



*Celebration Activities*  
*For Inclusive Schools Week*  
LESSONS & RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS



INCLUSIVE  
SCHOOLS  
NETWORK

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# *Celebration Activities Guide for Inclusive Schools Week*

## *Interesting, Fun, Learning Activities that promote Inclusive Practices During Inclusive Schools Week and Anytime Throughout the Year*

These celebration ideas serve as practical suggestions for facilitating the inclusion of all students in a general education setting. As the diversity of learners within our classrooms continues to grow, the need to structure curricula, lessons, and activities that not only meet the needs of all students, but celebrate the diversity among those learners becomes critical.

Whether students in your school and community are already sharing a common learning environment or you are just beginning to create an atmosphere of accessibility and acceptance for all, these resources will help to encourage and inspire movement toward a more inclusive community. This Celebration Activities Guide includes activities and resources for educators, families, students, and community leaders who are committed to embracing diversity and providing access to learning for all students.

To assist you in planning for the Week, we have categorized the activities into 3 groups: for **classrooms**, **schools and districts**, and **communities**. Within the categories there are three levels of implementation:

1. **Activities that Promote Awareness:** Activities in this section can help create awareness of the benefits of inclusive education. Awareness is the first step in promoting positive change. Once people are able to recognize the promise of inclusive education, they can begin to seek the knowledge and skills necessary to realize their goals.
2. **Activities that Build Knowledge and Skill:** Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking awareness to the next level—Action! Building the knowledge and skills of students, families, school staff, and members of the community increases the likelihood that inclusive practices will become integrated into the framework of the community.
3. **Activities that Influence the System:** Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking knowledge and skill to the next level—Change within the system! By changing the policies, procedures, and culture of our schools, it is more likely that positive advances in inclusive education will become an integral part of the community framework.

# Classroom, School, District and Community-Wide Celebration Ideas

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## CLASSROOM CELEBRATION IDEAS

The following ideas are geared toward implementation in classrooms. For even more learning and fun, team up with another classroom in your school to put some of these ideas into action.

### *Activities that Promote Awareness*

Activities in this section can help create awareness of the benefits of inclusive education. Awareness is the first step in promoting positive change. Once people are able to recognize the promise of inclusive education, they can begin to seek the knowledge and skills necessary to realize their goals.

- Decorate your classroom with items that support academic development for all children. This can include learning supports such as pictures, large print letters, and clear directions to complete assignments. If there are children who cannot access this information from a distance due to a visual, physical, or other disability, make small copies of these items to be used at the child's desk.
- Expand your morning circle activity to include various modes of communication. Use sign language, foreign languages, and augmentative communication supports (including photos, pictures, and assistive technology devices, etc.) to support those students whose communication systems might not include spoken English, along with exposing other students to the variety of ways that people can communicate.
- Have students develop a list of the variety of ways that people can communicate. Help them expand the list by discussing different forms of communication, including sign languages, foreign languages, assistive technology devices, etc.
- Establish a "Five Minutes for Friendship" ritual each day. Have students pair up with classmates on a rotating basis. Provide a topic for the pair to discuss for five minutes. Ask a few pairs to share their conversation with the class.
- Invite students who are not generally included into your classroom for one of your daily lessons. Try to expand these opportunities in your room and throughout the school.
- Ask students to create Inclusive Schools Week cards including reasons why they like being a part of an inclusive school.
- Ask related service personnel (occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language therapists, etc.) to include typically developing peers in the activities that they do with children who have disabilities in your classroom. Fun games that target the therapy goals of some students while including typically developing peers in the activity promote the inclusion of all students.

