

**A Model Program for
Facilitating Inclusion
Practices in SCCOE
Using a Collaborative
Team Approach**



Savitha Sundar



A Model Program for Facilitating Inclusion Practices in SCCOE Using a Collaborative Team Approach



Savitha Sundar
Occupational Therapist,
Special Education

Positivity

Input-Adaptability-Connectedness-Arranger

Professional Vision



An evolving Occupational Therapist who impacts her community with its ever changing needs through **service based learning, teaching and research.**



In the next 5 years..

Positivity

Connectedness



1. Create **collaborative (All IEP team members) inclusion programs** at Orchard School.
2. Evangelize the **role of OT in inclusion at COE and the profession at large.**
3. **Pursue a doctorate in Occupational Therapy (Education and research)**



Input

Why CFL and what did I expect to accomplish?



Driven vs need

Most impactful OT interventions?

Clarity, Direction and Support

Learn by doing.

My Project



To create a model program at Orchard School District for inclusive learning using a **collaborative** approach

Connectedness

Why this topic of “Inclusion”

.....after a decade of being an SCCOE Occupational
Therapist??



Input





What does inclusion mean to me?

Connectedness

Positivity

Help create a community for the students I serve that accepts all differences by not just *knowing about* them but truly *knowing them*.



What does inclusion mean in Education



Regarding individuals with disabilities and **special education**, **inclusion** secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in **general education classrooms**.



MY CFL Project Journey



1. Planning and streamlining my ideas
2. Survey of the current status of inclusion in SCCOE.
3. A model program that addresses some of the challenges involved in inclusion.

1. Discussions with my mentor-

Dr. Matthew Tinsley

Invaluable insights and clarity of thoughts in streamlining my ideas.



Introduced me to several individuals in the field to deepen my knowledge on inclusion and resources



2. Surveyed the current status of inclusion in the 165 SCCOE Classrooms



65 Respondents

~39%

Connectedness

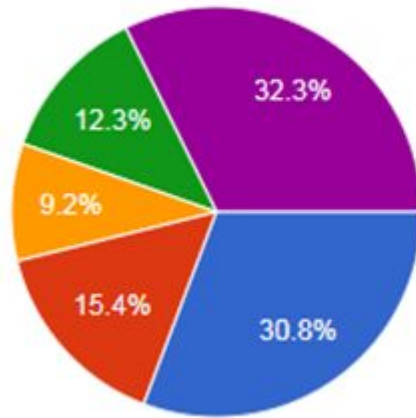
Arranger



Themes that Emerged from the Survey



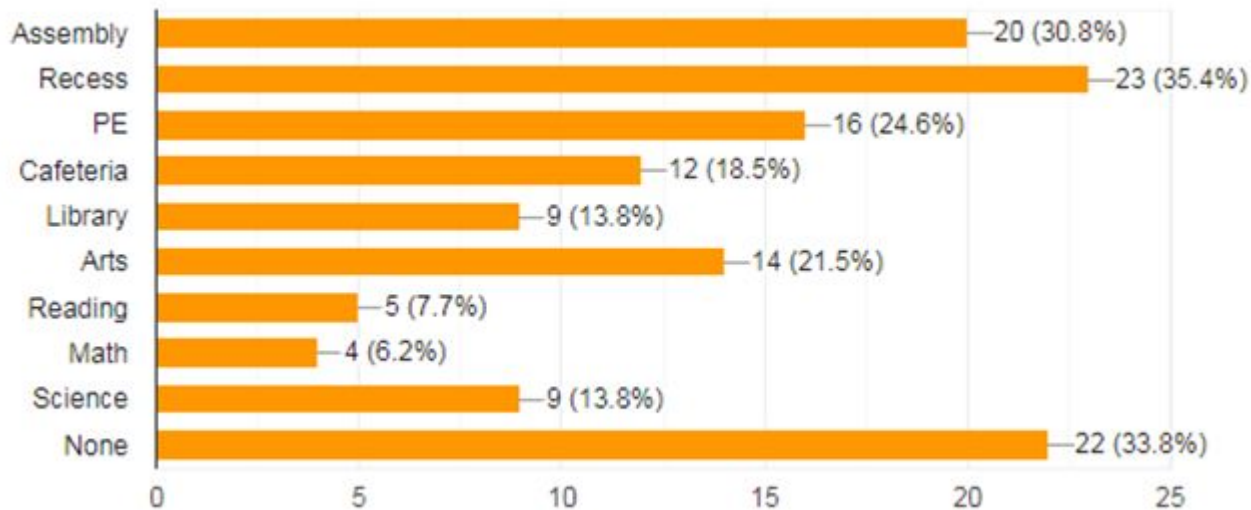
1. 30.8% - NO direct interaction with their gen ed. Peers



