

# Breaking Barriers for Inclusive Education & School Design

Making the Case for Inclusion in Education, Facilities, and School Design



## Co-Presenters

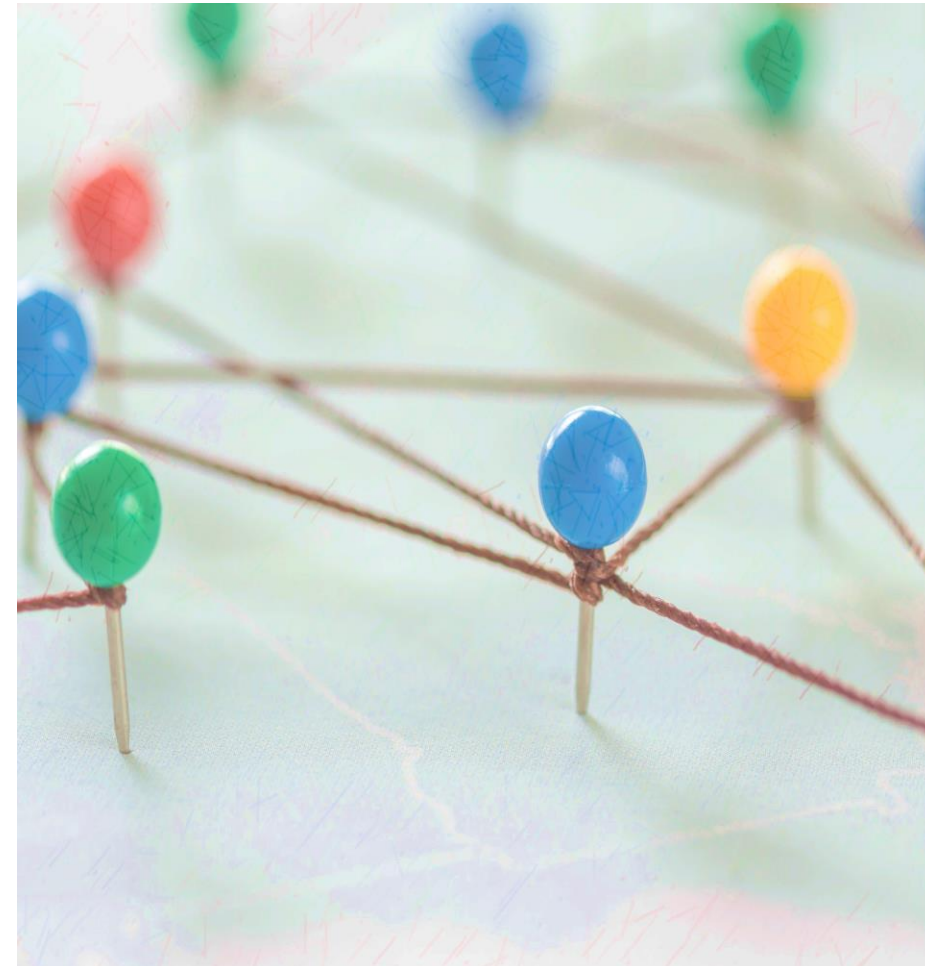
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# Understanding the Inclusive School

## Objectives: Inclusive Education and School Design

- 1** Provide an understanding of **Inclusion from multiple points of view** and Awareness of inclusion in the context of education, facility management, and school design.
- 2** Understand that **a safe school environment positively impacts** the student's health, well-being, and belonging.
- 3** Gain insight into **inclusive education** and an **inclusive design** presents opportunities and benefits for all students
  - Enact the educational foundation to bolster student achievement.
  - Improved academic performance.
  - Building social engagement and awareness.
  - Promoting the health, safety, and well-being of all students, faculty and staff.
  - Preparing students for career success.