- Develop a morning greeting routine so that all children, including those with disabilities and English Language Learners, have the opportunity to communicate with each other at the beginning of the day.
- Assign all classroom tasks/jobs in pairs so that children who aren't able to complete a task independently don't feel that they always need a "helper." This encourages children to collaborate with each other to get a job done.
- Have students work in groups to come up with a blueprint or plan for an inclusive school. They can focus on areas including physical access, curriculum ideas, support strategies, etc. A poster session can be held during the Week for each team to highlight their ideas.
- Ask students to write about a time that they didn't feel included in a group. Talk about how it made them feel. Ask them how their experiences relate to anyone who is perceived as different and what challenges they might face in a school setting.
- Have students keep journals to regularly record their contributions to an inclusive school environment.
- Model ways in which students can approach and interact with others who may be different from them in some way. Role-play hypothetical situations in which the students may have the opportunity to interact with a person in a wheelchair, a person who is blind, someone who speaks another language, or an individual from another religion or culture.
- Create art projects, such as "I am special" or "Great things happen in inclusive schools" buttons that the students can wear during the Week.
- Invite a guest speaker with a disability to speak about his or her experiences. Be sure to include a question-and-answer time for students.
- Invite students to write a list of all of their unique characteristics under a picture of themselves. Display student work during the Week.
- Have the class plant a celebration garden including flowers and plants with different characteristics. Ask students to describe how each is beautiful in a unique way. Students can write essays or journal entries on the ways the garden reflects the diversity of their community.
- Ask students to write and perform a play about accepting differences in others.
- Encourage students to write to Congress or a local elected official about inclusive education issues that concern them.
- Design a classroom mural to depict the students' perception of what an inclusive school and community look like.
- Assign students to write an essay describing how to be a good friend. Have students share their thoughts on kindness, acceptance, and friendship.

- Read and discuss poetry that focuses on creating and maintaining unity among different groups of people.
- Develop a class motto or mission statement that highlights the inclusive nature of the classroom.
- Implement a slogan contest: “I feel included when . . . ” or “I feel included because . . . ”
- Involve support staff (e.g., counselors, nurses, office staff, janitors, and related service staff) in classroom-based activities to create an awareness of their roles in the school community.
- Variations on a theme: Have students vote on a theme or issue related to inclusive schools that they would like to address during the Week. Integrate the theme into the major curriculum areas.

### ***Activities that Build Knowledge and Skills***

Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking awareness to the next level—Action! Building the knowledge and skills of students, families, school staff, and members of the community increases the likelihood that inclusive practices will become integrated into the framework of the community.

- Ask students to research technologies that can support students to achieve in school and in the community. Compile a resource guide for the school and district.
- Encourage students to study how the fields of science and technology have contributed to the lives of people with disabilities. Some examples are cochlear implants, assistive technology, wheelchairs, TTY, etc.
- Take time out to explore your students’ interests. Ask students to identify topics that interest them and activities that occupy their non-school time. Try to incorporate some of their interests and likes into your classroom.
- Assign students to explore websites dedicated to Universal Design for Learning and technology in order to come up with ideas to improve access to information for themselves and others. One example is Teaching Every Student at <http://www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/>.
- Ask students to complete a Learning Style Assessment. Host a classroom discussion about the various ways that people learn and why it is important to know how each individual learns the best.
- Make a commitment during the Week to try some new teaching strategies aimed at improving outcomes for all kids in your class. Incorporate active learning into your language arts lesson, take the students for an observation walk during science class, or act out the events in history that you are studying. Your hard work will pay off, because the students will embrace learning while having fun.
- Incorporate the teaching of study skills into the classroom curriculum. These supports serve to increase the achievement levels of all students.

- Encourage students to use graphic organizers as tools to write essays/stories/projects conveying their thoughts and ideas about inclusive education. See the Resources section for links to sample graphic organizers.
- Have the class study the use of “person first” language when talking about people with differences in language, culture, and ability. The lesson includes a discussion of what personal characteristics you want people to emphasize when they refer to you. Each student can sign a contract committing to using person first language in their conversations and sharing this information with others in their family and community.
- Allow students to make a choice of how they will demonstrate their learning on a specific topic. Encourage students to be creative and to be able to explain why they chose to be assessed in their respective ways.
- Assign a research project on culturally responsive educational practices. Ask students to make the connection between these practices and building an inclusive school.
- Each morning introduce students to a new word in American Sign Language. Encourage them to use the word at least five times during the school day.
- Teach students the proper way to provide assistance as a sighted guide to a person who is blind or visually impaired. They can take turns practicing on each other using a blindfold.
- Have students study the demographics of the school and community. Do the services provided adequately serve the needs of the community? What recommendations can be made to community leaders and local government?
- Ask the class to design a chart outlining the features of a store, restaurant, or other public place that would make it more accessible to people with disabilities. Collect data on local businesses that have these accessible features. At the conclusion of the project, present an award to the business that has the most accessible features.
- Have students research federal and state laws that protect human and civil rights. Research disability laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. How do they apply to their schools and communities?
- Instruct students to work in groups to assess the accessibility of the school and community for people with disabilities. What modifications can be made? Do the public buildings in the community offer access to people with disabilities? How many restaurants in the community offer menus in Braille? Is there a text telephone or TTY in the school (also known as a TDD, which stands for telecommunication device for the deaf)?
- Ask student groups to study the elements of universal design, a principle of architectural design that focuses on accessibility for all people. How do the concepts apply to their school and community? How can the concepts of universal design assist in fostering an inclusive environment?

