Check for updates

Feature Article

Principles and Practices: An Inquiry-Based Approach to Building and Sustaining Inclusive Schools

Inclusive Practices
2026, Vol. 5(4) 91–104
© The Author(s) 2026
Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/27324745261468318
journals.sagepub.com/home/ipx
Sage

RinaMarie Leon-Guerrero, PhD[1], Christina Nowak Constantouros, PhD[1], Naomi Fair, PhD[2], and Cassie Martin, PhD[3]

Abstract

Our manuscript introduces The Principles and Practices to Build and Sustain Inclusive Schools (P & P) tool, providing a road map for educational systems change. The P & P tool is grounded in appreciative inquiry and approaches systems change by taking a strengths-based approach and celebrating practices that are working well. The P & P tool presents seven principles and supporting practices through a lens of appreciative inquiry and belonging to support building and sustaining inclusive schools and systems. The manuscript outlines flexible uses of the tool which allows users to approach in a way that is meaningful for their own context. In addition, the tool provides guidance on cycles of inquiry, prioritizing, and action planning to guide users along their own journey.

Keywords

inclusive education, educational assessment, inclusion, systems change, program evaluation

Inclusive education is not about placing students with disabilities in general education classrooms. Rather, it requires addressing the practices, beliefs, and systems that create exclusion and inequity.

Sustainable inclusion requires schools to transform their cultures and structures to ensure belonging and success for all students.

Introduction

In the United States, inclusive education is often viewed as a special education reform that aims to educate students with disabilities within general education classrooms (Artiles & Kozleski, 2016). However, this framing of inclusive education as solely an issue of classroom placement overlooks the persistence of deficit-oriented beliefs, practices, and structures within classrooms and schools that emphasize making "students less intrusive rather than to make schools more inclusive" (Erevelles, 2011, p. 2158). This has contributed to significant consequences for students with extensive support needs, particularly those with multiple marginalized identities, who continue to be disproportionately assigned to segregated special education classroom settings when classrooms are not designed with their learning and belonging in mind (Kulkarni et al., 2021; Kurth et al., 2014; Mccabe et al., 2020).

To address these ongoing inequities, we assert that educators, schools, and districts should conceptualize and approach inclusive education in ways that not only disrupt this legacy of segregation but also pursue more than the mere presence of students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Ashby & Woodfield, 2019; Olson et al., 2016). Doing so means taking a critical, reflective, and appreciative lens to classroom, school, and district contexts to collaboratively question, "inclusion into what?" (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007). School-based teams can work to recognize and transform long-standing inequitable beliefs, practices, and structures that uphold deficit-based approaches in their local contexts while simultaneously building on the strengths that already exist (Kozleski et al., 2020; Siuty, 2019). Moving a school or district along a path toward equity-based inclusion requires a context-based or ecological approach.

In this paper, we will introduce the *Principles and Practices to Build and Sustain Inclusive Schools* tool (P & P; Supplemental Appendix A). Grounded in the framework of Appreciative Inquiry, this tool supports teams through a collaborative process to recognize and transform the beliefs, practices, and structures that contribute

[1]University of Washington, Seattle, USA
[2]Rutgers University–Camden, NJ, USA
[3]Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia, WA, USA

Corresponding Author:
RinaMarie Leon-Guerrero, Haring Center for Inclusive Education, University of Washington, Box 353600, Seattle, WA 98195, USA.
Email: rinalg@uw.edu

to the exclusion and marginalization of disabled and multiple-marginalized-identity students who experience harm at the intersection of multiple systems of oppression (Annamma et al., 2013; Kozleski et al., 2020). Equally as important, it is our hope that this tool will be used not only to initiate such processes but also to sustain the deep cultural shifts required to support inclusive and just educational communities (Baglieri et al., 2011).

From Research to Practice: Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is an inquiry-based measure that draws upon action-based research and organizational development methods to integrate philosophy, theory, practice, and research in an intentional effort to reduce traditional gaps between each (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Cooperrider et al., 2008). The Appreciative Inquiry process includes five stages or cycles called the 5-D process of Appreciative Inquiry. The five stages/cycles bring people together to *Define*, *Discover*, *Dream*, *Design*, and establish a *Destiny* toward what will be (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). Engagement with the 5-D process of Appreciative Inquiry supports participants across an entire system in uniting theory and practice. This collaborative process occurs when the focus shifts away from changing people, but rather toward visioning a new future that is inclusive of all.

The 5-D process emphasizes the importance of strengths-based planning to develop a shared vision and subsequent action plan around what is working well versus entertaining the potential for deficit-minded fixations on barriers (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Leveraging a strengths-based mind-set throughout the 5-D process does not mean that problems will not be acknowledged, but that focus is shifted away from narratives that blame students for ongoing challenges (Cooperrider et al., 2008). Furthermore, this paradigm shift is supported by Appreciative Inquiry as it positions school teams as action researchers rather than fixers of students, an ableist ideology prevalent in special education programs. Leveraging an appreciative mind-set can support and sustain ongoing reflection-to-action processes required of inclusive transformation to address the long-standing exclusion and educational inequities experienced by students with extensive support needs, particularly those who experience multiple forms of marginalization.

In other words, Appreciative Inquiry provides a focused perspective, highlighting positive forces and factors at work while also placing emphasis on the value and unique expertise and perspective every member of the organization brings to the table. Recent research (Franzen & Benavides, 2023; Garrett, 2022; Olander, 2019) demonstrates how school communities can support justice-oriented reform through the collection and assessment of the many positive dimensions of an organization's performance. These authors demonstrate how taking an appreciative lens uncovers the practices that are in place within a given organization which produces positive momentum toward dismantling systemic barriers, thus disrupting the history of positioning students as the problem (Garrett, 2022). Appreciative Inquiry's action-oriented approach has been shown to support the growth and development of more inclusive strengths-based and student-centered mindsets in teachers moving away from punishment approaches (Olander, 2019). Finally, this inquiry-based measure supported the creation of inquiry-based conditions for students to harness curiosity and humility while examining power dynamics in support of developing ideologies around the importance of collective action and social responsibility (Franzen & Benavides, 2023). Thus, Appreciative Inquiry's transformative process toward sustainable change is supported through the development of student-centered ideologies to facilitate collaborative teams and highlight learning theories to think creatively about diversity, equity, and inclusion to enhance student learning (Franzen & Benavides, 2023).