# Breaking Barriers for Inclusive Education & School Design

Making the Case for Inclusion in Education, Facilities, and School Design



## Educational Equity and Learning Inclusion

- Why think about inclusion?
- Evidence for inclusion in schools
- Defining inclusion
- Strategies for implementation



## Facility Accessibility and Student Inclusion

- Implementing Inclusion
- Impact of Safety & Security
- Supporting Student Health & Wellness
- Designing Schools for Inclusion



## Integrating Inclusive School Design

- Practice of Design for Inclusive School
- Inclusive Design Principles
- Inclusive School



## Practice of Inclusion

- Community engagement
- Professional development
- Monitor and evaluate
- 



## Audience Activity

- Discussions
- Participation
- Resources



# 1 Making the Case for Inclusion

## Educational Equity and Learning Inclusion

KATHLEEN JAHN



WHY THINK ABOUT  
INCLUSION?



EVIDENCE FOR  
INCLUSION IN  
SCHOOLS



DEFINING  
INCLUSION



STRATEGIES FOR  
IMPLEMENTATION



# Learning Environments Today

What determines the designs of our learning spaces?

Multiple factors such as:

- **Learning outcome goals**
- **Needs of learners**
- **Subject matter**
- **Flexibility**
- **Collaboration**
- **Technology**
- **Comfort**
- **Accessibility**
- **Aesthetics**



# Inclusion offers Educational Opportunities

## Access to Opportunities

- Educational opportunity & equal access to education resources by all students.
- Incorporate inclusion in planning and design of a school assists in providing these opportunities.
- Equal access to optimized learning environment dedicated to the education of all students.
- Inclusion optimizes accessibility to educational and environmental resources for all students.



# Benefits of Universal Design for ALL students

Inclusion fosters equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their background, abilities, and disabilities.

When educating ALL students you must create a learning environment that thinks beyond what exists already.

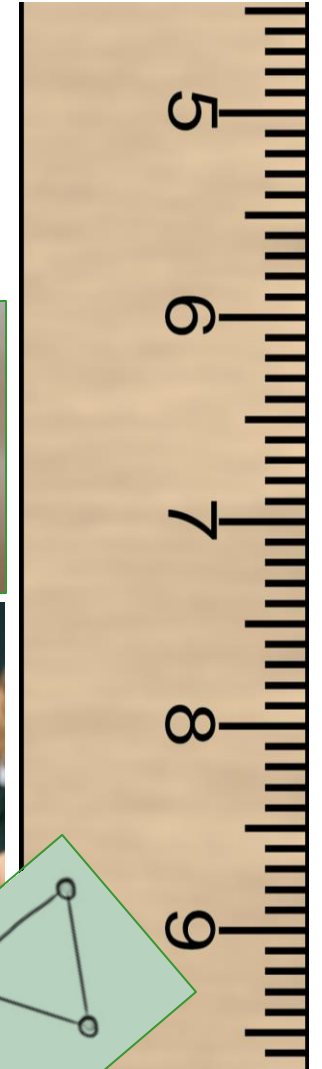
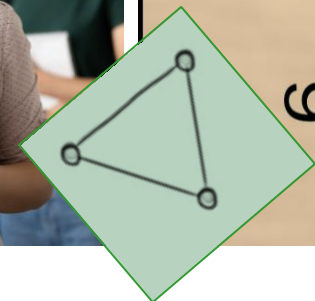
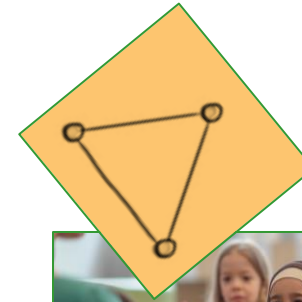
Inclusion contributes to the well-being, safety and academic success of all students through enhanced instructional delivery and a risk-free activated inclusive learning environment.

Universally designed spaces provide for the well-being and educational success of all students.

# Collaboration of Instruction, Facilities, and Architects

## Designing for Diverse Student Needs:

- **Opportunities for acceptance and belonging** to students and their respective educational environment.
- **Inch by Inch:** Purposeful and flexible in every corner of the facility
- **TRIAD of practitioners:** Demonstrating how shared knowledge and complete collaboration and trust between these stakeholders will lead to successful inclusive school design.