- Have individuals build a model (either three-dimensional or on graph paper) of a classroom, school, or community that provides access for all people. List the features that contribute to it being an inclusive environment.
- Have students investigate the laws that protect people with disabilities in our country. Compare the findings to those of other countries.
- Ask students to research what the education laws state about inclusive practices.

### *Activities that Influence the System*

Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking knowledge and skill to the next level—Change within the system! By changing the policies, procedures, and culture of our schools, it is more likely that positive advances in inclusive education will become an integral part of the community framework.

- Develop a list of ways that your classroom can be more inclusive. Set goals throughout the year towards realizing your ideal classroom.
- Organize the classroom to accommodate diverse learners. Consider lighting, placement of furniture, proximity of workspace to distractions, and availability of a broad range of materials and manipulatives (e.g., Braille books and books on tape).
- Engage your classroom faculty (teachers, parent helpers, assistants, related service providers, etc.) in a monthly gathering to discuss progress and to set monthly goals for becoming a more inclusive environment. Make it more fun by sharing responsibility for coffee and treats.
- Pilot a co-teaching model in one or more classrooms, pairing a general educator and special educator.
- Provide accommodations for all children in the class, not only those with disabilities. For example, during a pre-school circle time make adaptive chairs and positioning equipment available to all of the students whether they require the adaptation or not.
- Instead of creating a unit or lesson plan for a new subject area, ask your students how they would like to learn a particular topic. Have them work in groups to create a plan for learning and practicing the new content.
- Create a “Grab and Go” box that contains after school ideas that encourage learning, volunteerism, and goodwill projects. Each day upon dismissal the children have an opportunity to pick a surprise suggestion out of the box. Set up a reward system (pencils, posters, and stickers promoting the Week are a great idea!) for students who successfully complete their task.
- Incorporate a lesson that highlights the work that UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is doing toward promoting inclusive education around the globe. Find more information at <http://www.unesco.org>.
- Label items in the classroom with pictures, object cues, Spanish words, Braille, or any other symbol system that will support the students in the classroom.

- Differentiate instruction to target the learning styles of the children in your class. Identify learner outcomes on various levels so that all children can be successful.
- Develop a new lesson plan format to highlight the strategies you will use to meet the needs of diverse learners.
- Embed lessons on diversity and disability into already established units and lesson plans.

# Classroom, School, District and Community-Wide Celebration Ideas

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## SCHOOL-WIDE CELEBRATION IDEAS

The activities found in this section can be implemented across grade levels and throughout the school building. By engaging in a school-wide celebration, students have the opportunity to experience the power of working together as a community.

In many places, schools are considered the heart of the community. They are a wonderful place to celebrate diversity and bring about awareness and acceptance of differences among community members.

### *Activities that Promote Awareness*

Activities in this section can help create awareness of the benefits of inclusive education. Awareness is the first step in promoting positive change. Once people are able to recognize the promise of inclusive education, they can begin to seek the knowledge and skills necessary to realize their goals.

- Ask students to contribute to a list of “100 Things that Make our School Inclusive.” Place a large bin in a common area of the school and have students write their ideas on paper and drop into the bin. When the count reaches 100 choose some of the contributions to share with the students during an assembly. Give prizes (e.g., pencils and posters) to the students whose ideas were chosen.
- Create a student-run planning team for Inclusive Schools Week. Have a faculty advisor guide the group to develop goals and strategies for celebrating Inclusive Schools Week 2012
- Have a poster contest and/or essay contest using the theme “Great things happen in inclusive schools.” Display the art and literature work throughout the school and community.
- Create an inclusive school portrait to display in the school lobby. Have each student bring in a small photo of him- or herself for display in a large collage during the Week.
- Ask families, school personnel, and students to contribute their ideas to the slogan “Great things happen in inclusive schools.” Have a book or a box at the entrance of the school prompting people to answer the question “What are some great things that happen in our inclusive school?” Share the contributions with members of the school community during the Week through a newsletter or during a planned celebration.
- Highlight an “Inclusive Practice of the Week” in the faculty room.