This collective work includes continuous cycles of reflection, planning, and action through which teams can visualize and enact cohesive and context-based paths toward equity-driven inclusion (DeMatthews et al., 2021; Kozleski et al., 2020). With Appreciative Inquiry as the guiding framework, we present the P & P tool. This tool has been designed to support school teams as they engage in this necessary and complex collective work. In the sections that follow, we will first introduce the background of the tool's development. Then we will describe each of the seven principles through specific examples and narratives from individuals, school teams, and districts engaging in this work. Through these practical examples, it is our intent that researchers, practitioners, and others will be able to envision how they might engage in these processes within their own contexts and spheres of influence. More specifically, we hope this tool inspires collaboration across perspectives and positions, while remaining grounded in commitments to the transformative work of inclusive education in both research and practice. We hope that researchers, practitioners, and others will be able to invite a greater diversity of perspectives about the nature of disability and recognize the profound implications this raises for future inclusive educational research leading the way for transformational change (Baglieri et al., 2011).

Origin of the Principles and Practices Tool

In 2019, Washington state was ranked 1 of the 10 least inclusive states in the nation (National Council on Disability, 2018). To change this trajectory, the Washington State Legislature provided the Office of the Superintendent

of Public Instruction (OSPI) with grant funding to increase the capacity of educators to implement and sustain inclusive opportunities for all students. A unique feature was the designation of demonstration school sites.

Demonstration sites are schools that highlight educational practices in application within the context of the school's systems, structures, and community (Fullan, 2006; Grierson & Gallagher, 2009). Over time, demonstration sites are real-time examples of dynamic systems change as schools adjust year to year to meet student needs and refine inclusive systems and structures. In this grant, demonstration sites were selected for their strong implementation of inclusive practices. An integral part of the grant is the commitment of demonstration sites to engage in ongoing reflection, action planning, and professional development, which also involves modeling this commitment to visitors. Each demonstration site participates in professional development with the support of technical assistance and coaching. This process of continual growth and change underscores the necessity of inquiry-to-action processes as schools pursue more inclusive and just learning environments for students. Demonstration sites were invited to engage in their own Appreciative Inquiry process to discover their strengths and practices that were working well, dreaming to imagine what their inclusive school could be and actively designing that vision through action planning.

These inclusive sites, which include early learning through secondary grades, provide transformational professional development training to visiting school and district teams to observe inclusionary practices in action to support inclusive systems change in visitors' own contexts. At the start of visits, many visitors sought clarity on the meaning of "inclusionary practices," as the term can have different interpretations that evolve over time. Despite observing inclusive practices at demonstration sites, visitors often struggled with how to apply these ideas in their contexts. The struggle was related to barriers of needing conceptual clarity regarding inclusive practices and a framework or roadmap to guide application of those inclusive practices in their own context. In response, our team developed the P & P tool (Martin et al., 2023) grounded in Appreciative Inquiry and in collaboration with demonstration sites to help schools create and sustain inclusive environments.

Overview of the Principles and Practices Tool

The P & P tool provides a road map to support ongoing reflection and action planning "through continuous cycles of analyzing, disrupting, and restructuring social processes that produce inequity" (Siuty, 2019, p. 1033). Characteristic of critical inclusion (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007), these continuous cycles of reflection and action support teams to self-assess the inclusionary principles and supporting practices occurring in their contexts and to revisit how the process is supporting those students who have and continue to be most marginalized, including students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (Roberts et al., 2024); Black, Brown, and Indigenous students; and those who have multiple-marginalized identities (Annamma et al., 2013). A critically inclusive lens in the context of Appreciative Inquiry means reckoning with the ways students experience marginalization across multiple systems of oppression and at the intersection of those systems, including ableism, racism, linguicism, and others. This lens allows teams to keep the goal of addressing these systems in mind while attending closely to both what is working well and what can be done next. To do so, the P & P tool pulls statements from research on belonging to support definitions of inclusion, what it means for students to feel included, and how belonging correlates to student achievement (Carter & Biggs, 2021; Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). Thus, this tool presents inclusionary principles and practices through a lens of Appreciative Inquiry and belonging to support inclusive schools and systems, considering how all students, staff, family, and community members both experience belonging and invite others to belong.

Teachers, school teams, families, and other members of students' circles of support can often feel disconnected from broader school and district-wide reform processes. Appreciative Inquiry, however, is a framework that centers the collaborative inquiry of diverse teams seeking to address intersectional inequities. This framework prioritizes processes that uplift strengths to sustain ongoing and expanding efforts of inclusive transformation (Garrett, 2022). The P & P tool has thus been intentionally designed to support this Appreciative Inquiry process. More specifically, the tool includes seven principles and supporting practices, all of which have been documented extensively within inclusive education literature as pivotal components for building and sustaining inclusive schools (Figure 1). The seven principles highlighted in this tool include (a) inclusive mission and vision; (b) inclusive building schedule; (c) collaborative structures; (d) inclusive instructional practices; (e) flexible service delivery; (f) inclusive individual education programs; and (g) sustained family and community engagement. In the sections that follow, we will define each principle and provide implementation examples from classrooms, schools, and districts across Washington State to demonstrate how this tool can be used to support a classroom, school, or district journey toward inclusive education.

Principle 1: Inclusive Mission and Vision

The P & P tool's first principle begins with examining the inclusionary principle of inclusive mission and vision.

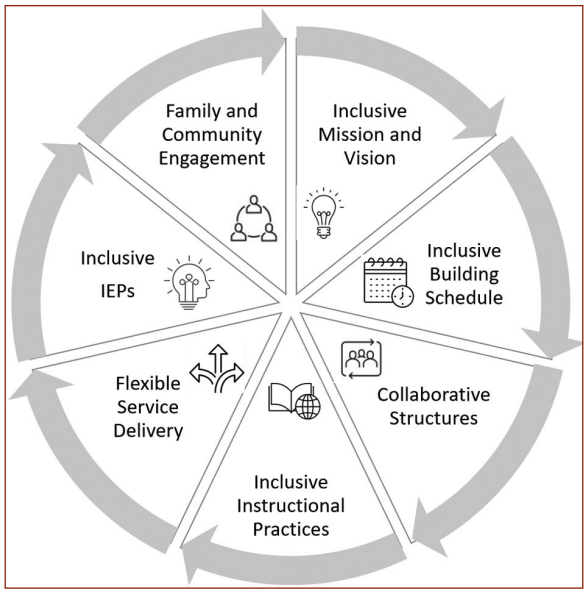


Figure 1. The seven principles and practices to build and sustain inclusive schools.
Note. This figure presents the seven guiding principles of the P & P tool. Separately, each principle is supported by a variety of inclusive practices, adding to the scalability of the work. Altogether, all the principles combine to support sustainability. The arrows indicate that the tool is designed to be used flexibly with no specific starting point.