# Enhancing Educational Opportunities

## HOW?

- ❑ **Optimizing educational environments** supporting diverse learning needs.
- ❑ **Design flexible spaces** to accommodate various teaching and learning styles.
- ❑ Inclusive environments that **enhance educational opportunities** for all students.



# Strategies for Implementing Inclusive Practices

## What determines the designs of our learning spaces?

- ❑ Offer **practical guidance and resources** for educators, architects, and facility members to implement inclusive practices in their schools.
- ❑ Highlights successful models of **collaboration and partnership** that have led to positive outcomes.
- ❑ Provide tools and frameworks for **evaluating and improving inclusive practices** over time.



# 2 Facility Accessibility and Student Inclusion

HILDA RODRIGUEZ



IMPLEMENTING  
INCLUSION



IMPACT OF SAFETY  
& SECURITY



SUPPORTING  
STUDENT HEALTH &  
WELLNESS



DESIGNING  
SCHOOLS FOR  
INCLUSION



# Implementing Inclusive Methods

1. **Designing spaces** for schools that create environments that cater to the diverse needs of all students.
2. **Designing facilities** for the inclusion of all students as a welcoming and accessible environment for everyone.
3. **Designing campuses** that ensure all students feel valued and supported in their learning.



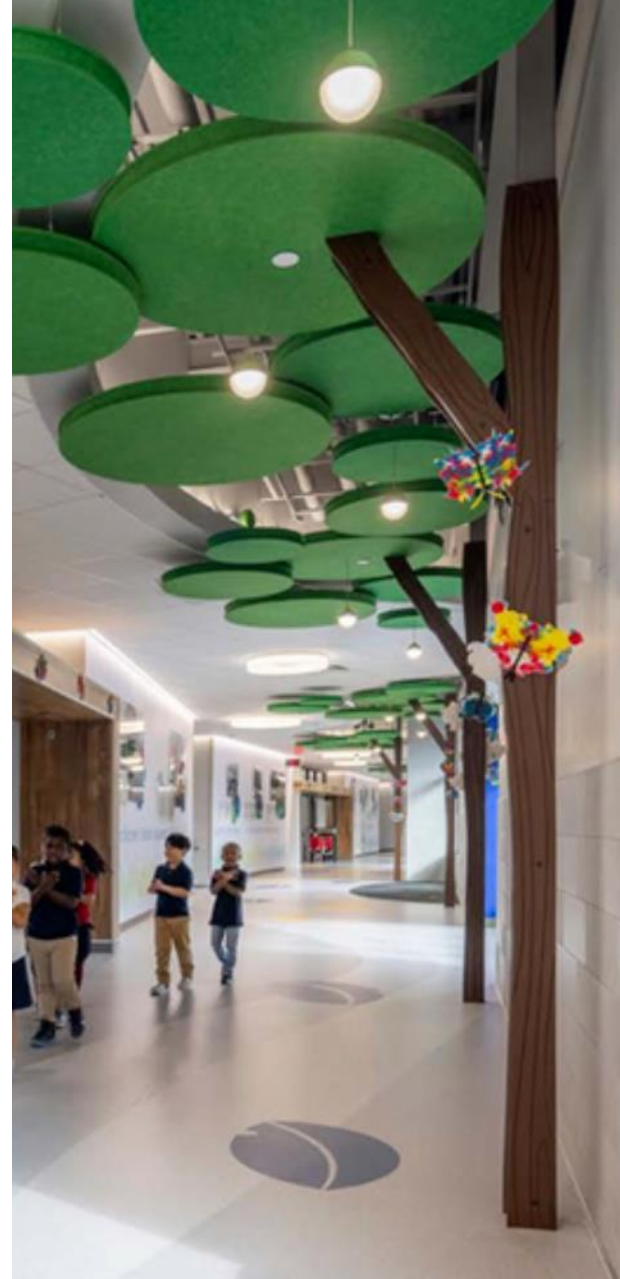
# Implementing Inclusive Methods

## Defining Inclusion:

- identifying the needs of students, campus, district in keeping focused on the vision

## Collaboration and Communication is essential to the design process:

- between stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, and community
- perspectives of all individuals are considered
- “No” is not the correct answer
- architects, consultants, and educators continuing collaboration with the entire design team at each stage of the project
- provide research and data to support the vision
- regularly provide update to constituents



Martinez Early Learning Center | Alief ISD



# 8 Key Considerations of Inclusive Methods

## 1 Accessibility:

- Ensure that the school building is accessible to all students, including those with mobility impairments. This includes ramps, elevators, and wide doorways to accommodate wheelchairs.

