

# Context Reflection

Review the circles in the image below. The first three circles are a visual insight into unintended consequences. By looking at the placement of circles that differ, we see marginalization, tokenization and segregation. The culture in those circles can be marked by an “us” versus “them” mentality, particularly in interactions between students and educators and educators and families. And psychological safety is compromised at varying levels due to assaults, insults and invalidation, which may or may not be met with support from school or district leadership. In these three circles, the focus is on “othering.” Fear, mental and physical insecurity, lowered expectations and “self-fulfilling prophecies” of lower achievement and higher discipline infractions flourish there.

Conversely, the final circle – “Inclusion” – is a state of intentionality where school and district leaders consciously override deeply ingrained implicit biases and stereotypes at the thought, action and appreciation levels. Assets across all cultures are now recognized, norms are co-created with the school community, and beliefs about all students are affirming. The consequences are also intentional: [students and families feel welcomed, spaces are inclusive](#), and all are encouraged and given adequate supports and opportunities to thrive.

Another key distinguishing feature here is that unlike its predecessors, Inclusion does not focus on fear or othering, or assumptions based on labels. Rather, Inclusion focuses on our practice. In other words, are we underserving our families? If so, who? And how? Problem-solving mode now takes the focus off students and families and onto how we have thought about policies and procedures, supports, curriculum and instruction, and resource allocation.

Curiosity and continuous self-reflection here are key. We begin going outside ourselves and our usual peer group for all the answers. Instead, we turn to the school community members we serve and ask for both input and feedback, reflecting thoughtfully on how to use the input and feedback before taking action.

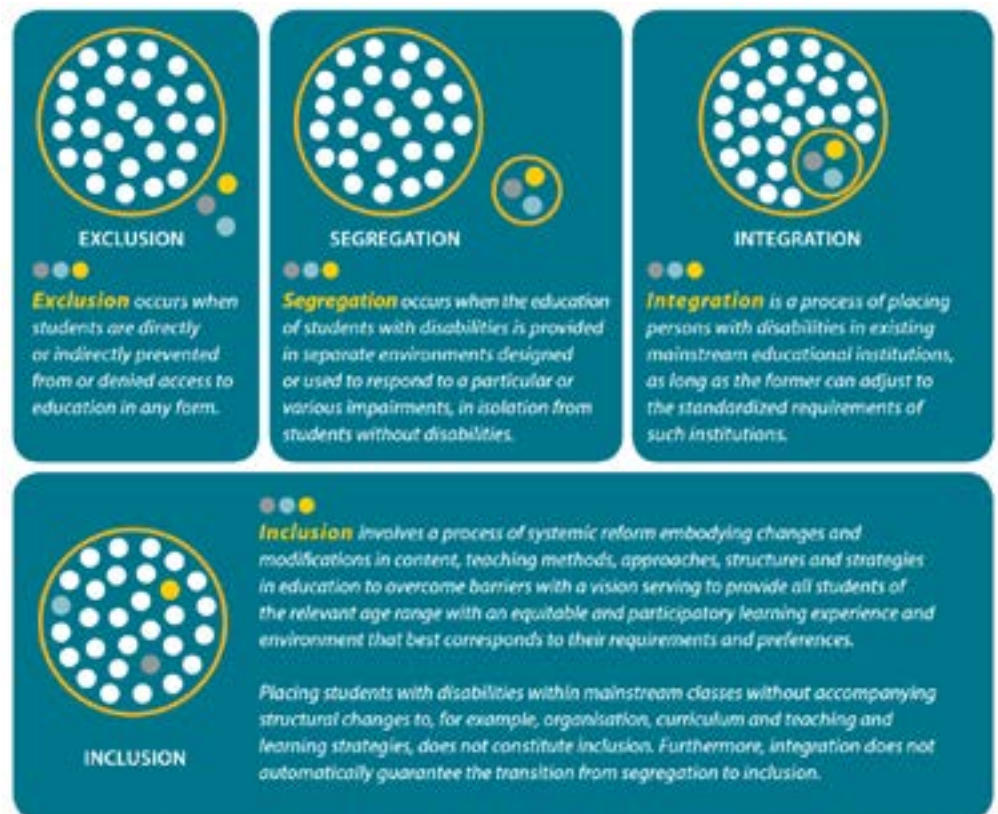


Image retrieved from: [A Summary of the Evidence on Inclusive Education](#)