The mission and vision should integrate an equity-based framing of inclusion, which is represented across all action planning, curriculum, and materials (Berry, 2011). This includes prioritizing antiracism, antiableism, and multilingual practices. Guiding any mission and vision is the belief that all students are general education students first and foremost (Berry, 2011). Policies and practices should continuously reflect the school and/or district's mission and vision statement. Therefore, the mission and vision truly guide and frame inclusive schools. If there is a misalignment between practices and the mission and vision, that may indicate the need to refine and even recreate the mission and vision statement. As statements should be clear and concise, this can prove challenging to condense and maintain intent and impact into a few sentences. In the creation of an inclusion mission and vision, collaboration among a diverse group is essential to ensure voices are heard and reflected in the vision statement (Smith & Leonard, 2005). The result is that inclusive education is clearly defined, and the definition is shared by all staff, students, and community members.

Delivering on their mission and vision is a key practice of distributive leadership to engage partners across the school community contributing to school success (Hoppey & McLeskey, 2013). A thoughtful leader recognizes the collective efficacy necessary to foster a sustainable community where mission and vision are actualized and go beyond words on a plaque. In one small rural school district, their mission and vision are,

> Our Mission: The reason we are here. Our Mission is High School PLUS for EVERY student that walks through our doors. Our Vision: The school we want to become. We will be a Safe, Inclusive, Purposeful school where ALL students feel Challenged, Supported, and that they Belong.

Recognizing a commitment to prepare all students for postsecondary experiences, this high school mission stressed the concepts of "all" and "plus" with an intentional focus on preparing each and every student for success beyond high school. This high school further defines its core values and how those beliefs show up in actions, with a focus on increasing attendance and graduation rates and closing the gap between students receiving special education services and multilanguage learners. Lifting up an inclusive mission and vision that is outward facing and shared sets the stage to guide and support creating an inclusive building schedule, explained in Principle 2.

Principle 2: Inclusive Building Schedule

An inclusive building schedule is one inclusionary practice that creates the structure and opportunities for a variety of inclusive practices to occur (Causton et al., 2023). The building schedule has long been referred to as a master schedule. As intentional language calls for continuous shifts, in this tool, we use the term inclusive building schedule. Inclusive building schedules provide structural support that identifies what content students learn, where they learn, and who they learn from at any given time in their school day (Kussin, 2008). However, an inclusive building schedule must go beyond organizing the daily timing of school activities. Expanding on traditional master schedules, inclusive building schedules are more focused on how to support high-quality instruction that accounts for the range of diversity in schools (Giangreco & Suter, 2015). This is done by reflecting on four essential pieces: school mission and vision, school priorities, centering students, and collaborative structures (Buckman et al., 1995).

When laying the foundation of an inclusive building schedule, prioritization of schoolwide inclusionary practices (i.e., social-emotional learning, community building, intervention, and acceleration blocks, or coteach partnerships) must occur. For example, if all students having access to core instruction is a school priority, any intervention opportunities should be scheduled in addition to, not instead of, core instructional times. Building schedules too often are dictated by adult schedules and needs. This runs counter to prioritizing student needs (Giangreco & Suter, 2015). Rather, the building schedule should center the needs of students first, which come to be known through building strong relationships with students and families, engaging in person-centered instructional and

assessment approaches, and through sustained family and community engagement, each of which will be discussed further in the sections that follow. Finally, building schedules should include built-in collaboration times. We acknowledge that inclusive practices are an inherently collaborative endeavor; thus, schedules must protect collaboration as an essential practice to break down the walls that have historically excluded the most marginalized students (Baglieri & Shapiro, 2017). Part of the collaboration considers a building schedule that maximizes school resources and utilizes staff and spaces to their full potential. Having flexible spaces allows for a variety of uses and flexible service delivery. Instead of students receiving services in fixed spaces, spaces flex to meet the needs of students. This maximizes school resources, reduces unnecessary student transitions, and increases instructional time. Building schedules should be visible to all staff and clearly show where all staff and support are throughout the day.

One school leader likened the process of creating an inclusive building schedule to laying a stone path across a river. Begin with the nonnegotiables (e.g., intervention blocks and collaboration times) as foundational stones, then fit in more flexible elements like specialist schedules. While some constraints such as early release days or shared staff across buildings are fixed, the key is identifying what must remain constant and what can flex to create the most effective and inclusive path forward for all students. This student-centered approach is supported through collaborative commitments that are inherent to inclusive schools as explained in Principle 3.

Principle 3: Collaborative Structures

Educators with backgrounds in general education, special education, specialists, therapists, counselors, and beyond all have important expertise and knowledge that enrich collaboration and lead to better inclusive experiences for students and adults. Historically, our school system has siloed educators, staff, departments, activities, and community activities. When adults are separate, students are separate as well (Gaylord et al., 2003). Educators and family members are adept at finding ways to collaborate with limited time. However, this does not always lead to ongoing and deeper collaboration. To build capacity for strong equity-based collaboration, time should be devoted to supporting teachers in their teams through conversations and by modeling the way to interrupt inequities (Aguilar, 2016).

For collaboration to happen, building schedules must create and protect collaborative times. Coplanning, common planning time, grade-level planning, professional learning communities, department planning, and so on must be times that regularly occur. During collaborative times, guidance on how to best use the time is beneficial. Structures may include coassessment protocols, data analysis protocols, and processes for guiding questions. These collaborative structures naturally bring about a shift in roles and responsibilities, requiring clarity and agreement on roles and responsibilities across teams to be clearly defined (Murawski, 2012). Engagement in high-quality collaborative plans can be a transformative process that supports growth toward sustainable change (Franzen & Benavides, 2023).

At an urban elementary demonstration site, weekly grade-level band common planning time is utilized for lesson planning, collaboration for service delivery, reviewing student data, and making data-based decisions. A schoolwide process guides grade-level teams to consider using Universal Design for Learning (UDL; CAST, 2018) to plan lessons, create access points, and review data at regular intervals to inform any reset, intervention, or acceleration small groups, referred to as "success groups." Although each grade-level team has autonomy and choice in representation, expectations from building leadership are clear and consistent. This further ensures that all students, no matter grade or teacher, experience consistency from schoolwide collaborative structures. Specific instructional practices developed in collaboration set the stage for Principle 4, inclusive instructional practices.