- Make an inclusion quilt. Have each classroom design a square of material with words or a design that celebrates the Week. Ask one volunteer from each class to help put the quilt together. Display in the school lobby during the Week and throughout the year.
- During a staff meeting or professional development day, ask teachers to evaluate their rooms for accessibility. Have wheelchairs, blindfolds, white canes, earplugs, and other simulators available for them to use during this assessment. Provide a form for teachers to record their findings and allow them to share their plans to improve their classrooms with the group.
- Develop an Inclusive Practices Manual for the school. Ask teachers to contribute ideas, strategies, and tools that they have found successful in promoting inclusive practices in their classroom and throughout the school.
- Honor school faculty and staff committed to inclusive education at a luncheon.
- Make a daily PA announcement on a particular topic or theme that relates to the Week.
- Make a book that honors the diversity of all students in the school. Have the book on display at the front office.
- Write a school song that highlights the inclusive nature of the school.
- Create school displays that promote the principles of the Week.
- Have all students and staff read a common book with an inclusive theme. Have school-wide or grade-level discussions about the book.
- Make a video for families highlighting your school's celebration of diversity. The video can be shown during parent-teacher conference night.
- Promote the Week via a parent newsletter, the local newspaper, school marquis, and/or the local community cable channel.
- Write a letter to school staff encouraging them to address inclusion at staff meetings, parent meetings, holiday concerts, student assemblies, and any other appropriate situations.
- Display student artwork and projects around the school. Projects might include life-sized paper dolls, the "what makes me special" essays, name histories, or family trees.
- Hold school-wide celebrations that might include presentations on inclusive practices by staff and other experts, poster and banner displays, awards for inclusive practices at the school or in the community, student displays, and celebrations with food from many countries.
- Invite faculty and families of neighboring districts to your celebration activities.
- Ask each grade level to choose a different topic relating to inclusive education to focus on during the Week. Share resources, photos, books, and activity ideas in the school lobby and faculty lounge.

### *Activities that Build Knowledge and Skills*

Activities in this section reflect the importance of taking awareness to the next level—Action! Building the knowledge and skills of students, families, school staff, and members of the community increases the likelihood that inclusive practices will become integrated into the framework of the community.

- Create a website that highlights the inclusive nature of your school. Have students and teachers work together to design the site, develop content, and act as webmasters. Make sure that the website is fully accessible (for more information, see the Web Accessibility Initiative website: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/>)
- Host a video, PowerPoint presentation, poster, or essay contest in your school on the theme of “How Technology Helps Me to Learn.” Send us the electronic copies of the winning entries, and we will post them on [www.inclusiveschools.org](http://www.inclusiveschools.org).
- Utilize time during faculty or team meetings to explore websites that have online tools to promote access to content. For example, visit the website of the National Library of Virtual Manipulatives, at <http://nlvm.usu.edu/>, and discuss how virtual manipulatives might be used with your curriculum to promote student learning.
- Have students develop a school brochure outlining all of the resources available within the school that support student achievement including technology, academic support (tutoring, study groups), counseling services, related therapy services, etc.
- Pair general education and special education teachers into teaching teams. Encourage each team to implement at least one lesson together during the Week. Challenge the teaching teams to continue this strategy on a regular basis throughout the school year.
- Host a professional development day focused on having teachers work together in pairs or small groups to brainstorm new and different instructional delivery methods. Ask each teacher to commit to trying out these new instructional strategies.
- Ask each grade level in the school to adopt an area of the school building to make it more accessible. Areas can include the cafeteria, mail lobby, gym, art room, main office, principal’s office, etc. Encourage students to be creative in finding adaptations that are creative and monetarily feasible. Hold a mid-year celebration to highlight progress and share solutions.
- Host a brown bag lunch for community leaders and teachers to help educate the school staff about the different cultures represented in the community. Ask each community leader to come with some ideas about how the school can better contribute to the values and traditions of the community.
- Celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., during the Week (you don’t need to wait until his birthday in January!) Host school forums and discussions about his mission of unity and peace. Ask students to contribute essays or speeches using Dr. King’s famous starting phrase “I have a dream” and relating it to their dream about building a more inclusive school and community.

