

Inclusion: *More than just a word*

Objectives:

- To define the meaning of inclusion
- To articulate the importance of inclusion for the success of all students
- To evaluate a student leadership program's attempts to meet the needs of all students

Time and Materials: 45 minutes, butcher paper & markers, sticky dots for value voting

Introduction: The phrase we need to “include all students” is often heard from student leaders. But what does this really mean? Who is “all” and how do you “include” them? A meaningful discussion of the concept of inclusion is the beginning of a student leadership team's attempt to live up to the noble quest of including all students.

Guiding Questions:

- What is our definition of inclusion?
- Why is it important to our school and to us as student leaders?
- Where and how is it missing in our school?
- What can we do to change this?

Lesson Plan:

1. Read the guiding questions to the group. Explain that a meaningful discussion about a large concept such as inclusion is an important step in realizing the word's potential.
2. Divide the group into teams of 5 to 7. Ask each group to come up with a definition of inclusion and write the definition on a piece of butcher paper.
3. Have each team present their definition of inclusion to the large group. After each team has presented, ask the large group to comment on any word or phrase in a definition that they particularly liked. Circle these words and phrases.
4. Ask the group to agree upon a definition of inclusion. Explain that they may adopt one of the definitions or combine parts of definitions to create the final description of inclusion.
5. [Brainstorm](#) a list of answers to the question: “Why is this definition of inclusion important to our school and to us as student leaders?”
6. Brainstorm a list of answers to the question: “Where and how is inclusion missing from our school?”
7. Using [Value Voting](#) , have the large group identify an area or aspect of school that they want to focus on.
8. Set a goal and create an action plan based around the identified area or aspect of school that is lacking inclusion or generate a discussion based on the question: “What can we do to change this?”