

MEMORANDUM

To: Glenna Gallo, Director of Special Education Services
From: Utah Special Education Advisory Panel (USEAP)
Subject: Inclusion
Date: July 10, 2014

In our role as an advisory panel, we would like to provide the following input and recommendations to the Special Education Section of the Utah State Office of Education to improve services for students with disabilities in the area of inclusion.

First, we would like to suggest a common definition of inclusion. Inclusion is active and meaningful participation within a school community individualized to the student's needs and aligned to the core curriculum.

With this definition in mind, we suggest LEAs follow these initiatives and adopt these principles to create a mission and vision statement that encourages and promotes inclusion as a priority in their school community.

- All students are general education students first.
- Inclusion ideas and practices are supported throughout the school from administration through the student body and school community in all classroom and school activities.
- The appropriate professional and parent education development is allocated to promote positive culture change.
- The school utilizes natural supports within the community, such as peer mentor programs, to foster an inclusive model.
- Each school selects an inclusion focus group advisory board that includes parents, special education teachers, general education teachers, and school administration, that is overseen by the LEA.
- Inclusion is a regular agenda item addressed at school community council meetings.
- Understand there is a continuum of inclusion practices and it is individual for each student.