- Dedicate a school professional development day to instructing faculty on topics such as differentiating instruction, culturally relevant curriculum, and providing accommodations for learners with disabilities.
- Offer American Sign Language to meet the foreign language requirement or as an elective.
- Bring together grade-level and content-specific teachers to redesign curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. This includes looking at the accessibility of materials and developing accommodations and modifications to the curriculum.
- Invite school faculty to attend a monthly book club meeting with the goal of discussing literature about inclusive education, community building, and diversity.
- Have school faculty and staff watch instructional videos on inclusive practices during their lunch hour or after school one day per week.
- Ask teachers to invite their colleagues into their classrooms to observe and provide them feedback and ideas about additional ways to reach diverse learners.
- Encourage related service providers (speech pathologist, teacher of the visually impaired, occupational therapist, school nurse, etc.) to share information about their area of expertise and provide instruction on how to incorporate strategies to support children receiving special services in the classroom.

### *Activities that Influence the System*

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- Host a post-election celebration at the school to honor elected officials who support diversity and acceptance in the schools and community. Ask selected officials to address the students on the importance of inclusive communities.
- Host a fund-raising event toward purchasing technology for the school to help support diverse learners.
- Appoint several teachers and students to be inclusive schools ambassadors. Identify other schools in the district or surrounding communities who are also working to become more inclusive. Have your ambassadors meet with students in these schools to encourage their movement toward a more inclusive school environment.
- Introduce a new high school course or graduation requirement that involves students performing community service activities. Encourage or require students to define how their chosen activity promotes inclusive practices in the school and/or community.
- Set aside time during the month for teachers to observe classrooms in the school/district successful in incorporating inclusive practices.

- Provide opportunities for co-teaching teams to mentor other prospective co-teaching teams through classroom visits, observations, sharing of resources, and informal planning meetings.
- Develop a position within the student government to represent issues related to building a more inclusive community.
- Develop a Welcome Center where new students and visitors can learn about the mission and features of your school, including its dedication to educating all students.
- Reserve common planning time each day for teachers to plan ways to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of all learners.
- Have information about the school and community available in a variety of accessible formats, including Braille, as well as translated into foreign languages spoken within the community. Have sign language and foreign language interpreters on call for visits with families.
- Institute a required new staff training session that focuses on introducing new staff to the inclusive environment at the school and offers strategies and resources on inclusive practices.

# Classroom, School, District and Community-Wide Celebration Ideas

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## COMMUNITY, UNIVERSITY, AND DISTRICT-WIDE CELEBRATION IDEAS

Entire countries, as well as states, communities, universities, and school districts, have chosen to celebrate Inclusive Schools Week, thus contributing to the development of a more inclusive society. Organizations that choose to celebrate Inclusive Schools Week send a positive message to their communities about the philosophy and climate of their schools. Involving the community in a celebration serves to empower school-based staff, families, and students to move forward in their goal of creating more inclusive schools.

### *Activities that Promote Awareness*

The activities in this section serve to create an awareness of the benefits of inclusive education. Awareness is the first step in promoting positive change. Once people are able to recognize the promise of inclusive education, they can begin to seek the knowledge and skills necessary to realize their goals.

- Create an "Inclusive Schools Action Committee" to guide school, district and community events supporting inclusive education throughout the community.
- Host a viewing of the documentary "A World for Inclusion" a film about the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in particular article 24 on education. Conclude with a discussion about the film and the role of inclusive schools in your district, the United States and throughout the world.
- Look for opportunities to highlight your school or district's inclusive practices at community events, such as town meetings, holiday concerts, art exhibits, local religious events, etc. Have students make buttons, posters, or other items to sell that will remind the community of the inclusive nature of the school, while raising money to support events promoting inclusive education.
- Sponsor a community essay contest using the theme of the Week. Have students write essays that explain why inclusive schools are important and how students with disabilities contribute to their communities in positive ways. Honor winners at an awards banquet.
- Create a DVD or video about your school district and community highlighting diversity and the commitment to inclusive education. Provide copies to new families entering the school district and to realtors who are encouraging new families to move to town.
- Promote the Week to community organizations (e.g. after school programs, senior centers, recreation centers, boys and girls clubs) and/or invite these groups to participate in the Week's activities to further build an inclusive community.

