

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: A MODEL FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

CHALLENGE

- **Media:** My name is Gina Lawrence, and I'm the principal of Central Middle School. In the time I've been in this role, our school has made a lot of progress: We've increased our test scores, improved our attendance rates, and added technology in our classrooms. We're lucky to have many involved parents and caring teachers, and we provide lots of professional development opportunities. So you can see why I'm so proud of Central Middle. By most standards, our school is a success. But yesterday something happened that opened my eyes to a problem I'd never recognized. (movie)

INITIAL THOUGHTS

- What is inclusion and why is it important?
- What model can school leaders use to guide the change necessary for creating inclusive school environments?
- How can school leaders prepare for the changes required to create inclusive school environments?
- How can school leaders implement changes that result in inclusive school environments?
- How can school leaders sustain the positive efforts toward creating inclusive school environments?

PERSPECTIVES AND RESOURCES

- Module Objectives (box)
 - After completing the entire Perspectives and Resources section and reviewing the accompanying activities, you should:
 - Understand the concept of inclusion and why it is important
 - Possess the knowledge required to lead the change to create an inclusive school environment
 - Understand how to create a climate for inclusion
 - Recognize how to sustain an inclusive school environment

Page 1: What Is Inclusion?

- **Media:** Click on the movie to learn more about inclusive school environments (movie)
- Did You Know? (box)
- **Media:** Cynthia Alexander describes some of the aspects of inclusive schools (audio)
- **Media:** Brenda Williams describes some of the aspects of inclusive schools (audio)

- FYI (box with links)
 - *Link*: “integration” (definition)
 - *Link*: “mainstreaming” (definition)
- Click on each item in the table below to learn about benefits for stakeholders (drop-down menus)
 - *Link*: Students with disabilities
 - *Link*: Students without disabilities
 - *Link*: Teachers and schools
 - *Link*: Parents and the community
- Research Shows... (box with bulleted list)

🎧 Page 2: How Does Inclusion Differ from Traditional Instruction?

- Traditional v. Inclusive (table with bullets and links)
 - *Link*: “some students”
 - *Link*: “some parents”
 - *Link*: Expanded version of the table
- **Media**: Elaine Mulligan explains why inclusive schools are better than traditional ones and highlights some of the characteristics typical of an inclusive school (audio)
- FYI (box with bullets)

🎧 Page 3: Why Should School Environments Become Inclusive?

- Legal Imperative
 - *Link*: Federal Legislation
- Professional Imperative
 - *Link*: Professional Standards
- **Media**: Joseph Murphy discusses how professional standards reflect the role of the modern principal as an instructional leader rather than a manager (audio)
- **Media**: John Nori discusses how professional standards reflect the role of the modern principal as an instructional leader rather than a manager (audio)
- Moral Imperative
 - Box with quotations
- Expert Panel (box with media)
 - **Media**: Mel Riddile discusses the moral imperative related to creating an inclusive school environment (audio)
 - **Media**: Jennie Scott discusses the moral imperative related to creating an inclusive school environment (audio)
 - **Media**: Cynthia Alexander discusses the moral imperative related to creating an inclusive school environment (audio)

🎧 Page 4: Kotter’s Model of Change

- Box with quotation
- Kotter’s model of change (graphic with link)
 - *Link*: The eight-step model (enumerated list with bullets)
- FYI (box)

🎧 Page 5: Establish a Sense of Urgency

- Recognize the need for change
 - Present data
 - Three organizing questions (table)
 - Highlight current realities

- Elaine Mulligan discusses two current realities faced by schools that often create a sense of urgency (audio)
 - o Encourage self-reflection
 - Principals' questions for staff (bulleted list)
- Barriers to creating a sense of urgency
 - o Barriers may include... (bulleted list)
 - o **Media:** Matt Montoya talks about the barriers he experienced trying to create urgency (audio)
- Research Shows... (box with bullets)
- Myths and facts about inclusion (graphic with pull-down menus)
- Ms. Lawrence shares... (bulleted list with links)
 - o *Link:* Reading data for the last two years
 - o *Link:* Discipline referral data for the last two years
- *Link:* Ms. Lawrence's informal survey
- **Activity:** It's your turn to practice establishing a sense of urgency for your school (box with numbered items)