## 2 Universal Design:

- Incorporate universal design principles to create spaces that are usable by all students, regardless of their abilities. This includes adjustable desks, sensory-friendly spaces, and clear signage for navigation.

## 3 Natural Lighting and Ventilation:

- Design classrooms with ample natural light and ventilation to create a comfortable and healthy learning environment. Consider using skylights, large windows, and air circulation systems.

## 4 Flexible Spaces:

- Create flexible learning spaces that can be easily adapted to accommodate different teaching methods and student needs. This can include movable furniture, adjustable lighting, and acoustics.



## 8 Key Considerations of Inclusive Methods

### 5 Inclusive Restrooms:

- Design restrooms that are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. Include grab bars, accessible sinks, and enough space for wheelchair users to maneuver.

### 6 Sensory Considerations:

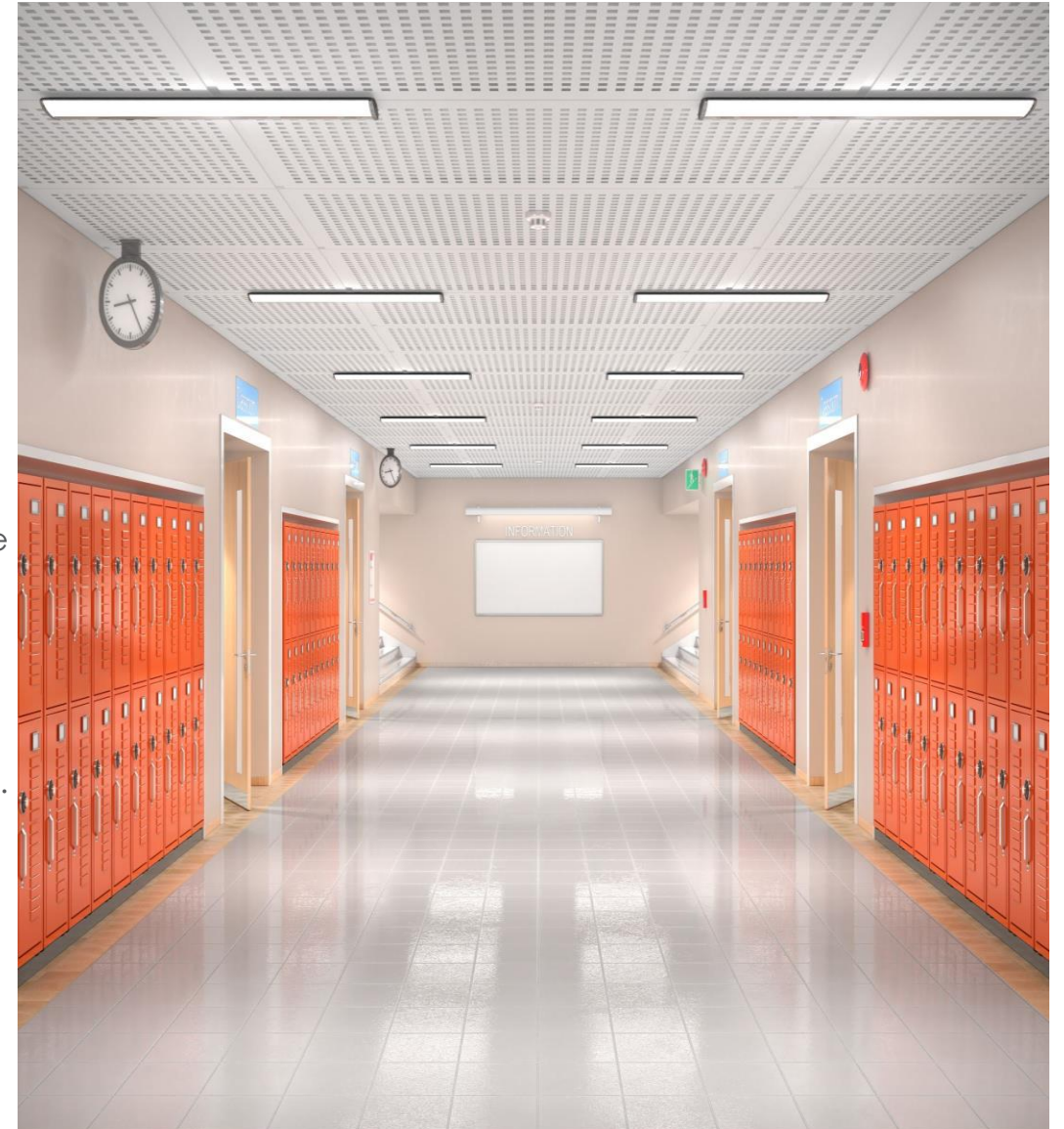
- Incorporate universal design principles to create spaces that are usable by all students, regardless of their abilities. This includes adjustable desks, sensory-friendly spaces, and clear signage for navigation.

