

ecta Early Childhood
Technical Assistance Center

Every Child, Every Classroom: Navigating the Path to Early Childhood Inclusion

Inclusion Institute
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Warm-Up!

How to foster belonging in your community or program?

Begin with the end in mind....

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**FROM COULD-DOS TO SHOULD-DOS:
TURNING STRATEGIES INTO ACTION**

Purpose: Use this worksheet to move from ideas to intentional action. You'll first capture all the strategies you could try, then narrow your list to the 1-2 actions that deserve your time and energy right now.

STEP ONE: LIST YOUR COULD-DOS

As challenges are introduced, write down anything that has possible, interesting, or worth exploring. Don't worry yet about whether you think you can do it.

Good: Obligations or what you can't do?

Good: What would you need to do it?

STEP TWO: PAUSE AND REFLECT

Which strategies are most important?

- Which align best with current goals or priorities?
- Which would have the greatest impact if implemented well?
- Which feel doable with available time, energy, and support?
- Which address an immediate need?

How might this look in your community or program?

Identify your "could-dos" and then choose 2 "should-dos"

NOT EVERYTHING YOU COULD DO NEEDS TO BECOME A SHOULD-DO. STRATEGIC FOCUS IS A STRENGTH.

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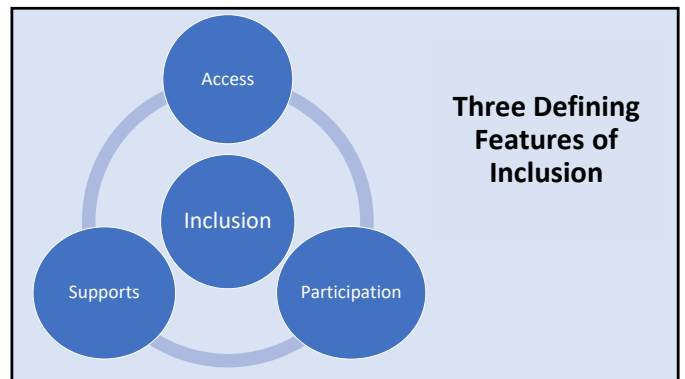


The Vision

Inclusion is not simply a set of practices or a checklist—it is a stance that affirms the rightful presence of every child and family in our early childhood communities. For children with disabilities and their families, rightful presence means more than physically being in the same space at the same time. It means ensuring access, participation, and supports to promote belonging.


From the revised draft position statement of DEC/NAEYC - https://unc.az1.qualtrics.com/CP/FILE.php?F=F_egndIXqjdBoAm

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The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)



Source: <https://www.ed.gov/laws-and-policy/individuals-disabilities/idea> and <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/>

U.S. Department of Education

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Released November 2023

U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs

Source: <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/policy-statement-inclusion-of-children-with-disabilities-in-early-childhood-programs/>

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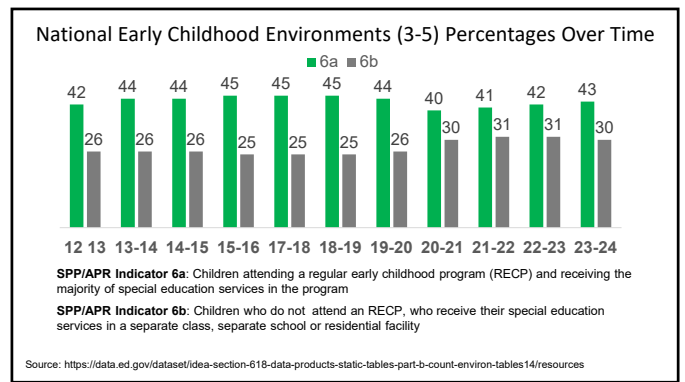
Inclusion Benefits....

- Children with disabilities
- Children without disabilities
- Educators
- Systems

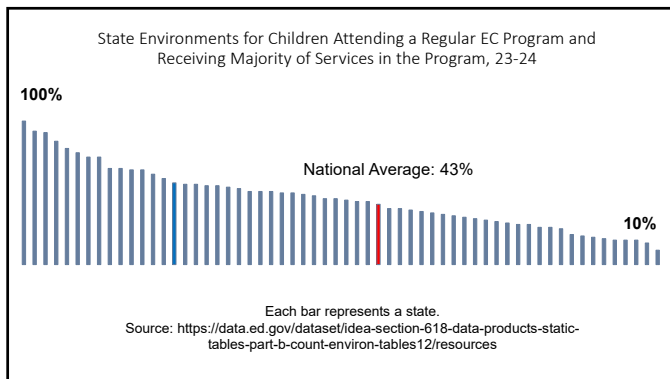
Yet.... we still have issues with access and equity

Source: ECTA research hub - <https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/research.asp>

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It's Takes the Whole System!



Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion

These four sets of indicators were designed by a group of national partners to support state leaders, local administrators and front-line personnel in the early care and education system providing programs and services to children, ages birth through five and their families.