Page 6: Form a Guiding Team

- *Link:* "distributed leadership" (definition)
- Box with quotation
- Engage the right people
 - o FYI (box)
- Ensure effective teamwork
 - o Effective group process
 - o Training
- *Link:* Ms. Lawrence's list of individuals to recruit
- **Activity:** Build a guiding team (box with link)
 - o *Link:* Blank form to help create the team

Page 7: Create a Vision

- *Link:* Inclusive school characteristics
- Create vision statement
 - o A good vision statement is... (bulleted list)
 - o Longview Middle School Vision Statement (box)
 - o **Media:** Mel Riddile discusses why it is important for a school's vision statement to be clear and simple (audio)
- Determine Whether the Vision Can Be Measured
 - o Longview Middle School: Monitoring the Vision Statement (table with bullets)
- *Link:* Responses to Ms. Lawrence's vision statement
- *Link:* Central Middle School's evaluation table
- **Activity:** Use the tools to create an inclusive vision statement and show how you will measure it (box with links)
 - o *Link:* Create a vision statement
 - o *Link:* Vision statement evaluation table

Page 8: Communicate the Vision

- Communicating To Gain Support
 - o A communication plan involves strategies such as... (bulleted list and link)
 - *Link:* Examples of tough questions
 - o Box with quotation

- Evaluating stakeholder support
 - *Link:* Sample teacher survey about buy-in
- **Media:** Elaine Mulligan discusses ways that the team can promote inclusion for those who do not initially buy in to the need for change (audio)
- *Link:* View the CMS communication plan
- *Link:* Learn how CMS will evaluate its communication plan
- **Activity:** Develop a communication plan (box)

🔍 Page 9: Enable Action

- Evaluate Current Level of Inclusiveness
 - *Link:* Quality indicators of an inclusive environment
- Identify priorities
 - *Link:* Learn how to perform an SWOT analysis
 - FYI (box with bulleted list)
- Create an Action Plan
 - An action plan should include... (bulleted list)
 - *Link:* Turn priorities into action
 - FYI (box with bulleted list)
- Implement the Action Plan
 - **Media:** Mel Riddile offers suggestions about how to begin implementing school change (audio)
- The team starts by examining available data... (bulleted list)
- CMS's documents
 - *Link:* CMS Quality Indicators of an Inclusive Environment checklist
 - *Link:* CMS SWOT analysis
 - *Link:* CMS action plan
- **Activity:** Enable action (box with numbered items)

🔍 Page 10: Ensure Short-Term Wins

- To create short-term wins... (bulleted list)
- Did You Know? (box)
- Engage More People
 - **Media:** Pearl Sims relates an experience she had when leading a school change and advises school leaders to recruit rather than ask for volunteers (audio)
- Make Progress Visible
- Reward Individuals
 - Rewards might include (bulleted list)
- FYI (box)
- *Link:* Provide teachers with common planning time
- *Link:* Utilize volunteers to increase opportunities for reading practice
- **Activity:** Choose two items from your action plan that you think will ensure short-term wins (box)

🔍 Page 11: Improve and Expand

- Refine Procedures
 - As part of their examination, the guiding team should... (bulleted list)
- Build Leadership Capacity
 - Box with quotation
 - **Media:** Mark Wilson talks about his own experience building leadership capacity (audio)
- FYI (box)

- *Link*: Notes from CMS’s guiding team meeting
- **Activity**: As a principal, how would you build leadership capacity among your staff to address the identified problem? How would this increased leadership capacity affect your change effort? (box)

🔍 Page 12: Anchor the Changes

- Documents that guide the school’s processes and procedures (bulleted list)
- FYI (box with link)
 - *Link*: “recursive” (definition)
- *Link*: CMS’s checklist for ensuring long-term sustainability
- **Activity**: List at least three processes or procedures in which you would anchor your changes (box)

🔍 Page 13: References, Additional Resources and Information

- References
- Additional Resources and Information

🔍 Page 14: Credits

- Content Experts
- Module Developers
- Module Production Team
- Module Production Support Team
- Media Production Team
- Media
- Expert Interviews

ASSESSMENT

- “Please complete the items below” (numbered questions)

WRAP UP

- **Media**: Mel Riddile discusses Kotter’s eight-step model of change (movie)
- Boxes with quotations
- Three years after CMS began to make changes toward becoming more inclusive... (bulleted list)
- Reflection on Initial Thoughts (box)