Principle 4: Inclusive Instructional Practices

Principle 4 looks at inclusive instructional practices. Often inclusive practices or the term inclusion has been associated with students with disabilities. We broaden the definition of inclusion to recognize not only the ways they experience oppression through intersecting systems but also the multidimensionality of learners' identities. Inclusive instructional practices recognize learner variability and are intended to reach all students. Planning for all students starts with a clearly defined multitiered system of support (MTSS). MTSS draws from a public health approach focused on prevention. In education, this means providing strong foundations for all students and then adding available additional support as and when needed for students (Sugai et al., 2019). MTSS includes three tiers that operate fluidly. Tier 1 supports for all students include UDL, universal communication, data analysis protocols, collaboration, and prioritizing the focus of instructional practices on instruction and prevention. Tier 1 instruction should also center asset-based pedagogies alongside UDL, recognizing that providing students with academic supports goes hand in hand with recognizing and sustaining the many diverse assets that they already hold (Flint & Jaggers, 2021; Waitoller & Thorius, 2016). Additional Tier 2 supports are available as needed for some students and may include smaller groups for

targeted intervention or acceleration. Tier 3 supports, available as needed, may include individualized positive behavior support plans or other supports that require more instructional time. MTSS tiers are available to all students and are additive rather than one being in replacement of the other. We recognize that strengthening a robust MTSS system is often an ongoing work in progress; however, MTSS tiers are critical to support inclusive practices. Fixsen et al. (2005) describe the process of MTSS as a complex process that requires facilitating meaningful and sustainable systems-level change which requires an understanding of the components associated with the evidence-based program (e.g., MTSS), effective implementation practices.

Inclusive instructional practices must begin with building a solid foundation of Tier 1 universal support. Seen across all the demonstration sites, this means beginning with a strong base level of instructional practices which include a UDL. In one large urban school with learners communicating with multiple modalities, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices are part of the school's strong Tier 1 foundation. Classroom instruction and visuals throughout the building spaces include visuals that align with the communication software icons. All students can engage in their daily instruction and class activities in a variety of ways. In this way, a UDL and AAC devices highlight foundational Tier 1 practices. Clearly defined MTSS structures allow for maximizing instructional time and flexible service delivery, our fifth inclusionary principle.

Principle 5: Flexible Service Delivery

Flexible service delivery looks at both physical spaces and what is available to students within those spaces. Physically, flexible spaces are spaces that are available to all students, and the use of the space flexes to meet student needs. Classrooms are also organized to allow for flexible groupings such as small or larger groups. For example, pods or communal areas may be used for small-group instruction at one point in the day and spots for individual spaces at another point in the day. In addition, considering the physical space, tools to support engagement are provided (i.e., movement breaks, wiggle cushions, assistive technology, or high-interest materials).

All students are general education students, therefore keeping in line with the intent of IEPs; the IEP should allow for students to have access to the general education curriculum and peers as much as possible (IRIS Center, 2022). As educators seek to deliver services in the context of general education classes and content, they can consider what flexible services and supports they can bring to students rather than necessitating students to transition to other spaces to access needed services and support. This flexible service delivery also includes related service providers who provide specially designed instruction in general education classrooms within the context of daily school routines and activities.

Building on the previous example, which highlights strong Tier 1 UDL, flexible service delivery strengthens the efficacy of tiered practices. Flexing adults to move to students and prioritizing students remaining in their general education classes, special education teachers, speech and language pathologists (SLP), and physical therapists (PTs) provide services in the classroom. In addition, their expertise is leveraged to support all students. This maximizes resources to have highly trained educators and therapists working directly with all students. In addition, flexing staff, the vital role of modeling instructional practices for all staff, allows other educators to support students throughout their day. A student's individualized education goals are supported throughout their day, across all peers and teachers, versus being limited to services delivered in a pull-out service delivery model in isolated settings.

Principle 6: Inclusive Individual Education Programs

Individual education plans (IEPs) can often highlight skill deficits rather than strengths-based thinking (Kurth et al., 2022). The P & P tool, however, utilizes a strengths-based approach to IEP development, which extends to development of IEP goals, progress updates, and evaluations. It is important to presume competence among all students when creating IEPs. Presuming competence recognizes that learners have the capacity, regardless of disability, are intellectually capable, and have the skills and the motivation to manifest just as anyone in daily life (Biklen & Burke, 2006). Student voice must be at the forefront of the development of IEP and goals. Person-centered planning approaches (O'Brien & O'Brien, 2000; Wells & Sheehey, 2012) and student-led IEPs (PAVE, n.d.) ensure students are at the center of their IEP. In addition, families and students' circles of support are critical partners in a child's IEP and should be involved and valued as collaborators in the IEP creation process.

At one medium-sized urban elementary school, family members and classroom teachers sought support as to how best to address IEP goals. The school served an average of 400 students, grades kindergarten to fifth grade, with 12% receiving IEP services. In the initial IEP goal conversations, it was quickly uncovered that the support they were seeking around accommodations and modifications or service delivery outside of the student's general education context needed to be reframed. Rather than focusing on accommodations, it was essential to focus on how the goals were cocreated. If IEP goals were first

aligned to the three areas of grade-level content, daily routines of students, and social opportunities, this approach would shift the role of IEP goals from supplemental to school curriculum to the student's complete educational experience (Vandercook et al., 2021). Ideally, IEP goals should be codeveloped in partnership with family members, students, special education teachers, general education teachers, and related service providers. This student shared a clear vision of their hopes and dreams both now and beyond high school. By cocreating an IEP that included student voice, family priorities, and standards-based IEP goals, the student's educational plan shifted from being focused and led by a noninclusive IEP to the student's education focused on their grade-level curriculum, daily routines, and meaningful social opportunities. Further examples of family engagement are explained in Principle 7.

Principle 7: Sustained family and community engagement

The P & P tool intentionally incorporates family and community engagement throughout all principles. It is also strategically positioned as a stand-alone principle to drive home the point that family and community engagement is ongoing and a component of every aspect of school and community. This includes home and school modes of communication and all school activities including extracurriculars and events outside of school hours.

As we seek to dismantle inequities, we need to acknowledge that for many students and their families, inequitable systems may be all they have known and have been what educators and leaders have offered forward as best practices. This may have included being placed in segregated classrooms, limited access to grade-level instruction, and/or families without a voice in their child's educational experience. This shift to not only own the misguided efforts but also build trust to move forward to equitable and inclusive schools must be acknowledged. It is only through meaningful engagement and building trust with students and their families that these conversations can occur. As mentioned in inclusive IEPs (Principle 6), families should be seen as codesigners in their child's education and valued for their expertise and problem-solving abilities (Ishimaru, 2019). This is first done by creating a culture through which families are invited and welcomed into all school communities and activities.

In one rural high school, coaches reached out to students who had not historically participated in school sports to invite and encourage them to check out certain sports or clubs. Because of this simple outreach, students who had not previously viewed themselves as athletes or artists showed up in spaces that, although always accessible, did not seem like an option. This encourages more students to participate in sports and clubs of various interests. This expands community, social networks, and larger belonging in a school community for both students and their families.

