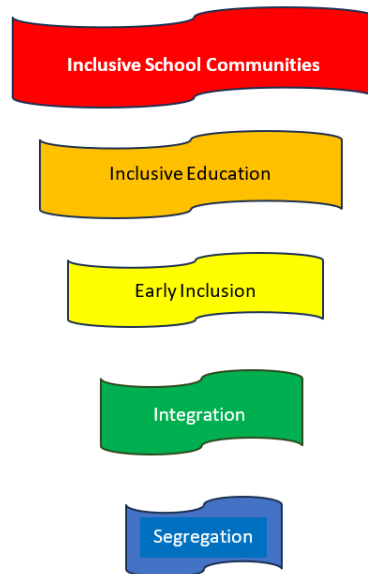


Inclusive School Communities: Growing Togetherⁱ

An inclusive school community welcomes all... as active, fully participating members of the community, and provides equitable voice, agency, opportunities and supports for each individual to realize their potential and contribute to the community. Inclusive school communities view diversity as the norm; recognize and teach students and all community members the benefits of diversity, cooperation, and consideration of others and provide opportunities for members to learn from, support, and develop relationships with one another.

However, creating inclusive school communities at the level of the classroom, the level of the school and the level of parents and local partners is a challenge where different levels can be identified, ranging from segregated to inclusive school communities.

This document aims to support schools in creating (more) inclusive school communities. It is meant as supportive material to the online toolkit www.developinginclusiveschoolcommunities.org.



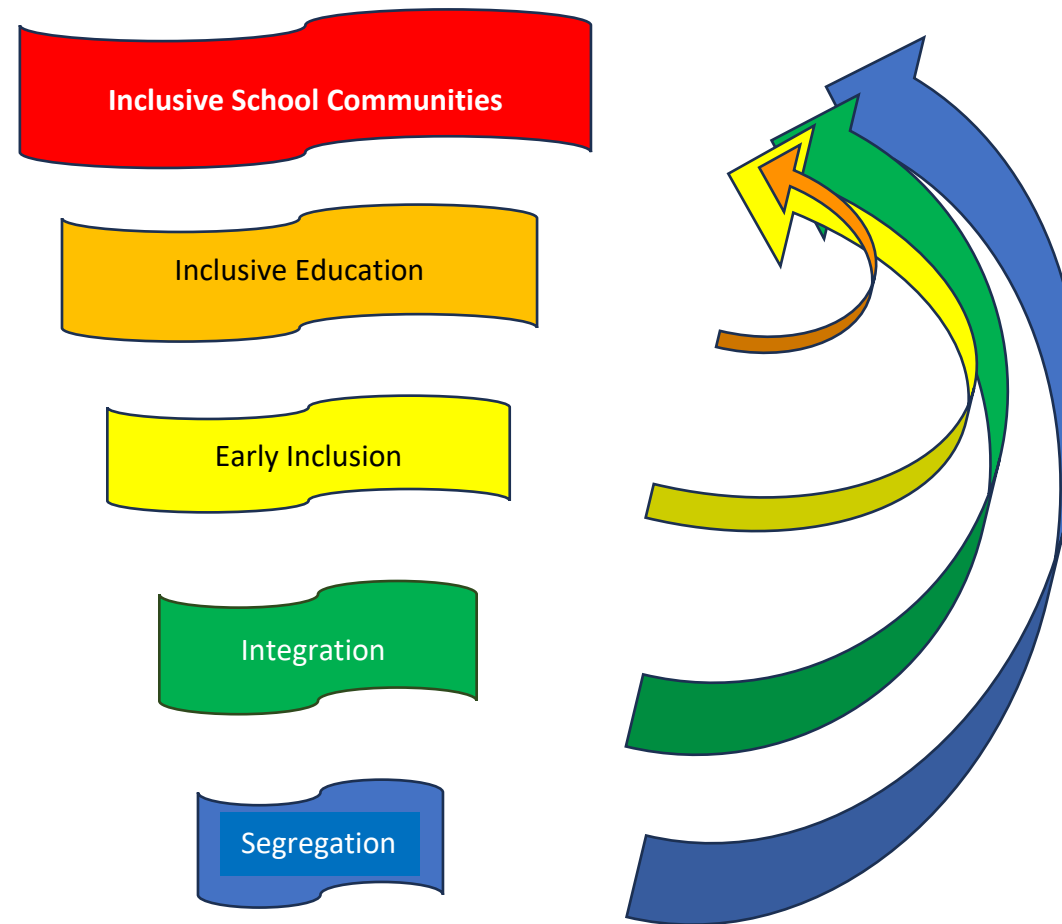
Level	Description
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supports are in place to overcome barriers to learning (eg poverty, disabilities, etc.). - Students in the school engage in social and emotional learning programs, value diversity.
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers and all staff work as a team – all children are cared for by all adults, and adults support each other as well.
Local partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All children, parents, and the community are fully included and involved in lifelong learning
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The learning environment is designed for diversity – all children are achieving and participating together
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teachers and support staff work together to meet the needs of all students.
Local partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents are involved in their individual child’s education, but not as full participants in the school plan and program.
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students with SEN participate in a parallel (adapted / modified) academic program within the classroom
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special education teachers and classroom teachers work together to adapt/modify curriculum for students with special needs.
Local partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parents are involved socially in the school, but have little voice in educational programming.
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students with SEN and/or second language needs are enrolled in mainstream classrooms but work on a separate academic program focused on life skills, often spend more than 50% of their day out of the class. - Special education teachers and educational assistants take responsibility for the program for students with special needs.
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classroom teachers are welcoming but see the student as being the responsibility of the special education teacher and/or educational assistant. - There is some dialogue between classroom teachers and special education teachers.
Local partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school operates with very little parent and community participation.
Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students with SEN and/or second language needs do not interact with students who do not have SEN – they are in segregated schools/classrooms
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special education teachers work separately from general education teachers - Schools and or classrooms are designated as special education settings
Local partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The school operates with very little parent and community participation.