- Never
- Only at Special Events
- 1-3 times a year to monthly
- 1-3 times a month to weekly
- 1-3 times a week to daily



2. Most inclusion happens during recess and assemblies followed by cafeteria, PE and Arts.



3. 75.4% report no effort is taken to organize inclusive activities in their sites.



Themes that Emerged from Survey

4. 33% were interested in receiving some mentoring (while 41% were unsure).



Themes that Emerged from Survey

5. The largest group of the respondents were **not satisfied** with the current level of inclusion opportunities that their students were receiving

Satisfied
Not satisfied

Top 5 Challenges to inclusion as identified by the participants

1. **Dissimilarity** in functioning levels of students
2. General education sites **not supportive**
3. Stand alone sites with **no peers** in the campus
4. **Don't know** how to initiate
- 5 **Lack** of a known **method**.



3. Using the survey insights and experiences gathered...

Adaptability

My project **evolved** to be

Expanding on the existing FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE program to create a model inclusive community at Orchard School





Friendship Circle

A program for middle schoolers that is universally designed for learning that **ALL CHILDREN can engage and PARTICIPATE in**



Friendship Circle 2018-2019 snapshots

Holiday Ornament Making



Ornament Sale 2018



Ornament Sale 2018



Sensory Wall Collage Art

Bits and pieces cut and glued together over 2 months



2018-2019 Collage Art



2017-2018



Playing together and having fun



Six months of gardening







Arranger

Onsite Composting



Consolidating the experiences gained from....



- Two years of running Friendship Circle
- Insights into inclusion county wide through the CFL journey (Survey, inputs from experts, interviews with COE teachers)
- Information about other successful inclusion activities at SCCOE – Inclusion LCSS 's compilation

Future/Ongoing Steps:

1. Develop an easy to adopt curriculum of Friendship Circle that is Universally Designed for Learning—Using the talents of all our COE and district staff at the site.
2. Start Best Buddies chapter at Orchard
3. Incorporating the “Changing Perspectives” curriculum wherever possible.
4. District Staff inservices on the value and curriculum standards addressed in Friendship Circle.



Inclusion challenges addressed through Friendship Circle

1. **Dissimilarity in functioning levels** – A universal design for learning for all students
2. **General education sites not supportive** – Communicate the value for ALL students.
3. **Stand alone sites with no peers in the campus** – Peers can be invited over from neighboring schools.
4. **Don't know how to initiate** – Steps outlined in the curriculum
5. **Lack of a known method.** – Here's one model and many more ideas put together by a one of our professional learning teams.



My Top 3 Learnings from CFL

Helped me better articulate my career path.



The link I saw between my top 5 , my passion project and my choices so far.

Positivity–**Input**–**Adaptability**–**Connectedness**–**Arranger**

This is just the start– SCCOE has amazing resources



Kathy Wahl

Anna Marie

Jen Ann

Demerris Brooks

Thank
You!

Rachel and Christine for
nominating me

My Mentor
Matthew Tinsley

My dearest team at
Orchard.....
All Paraeducators
Rajul-SLP,
Rodney-APE, Hanh-BCBA
Spl Ed. Teachers-
Sheji, Jennifer, Aileen.

My supervisor
Cynthia
Loleng Perez

My Principal
Maureen Dolan

Leo Mapagu

My fellow champions- for all the
open sharing of ideas and personal
journeys

Megan Rielly