### 7 Safety and Security:

- Ensure that the school building is safe and secure for all students. This includes accessible emergency exits, security cameras, and designated safe zones.

### 8 Community Spaces:

- Create communal areas within the school building that encourage social interaction and inclusivity. This can include outdoor courtyards, student lounges, and collaborative workspaces.





Marshall Center for Advanced Careers  
Alief ISD







## Impact on Student Health and Wellness

### Intellectual-Social-Emotional-Mental

#### **Inclusive Design Spaces:**

Reduces stress and anxiety levels, leading to improved mental health among students.  
Opportunities to provide multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression  
Providing opportunities to learn in ways that suit their individual learning styles and preferences.  
Enhances student engagement and participation in learning activities

#### **Leads to:**

increased motivation, self-confidence, and overall well-being.  
Increased sense of belonging and community among students.  
Increased sense of connectedness and support





# Balancing Safety with Inclusivity

- 1. Security measures** in school facilities are crucial for ensuring the safety and well-being of students, staff, and visitors and are mandated by statute.
- 2. How do we strike a balance** between implementing security measures and maintaining an inclusive and welcoming environment for all individuals?
- 3. Excessive security measures** can sometimes create barriers for individuals and students. Examples?



# Balancing Safety and Security



**Accessible Entry Points:** Implementing secure entry points with features such as keycard access or security personnel while ensuring that these entry points are wheelchair accessible and have tactile indicators for individuals with visual impairments.



**Emergency Evacuation Plans:** Developing emergency evacuation plans that consider the needs of individuals with disabilities, such as providing accessible routes, evacuation chairs, and clear communication methods for those with hearing impairments.



# Balancing Safety and Security



**Security Checkpoints:** Designing security checkpoints with considerations for individuals with mobility impairments, sensory sensitivities, or cognitive disabilities. This may involve providing alternative screening methods, accessible seating areas, and staff training on interacting with individuals with diverse needs.



**Surveillance Systems:** Installing surveillance systems that enhance security measures while respecting the privacy and dignity of individuals. Ensuring that surveillance cameras are strategically placed to monitor key areas without infringing on personal space or creating discomfort for students and staff.



# Balancing Safety and Security



**Communication Systems:** Implementing communication systems that allow for effective dissemination of security information in multiple formats, such as visual alerts, text messages, and audio announcements. Ensuring that communication methods are accessible to individuals with disabilities and language barriers.



**Safe Design Features:** Incorporating safe design features into school facilities, such as non-slip flooring, adequate lighting, and clear signage, to enhance safety for all individuals, including those with mobility challenges or sensory impairments.