No Matter Where You Are Starting , be ambitious!

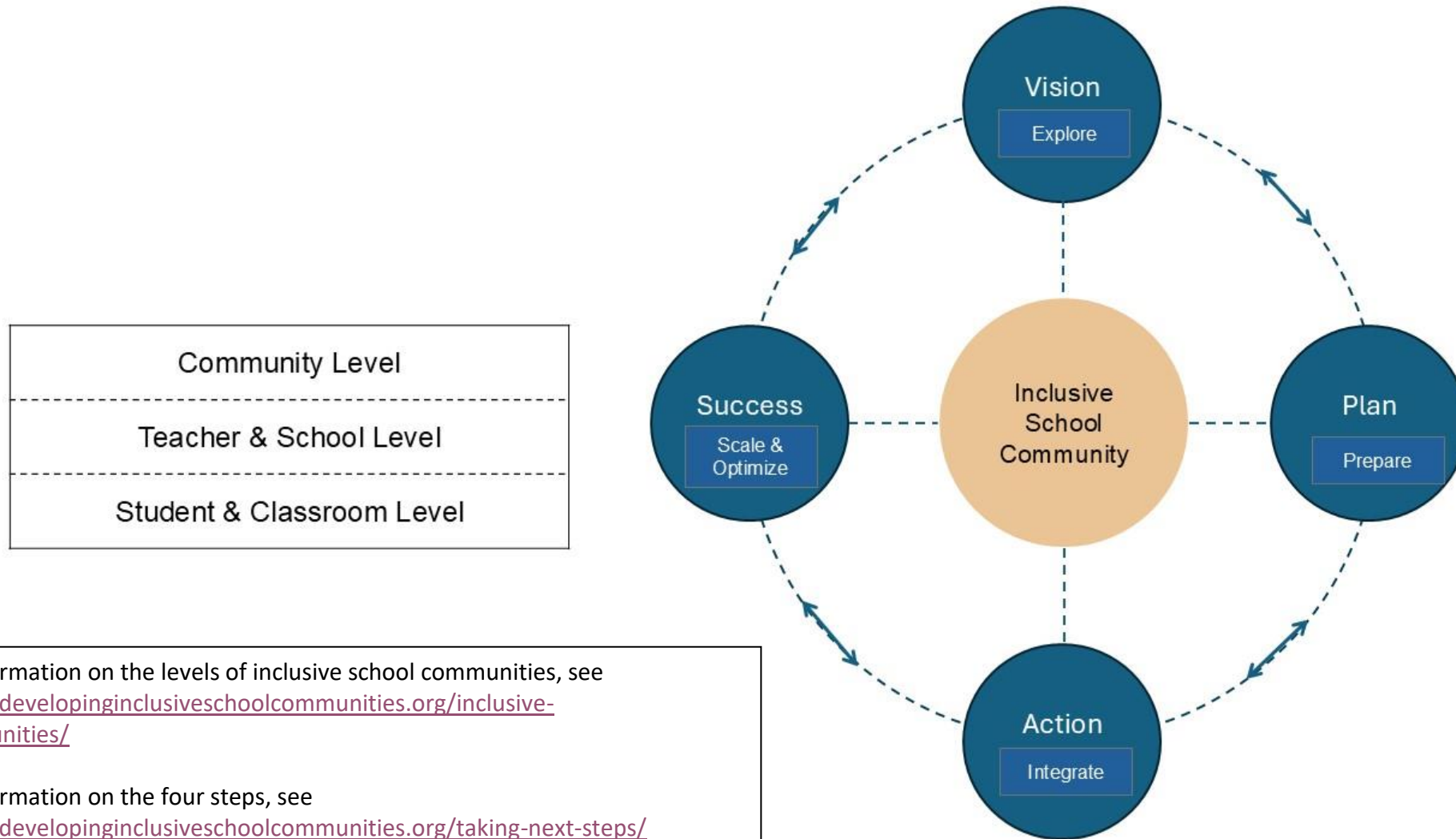
For instance, if your school is currently at stage 1 (integration), your goal should not be limited to the next stage 2.

