

Engaging Students with Special Needs and their Families

How to Plan
Inclusive PTA
Events & Programs



WAKE COUNTY
PTACouncil

*2019 NC PTA Conference
Charlotte, NC*



Kerry McCarthy Adams, Wake SEIC Chair

1) Introductions & Background (5 min)

2) Challenges to Inclusion (10 min)

3) Explore tools (30 min)

4) Share insights & Ask questions (20 min)

5) Choose one next step (10 min)

1) Introductions & Background (5 min)

Background

Wake SEPTA = Special Education PTA



2008: Joined Wake PTA Council as
Wake Special Education & Inclusion Committee



Special Education Inclusion Committee (SEIC)



2019: NC PTA SEIC



1. Support PTAs

Accommodations

Modifications

Facilitate
inclusion



2. Link to
Resources

Parents &
community

Educators &
administrators

Community
Services

Who is in the room today?



2) Challenges to Inclusion (10 min)

What are the Challenges to


Engaging Students with Special Needs and their Families

- ?

Planning an Inclusive PTA Event or Programs

- ?

3) Explore tools (30 min)



SEEK FIRST
TO UNDERSTAND,
THEN TO BE
UNDERSTOOD.

Stephen R. Covey

PTA Events & Programs: Inclusion Brainstorm 2019-20

“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.” [Dr. Stephen Covey](#)

PLANNED PTA EVENTS	What accommodations & modifications have been tried in the past?	If this event occurred last year, what was the level of participation by students with special needs? (Identify possible obstacles)	What could we try this year?

PTA Events & Programs: *Inclusion Brainstorm 2019-20*

TYPE OF PTA EVENT or PROGRAM	CONSIDERATIONS Obstacles to participation What factors do you have control over?	SUGGESTIONS Accommodations Modifications
Evening event <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••		
Assemblies & Daytime Events <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••		
Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none">•••		

Quiet Zone

PTA Events & Programs: *Inclusion Brainstorm 2018-19*

TYPE OF PTA EVENT or PROGRAM	CONSIDERATIONS	SUGGESTIONS
Evening event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Festival Science Fair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the obstacles preventing participation of students with special needs? Highlight in green obstacles PTA will focus on this year. Noisy events can be challenging for students with sensory needs. Our school has a "regional program" which means that children may live farther from the school than other students. School day can take a lot of energy. It can be difficult to attend an evening event. 	Accommodations Modifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a dedicated quiet area Open an event early to students with special needs so that they can experience the event before it gets loud and busy.
Assemblies & Daytime Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kick off for fundraiser In school field trips Visiting presenters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sudden changes in schedules can be very difficult. Advance knowledge of an event (1 week) would help the teachers and parents prepare the students for possibly participating in the event. Some students do not like the loud noises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When possible, share slideshow or whatever visuals presented to the special education teachers to share with those students who did not participate in the event.
Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yearbook Reflections Art Competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the classroom teachers what time of day would be best for these students to have their pictures taken. Share flyer regarding Special Artists Category with all families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach out to teachers for pictures of their classes. Have a page dedicated to the Special Olympics.

Inclusion Success Story Spotlight

Shining a light on inclusion in PTA Events & Programs

"Seek first to understand, then to be understood."

Dr. Stephen Covey

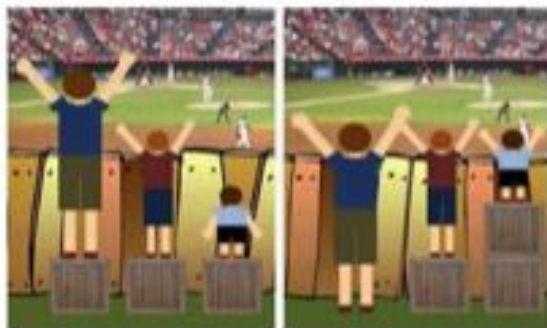
Elementary PTA Fundraiser

Before Inclusive Considerations	Problems	Solutions	After Inclusive Considerations
<p>Incentive: Students were encouraged to participate as a class to collect box tops. The classroom to collect the highest number of box tops got a prize. Smaller prizes were given each week. At the end of the month, the classroom with the highest total of box tops got a special reward. Winners were announced over the intercom.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="523 368 937 758">1. The PTA volunteers at the time were not aware of regional program. As part of their process, they requested a "class list" from the Data Manager. Since the PTA were not aware of the separate special education classrooms (also called Regional Programs) they did not know to ask.<li data-bbox="523 815 937 1025">2. The Regional Program classrooms have fewer students. The total number of box tops would never come close to larger classrooms. <p><u>Consequences:</u> The students and teachers in this classroom did not feel a sense of belonging to the PTA. When winners were announced each week, the students in the Regional Program used to say to the teacher, "It won't be us."</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="967 368 1381 615">1. Confirm with an administrator or special education staff that the planned activity (in this case, box tops fundraiser) are inclusive of all students in the school community.<li data-bbox="967 815 1381 986">2. The SEIC Liaison and Box Tops Coordinator created a formula used to average the number of box tops to the number of students. <p><u>Result:</u> The year that a classmate won a prize, she shared the news with everyone. A photo of her smile as she held her prize was in the yearbook.</p>	<p><u>Increased participation:</u> Students in this special education classroom were motivated to participate in fundraisers because they saw themselves as having a chance. They shared their excitement with their families, which led to greater participation in fundraiser.</p> <p><u>Increased awareness:</u> Students throughout the school started to hear this class recognized over the intercom.</p>