**Training:** Providing training for staff, security personnel, and students on disability awareness, emergency response protocols, and respectful interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds





## Improvement to Safety and Security Programs Securing Open Libraries



# Benefits of Inclusive Design

## Inclusive Design Spaces:

- Reduces stress and anxiety levels, which improves mental health among students.
- Opportunities for multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression
- Opportunities for learning in ways that suit their learning styles and preferences.
- Enhances student engagement and participation in learning activities

## Leads to:

- ❑ Increased motivation, self-confidence, and overall well-being.
- ❑ Increased sense of belonging and community among students.
- ❑ Increased sense of connectedness and support



# Benefits of Inclusive Design



## Increased Student Enrollment

By creating an inclusive and accessible learning environment, laws and regulations can help avoid legal fees and penalties associated with non-compliance. Inclusive schools can attract more students, leading to increased enrollment and revenue.



## Cost Savings on Retrofits

Designing schools with inclusivity in mind from the beginning can help avoid costly retrofits and modifications later on to accommodate students with disabilities.



## Reduced Legal Costs

Ensuring that schools are ADA-compliant not only mitigates the risk of redesign, associated construction, and legal proceedings but also helps avoid substantial fines and penalties.



## Enhanced Reputation

Schools that prioritize inclusive design demonstrate a commitment to diversity and accessibility, enhancing their reputation and attracting more students and funding.



## Long-Term Cost Effectiveness

Investing in inclusive design upfront may require some initial costs, but in the long run, it can result in cost savings by reducing the need for future modifications and accommodations.





# 3 Integrating Inclusive School Design

GREG LOUVIERE



DESIGN PRACTICE  
INCLUSIVE SCHOOL



INCLUSIVE DESIGN  
PRINCIPLES



DESIGNING  
INCLUSIVE  
SCHOOLS



THE INCLUSIVE  
SCHOOL  
ENVIRONMENT



# Educational Architecture & Inclusive School Design

## The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment

Three core principles for inclusive design

### 1 Access with Dignity

To ensure physical access to places and services, including appropriate technology.

### 2 Treatment with Respect

Consider the student's needs, respecting them, and welcoming them.

### 3 Relevant Services

Design places with the student and faculty users in mind, emphasizing their right to be there.



# Design Strategy



## Planning and Design Team Objectives

### **Principles of Inclusive Design**

Integrate principles in school planning, organization learning environment and facility operation.

### **TEA School Facility Standards for Construction 2021**

Utilize the current TEA Standards to promote inclusive design and determine levels of flexibility and compliance.

### **Best Practices**

To attain project goals, achieve a successful outcome, and meet the objectives of Inclusive School Design.

### **Comply with District Standards**

Employ district long-term master plan, educational specification, and district vision



# Building Resiliency in Schools

## Resilient Design

Environmental, social, and economic factors for planning to and responding to known and unknown threats, risks, hazards, and vulnerabilities.

- **District's Plan for Resilience and Infrastructure**
- **Learning progress:** Sustain education within conditions.
- **Expand school capabilities:** protect, respond, and adapt to inherent hazardous risks,
- **Strengthen students' capacity:** to adapt to climatic disruptions, local inherent hazards, and their associated risks.
- **Maintain student health, well-being, and safety:** for long-term climatic interruptions and inherent hazards.