As previously mentioned, this tool was designed to help bring inclusivity from theory to practice: to appreciate what is already occurring in a system and further define and dream where to go next. Ideas as to how to use a specific practice at any age level have been considered and shared through the previously mentioned narrative examples and are also included in Table 1. The additional examples in Table 1 show how a specific principle and supporting practice have been interpreted and implemented by different teams across the different age ranges of a district system (i.e., early learning, elementary, and secondary). This encourages vertical alignment within a system to continue to scale and sustain the work.

Action Plan and Cycles of Inquiry

The P & P was created in response to two surfacing needs of visitors. The first need was to have access to clearly defined inclusive practices. In response to this need, we have outlined and organized inclusive practices across the seven principles explored previously. Second, we understood there to be a desire for a roadmap that schools and districts could use to ground their work in Appreciative Inquiry's strengths-based approach to inclusive transformations. Such a process prioritizes generating hope, excitement, and renewed investment in the collective effort to plan next steps that are driven by a school community's strengths. The roadmap that the P & P tool provides emphasizes dialogue as the path through which teams can envision and enact possibilities for change (Bushe, 2012), while remaining deeply attentive to the ways such possibilities will never be perfect. This tool allows for teams to engage in ongoing revision, with the needs of students and a deep understanding of systemic inequities always at the center of the work. With dialogue at the core of this process, it is inevitable that different perspectives and emotions will arise, particularly given that we are each impacted differently by the systems of which we are a part as educators, leaders, family members, whatever the positions we hold may be. This is expected, however, even encouraged, as surfacing these differences can support honest discussions, while keeping the central and shared purpose of the work always in mind: prioritizing and sustaining students' experiences of inclusion and belonging. Students are positioned for academic and social success when they experience belonging (Cobb & Krownapple, 2019). For students with complex support needs, a sense of belonging to be connected to a school community has a positive impact on student progress.

Table 1. Principles and Select Practices Examples by Grade Level.

Principle	Practice	Early learning	Elementary	Secondary
Inclusive Mission and Vision	1.2 The mission and vision integrate an equity-based framing of inclusion that is represented across all action planning, curriculum, and materials.	Our vision for early learning is to eliminate the opportunity gap by optimizing the foundational early learning years in an inclusive and equitable community where every child belongs and is supported in developing friendships and becoming a lifelong learner. Our mission is to provide high-quality early learning experiences to all preschool-aged children.	You are a learner, you are a leader, you belong here.	Our Mission: The reason we are here. Our mission is High School PLUS for EVERY student that walks through our doors. Our Vision: The school we want to become. We will be a Safe, Inclusive, Purposeful school where ALL students feel Challenged, Supported, and that they Belong.
Inclusive Building Schedule	2.2 When laying the foundation of the building schedule, prioritize schoolwide inclusionary practices (i.e. social emotional learning (SEL), community building, intervention blocks, coteach partnerships, etc.)	The social-emotional curriculum is the foundation for learning and is embedded into building schedules.	Building a schedule starts with understanding students and their needs. That determines cotaught classes. The schedule is built around student needs.	"There are many ways to place stones across a river, but what is the most efficient path for all." Meaning, prioritizing those closest to the margins and scheduling intervention blocks, coteaching, and collaboration time.
Collaborative Structures	3.2 Site-based leadership prioritizes and preserves collaborative structures by honoring those times and not scheduling them into that time. OR 3.4 Educators coplan, engage in data collection/analysis, and/or learn together with an equity-oriented lens as part of a PLC on at least a weekly basis.	Teaching teams meet once a week to collaborate. Classroom collaboration times are staggered to allow related service team members to participate in all classroom meetings. Classroom collaborations allow for discussions on specially designed instruction. Related services (e.g. OT, PT, SLP) and special education services are mostly delivered in the context of the child's class.	Grade-level common planning occurs every Wednesday before school and uses an electronic schoolwide shared planning document created by grade-level leads in collaboration with each other. Planning teams are made up of general education, special education, specialists, and related service providers. This time is protected, and no meetings are scheduled during this time.	Coteach partnerships meet to coplan during a designated day and period of the day each week. A shared electronic planning document is used to highlight the state standard, learning objectives, cotaught models, and roles and responsibilities for preparing the lesson and lesson materials. PLC groups meet monthly on Fridays to analyze data for whole-school enrichment rotations.

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Principle	Practice	Early learning	Elementary	Secondary
Inclusive Instructional Practices	4.1 Multitiered systems of support are in place. -Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are available for all students -Access to Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 is always in addition to Tier 1	The pyramid model framework clearly outlines MTSS Tiers 1, 2, and 3. Tier 1 core foundations in evidence-based instruction and social-emotional curriculum.	MTSS Tier 1 intervention and acceleration groupings are adjusted every 4–6 weeks and informed by reviewing ongoing data collection.	Ensuring that all students are accessing Tier 1 and then only Tiers 2 and 3 as needed. Tier 2 extension math or English is in addition to Tier 1 general education math and English not a replacement.
Flexible Service Delivery	5.2 All learning spaces (i.e. classrooms, pods, common areas, etc.) are available for any student, with or without disabilities, to receive instruction to support their learning in general education and to target essential skills based on data collection.	Flexible service delivery. Multiple spaces in the building for large groups motor area.	Repurposing classrooms formerly used as self-contained classrooms for flexible learning spaces.	Students use common spaces and flexible furniture in the hallway for alternate learning spaces.
Inclusive Individual Education Programs (IEPs)	6.2 Coassessment practices are utilized to collaborate on goal development related to grade-level content standards. Coassessment includes special education and general education teachers, related service providers, family members, and students.	Elementary building schedule that shows success groups for reading and math blocks.	Strengths-based IEP cocreated focused on standards-based IEP goals, daily transitions, and social opportunities.	Case managers provide guidance around goals and examples that align with grade-level standards.
Sustained Family and Community Engagement	7.1 Families are codesigners in their child's education. Codesign includes elevating a family's expertise, establishing trust with the child's family and community, and demonstrating integrity of word and action.	Career and technical education (CTE) programs for high school students to have early learning CTE classes and work in preschool classes.	Including an explanation of the delivery of services (i.e. coteach classes, math options) for incoming family information sessions. Follow up with materials for families not able to attend in person.	Person-centered planning to determine the class schedule and service-delivery options. Also, school visits to support student and family transition to a new school and district.

Note. This table provides examples of all seven principles across selected practices for early learning, elementary, and secondary.