- Showcase materials around the slogan “Great things happen in inclusive schools” in local public buildings and community gathering places (library, town hall, community center, etc.). Photos, posters, essays, and other artifacts can serve to highlight the achievements of the district and its work toward being more inclusive.
- Approach a local television station with ideas about how they can highlight the events of the Week, such as interviews with district personnel, family members, and students; video tours of schools that promote inclusive education; or coverage of specific activities you have planned.
- Present the school board with materials that promote the Week, including stickers, posters, and pencils.
- Create window displays about inclusive practices in central office buildings.
- Encourage district-level personnel to volunteer in a school classroom to read a book about diversity or facilitate a discussion about inclusive communities.
- Organize an evening program inviting students, families, teachers, and community members to read their favorite books with inclusive themes.
- Show videos on various aspects of inclusion and hold discussions with students and faculty in local teacher education programs.

### ***Activities that Build Knowledge and Skills***

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- Encourage local service and nonprofit agencies to host an Open House Day to encourage community members to become involved in local efforts through volunteerism and/or financial support. Recruit students to assist in the planning and implementation of this event.
- Invite a disability services coordinator from a local college or university to speak at a school or community event about the supports that are available to students with disabilities who are considering or ready to enter college.
- Encourage a local bookstore to highlight books that promote inclusive education during the Week. Invite an author or an avid reader to speak at a store-hosted event on the principles and benefits of inclusive education.
- Organize a meeting between school faculty and community after school program staff to discuss ways both programs can share ideas and strategies to become more inclusive.
- Encourage school faculty who have been successful in implementing inclusive practices to contact a local college or university to share information about classroom strategies as a guest lecturer.
- Ask school district personnel to attend professional development workshops on topics related to inclusive education. Have each faculty member develop an action plan to

incorporate lessons learned into his or her own practice. Educators can share their ideas and the outcomes later in the year.

- Hold a symposium for the school board to provide information about the management and administration of inclusive schools. Invite school board members from area schools that are moving ahead with inclusive education to share their knowledge and experiences.
- Host a community meeting to educate local employers and other community leaders about how they can support transition-age students with disabilities by providing summer and long-term employment opportunities.
- Host a community forum to spotlight city or town amenities that are accessible to all. Invite the recreation department, local Girls and Boys Clubs, YMCA, YWCA, and other youth organizations. Ask the organizations to highlight the accessible features of their space and of the activities that they host.

### ***Activities that Influence the System***

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- Develop a formal partnership between the local school system and a local youth organization committed to inclusive education, such as the Boys and Girls Club, Girl or Boy Scouts, YMCA, and after school programs. Highlight this partnership in the community as a way to share resources and to broaden the scope of inclusive community practices.
- Create a Professional Learning Community in your school district, university or community focused on the use of technology to provide access. A great starting place for your exploration would be the Center for Implementing Technology in Education at <http://www.cited.org/>.
- Declare the first week in December as Inclusive Schools Week with an official school board or local government proclamation. See the Media Kit for examples.
- Encourage your community newspaper to include a regular column entitled “Great things happen in inclusive schools.” Have school personnel, families, and students contribute to the column by sharing experiences and ideas about inclusive education.
- Create a partnership with a local college or university to support student teachers with experience in inclusive education.
- Include information in all correspondence to families that interpreter services and Braille translation are available for all meetings and community activities.
- Create a volunteer diversity council comprised of school and community leaders, including student leaders. Begin by hosting a community forum to gather and prioritize ideas about how to make the community more inclusive. The diversity council can lead the campaign to address the issues outlined by the community.

- Develop an after school program for youth focused on gaining work experience. Have students volunteer their after school time to do internships at local businesses, especially for nonprofit and volunteer organizations. While gaining valuable work experience, students will be contributing to the local community. Ask local business leaders to act as mentors.
- Adopt a self-determination/self-advocacy curriculum for middle & high school students.
- Develop a community resource guide highlighting local businesses and organizations that provide accommodations enabling all people to access their services. This resource may include restaurants that have Braille menus, museums that provide interpreter services, and businesses that are wheelchair accessible.
- Implement a family-school partnership model in the district.
- Declare it a formal district priority to move toward educating all children within the school district at their own neighborhood school.
- Create or review the district's mission and values statement to ensure that ALL children are represented.
- Encourage the state legislature to declare the first week in December Inclusive Schools Week. See the Media Kit for sample proclamations.
- Refine recruitment policies to focus on hiring new teachers who value and have experience in inclusive education.
- Present the results from a district-level assessment of the accessibility of the schools to community businesses and leaders. Develop a plan and identify funding sources to alleviate some of the physical and institutional barriers within the schools.
- Include an update on the status of inclusive education in the district in all board of education meetings.
- State the district's commitment to inclusive education on the school website and in all correspondence with the community.