

# All Inclusive

A Collaborative Effort from the MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Division of Special Education and Early Intervention Services and the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education

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## Special Education is a Service, Not a Place

Participation in school as a learner, contributor and consumer lays the foundation for a life time of learning and participation in the community as a productive adult. For students with disabilities, the foundation is laid through a network of special education services aimed at preparing students to lead productive lives as citizens and members of an adult community.

The age-appropriate general education class in the "neighborhood" school is the placement of choice for all students, including those who require special education services as identified in an Individual Education Program (IEP). Removal or restriction from that school or class is only appropriate if it has been demonstrated that the student's IEP cannot be satisfactorily implemented in that setting even with supplementary aids and services.

Some school systems make exceptions due to family concerns such as day care or system practices such as magnet school participation. These exceptions apply to all students, including students with disabilities.

At some schools and school systems have begun to institute changes in their model of service delivery, they have encountered new challenges that require new solutions. Despite the successes of some schools and the models of successful inclusive practices, there remains great variability from school system to school system and, sometimes, from school to school within a system.

Based on successful inclusive education experiences in Maryland, it is clear that the most significant factor building an inclusive education setting

## Welcome

## Readers

Maryland has made significant progress in increasing options for inclusion of students with disabilities.

In 1998, the Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Special Education convened the Task Force on Inclusive Education resulting in the presentation of various recommendations to the State Board of Education and Local Education Agencies regarding special education service delivery.

ALL INCLUSIVE is designed as a vehicle for exploration of those recommendations and sharing of inclusive education practices from around the State. Welcome.