Although individuals and teams can decide where to start, we have helped by identifying high-leverage items, indicated in bold, as places to start if they are not already in place. Users will self-assess, by reflecting on each principle and deciding if that principle is "in place," "in process," or "not in place" on the rating scale. We recognize that self-assessments require self-evaluation and can be subjective in nature. When users approach in groups, the combined multiple perspectives strengthen confidence in the self-assessment ratings. Following the self-assessment and scoring sheet, we have provided steps to move into action planning. Although the P & P tool offers a way to score, this tool is not intended to be evaluative. Users can use the tool as a form of self-assessment to lean into Appreciative Inquiry and discover what is working well to dream and design what is possible. The P & P tool supports Appreciative Inquiry by focusing on discovering strengths as a starting point and is designed for cycles of inquiry to support designing and destiny, in systems change efforts.

Systems change is not linear, and the P & P tool's process provides a supportive scaffold for ongoing self-assessment that recognizes this reality. For example, when one school team re-engaged in the P & P self-assessment process for a second year in a row, they reflected on how several practices that had been marked as "in place" the year prior were now marked as "in progress." Initially feeling that this was evidence of a setback for the team (and for their students), by engaging in rich discussion, they were able to identify those areas of growth that would help them to continue their growth in less-developed practices. Through this dialogue, they were able to come up with a plan for expanding their practices for flexible service delivery across grade levels.

In another school that had been utilizing the P & P tool for 3 years, the team reflected on how many of their inclusive practices had shifted from "in progress" to "in place"; however, they wanted to ensure they were specifically attending to the needs and belonging of their students with extensive support needs. This is a particularly important focus given that this school's district had recently begun supporting students with extensive support needs who had previously been assigned to segregated special education environments to attend their neighborhood schools. When the school team shifted their dialogue to focus on this group of students, they realized that many of their inclusive practices were "in progress" rather than "in place." Rather than seeing this as a reflection of doing worse than before, they used this as an opportunity to commit to the growth necessary to center those students who had been most marginalized within the community.

The P & P tool prioritizes dialogue that ultimately moves teams to generate plans for next steps. Thus, after reflecting on their practices, the tools guides teams to utilize the indicator summary and practices grid to examine strengths at a glance to identify areas of potential focus and action steps. In recognition of the team and effort that such change takes, the tools action planning section supports the team to review and update their steps and the progress made toward their goals. Depending on a team's context and their particular goals, ongoing inquiry and reflection will vary, and the tool is designed with this in mind. To support continual cycles of inquiry, we recommend revising the P & P tool up to four times throughout the school year. This could include once at the beginning of the school year to establish a focus, then twice throughout the year to update progress, and then again at the end of the year to reassess overall growth. Whether school teams use the tool in this way, or to simply assess how things are going in key areas, to celebrate progress every now and then, or to make updates to the plan, this type of ongoing inquiry can support the overall improvement and refinement of inclusive transformation within classrooms, schools, and districts.

Flexible Uses of the P & P Tool

The P & P tool is designed to support self-assessment and guide action planning for next steps toward building inclusive schools, whether at the classroom, school, district, or community level. It can be used flexibly by individuals or teams, including educators, administrators, families, and community members, to examine specific principles or the entire tool, using artifacts, learning walks, or collaborative discussions. There is no single or correct way to use the tool; each site's approach reflects its unique context, culture, and goals. The P & P tool serves as a flexible guide for identifying, framing, and advancing inclusive practices tailored to each community's needs. We offer a means for individuals and/or groups to use to guide their own inclusive journey. Table 2 outlines systems levels, and for each level, it provides a detailed example of how the P & P tool was used flexibly. In addition, users can narrow the focus of the P & P tool to assess each practice specifically considering students with extensive support needs. Flexible use allows any user to find an access point to use the P & P tool in a meaningful way focused on the user's locus of control and what they have direct impact upon to guide.

Artifacts and Resources

The power of storytelling and allowing visitors to observe inclusive school systems is transformational. Beyond visiting demonstration sites, artifacts offer additional means for anyone to learn from demonstration sites and their districts. On the demonstration site website, artifacts are listed under each demonstration site (Haring Center for

Table 2. Examples of Flexible Uses of the P & P Tool by Systems Levels.

Level	Example
District	With a district commitment to mission and vision, one district scaled inclusive practices across all schools. Schools were divided into cohorts that received on-site support from district coaches. The coaches used the P & P tool to identify next steps specific to the strengths of individual school buildings. For many schools, starting with creating an inclusive building schedule was essential to lay the foundations for flexible service delivery.
School	Within a building, school leadership team members each took one of the principles of the tool to assess practices in place. From there, each subgroup's responses were combined to complete the P&P tool. The building leadership team created an action plan, aligning it with their school-improvement plans. Leveraging their strengths of dedicated collaboration time, they used that structure to develop more flexible service-delivery options.
Department	One high school department approached the tool by selecting three principles (e.g., inclusive instructional practices, IEPs, and collaborative structures) which were identified as growth areas. The team found it manageable to create one action item from each of the three principles. The department team felt empowered by having more specificity about inclusive practices and a tool to guide their progress. This resulted in positive outcomes for students and built momentum for transformative change across other departments in the larger school.
Grade band	In one elementary school, each grade-level team utilized the tool, focusing on principles specific to content practices. For the 1st grade team, they chose the principle of inclusive instructional practices along with the practice of specially designed instruction embedded into the curriculum surfaced as their next steps. This flexible use allows for each grade level to have an individualized focus.
Individual	Individual educators have used the P & P tool to guide their own professional growth. The tool was used to better familiarize themselves with inclusive practices to seek out professional development opportunities. One educator noted that creating inclusive IEP goals was a growth area, and the curated artifacts provided concrete examples.
Family and community	One parent reflected, "Coming from a place with limited inclusive opportunities, it is one thing to know you want something better and different. However, it is more empowering to have a clearer vision for reimagining your child's inclusive school experience." The tool provides resources such as a glossary of terms and specific artifacts which help families demystify education by providing concrete examples, thus strengthening their own advocacy for inclusive opportunities and more meaningful engagement in their child's IEP.

Inclusive Education, n.d.). Artifacts are subcategorized in alignment with each of the seven principles of the P & P tool. The following are examples of artifacts corresponding to each principle.

Inclusive mission and vision artifacts feature photos and documents of mission and vision statements posted in schools, as well as recordings describing community work groups to develop and create one school's mission and vision. Inclusive building schedule features Word or Excel sheet building schedules from early learning to high school and video recordings depicting how schools approached creating building schedules. These artifacts highlight other inclusionary practices, such as viewing in a building schedule where coteach and coplan times are protected times or staffing to visualize how services are flexibly delivered by educators.

