

Appendix 5: Inclusion

Inclusion is defined as providing specially designed instruction and supports for individuals with special needs on an IEP in the context of regular settings. Inclusion reflects a philosophy of acceptance, belonging and community. Inclusion does not simply happen when individuals are placed together in typical situations.

Inclusion education means that all individuals in a school, regardless of their strengths or challenges in any area, become part of the school community. It is part of a continuum of the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as defined by IDEA and its amendments. Individuals with ASD are included in the feeling of belonging among other individuals, teachers, and support staff.

This is accomplished through educational strategies designed for a diverse individual population and collaboration between educators so that specially designed instruction and supplementary aids and services are provided to all individuals as needed for effective learning.

For individuals with disabilities, inclusion accomplishes the following:

- ◆ Affords a sense of belonging to the family
- ◆ Provides a stimulating environment in which to grow and learn
- ◆ Enhances the feeling of being a member of the community
- ◆ Develops friendships
- ◆ Enhances self-respect
- ◆ Affirms individuality
- ◆ Provides peer models
- ◆ Provides opportunities to be educated with same-age peers

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