- ★ State Indicators
- 👥 Community Indicators
- 🏠 Local Program Indicators
- 📍 Early Care and Education Environment Indicators

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Community Indicators

- INDICATOR C1: Community Inclusion Team (CIT) +
- INDICATOR C2: Family Partnerships +
- INDICATOR C3: Awareness and Commitment +
- INDICATOR C4: Policies and Procedures +
- INDICATOR C5: Fiscal Resources +
- INDICATOR C6: Staff Policies and Structure +
- INDICATOR C7: Collaborative Teaming +
- INDICATOR C8: Specialized Technical Assistance and Consultative Services +
- INDICATOR C9: Program Supports for Professional Development +
- INDICATOR C10: Curriculum +
- INDICATOR C11: Data Collection and Use +

<https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators-ecce.asp>




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Program Indicators

- INDICATOR L1: Inclusion Leadership Teams +
- INDICATOR L2: Shared Purpose +
- INDICATOR L3: Family Engagement and Partnerships +
- INDICATOR L4: Awareness and Commitment +
- INDICATOR L5: Policies and Procedures +
- INDICATOR L6: Fiscal Resources +
- INDICATOR L7: Staff Policies and Structure +
- INDICATOR L8: Collaborative Teaming +
- INDICATOR L9: Specialized Technical Assistance and Consultative Services +
- INDICATOR L10: Program Supports for Professional Development +
- INDICATOR L11: Curriculum +
- INDICATOR L12: Data Collection and Use +

<https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators-ecce.asp>






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Early Care and Education Environment Indicators

- INDICATOR E1: Promotion and Affirmation of Individual Differences +
- INDICATOR E2: Family Partnerships +
- INDICATOR E3: Social Emotional Learning and Development +
- INDICATOR E4: Meaningful Interactions with Peers +
- INDICATOR E5: Curriculum +
- INDICATOR E6: Instruction +
- INDICATOR E7: Collaborative Teaming +
- INDICATOR E8: Assessment +
- INDICATOR E9: Culturally Responsive and Identity Affirming Practices +

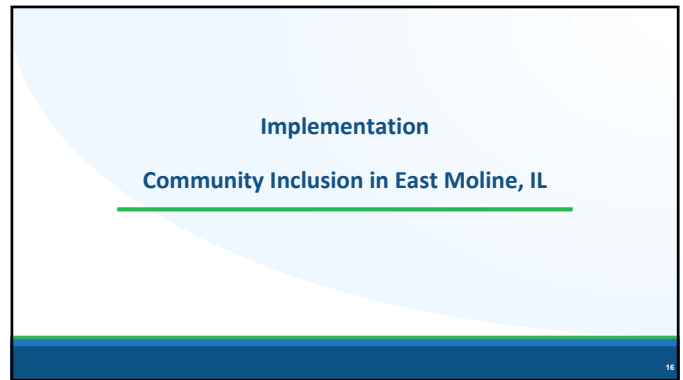
<https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators-ecce.asp>

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Implementation

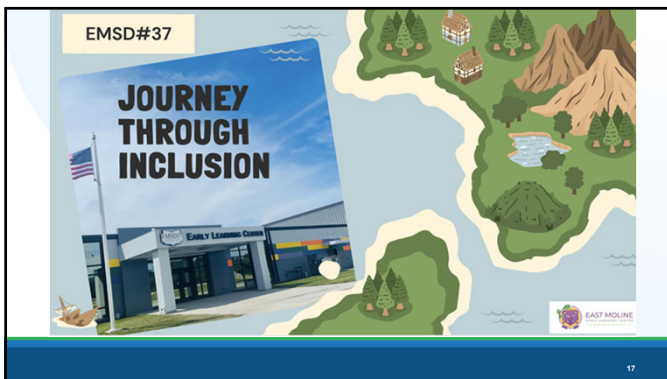
Community Inclusion in East Moline, IL



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EMSD#37

JOURNEY THROUGH INCLUSION



EAST MOLINE

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TODAY'S MAP

Who in the world is EMSD?

- Starting Point
- Getting There
- Final Destination





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WHERE IN THE WORLD??

East Moline School District #37

Located approximately 2.5 hours West of Chicago, Illinois and 2.5 hours East of Des Moines, Iowa






East Moline School District 37
Quality Education

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WHO IN THE WORLD??.....

- Approximately 40 staff members at East Moline Early Learning Center
- Full time: Dually-certified Teachers, 2 EL Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Family Educator, 2 Speech-Language Pathologists, School Nurse, Instructional Specialist, 2 Custodians, Secretary, Principal
- Partial time: School Social Worker, School Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist

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THEN.....



East Moline #37
Early Childhood
2010-2021

#adaptable

.....NOW



East Moline Early Learning Center Staff
24-26

PIC-COLLEGE

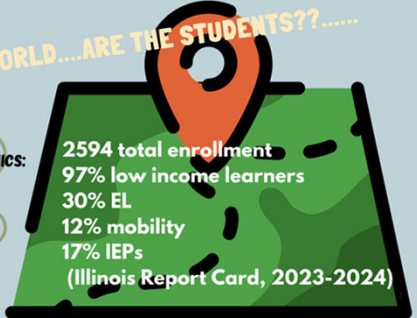
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WHO IN THE WORLD....ARE THE STUDENTS??.....

DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS:

- 2594 total enrollment
- 97% low income learners
- 30% EL
- 12% mobility
- 17% IEPs

(Illinois Report Card, 2023-2024)





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THE EVOLUTION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMMING

- Early Childhood Programming has been in existence for over 30 years
 - PFA, IDEA, and PFAE
- Prior to 22-23 School Year, all programming was housed at a local elementary school
- In 22-23, purchased, renovated and opened East Moline Early Learning Center
- Preschool For All Grant funded for 187 students
- Preschool For All Expansion Grant funded for 60 full day students

How did we get here??





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OUR MISSION

The mission of the East Moline Early Learning Center is to create a culture where all children are provided unique opportunities to explore and learn through play in a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment while empowering families to be partners in every child's learning experience.

growing through play



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OUR COLLECTIVE COMMITMENTS

Collective Commitment:

We commit to engaging in daily, meaningful interactions with all our students through play.

growing through play

Collective Commitment:

We commit to creating a school family where all staff contribute their unique strengths and skills as essential members of our school community.

growing through play

Collective Commitment:

We commit to collaborate together to ensure high levels of learning for ALL students.

growing through play

Growing through PLAY

****Indicator L4**

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STARTING POINT

Map



Overall Vision

Where should I even begin?!



Compass




A Champion

EAST MOLINE

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EMSD INCLUSION MAP

established in 2018



* Caution: Objects in mirror are closer than they appear

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THE COMPASS....


A compass is a device used in navigation

The letters indicate the cardinal directions. *The leader knows which way to go in all directions*

The compass needle always points to the magnetic north. *If not now, then when??*



The bearing tells how many degrees away from the north or south. *The leader continually assesses the momentum, pauses, and resets*

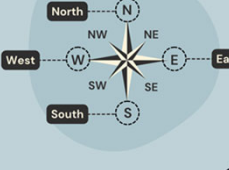


....ALSO KNOWN AS THE CHAMPION


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Who's your Maury?



THE LEADER MUST HAVE A CLEAR VISION, PERSEVERANCE, AND THE UNWAVERING BELIEF THAT INCLUSION IS BEST PRACTICE



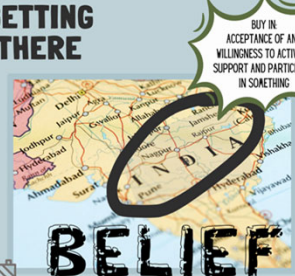
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GETTING THERE

ROADBLOCKS AHEAD

- Staff Survey
- Self-Reflection
- Books & resources

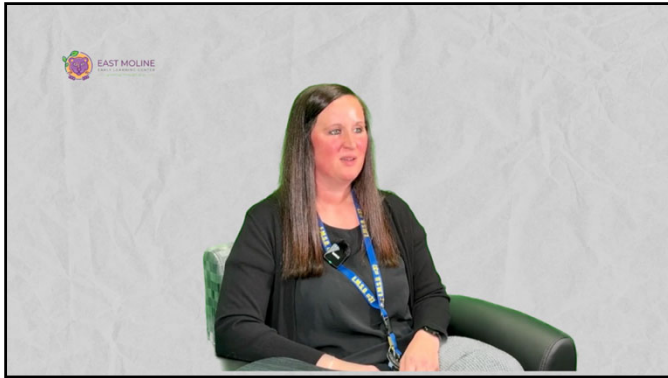


BELIEF

BUY IN. ACCEPTANCE OF AND WILLINGNESS TO ACTIVELY SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN SOMETHING

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GETTING THERE

ROADBLOCKS AHEAD

TOUGH CONVERSATIONS
STAFF BUY IN
LACK OF PREPAREDNESS
LACK OF RESOURCES

CORE VALUES/BELIEFS
 CORE VALUES MAY NOT ALIGN WITH GOALS & VISION

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HOLLAND

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REROUTING.....

Detours and rerouting are inevitable.

Vision Board Project

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GETTING THERE

Other Critical Components:

- Frequent Check Ins
- Weekly Collaboration—all staff
- CELEBRATIONS
- Defining non-negotiables
- Support for staff (IEP support, related service support, Tier 1 SEL)

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ARE WE THERE YET?!

Sustainability

Commitment

- It is HARD WORK
- Change is incremental and much harder for some people
- There may be setbacks...do it anyway

Continuous Reflection

- Leverage your staff and families as resources to continually improve
- Be prepared for the pushback, but use it to problem-solve
- CELEBRATE often!

Leadership

- Find people that will celebrate with you
- Take Passion, Guts, Will & Courage

If not now, when?

- Early Childhood is the IDEAL time to include...after all, we are the ultimate **Circleleaders**!

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Wrap-Up!

If you're willing..... Share a Should-Do you have chosen.

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Find out more at ectacenter.org

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