your inclusive practices as a group

The overview page auto-calculates based on the data input on the Group Individual Scores page

Element	Element Rating	Element Benchmark	Emerging Inclusion	Approaching Inclusion	Effective Inclusion	Highly Effective Inclusion
Peers	34.40	Peers	1-10	11-24	25-30	31-40
System	29.60	System	1-10	11-24	25-30	31-40
Access	30.60	Access	1-10	11-24	25-30	31-40
Supports and Services	21.40	Supports and Services	1-7	8-14	15-20	21-28

Peers Condition	Peers Rating	System Condition	System Rating	Access Condition	Access Rating	Supports and Services Condition	Supports and Services Rating
P1	3.00	S1	3.00	A1	3.00	SS1	3.00
P2	3.80	S2	2.80	A2	3.60	SS2	3.20
P3	4.00	S3	3.00	A3	3.60	SS3	3.20
P4	3.60	S4	3.40	A4	3.20	SS4	3.60
P5	3.80	S5	2.60	A5	3.20	SS5	3.00
P6	3.60	S6	3.00	A6	2.60	SS6	2.40
P7	3.20	S7	3.00	A7	2.60	SS7	3.00
P8	3.00	S8	2.60	A8	2.40		
P9	3.00	S9	3.40	A9	3.60		
P10	3.40	S10	2.80	A10	2.80		
Total	34.40	Total	29.60	Total	30.60	Total	21.40

Element	Group Average	Group Mean	High	Low
P1	3.00	4	4	1
P2	3.80	4	4	3
P3	4.00	4	4	4
P4	3.60	4	4	3
P5	3.80	4	4	3
P6	3.60	4	4	2
P7	3.20	3	4	3
P8	3.00	3	4	2
P9	3.00	3	4	2
P10	3.40	4	4	2
S1	3.00	3	4	2
S2	2.80	4	4	1
S3	3.00	3	4	2
S4	3.40	4	4	2
S5	2.60	2	4	2
S6	3.00	4	4	1
S7	3.00	4	4	1



Inclusive Practices Improve Student Outcomes

“Almost **30 years of research** and experience has demonstrated that the education of children with disabilities can be made more effective by having high expectations for such children and **ensuring their access to the general education curriculum** in the regular classroom, to the maximum extent possible”

[20 U.S.C. Section 1400\(c\)\(5\)](#)



Why Improve Outcomes for Students with Disabilities?



[CBS News-- Unique partnership teaches life skills to people with intellectual disabilities 11/14/2024](#)



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