Eventually over time your school might decide to focus on stage 4 or 5.

You may work through some aspects of these stages, but you do not have to go step by step – systems change is not linear.



Although there is a logical sequence (Explore-Plan-Integrate-Scale&Optimize), we go back and forth!



For more information on the levels of inclusive school communities, see <https://www.developinginclusiveschoolcommunities.org/inclusive-schoolcommunities/>

For more information on the four steps, see <https://www.developinginclusiveschoolcommunities.org/taking-next-steps/>

Before going into a change process

Start Here If:		Suggested Activities
<p><i>Using the reflective tool</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Developing a better understanding of the current state of your school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go to Reflective tools: ● Professional Learning ● Social environment ● Working with families 	<p>Gather Data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use one or more of the reflective tools. Decide whether you fill out the tools with the leadership team, the whole school team or with the wider school community. <p>Inspire Attitude Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Decide which point of interest you will focus on. ● Decide the stage of change (explore, prepare, integrate, scale/optimize) you are starting with. If a school community starts by assessing its current stage of inclusiveness, it could conclude that they are ready to start the change process at stage 2 or 3.

Process for Change

Start Here If:

Suggested Activities

Explore Setting the Vision

It's New & We Are Unsure, or We Have Some New Ideas to Consider

- There is considerable resistance to inclusion / equity
- There is no clear vision of what an inclusive school community is
- Core values are not explicitly discussed in relation to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- We want kids to have friends / social skills
- All students are enrolled in mainstream classrooms but students with special needs spend most of their time one to one with assistants on separate academic programs
- We focus on life / job skills, our general curriculum is not accessed
- We adapt and modify our curriculum and design Individual Education Plans to support learning but we can't envision all students learning together (i.e. involved in the same task)
- We design for diversity, but still place greater value on some ways of learning / being
- Reflect on equity – do we truly value all students?

Gather Data

- Ask staff, parents and students about their experiences in your school.

Inspire Attitude Change

- Discuss the meaning and the goals of inclusion in your team, taking into account the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" or "Agenda 2030, goal 4" or other laws
- Take the newest research into account and confront the myths with it (e.g. inclusion isn't possible).
- Share the data you gathered – what are you doing well? Who is being included / successful in your school at all three levels (student & classroom, teacher and school, family & community)? Who is not?
- Visit schools that are working inclusively and are using a [universal design for learning](#), or show videos, or bring in speakers to make it clear it's possible.
- Point out that if you keep doing what you are doing, you will keep getting the same results (stress, burnout, etc.)

Develop A Vision

- What would staff, students, families, and community want the school to be – Dream big!
- Explore how you can establish a culture in which inclusiveness of pupils, staff and parents is a matter of course.
- Speak about your concerns and barriers and creatively solve these problems.
- Discuss in your team that learning is more than "Learning for tests".
- Encourage your team to welcome every student into the classroom.
- Be careful to introduce new colleagues from the beginning.
- Work on a mission statement about inclusion at your school
- **Identify your core values – and discuss them daily!** (e.g. we believe all children have the right to an education), then make decisions based on those core values.

Make it Sustainable

- Plan time for reflection and focus on successful situations.
- Plan time for reflection and focus on the question "What's next?"
- Gather data again – how are you doing?

Inspiring examples

1. [Ferris Elementary School](#)
2. [Humans of Boucherie](#)
3. [Boa Agua](#)

