

Inclusionary Practices and Systems:

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES TO BUILD AND SUSTAIN INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS

WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES?

One of the goals of the demonstration sites, is to have model demonstration site schools to provide professional development to visitors. These schools were selected because they serve as statewide exemplars, showcasing the benefits of inclusionary practices on student outcomes. Visitors engage in a transformational learning experience to observe inclusionary practices in action and hear the varying inclusive journeys of each site. Consistent feedback from visitors told us there was a need to further understand specific inclusionary practices and guidance of where to even begin in their own schools and districts.

We took what we learned from the demonstration sites and created the Principles and Practices to Build and Sustain Inclusive Schools tool. Principles and practices are framed around 7 core sections. Each section contains specific inclusionary practices. Supporting artifacts and resources provide deeper context for each inclusionary practice.



WHY ARE THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES IMPORTANT?

The Principles and Practices tool is helpful to see what one means when they refer to “inclusionary practices.” Inclusionary practices are extensive and should be a throughline across our systems of education to impact teaching and learning, leadership, family and community engagement.

The tool is formatted as an assessment tool allowing individuals and/or school teams to self-assess and rate each item by noting which ones are “in place” “in progress” or “not in place” and scoring results. Scoring can then be used to appreciate inclusionary practices that are working well and to identify growth areas and next steps.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

Items appearing in bold text denote Fast Track Items. These inclusionary practice items were identified as high leverage and high priority in the inclusive journey to potentially target where to start. So, if school team members and districts are unsure of where to start, they can begin with fast track items that were rated as “not in place” or “in progress.”

CASE STUDY: EVERGREEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Evergreen Public Schools is a district located in Vancouver, WA. Home to Evergreen High School which is one of our high school demonstration sites. As Evergreen Public Schools continues on their inclusive journey, they are focused on building capacity within the district to provide inclusive and equitable education for all students. Leadership and stakeholders are taking a strategic and intentional approach to shifting systems to support inclusion at the elementary level. To begin, they engaged site leadership to provide feedback and input on a blueprint for systems change needs and professional development. As part of their process, they took the Principles and Practices to Build and Sustain Inclusive Schools tool and converted to a google form. This alternative survey format provided for an efficient way to both self-assess and view scoring results. This is also an example of utilizing the tool to gain more extensive information on district wide inclusionary practices.

Evergreen Public Schools is an outstanding example of how districts, and ones that include an IPP demonstration site, are making strides to build capacity within their own districts. As they continue on their path, Evergreen Schools is beginning at the elementary level with a commitment to returning all students to their neighborhood school. Thus, each and every student will be able to attend school within their neighborhood with their peers. Additional benefits for families are to be connected to their local community network.

Large scale change occurs over time and in phases. Evergreen Schools is demonstrating how the work to change systems is extensive but achievable. As they continue and progress beyond elementary, they will ensure vertical alignment across the grade levels from preschool through high school and transition services. As Evergreen Schools continues on their path, the demonstration sites project will seek to help them share their story. In doing this others will learn and be empowered and informed and in turn expand inclusionary practices statewide.

RESOURCES

1. See Artifacts found in **Principles and Practices to Build and Sustain Inclusive Schools**

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