

TeachME Professional Development

Policy Update on Including Students with Disabilities in Preschool Programs

Purpose

1. It is the position of the U.S. Department of Education that all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, where they are provided with individualized and appropriate support in:

- A. Promoting and expanding potential
 - B. Developing self-motivation for learning
 - C. Meeting high expectations
 - D. Enhancing cognitive, language, and physical development
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2. Inclusion in early childhood programs can set a trajectory for inclusion across the life course, making it critical that we include individuals with disabilities in all facets of society from birth.

- A. True
 - B. False
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Overview

3. Children with disabilities and their families continue to face significant barriers to accessing inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, which, as the authors report, is troubling for each of the following reasons EXCEPT:

- A. Equal opportunity is one of America's most cherished ideals, and being meaningfully included as a member of society is the first step to equal opportunity and is every person's right—a right supported by our laws
- B. Although preliminary research shows that operating inclusive early childhood programs is more expensive than operating separate early childhood programs for children with disabilities, the overall benefits have shown to outweigh the financial discrepancies
- C. Research indicates that early childhood inclusion is beneficial to children with and without disabilities
- D. Meaningful inclusion can support children with disabilities in reaching their full potential resulting in broad societal benefits, including higher productivity in adulthood

and fewer resources spent on interventions and public assistance later in life

The Foundation for Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs-The Scientific Base for the Benefits of Inclusion

4. Numerous studies have shown that children with disabilities in inclusive settings experienced greater cognitive and communication development than children with disabilities who were in separate settings, with this being particularly apparent among children with less significant disabilities.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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5. Children without disabilities can also benefit from inclusive early childhood programs because:

- A. They learn to demonstrate greater compassion and empathy, can have a more positive perception of children with disabilities, and can also develop a better understanding of diversity and disability as concepts**
 - B. When programs and teachers have an advanced understanding and capacity for individualizing learning and can provide appropriate developmental supports for each child, all children can benefit**
 - C. Children without disabilities in high-quality inclusive early childhood settings also benefit from developmental specialists who can identify and address delays in development that might otherwise not be identified**
 - D. All of the above**
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The Legal Foundation for Inclusion

6. Under Part B of the IDEA, special education and related services are to be made available to all children with disabilities ages three through 21, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the least restrictive environment (LRE) factoring in an individual child's unique strengths and needs.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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Challenges to Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs

7. The most frequently reported barrier to early childhood inclusion is the large variability in the training, education, and expertise of the early childhood workforce,

which makes inclusion unrealistic in many settings.

- A. True
 - B. False
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8. Children with disabilities, more than other children, may have increased interface across several systems, and may therefore be disproportionately affected by the lack of comprehensive services offered in any one system.

- A. True
 - B. False
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The Path Ahead: Partnering to Build a Nationwide Culture of Inclusion

9. Which of the following is NOT one of the characteristics of an early childhood system that considers the principles of access, participation, and support?

- A. Access refers to removing structural, physical, or communicative-related barriers to full participation
 - B. Participation refers to strategies used to promote children's sense of self, a positive attitude toward school, and self-direction and discipline
 - C. Support refers to the broader system that enables these efforts, including program/school-family partnerships and professional development
 - D. Such systems should be designed in ways that are beneficial to all children in their communities
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Recommendations for State Action-Ensure State Policies Support High-Quality Inclusion

10. Experts recommend that states consider policies that include culturally and linguistically responsive specialized services across early childhood programs, and that the design of inclusive early childhood programs are guided by the principle of 'the person not the label.'

- A. True
 - B. False
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Ensure that State Certifications, Credentials, and Workforce Preparation Programs have a Strong Focus on Inclusion and Supporting Children With Disabilities

11. Higher education programs should ensure that early childhood preparation degree programs include specific pedagogy for children with disabilities, preferably through supplemental courses or a separate specialized program, which are generally more effective than experiences that are woven throughout the entire curriculum.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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12. Since a program's lack of capacity to manage challenging behavior or social-emotional developmental delays may be a barrier to inclusion, all early childhood programs should have access to specialists who can build capacity in working with young children, with an emphasis on fostering social-emotional and behavioral health.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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Raise Public Awareness

13. States should partner with community leaders to communicate the benefits of early childhood inclusion, affirm the laws and research that provide the foundation for inclusion, and set the expectation that the community is responsible for ensuring that all children have access to high-quality early childhood programs and:

- A. That they have the individualized supports they need to fully participate in those programs**
 - B. That school professionals have adequate knowledge and training**
 - C. That parents have critical information needed about these programs**
 - D. None of the above**
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Recommendations for Local Action-Enhance Professional Development

14. High-quality staff should have a strong philosophy of developing and designing physical environments to be accessible to the greatest extent possible, to the people who use them, without the need for adaptation, which is known as a:

- A. Global framework**
 - B. Comprehensive model**
 - C. Universal design**
 - D. Inclusive scheme**
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15. Early interventionists, early childhood special educators, and related services personnel play a unique role in supporting young children's access to and participation in inclusive early childhood programs, and should be directed to co-teach and coach early childhood professionals to encourage inclusive educational environments.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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Ensure Access to Specialized Supports

16. Specialized supports delivered by experts should be culturally and linguistically responsive to meet the diverse needs of providers and teachers, and the children and families whom they serve.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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17. Each of the following is a correct statement about formal collaborations between public and private community partners, such as the medical home and developmental specialists EXCEPT:

- A. They may improve screening, evaluation, and referral systems**
 - B. They encourage data sharing**
 - C. They may help ensure children who need additional supports receive them as soon as possible**
 - D. They may facilitate providing intensive coordinated services designed to meet children's specific social-emotional and behavioral health needs, which are referred to as synchronized services**
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APPENDIX 2: Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) and Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)

18. ECMHC is a multi-level preventive intervention that has been shown to be effective in increasing children's social skills, reducing children's challenging behavior, preventing preschool suspensions and expulsions, improving child-adult relationships, and identifying child concerns early.

- A. True**
 - B. False**
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