

www.inclusiveschools.org

National Inclusive Schools Week is…

- **Celebrated** annually the first week **in December**
- An opportunity to engage parents, students, educators and communities in **discussion about inclusive practices**
- A **series of tools, resources and publications** designed to support schools as they make progress in integrating inclusive practices
- About **improved academic achievement** for all students

National Inclusive Schools Week …

- Now in its **6th Year**
- **Started as a federally-funded** in initiative in cooperation with National Urban Institute
- **2005** represented the first year that *National Inclusive Schools Week* **was managed soley by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative**
- Created a sense of **momentum**

National Inclusive Schools Week …

- Over **500,000 hits** to the Web site
- Over **100,000** posters, pencils and stickers disseminated
- Over **60,000 Celebration Kits** downloaded
- Over **50** Association & Corporate **Partners**
- Celebrated in thousands of school districts in **all 50 states**
- Recognized by the **White House**

Why Inclusive Schools? Because…

Great things happen in inclusive schools.™



- Each student is **welcomed and honored** for who they are and the special things their experiences bring to the school community.
- Students **learn from and about each other**: learning to appreciate and support each other, and to care for and about each other
- Students and teachers **learn together, drawing upon each others' strengths** and supporting each others' needs.
- Each student learns and **achieves in ways that make sense to them**, are useful in their lives,



Inclusive schools…



- make sure each and **every student feels welcome** and is learning
- embrace the understanding that **every student** is unique and, therefore, **learns differently**
- understand that all children—students with and without disabilities, English language learners, those with special talents—learn better if **teaching is tailored to their abilities** and interest
- **collaborate** with families
- hold **high expectations** for student success
- **keep improving**



How Can I Celebrate?

- **Visit**
  www.inclusiveschools.org
- **Download the FREE Celebration Kit**
  - Use it to plan your celebration and share it with others!



How Can I Celebrate?

- **Subscribe to *NISW News***
  - *NISW News,* our monthly electronic newsletter allows you to stay in touch with news and information related to the *Week* and how you can celebrate.



How Can I Celebrate?

- **Hold an event**
  - recognizing best practices and staff
  - bringing students together
  - celebrating diversity









How Can I Celebrate?

- **Participate in the national poster - essay contest**
  - **Awards in five categories:**
    - **Grades K-3**
    - **Grades 4-5**
    - **Grades 6-8**
    - **Grades 9-12+**
    - **Adult (teachers, parents community members)**
  - **Deadline for submissions**
    - **December 15, 2006**
  - **Awards announced**
    - **February 15, 2007**



Dariea, Age 17

How Can I Celebrate?

- **Order materials**
  - In 2005, we distributed over 100,000 posters, stickers, bumper stickers, and pencils to help schools celebrate the *Week*.

Order yours today!





How Can I Celebrate?

- **Write a letter-to-the-editor**
  - or an op-ed piece for your metro or local newspaper. A sample op-ed piece and multiple sample letters to the editor are available in the Celebration Kit and at

    www.inclusiveschools.org



TIME TO CELEBRATE EDUCATION FOR EVERYONE

Kyrene School District this week is celebrating the fourth annual *National Inclusive Schools Week*, sponsored by the National Institute for Urban School Improvement.

The purpose of this week is to recognize the ever-increasing diversity among our student population and to celebrate the work performed on behalf of all children, particularly those with disabilities.

Kyrene's participation in this weeklong event is not about a set of activities that once completed are forgotten, but rather it stems from a philosophy that all individuals have a right to a quality of life that embraces differences, not just "tolerates" them.

Our philosophy is one that provides opportunities for learning no matter what a person's abilities or needs are. Kyrene schools are a place where children are valued and differences are seen as opportunities, not obstacles.

I would like to share an excerpt from a letter written in third grade by Emily, now a sophomore in high school, about embracing differences:

"I want to tell you about my friend that is atistick. He's a real good friend. I'm lucky he's my friend. Max doesn't care how people look or act. He's nice to everybody because he has a good heart.

"I wish other people would try to get to know those with differences before they make fun of them. They are probably missing out on one of the best friends they could ever have."

Max is my nephew, now a sophomore in high school, and he has autism. Max has taught me more about the importance of laughter, acceptance of self and others, and how to be an educator for all children than any book could ever address.

Emily went beyond the label and right to the heart of the matter ... the person. That is what inclusive education is about. Utilizing resources and supports in order for a child to succeed as a learner.

It is about looking at the child first and the disability second. Differences can be seen as barriers or opportunities. I choose the latter.

I encourage our community to join Kyrene schools in celebrating inclusive education this week.

Shari Dukes is the director of exceptional student services for the Kyrene School District. The views expressed are those of the author. This op-ed originally appeared in the Arizona Republic, December 7, 2004. Reprinted with permission from the author.

How Can I Celebrate?

- **Issue a Proclamation -**
  - Encourage your school board and local and state elected officials to issue a proclamation declaring December 4-8, 2006 *Inclusive Schools Week* in your community. A sample proclamation is provided in the kit.



SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

HEREAS, The Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative and Education Development Center, Inc., has signated the week of December 5-9, 2005, as *NATIONAL INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK*; and

HEREAS, [YOUR SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT] is committed to providing the [YOUR CITY OR WN'S] children an education in schools and classrooms that are welcoming and capable of educating all the City's ildren;

HEREAS, The educators of [YOUR SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT] recognize that each child is unique, lear ferently, and, therefore, learns better if teaching is tailored to their abilities and interests; and

HEREAS, The educators and families of [YOUR SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT] have been working hard t sure that our classrooms and schools are characterized as being high performing and inclusive; and

HEREAS, By their efforts to make our schools and classrooms high performing and inclusive, the educators and nilies of the [YOUR SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT] have contributed significantly to building a stronger and re inclusive [YOUR CITY OR TOWN] community; and

HEREAS, The educators and families of [YOUR SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT deserve to celebrate their ccesses and wish to reflect on how they might even further improve;

EREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: That [YOUR SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT] join with the Collaborative d EDC in declaring the week of December 5-9, 2005, as *INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS WEEK* in the [YOUR CITY OR WN] and encourage schools and classrooms across the [CITY/TOWN] to sponsor appropriate learning and mmunity-building activities in its recognition.