Process for Change	Start Here If:	Suggested Activities				
<p style="text-align: center;">Prepare Making A Plan</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">We Have A Vision - Now We Need A Plan, or The Plan Needs Revising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We are assessing our ability to close segregated programs and enrol all kids in mainstream classrooms ● We know “it’s the right thing to do”, but don’t know how ● We don’t know how to universally design for a wide range of students ● How can we develop all of our students gifts and learner agency ● We want to strengthen shared leadership and teacher agency in our school ● We are creating forums for exchange and collaboration with families and community members ● Our practice collaborates with students and families, but we don’t fully engage parents and community as partners 	<p>Plan Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go for professional development: eg. organize a team event and work with the team with the help of the question “How can we successfully include all students”. ● Invite experts who help to prepare lessons, or demonstrate them. <p>Plan Communications with Families & Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite the community to be part of the school. ● Educate parents about equity, diversity, and inclusion – explain the changes you will be making <p>Create A Pilot Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite staff to be part of the initial implementation – who is interested? ● Find inspiration e.eg by discussing inspiring examples from other schools ● Plan the budget. ● Set the time line. ● Recognize the rich resources available outside the walls of the school, ask for support where needed ● Modify with a small team some lessons so that all students are working on the same topic. ● As a team: Explore your possibilities of cooperation ● Discuss about what you are good in and where you need help. ● Encourage your team to discuss critically success and possible next steps. ● Widen your capacity of including every student in reflecting your experiences together. ● Install regular exchange with the members of the school community. ● Gather data about success and what to improve (eg. video, vignettes of good practice, ...). 				
<p>Inspiring examples</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1. Manchester Communication Academy</td> <td>3. Spring Valley</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Malma School</td> <td>4. Helen Baller</td> </tr> </table>			1. Manchester Communication Academy	3. Spring Valley	2. Malma School	4. Helen Baller
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Process for Change	Start Here If:	Suggested Activities
<p>Integrate Implement the Plan</p>	<p>We Have A Plan, It's Time For Action or We Need to Add Some New Pieces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We've created a plan and begun professional development, but we haven't started restructuring ● We are ready to pilot academic inclusion ● We are ready to really share leadership in our school ● We are ready to pilot UDL (Universal Design of Learning) ● Shift practices such as assessment, labeling, IEP's (<u>Individualized Educational Programme</u>), etc. to honor all students ● We are working to reshape our practices to align with family and community values and resources 	<p>Pilot Group Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go into prototyping. ● Pilot your project, providing lots of support and resources to the pilot group – ensure their success! ● Reflect and improve until you are confident that you can share it. ● Gather evidence you can use to share your progress (eg. make video clips, vignettes, ...) ● Focus on success and speak about what is working- ● Share your experiences. ● Access the know how and capacity of the whole community to foster an inclusive school community. <p>Sustainable Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand the core group. ● Recognize leaders and provide them with opportunities to coach others, provide training in collegial coaching. ● Provide additional supports to those who need to make the change. ● Take enough time to change step by step your policy and practice.
<p>Inspiring examples</p> <p>1. Joaquim Rurya 3. Xplore</p> <p>2. Melissa's Story</p>		

Process for Change	Start Here If:	Suggested Activities
<p>Scale Involve Others</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">We Have a Core Group, But We Need Everyone to Get Involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have begun restructuring (e.g. moving students from special schools into mainstream schools, determining pilot classes/kids) ● Some teachers are proficient in adapting / modifying but most are not ● We are developing professional development for all educators around UDL ● We are changing policy and practice to honor diversity ● We are reaching out to the wider community to establish partnerships ● We have developed leadership teams and coaches and gathered resources, we are ready to make it system wide 	<p>Expanding the Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Start to bring in more people. Invite new colleagues to cooperate. ● Spread it (eg. speak with other teachers and schools, parents, district representatives, ...) ● Plan a day when the team has time to prepare lessons together with teachers who haven't been participating. ● Sample situations of good practice and try to generalize them. ● Divide the work and start to prepare lessons for all. ● Exchange and teach lessons that others have prepared. ● Involve the whole team, the parents and the students and wider community ● Network and share your experiences as much as possible. ● Invite other colleagues to lead. <p>Sustainable Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide additional supports to those who need it to make the change. ● Take enough time to change progressively your policies and practices.
<p>Inspiring examples</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Humans of Boucherie 		

Process for Change	Start Here If:	Suggested Activities
<p>Optimize <i>Refine Practice</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">We Are Doing Well, But... There's Always New Things to Learn</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We have structures for continuous reflection on equity and inclusion ● We are implementing the basics of UDL but need to deepen our practice 	<p>Maintaining Momentum, Growth, and Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As new issues, research, and practices arise, be open to adding / shifting what you are doing ● Always connect the new to the core values and what you have been doing (e.g. a new program comes in about anti-racism – connect it to inclusion and your values, so it is not “an add on”) ● Organize regular team events, share you experience and focus on success. ● Continue to gather data (eg. video, vignettes of good practice, ...). ● Hold on, stay curious, encourage the team and the whole community to continue learning, cooperating and networking. ● Make it common practice that team reflection will be part of a routine.
<p>Inspiring examples & Tools See inspiring examples and reflective tools.</p>		

¹This document is part of the ERASMUS+ project *Co-creating Inclusive School Communities* (2021-1-LI01-KA220-SCH-000027667). This project has resulted in a toolkit to support schools to strengthen inclusive school communities at classroom level, school level and at the level of parents and local partners. The toolbox can be found at <http://www.developinginclusiveschoolcommunities.org>.