

# Inclusive Education

## Conversation Guide for the video: *Valuing All Students*

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### Building a Shared Understanding

Alberta's vision for an inclusive education system is that each and every student has the relevant learning opportunities and supports necessary to become an engaged and successful learner.

### Key Understandings

- The *Ministerial Order on Student Learning* describes the fundamental goal of education in Alberta as inspiring “all students to achieve success and fulfillment, and reach their full potential.”
- Inclusion is not about rules or eligibility criteria. It is about making educational decisions based on the best interest of the student and is rooted in six core values:
  1. Anticipate, value and support diversity and learner differences
  2. Higher expectations for all learners
  3. Understand learners’ strengths and needs
  4. Reduce barriers within learning environments
  5. Capacity building
  6. Shared responsibility
- All students can learn and achieve, given the opportunity, time and support for rich learning experiences and the investment of all partners in education.

- Every learner should experience fairness and reasonable access to educational opportunities, regardless of their situation. Some will need additional specialized supports, as found in evidence-based special education research and practice.
- Inclusion is not just about students with exceptionalities. It is part of a global movement in how we view citizenship, belonging and learning for all students.
- Inclusive education is an approach, not a place, which values choice in programming and placement that best meet students' learning needs. It focuses on student strengths.
- Inclusion affirms that diversity is an essential part of the human condition and needs to be respected and valued.
- Inclusive education is about excellence in teaching and learning through the creation of a culture of high expectations, a commitment to help all students build on their strength and a focus on literacy, numeracy and competency development.

*“We need to be clear that diversity is an essential part of the human condition and needs to be anticipated and celebrated.”*

Dr. Dave Edyburn, Associate Professor  
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee

## Questions for Discussion

- What did you hear or observe in the video that reflects your school or school authority's practices?
- How has your understanding of "an inclusive education system" changed (or stretched) as a result of watching this video?
- Which ideas in the video illustrate "working differently to meet the learning needs of all students"?
- What are some ways that parents, as partners in education, can invest in the success of their children?

## Taking the Pulse at the School and Authority Level



- How does your current professional development model help school leaders and staff to build their vision and action plans for inclusive education?
- What other ideas for professional development did you get from the video?

To support children and students attaining the goals as stated in the *Ministerial Order on Student Learning* (#001/2013), school authorities must ensure that all students (Kindergarten to Grade 12), regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disabilities, mental disabilities, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s), have access to meaningful and relevant learning experiences that includes appropriate instructional support.

## More Information

- [A Guide to Support Implementation: Essential Conditions](#)
- [Supporting Every Student](#) - Alberta Education provides information and resources on "supporting every student."
- [Indicators of Inclusive Schools](#) - This Alberta Education resource offers information and tools that leaders and school staffs can use to reflect on how their schools are demonstrating a commitment to inclusive education, and to develop strategies and action plans to strengthen equitable access for all learners.
- [School Leadership and Inclusion](#)—This PD resource is intended to support administrators and school leaders with creating inclusive environments
- [Making a Difference](#) - Chapter 7 of this Alberta Education resource describes approaches to building and sustaining school-wide responses to student differences.

## Alberta Examples

The following Alberta school authorities are among those who have developed staff resources on valuing all students:

- Edmonton Public Schools - This document, part of the *Inclusive Learning: Everyone's In* video series, gives an overview of eight schools and their inclusionary focus. [The companion Learning Guide](#) has video discussion questions (p. 6).
- Rockyview Schools - This link contains a [summary of information](#) dedicated to the development of inclusive practice for all students.