



Inclusive Education

What does MODDC think about inclusive education?

Inclusion is when disabled people live and work with non-disabled people. In schools, this means everyone should get to learn in the same classes. We call this **inclusive education**. When all students learn in the same schools and classrooms, we call this an inclusive setting.

Inclusive education helps all students. Students learn better, and it costs less money to teach them. Laws in Missouri and the U.S. say that schools have to use inclusive education. Missouri must follow these laws.

Why is inclusive education important?

U.S. law says that schools must teach students in the most inclusive settings. Missouri law says so too. And research shows that it's the best way to teach students.

Inclusive education helps students with disabilities. When students with disabilities learn in inclusive settings, they do better in many ways. They get better grades and test scores. They learn how to talk to people and get along with them better. They get to have more control over their lives.

Inclusive classrooms let students with disabilities do the things as students without disabilities. They get to learn the same things. They get to do the same extracurricular activities. They get to talk to and get along with their peers. They get better help, and more attention to their needs.

And research shows that inclusive education helps students without disabilities, too. They do better in reading and math. One study looked at students without disabilities who helped support their classmates with disabilities. It found that the students without disabilities did better in school and participated more.

We've known that inclusive education is good for all students for a long time. Inclusive education has been the law for a long time, too. But many schools still teach students with disabilities separately from students without disabilities. In Missouri, 4 in 10 students spend 90 minutes each day in separate classrooms from non-disabled students. This is almost 20% worse than other states.



In 2021, Missouri did a survey. Missouri asked people about students with disabilities. People said they were worried about how schools taught students with disabilities. Some of the things they talked about were:

- Students and their parents being left out of the IEP process.
- Staff that did not have enough training.
- Their needs not being taken seriously compared to students without disabilities.

What should Missouri do?

Missouri needs to understand that inclusive education is good for all students. And inclusive education is the law. Missouri must support inclusive education.

Missouri's rules about education should say that schools must use inclusive education. Schools need to give students with disabilities a good education.

Schools should not teach students with disabilities separately from students without disabilities.

Rules about Inclusive Education should focus on helping students with disabilities:

- Keep learning in inclusive settings
- Get good jobs
- Live on their own

When students with disabilities are getting close to finishing school, their schools should:

- Help them find ways to keep learning in inclusive settings, like going to college
- Help them find a good job
- Help them get in touch with groups that can help them live on their own

Schools can work with groups like:

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Centers for Independent Living
- Medicaid Waiver providers
- To help students prepare for life after school

When schools become more inclusive, they will save money. They should use this money to make their classrooms even more inclusive. For example, they can spend that money on assistive technology for students with disabilities.



The state agency in charge of schools in Missouri is called MO DESE. MO DESE should look at schools and figure out if they:

- Teach students in inclusive classrooms.
- Make sure students with disabilities get included in school programs and services.
- Make sure people who work at schools get the chance to learn to be leaders. This is especially important to make schools more diverse.

To Learn More

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