RADFORD UNIVERSITY
Virginia Inclusive Practices Center

Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Inclusion
Crear y mantener una cultura de inclusió

"What have we learned about creating inclusive …schools? …First, there are things we can do. Second, there are ways we can be" (Nisbet & Hagner, 2000).

Cultivating a safe, positive, and robust school culture may be the most difficult piece of creating an inclusive school, but it is also, perhaps, the most critical piece (Kluth, 2013.)

The indicators below are crucial to creating and sustaining a culture of inclusion in schools. You can create goals for your school using these indicators.

Directions: Based upon your experience, please give each of the following 15 indicators a rating in response to the question, "To what degree does this indicator occur in my school?" - Never, Rarely, Some of the time, Most of the Time, Always.

1. All children and youth, regardless of ability, cultural background, and/or social economic differences, are encouraged, and provided supports as needed, to participate in before, during, and after-school activities (non-academic) with their peers.

2. All children and youth, regardless of ability, cultural background, and/or social economic differences, are provided behavioral, sensory and/or academic supports and services as needed to participate in and be actively engaged in academic learning with their peers.

3. All children and youth are provided the supports and scaffolds needed to be actively engaged in the life and community of the school.

4. All students are seen as contributors and are supported and taught to contribute to the well-being of the classroom, school, and/or community.

5. All students are taught self-determination and self-regulation of learning and behavior.

6. Adults provide scaffolding strategies for supporting positive, reciprocal, sustained peer interactions and relationships between children/youth.

7. Adults strategically prevent and meditate peer conflict through provision of services and training.

8. Adults work together to create classroom and school community in which all children

feel that they belong, regardless of their individual differences, including activities and opportunities that help children understand and accept individual differences.

9. All adults who work in the school give children sensitive, positive feedback (verbal and nonverbal) on their efforts, behaviors, and learning.

10. The school uses welcoming, celebration, and community-building activities on a regular basis to introduce new students and build relationships among students with different experiences, backgrounds, and abilities.

11. The school works to celebrate and share stories of success for every student in the school, not just those who are academically or athletically successful. Awards are based on personal best achievement.

12. A variety of communication methods (newsletters, phone calls, email, social media) are used to invite family members and community members to visit classrooms, help with projects, and serve as resources.

13. Your school celebrates inclusion and diversity every year with art, essays, poetry, film, workshops, etc.

14. Your school hosts family coffees or lunches to discuss school improvement related to inclusion and diversity.

15. The values of diversity and inclusion are evident in our school's mission statement.