Inclusive Practices in Early Childhood and Early Childhood Special Education

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Great Start
January 14, 2015
Welcome

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Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, must be educated with children who are not disabled. Further, special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment may occur only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

(IDEA– P.L. 108–446 Section 612(a)(5) and (§ 300.114(a)(2))
Why Does Inclusion Matter?

- Federal Mandate
- Higher Outcomes
- Good for ALL children
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)

Today an ever-increasing number of infants and young children with and without disabilities play, develop, and learn together in a variety of places – homes, early childhood programs, neighborhoods, and other community-based settings. The notion that young children with disabilities' and their families are full members of the community reflects societal values about promoting opportunities for development and learning, and a sense of belonging for every child. It also reflects a reaction against previous educational practices of separating and isolating children with disabilities. Over time, in combination with certain regulations and protections under the law, these values and societal views regarding children birth to 8 with disabilities and their families have come to be known as early childhood inclusion. The most far-reaching effect of federal legislation on inclusion started over the past three decades has been to fundamentally change the way in which early childhood services ideally can be organized and delivered. However, because inclusion takes many different forms and implementation is influenced by a wide variety of factors, questions persist about the precise meaning of inclusion and its implications for policy, practice, and potential outcomes for children and families.

The lack of a shared national definition has contributed to misunderstandings about inclusion. DEC and NAEYC recognize that having a common understanding of what inclusion means is fundamentally important for determining what types of practices and supports are necessary to achieve high quality inclusion.

This DEC/NAEYC joint position statement offers a definition of early childhood inclusion. The definition was designed not as a litmus test for determining whether a program can be considered inclusive, but rather, as a blueprint for identifying the key components of high-quality inclusive programs. In addition, this document offers recommendations for how the position statement should be used by families, practitioners, administrators, policy makers, and others to improve early childhood services.
Indicator B–6

- Percent of children aged 3 through 5 with an IEP attending a:
  
  - A. Regular early childhood program and receiving majority of special education and related services in the regular early childhood program
  - B. Separate special education class, separate school, or residential facility
Looks at Both What and Where

What type of program is the child enrolled in?

Where is the majority of the special education and related services delivered?

- Regular early childhood programs
- Special education programs
- Neither regular or special education program (home or provider location)
Early Childhood Inclusion

Nancy Ely
Director of Early Childhood, Supervisor of Special Education
Farmington Public Schools

Lydia Moore
Early Childhood Special Education Consultant
Oakland Schools
INCLUSIVE PRESCHOOL EXPERIENCES IN OAKLAND COUNTY

- Different models
- Blended classrooms
  - Often operated as ECSE Programs
- Itinerant services within PreK classrooms
  - Often delivered as ECSE Services
ENSURING SUCCESS

- Develop an understanding of what is meant by “Early Childhood Inclusion.”
- Develop a set of principles that will guide all decision making.
- Include all stakeholders in the process.
- Keep children as the #1 priority.
OVERVIEW OF INCLUSION IN FARMINGTON

- Special education supports and services are provided in Pre-K / GSRP / Head Start classrooms.
  - ECSE teacher is responsible for educational direction of the instruction.
  - Ancillary services are provided per IEP
  - Para – educators provide adult assistance as needed

- For students requiring more intensive ECSE teacher support, other opportunities are in place.
Funding Streams

- GSRP
- Head Start
- Special Education foundation allowance (rule 340.1755)
- Special Education IDEA 619 funding
KEY PLAYERS

- All early childhood staff
- All special education staff
- Parents / families
- Building and district level administration
PREPARING STAFF FOR CHANGE

- Met with special education team to brainstorm skills children need to be successful in preschool.
- Met with all preschool staff to set expectations for team meetings, awareness level training on embedded instruction.
- Met with each classroom team (including SE and Pre-K teachers and paras, ancillary service providers, and teacher consultant) to set expectations for team meetings.
PREPARING FAMILIES FOR CHANGE

- Worked with families to be informed, and welcomed into the preschool classroom.
- Worked with preschool staff to understand families’ needs, priorities, and expectations.
- Worked with staff to help families understand the continuum of service.
PREPARING ADMINISTRATORS FOR CHANGE

- Developed a shared vision and mission for all children in our early childhood programs.
- Supported time for collaboration.
- Supported initial and ongoing professional development.
WHAT WE’VE LEARNED

- Changing how and where we provide special education requires a shift in thinking.

- While staff may desire specific ‘policies’ for services, inclusive services are individualized and may look different for every child based on individual needs.

- Communication and understanding about inclusion are necessary.

- It is important to be highly thoughtful when including children with higher risk factors with a group that is composed of children with risk factors.
WHAT WE’VE LEARNED CONT.

- Time for professional development and collaborative planning time between early childhood and special education staff are critical.
- Special education services need to focus on helping children move out of restrictive settings.
- IEP teams need to be careful not to move to a more restrictive setting at the time of Kindergarten transition.
- Multi-tiered systems of support, such as PBIS, can be implemented at preschool level.
- Extreme differences in salaries between ECE and ECSE teachers impacts teacher attitude regarding inclusion.
REQUIRED COMPONENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM INCLUDE

Knowledge

Skills

Dispositions
HELPFUL WEBSITES

- http://michigandec.org/ProfessionalDevelopment.aspx
- http://www.dec-spced.org/Store
- http://www.challengingbehavior.org/
THANK YOU!

Contact Information

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A Journey to Inclusive Programming

Shiawassee Regional Education Service District
Preschool Funding Streams for GSRP Partners in Shiawassee County

4 LEA'S AND 4 CBO'S

ONE LEA

2 LEAS

1 LEA

GSRP

Tuition

ECSE

Head Start

Tuition

Tuition
Shiawassee Regional Education Service
Inclusion Evolution

2010
Corunna
(2000+)

2013
Corunna
Owosso
(3000+)

2014
Corunna
Owosso
Durand
Timing is everything

• Building Capacity
  • No Child Sitting at Home

• School Readiness Advisory Committee

• Families
Foundation

• Engaging Local Districts
  • Superintendents
  • Business – Finance
  • Principals
• Early Childhood
  • ECSE
  • GSRP
Road Blocks

• Spending Special Education Dollars on Special Education Students
• How to Write “it” in the IEP
• Over use of rule 55
• Recommitment
Data - Corunna

Outcome Data

- Fully Inclusive programming in a 3 year period
- Acceptance into Kindergarten
  - Individualized Transition
  - Plan/Needs Matrix
- Resource Room Placement
  - 11/12 7 students
  - 12/13 4 students
  - 13/14 2 students
- Dismissed from Services
  - 11/12 No children dismissed from services
  - 12/13 2 Children dismissed from teacher services
  - 13/14 1 Child dismissed from all services and 2 children dismissed from teacher services
## Data – Shiawassee County Wide

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<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Enrollment Site Name</th>
<th>Pre-School Participation Year</th>
<th>Pre-School Participation Program Code</th>
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<th>DIBELS Next Grade K End Composite Score</th>
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Questions?