

Spotlight on Inclusive Practices

Research supports educating children with disabilities alongside non-disabled peers.

“No studies conducted since the late 1970’s have shown an academic advantage for students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities educated in separate settings.” (Falvey, 2004) Students who spend more time in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) will experience exponential academic growth as compared to those who spend time in a segregated setting (Figure 1). Studies reveal that peers without a disability made greater gains in reading and math when taught in inclusive settings and experienced no adverse effects.

Frameworks such as Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) support effective instruction. The Ways 2 Equity Playbook and its Enhancements provide tools for educators to promote and implement effective, equitable and inclusive education.

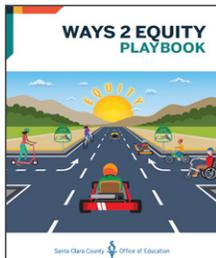
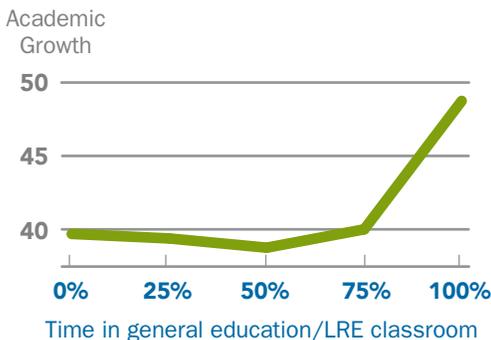


Figure 1
Relationship between academic growth and percentage of time in general education



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In Practice: Alum Rock

Alum Rock School District began a focused collaboration in 2018.

Professional development for staff included:

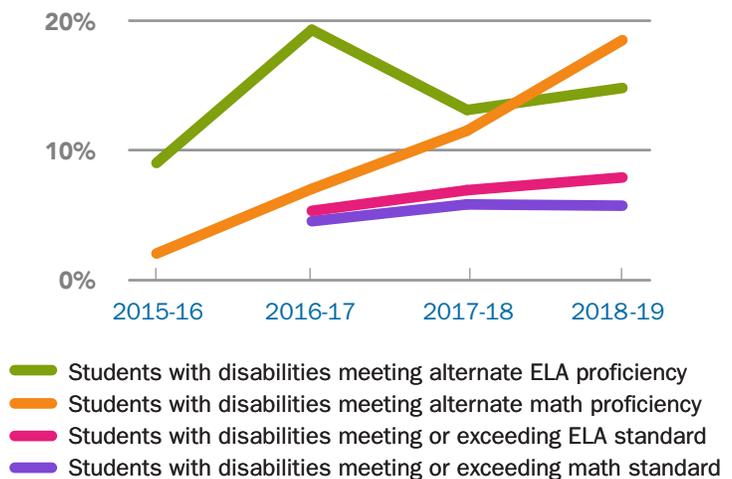
- Inclusion 101 for School Administrators
- Inclusion PLC for teachers
- Welcoming and Belonging at school sites
- Universal Design for Learning
- EL Alternate Assessment, Reclassification Procedures, and Writing IEP goals using the CA ELD Standards



Alum Rock has met or exceeded the target for Federal Indicator 5 for LRE for the last three years and increasing numbers of students with disabilities are meeting the alternative ELA/Math proficiency targets (Figure 2).

95% of Alum Rock’s teachers and Speech Therapists completed UDL training and earned Tier 1 UDL credentials.

Figure 2
Alum Rock School District



In Practice: Palo Alto Unified

Since 2017, Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) supported inclusive practices at the PK-12 grade levels.

Initially focused on inclusive practices at the paraeducator level, the work has expanded to include the UDL framework, Co-Teaching for grades K-12, and the preschool program. The first full inclusion preschool classroom was created in 2017 and expansion to all preschool classrooms is underway.

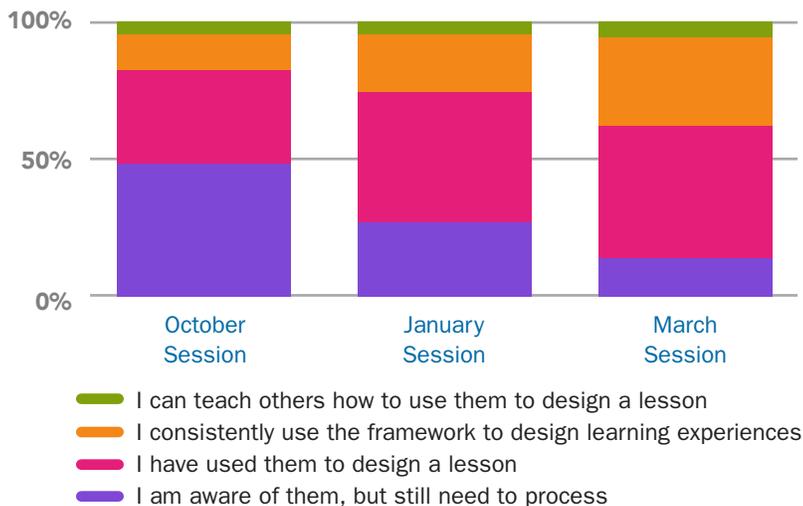
Participants in the UDL training report increases in both their knowledge and practice as shown in Figure 3. Teachers moved from being aware of the framework to consistently utilizing it to design learning.



All of PAUSD's Principals have received UDL micro credentials.

Figure 3 – Palo Alto Unified School District

How would you describe your current knowledge or practice of the UDL guidelines?



The SCCOE's Inclusion Collaborative (IC) is the leader in promoting and supporting inclusive practices for all children in Santa Clara County. Every child, regardless of abilities and disabilities, has the right to full access to quality, inclusive learning, and community environments.

Professional development, coaching, and technical assistance is provided to school districts and community agencies. Training and support are offered to teachers, paraeducators, site administrators, district administrators and childcare providers.

The Warmline offers free resources and support to educators and caregivers. Contact the Warmline at inclusionwarmline@sccoe.org or (408) 453-6651.

Visit inclusioncollaborative.org.