Collaborative structures artifacts feature team-planning documents, coplanning templates, and guiding documents for staff roles and responsibilities when flexing service delivery. Inclusive instructional practices artifacts are robust, with demonstration sites offering resources to support each tier of a school's MTSS. In one elementary school, description for expected school-wide Tier 1 support of soft landing,welcoming activity for all students, is documented. At the start of school, all staff welcome and greet students into the building and the students' day begins with choices for neutral welcoming activities. In another elementary school, daily school-wide morning meeting presentation slides are shared for examples.

Flexible service delivery expands the building schedule to share intervention block schedules and data analysis protocols for reviewing student data. Inclusive individual education programs (IEPs) artifacts offer specifics on IEP goals aligned to common core standards, as well as access points for grade-level standards.

Sustained family and community engagement artifacts offer ways in which demonstration sites welcome families to the school community and are transparent in messaging for schools' inclusive mission and vision. Other artifacts may showcase family surveys for family input and voice or how they have expanded extracurricular opportunities for all students.

As the seven principles overlap and together create robust inclusive practices, the artifacts themselves overlap and show connections between the principles and practices. For example, for coteaching or intervention-blocks flexible service delivery to be supported, the building schedule must block out these times, and collaboration is made possible through structures such as planning documents and shared data-collection systems. Artifacts support flexible use of the P & P tool, allowing users to access differing artifacts and find access points for their own learning.

Artifacts formats can be Word documents, Excel sheets, images, video recordings, or presentation slides. Artifacts are also continuously updated and thus show shifts and changes over time as a school or district's journey progresses. As educators, community, and family members moved on to the next steps, they needed support in the how. These artifacts are concrete examples of inclusionary practices across all seven principles.

Conclusion

With a steadfast commitment to creating more just and equitable educational systems and experiences, our statewide technical assistance professional network has continuously sought to increase our collaboration across Washington State. Collaborative contributions with partner schools and districts led to the creation of the P & P tool (Martin et al., 2023) we share in this manuscript. There is a call for more inquiry-based systems change in inclusive education to support more sustainable change. For inclusive education to achieve widespread implementation, it will require a deep cultural transformation (Baglieri et al., 2011). Positioning educators as transformative practitioners is one way to support such sustainable change. It is important for schools and families to have support getting started and/or continuing their journey toward inclusive education, as this work can prove challenging to dismantle inequitable systems and design equitable systems and maintain the constant positive pressure on all levels of our educational system. We hope that this collaboratively developed tool, the P & P tool, can provide one potential mechanism to help teams create sustainability toward inclusive education reform.

ORCID iDs

RinaMarie Leon-Guerrero https://orcid.org/0009-0002-7958-6210
Christina Nowak Constantouros https://orcid.org/0009-0002-6869-9244
Naomi Fair https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5031-1358

Funding

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Supplemental Material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

References

Aguilar, E. (2016). *The art of coaching teams: Building resilient communities that transform schools*. Jossey-Bass.

Annamma, S. A., Connor, D., & Ferri, B. (2013). Dis/ability critical race studies (DisCrit): Theorizing at the intersections of race and dis/ability. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *16*(1), 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2012.730511

Artiles, A. J., & Kozleski, E. B. (2007). Focus on policy: Beyond convictions: Interrogating culture, history, and power in inclusive education. *Language Arts*, *84*(4), 357–364. https://doi.org/10.58680/la20075646

Artiles, A. J., & Kozleski, E. B. (2016). Inclusive education's promises and trajectories: Critical notes about future research on a venerable idea. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *24*, 43. https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.24.1919

Ashby, C., & Woodfield, C. (2019). Honoring, constructing, and supporting neurodivergent communicators in inclusive classrooms. In K. Scorgie & C. Forlin (Eds.), *Promoting social inclusion: Co-creating environments that foster equity and belonging*. Emerald Publishing.

Baglieri, S., Bejoian, L. M., Broderick, A. A., Connor, D. J., & Valle, J. (2011). [re]claiming "inclusive education" toward cohesion in educational reform: Disability studies unravels the myth of the normal child. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, *113*(10), 2122–2154. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811111301001

Baglieri, S., & Shapiro, A. (2017). *Disability studies and the inclusive classroom: Critical practices for embracing diversity in education*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Berry, R. A. W. (2011). Voices of experience: General education teachers on teaching students with disabilities. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *15*(6), 627–648. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110903278035

Biklen, D., & Burke, J. (2006). Presuming competence. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *39*(2), 166–175. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680500540376

Buckman, D. C., King, B. B., & Ryan, S. (1995). Block scheduling: A means to improve school climate. *NASSP Bulletin*, *79*(571), 9–18. https://doi.org/10.1177/019263659507957103

Bushe, G. R. (2012). Appreciative inquiry: Theory and critique. In D. Boje, B. Burnes, & J. Hassard (Eds.), *The Routledge companion to organizational change* (pp. 87–103). Routledge.

Carter, E. W., & Biggs, E. E. (2021). *Creating communities of belonging for students with significant cognitive disabilities (Belonging series)*. TIES Center, University of Minnesota.

CAST. (2018). *Universal design for learning guidelines version 2.2*. http://udlguidelines.cast.org

Causton, J., MacLeod, K., Pretti-Frontczak, K., Mancini Rufo, J., & Gordon, P. (2023). *The way to inclusion: How leaders create schools where every student belongs*. ASCD.

Cobb, F., & Krownapple, J. (2019). *Belonging through a culture of dignity: The keys to successful equity implementation*. Mimi & Todd Press.

Cooperrider, D. L., & Whitney, D. A. (1999). *Positive revolution in change: Appreciative inquiry*. Corporation for Positive Change.

Cooperrider, D. L., Whitney, D. K., & Stavros, J. M. (Eds.). (2008). *Appreciative inquiry handbook: For leaders of change* (2nd ed.). Crown Custom Publishing.

DeMatthews, D. E., Serafini, A., & Watson, T. N. (2021). Leading inclusive schools: Principal perceptions, practices, and challenges to meaningful change. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *57*(1), 3–48. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X20913897

Erevelles, N. (2011). "Coming out crip" in inclusive education. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, *113*(10), 2155–2185. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146811111301003

Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M., & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation research: A synthesis of the literature*. National Implementation Research Network, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, University of South Florida.

Flint, A. S., & Jaggers, W. (2021). You matter here: The impact of asset based pedagogies on learning. *Theory Into Practice*, *60*(3), 254–264. https://doi.org/10.1080/00405841.2021.1911483

Franzen, R. M., & Benavides, M. T. (2023). From talk to action: An appreciative inquiry approach to diversity and inclusion work within a community of practice. *Journal of College and Character*, *24*(2), 100–119. https://doi.org/10.1080/2194587X.2023.2190125

Fullan, M. (2006). Leading professional learning. *The School Administrator*, *10*(63), 10–14.