# Principles of Inclusive Design for Schools

5 Principles of Inclusive Design prioritize accessibility, safety, and inclusivity.



**1. Universal Design**



**2. Flexibility**



**3. Safety**



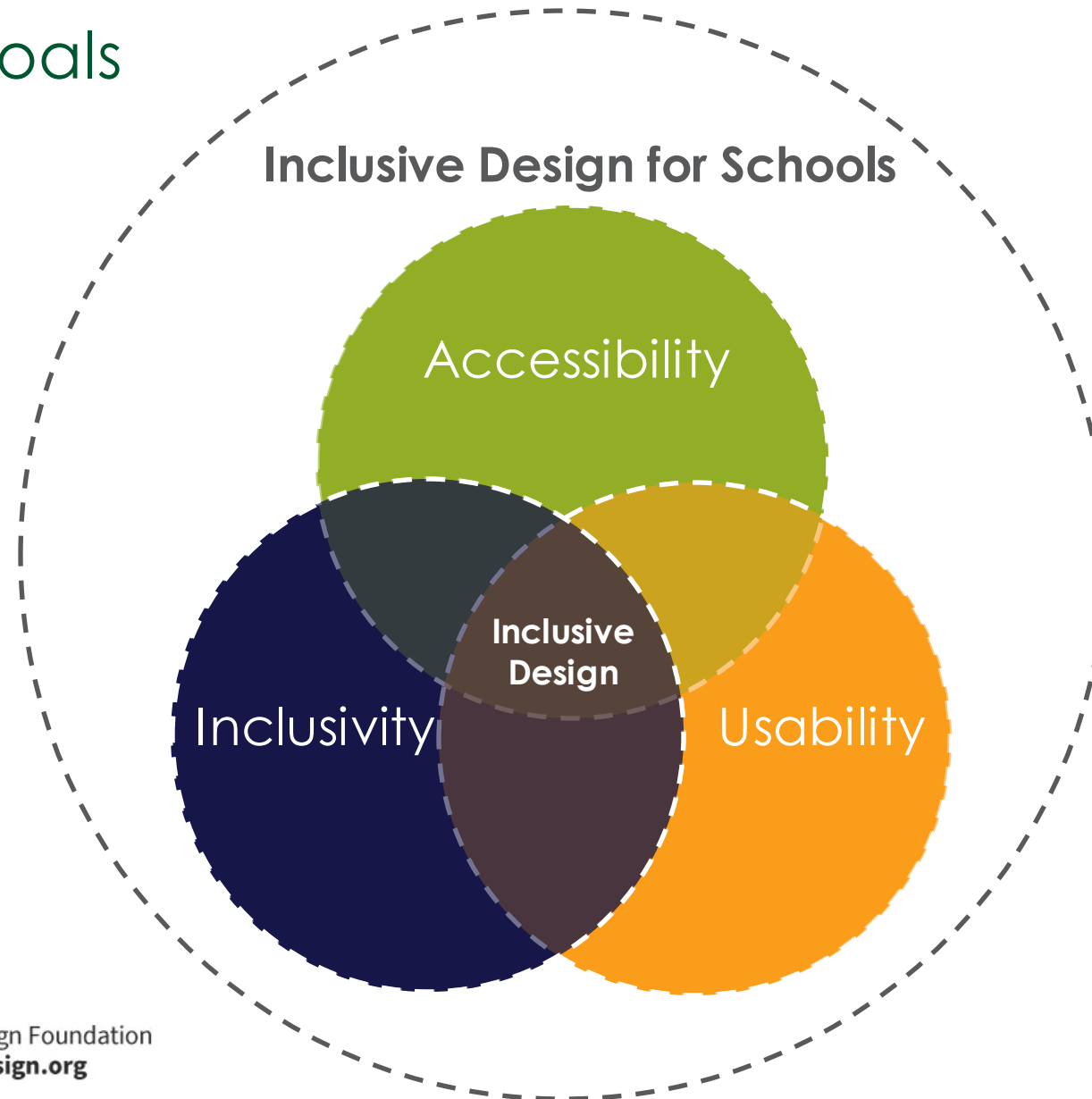
**4. Sensory Considerations**



**5. Collaboration and Communication**



# Inclusive Design Goals



Interaction Design Foundation  
[interaction-design.org](http://interaction-design.org)



# Inclusive School Design

**Architects, facility management, districts, and educators need collaborative engagement.**

Assure the School's capacity to deliver and sustain inclusivity for all.

Student safety, universal accessibility, and beneficial learning opportunities exist for all students.



# Inclusive Design Considerations

## *Safety & Inclusivity in School Entries*



1. **Inclusive entries** respond to all students and visitors in height and scale.



2. **360-degree range of view** offers security, visibility, and awareness and visibility for incoming and secured visitor & student use.





