

MOMS on the MOVE: Inclusive Education – Spring 2010

1. The promise of Inclusive education:

Inclusive approaches to education gear classrooms towards more effectively serving the unique needs of ALL students:

- Inclusive education brings all students together in one classroom and community, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, and seeks to maximize the potential of all students.
- Inclusion is an effort to make sure that diverse learners – those with disabilities, different languages and cultures, different homes and family lives, different interests and ways of learning – are exposed to teaching strategies that reach them as individual learners
- Inclusive schools ask teachers to provide appropriate individualized supports and services to all students without the stigmatization that comes with separation
- Teachers in inclusive classrooms vary their styles to enhance learning for all students

(More from the Nevada Partnership for Inclusive Education at: <http://nvpie.org/inclusive.html>)

2. The reality in BC:

- Many BC classrooms are far from realizing this ideal, and there are legitimate and growing concerns about cuts and underfunding leading to too many challenging students crowded into classrooms with inadequate supports and/or inadequately trained staff.
- **However, a 2009 SFU study found no negative impacts on typical students who attend inclusive classes with disabled students:**
- The study was done by the Centre for Education Research and Policy at Simon Fraser University, which compared achievement of successive cohorts of students, using data from the annual Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), and measured the effect of having more or fewer classmates with disabilities. "This research provides credible evidence that, whatever B.C.'s teachers are doing to support students with disabilities and their classmates, it is successful in ensuring that there are no detrimental side-effects of the inclusion policy," study co-author Brian Krauth stated.

Download the SFU study itself: http://www.sfu.ca/cepr/research/d_p_a_a.pdf

3. Ten Reasons for Inclusion

Human Rights

1. All children have the right to learn together.
2. Children should not be devalued or discriminated against by being excluded or sent away because of their disability
3. Disabled adults, describing themselves as special school survivors, are demanding an end to segregation.
4. There are no legitimate reasons to separate children for their education. Children belong together – with advantages and benefits for everyone. They do not need to be protected from each other.

Good Education

5. Research shows children do better, academically and socially in integrated settings.

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6. There is no teaching or care in a segregated school, which cannot take place in an ordinary school.
7. Given commitment and support, inclusive education is a more efficient use of education resources.

Good Social Sense

8. Segregation teaches children to be fearful, ignorant and breeds prejudice.
9. All children need an education that will help them develop relationships and prepare them for life in the mainstream.
10. Only inclusion has the potential to reduce fear and to build friendship, respect and understanding.

List prepared by: **Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education** (CSIE), England.

(Download their colour poster: <http://www.csie.org.uk/publications/ten-reasons-02.pdf>)

4. Inclusive education systems get better results for *all* students:

- Decades of studies have repeatedly documented the benefits for all students of inclusive education
- Inclusive education has been the standard approach for educating students with special needs around the world for the past two decades.
- **Finland, which has the world's most successful education outcomes for K-12 students, also has the world's most inclusive education system:** BBC News; Why do Finland's schools get the best results: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/world_news_america/8601207.stm

5. More information and resources:

- **Ministry of Education: Special Education:** http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/my_childs_special_needs.htm
- **Vancouver Parents for Successful Inclusion:** <http://www.vpsinclusion.net/index.html>
- **BCACL - Inclusive Education site:** <http://www.bcacl.org/our-priority-areas/inclusive-education>
- **Stop BC Education Cuts: Special Education:** <http://stopeducationcuts.org/communities/special-ed/>