Garrett, M. D. (2022). Applying appreciative inquiry to research in the field of inclusive education. *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education*, *13*(1), 104–115. https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/cjnse/article/view/74418

Gaylord, V., Vandercook, T., & York-Barr, J. (Eds.). (2003). *Impact: Feature issue on revisiting inclusive K-12 Education* [online]. Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota. https://ici.umn.edu/products/impact/161/

Giangreco, M. F., & Suter, J. C. (2015). Precarious or purposeful? Proactively building inclusive special education service delivery on solid ground. *Inclusion*, *3*(3), 112–131. https://doi.org/10.1352/2326-6988-3.3.112

Grierson, A. L., & Gallagher, T. L. (2009). Seeing is believing: Creating a catalyst for teacher change through a demonstration classroom professional development initiative. *Professional Development in Education*, *35*(4), 567–584. https://doi.org/10.1080/19415250902930726

Haring Center for Inclusive Education. (n.d.-a). *IPP demonstration sites*. https://ippdemosites.org/

Haring Center for Inclusive Education. (n.d.-b). *UW Haring center demonstration sites*. https://ippdemosites.org/

Hoppey, D., & McLeskey, J. (2013). A case study of principal leadership in an effective inclusive school. *The Journal of Special Education*, *46*(4), 245–256. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022466910390507

IRIS Center. (2022). *Related services: Common supports for students with disabilities*. https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/rs/cresource/q1/p03/

Ishimaru, A. M. (2019). From family engagement to equitable collaboration. *Educational Policy*, *33*(2), 350–385. https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904817691841

Kozleski, E. B., Stepaniuk, I., & Proffitt, W. (2020). Leading through a critical lens: The application of DisCrit in framing, implementing, and improving equity driven, educational systems for all students. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *58*(5), 489–505. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-12-2019-0220

Kulkarni, S., Nusbaum, E., & Boda, P. (2021). DisCrit at the margins of teacher education: Informing curriculum, visibilization, and disciplinary integration. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *24*(5), 654–670. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2021.1918404

Kurth, J. A., Lockman Turner, E., Gerasimova, D., Hicks, T. A., Zagona, A., Lansey, K., & Pace, J. R. (2022). An investigation of IEP quality associated with special education placement for students with complex support needs. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *47*(4), 244–260. https://doi.org/10.1177/15407969221134923

Kurth, J. A., Morningstar, M. E., & Kozleski, E. B. (2014). The persistence of highly restrictive special education placements for students with low-incidence disabilities. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *39*(3), 227–239. https://doi.org/10.1177/1540796914555580

Kussin, S. (2008). *How to build the master schedule in 10 easy steps: A guide for secondary school administrators*. Corwin Press.

Martin, C., Leon-Guerrero, R. M., Fair, N., & Nowak, C. (2023). *Principles and practices to build and sustain inclusive schools* (Version 3). University of Washington. https://ippdemosites.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Principles-and-Practices-Demo-Site-Fillable-Form-FINAL.pdf

Mccabe, K. M., Ruppar, A., Kurth, J. A., Mcquestion, J. A., Johnston, R., & Toews, S. G. (2020). Cracks in the continuum: A critical analysis of least restrictive environment for students with significant support needs. *Teachers College Record: The Voice of Scholarship in Education*, *122*(5), 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/016146812012200511

Murawski, W. W. (2012). 10 tips for using co-planning time more efficiently. *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, *44*(4), 8–15. https://doi.org/10.1177/004005991204400401

National Council on Disability. (2018). *The segregation of students with disabilities* (IDEA series report). https://www.ncd.gov/assets/uploads/docs/ncd-segregation-swd-508.pdf

O'Brien, C. L., & O'Brien, J. (2000). *The origins of person-centered planning: A community of practice perspective*. Responsive Systems Associates.

Olander, L. (2019). *Promoting inclusion in a "struggling" school: Supporting co-teachers through critical appreciative inquiry-based professional development*. http://www.proquest.com/en-US/products/dissertations/individuals.shtml2019

Olson, A., Leko, M. M., & Roberts, C. A. (2016). Providing students with severe disabilities access to the general education curriculum. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, *41*(3), 143–157. https://doi.org/10.1177/1540796916651975

PAVE. (n.d.). *Attention students: Lead your own IEP meetings and take charge of your future*. https://wapave.org/attention-students-lead-your-own-iep-meetings-and-take-charge-of-your-future/

Roberts, C., Saliba, E., & Stewart, E. (2024). Expanding science learning for students with complex support needs: A case study. *Remedial and Special Education*, *46*(2), 343–358. https://doi.org/10.1177/07419325231225441

Siuty, M. (2019). Inclusion gatekeepers: The social production of spatial identities in special education. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *32*(8), 1032–1047. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2019.1635283

Smith, R., & Leonard, P. (2005). Collaboration for inclusion: Practitioner perspectives. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *38*(4), 269–279. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665680500299650

Sugai, G., La Salle, T. P., Everett, S., & Feinberg, A. B. (2019). Multi-tiered systems of support. In E. Goodman-Scott, J. Betters-Bubon, & P. Donohue (Eds.), *The school counselor's guide to multi-tiered systems of support* (1st ed., pp. 1–28). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315144467-1

Vandercook, T., Bowman, J., Ghere, G., Martin, C., Leon-Guerrero, R., & Sommerness, J. (2021). *Comprehensive inclusive education: General education & the inclusive IEP*. TIES Center, University of Minnesota.

Waitoller, F. R., & Thorius, K. A. K. (2016). Cross-pollinating culturally sustaining pedagogy and universal design for learning: Toward an inclusive pedagogy that accounts for dis/ability. *Harvard Educational Review*, *86*(3), 366–389.

Wells, J. C., & Sheehey, P. H. (2012). Person-centered planning: Strategies to encourage participation and facilitate communication. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, *44*(3), 32–39.

Author Biographies

Dr. RinaMarie Leon-Guerrero leads the IPTN Demonstration Sites Project at the University of Washington Haring Center for Inclusive Education. Drawing on extensive experience as an educator and behavior analyst, she collaborates with schools and districts to strengthen educator capacity and support the implementation of inclusive practices. Her work focuses on creating sustainable systems that promote equity, belonging, and meaningful participation for all students.

Dr. Christina Nowak Constantouros focuses on systems-level transformation to advance equitable and inclusive education. Building on expertise in implementation science and organizational change, she partners with schools and districts to scale sustainable practices that expand access and belonging. Her research and leadership particularly emphasize improving inclusive opportunities and outcomes for students with extensive support needs.