# Inclusive Design Considerations

## *Access and Mobility: Corridors and Hallways*



1. **Corridors invite accessibility** in use as the access provided to inclusive locker rooms.



2. **Accessible Features** for all levels of learning.



3. **Corridors allow openness, study, and social spaces** available to all.



# Inclusive Design Considerations

## *Expanding Classroom Capabilities*



**1. Classrooms central to inclusive education.** Natural light, good acoustics, ample writable services, technology in media/online. Furniture allows disabled and abled use throughout.

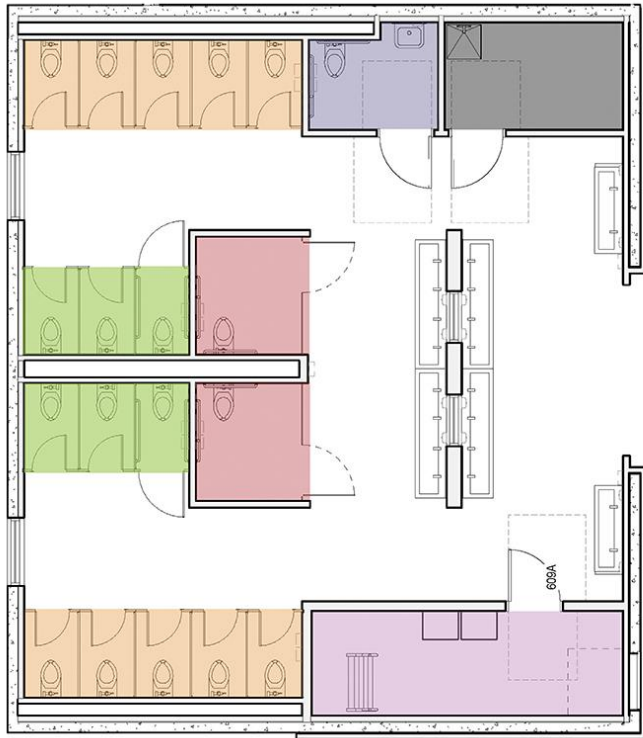


**2. Access, flexibility, and maximum use** are features of an inclusive classroom.



# Inclusive Design Considerations

## *Inclusive Restrooms for Safety, Visibility & Inclusivity*



1. **A typical gendered restroom is retrofitted** for inclusive use with greater visibility, safety, and accessibility

2. **Inclusive restrooms** offer students a safe and secure environment in a more public sphere.



# Design Considerations

## Collaborative Spaces offer Learning Opportunities



1. Students are offered opportunities for social and academic activities individually or with student peers.



2. Collaborative spaces can play a major role in establishing inclusion within the learning environment.



# Design Considerations

## *Open, Accessible and Safe Science Laboratories*



1. Consider a Science Lab as an Interactive accessible learning space for all students.

2. In a lab setting, all students require a safe, inclusive, safe, secure, and well-managed environment.



# Design Considerations

## *Outdoor Spaces for Learning, Living and Activity*



1. Outdoor spaces render inclusion for accessible surfaces, directions, and reaching destinations to all outdoor and indoor venues.

2. Inclusive design requires accessibility to outdoor spaces, transportation, and student movement for play, recreation, learning, and social activities.



# Review of Inclusive School Design

## Assessment, Evaluation and Outcomes

- Advanced Educational Performance
- Leadership Advocacy
- Operational Adequacy & Facility Management
- Safety & Security Evaluation
- Materials & Construction Evaluation
- Student Health, Well-Being, and Belonging Outcomes
- Student Achievement Outcomes



# 4 PRACTICE OF INCLUSION

Discussion



COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT



PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT



MONITOR AND  
EVALUATE







# Community Engagement and Support





# Professional Development and Training





# Monitor and Evaluate Inclusive Practices



# 5 CONCLUDING OUR CASE FOR INCLUSION

Audience Activity



DISCUSSIONS



PARTICIPATION



RESOURCES



# ACTIVITY TO ENGAGE in Inclusive Design





# Resources (and thank you)



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**SCAN QR for  
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Information  
& Resources**