4) Share insights & Ask questions (20 min)

Fair Isn't

everyone getting
the same thing.



Fair Is

everyone getting
what they need in order
to be

Successful!

5) Choose one next step (10 min)

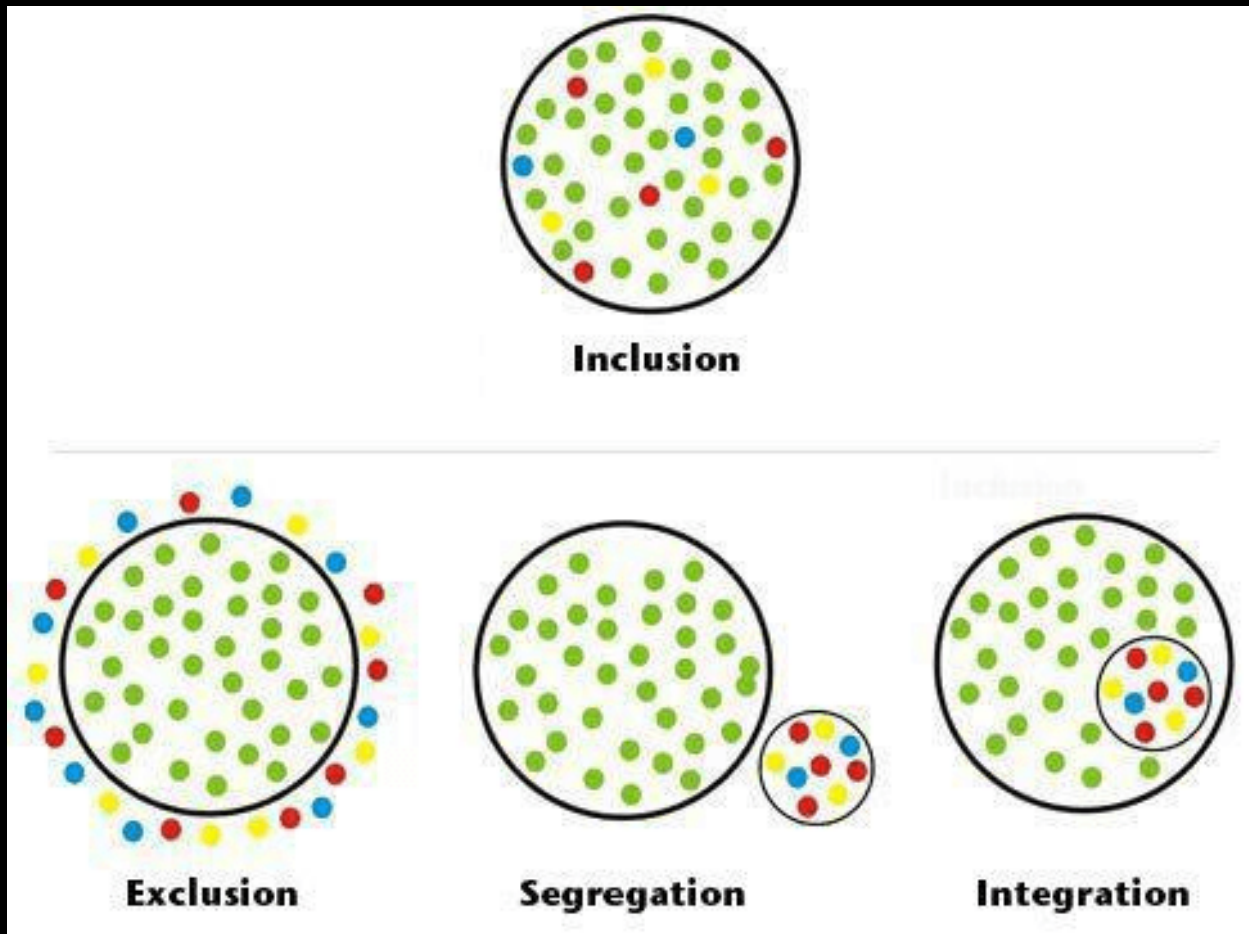
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"Inclusion is a basic value that extends to all children."



everyone belongs,
and everyone is welcome."