



Educating Each Student

A Position Paper of the New England League of Middle Schools

The New England League of Middle Schools believes that each young adolescent learner will be provided an equal opportunity to participate in learning experiences and to achieve success in school programs regardless of skills, race, gender, or aptitude. Not only must educators provide opportunities, but they must encourage and support students to take advantage of these opportunities.

Educators must utilize instructional methods that ensure each child can learn. This shift requires that educators move from teaching a group, to teaching individuals based on their strengths, and it requires that teachers work with students in a variety of ways by differentiating instruction.

We believe that effective instructional strategies need to be utilized while striving to incorporate learning exceptionalities into the mainstream of middle schooling. Inclusion is a guiding principle; students must work and learn together within a dynamic environment that utilizes each student's intellectual profile and his/her interests, talents and skills.

Underlying these beliefs are the following assumptions and researched based practices:

- Student learning and success are assessed in relationship to individual potential and state performance standards. The methodology is student performance directed toward the identified essential learning.
- Students learn from each other when afforded the opportunity to interact in meaningful and interesting activities.
- Each child can be challenged by appropriate activities to work to full potential. Learning should be vigorous and satisfying for everyone.
- Understanding and utilizing different learning styles and features in a student's intellectual profile are essential in providing quality education for each student.
- Learner participation is enhanced by offering learning activities based on the interests of each child.
- Flexible grouping practices, based upon skills, interests or themes encourage each student to learn to higher levels.
- Enrichment activities are offered to all because they enhance learning for each student.
- Co-curricular activities must not be limited by ability.
- Developmentally appropriate advisory sessions held daily and focused on improvement of learning positively impact and support student learning.
- Learning is expected of each student. Some students simply need more time to learn. Therefore, time is the variable and learning is the constant.
- Technology exists as a tool to assist in the learning process and to help manage individual program delivery for each student. Schools must develop and utilize this technology.
- Individual education plan are developed for each student and the plan is developed cooperatively with the student, parents and educators.

Professional development opportunities for middle level teachers to create appropriate learning environments that address a diverse student population are imperative. Through conferences, seminars, publications, fieldwork and networking, the New England League of Middle Schools will serve as a catalyst for action to ensure that each student is educated to his/her highest level and that these beliefs outlined in this position statement become a reality for each young adolescent.