

What Is Inclusion?

The "inclusive" approach to educating individuals with physical disabilities or intellectual disabilities is to include them in the general educational classroom, shoulder to shoulder with their age peers. Whatever individualized needs a student may have are addressed in the classroom, and not by segregating the student from their peer environment.

- Students with special needs are educated in the context of an "inclusive service delivery model" that may include curriculum modifications, support from the general education teacher, peer students, a teaching aid, or specialized teacher.
- The expectation is not that the student necessarily maintains the same academic pace as typical peers, rather that the student maintains progress towards their individual potential.
- Providing for students within an educational "system" or simply within a "building" is not sufficient to be considered inclusion.
- A large body of research demonstrates that children educated in inclusive environments achieve higher academic gains, and achieve more success after high school.
- A large body of research demonstrates that typical peers experience improved academic outcomes and social development.
- There have been no studies since the 1970's showing better outcomes for students with significant disabilities when they are educated in separate classrooms.