

# ***Diversity, Equality & Inclusion: A Rights Based Framework for Schooling – The Road Ahead.***

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**Dr. Gordon L. Porter, Director  
Inclusive Education Canada**

**&**

**Chairman of the  
New Brunswick  
Human Rights Commission**





## ***Diversity, Equality & Inclusion: A Rights Based Framework for Schooling – The Road Ahead.***

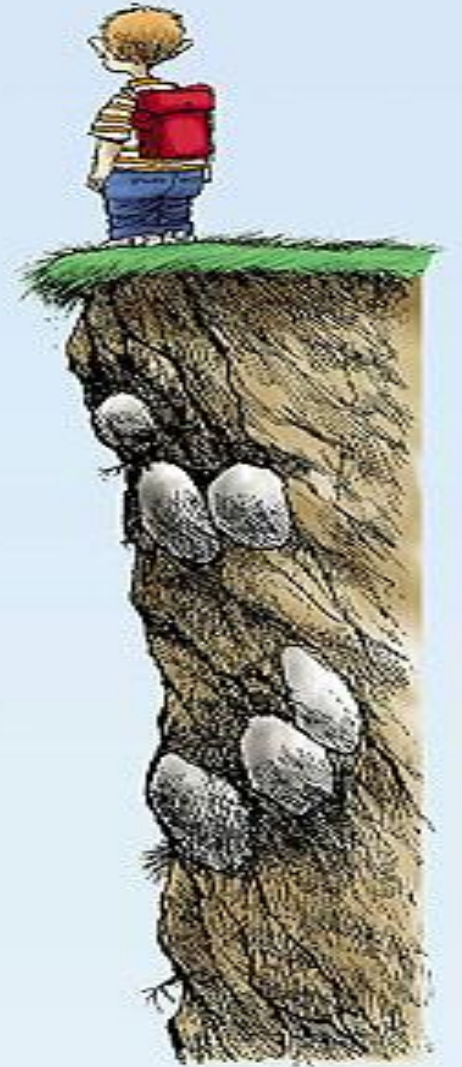
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- **A discussion of the connection between inclusion, accommodation and human rights.**
- **Key school and classroom practices connected to successful inclusion.**
- **Research results on the “effects” of inclusion on students well being.**



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**What is inclusive education?**





**Why is this a critical and controversial issue?**

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**Developed countries need to provide a model**



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**What is wrong with traditional special education?**



# Moving Inclusion Forward

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**... CHANGE ...**



# **In Canada – Current Advocacy Campaign ...**

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**“No Excuses”**



# No-Excuses Campaign



My name is Jessica.

I'm in grade 5.

People say I'm disruptive in class.

People say that I hold the other kids back.

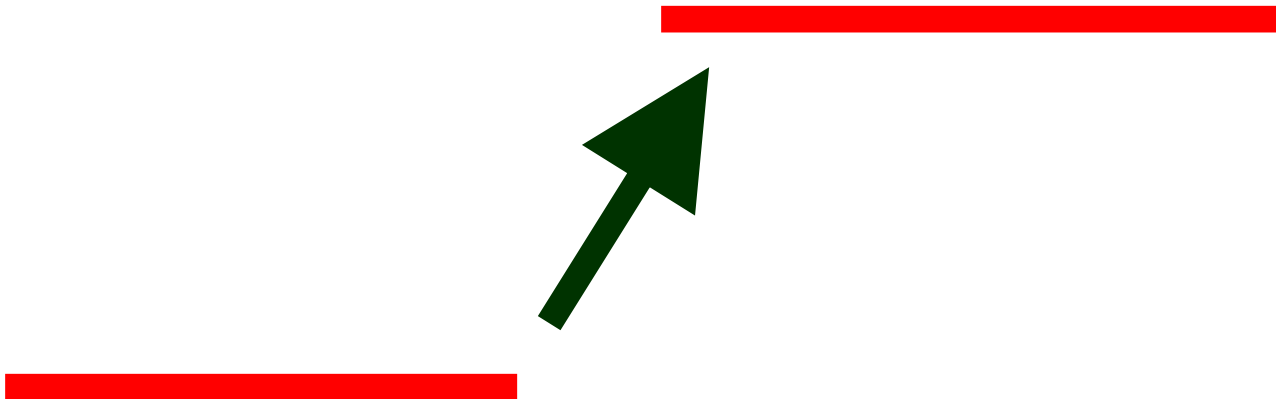
People say that I take up all the teacher's time.

None of these people are in my classroom.



# Raise the bar ...

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# The goal ...

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- ✓ Better schools
- ✓ Schools for all
- ✓ Schools that are inclusive
- ✓ Schools that focus support on students
- ✓ Schools that enable and empower teachers & other school staff



UN



UNITED NATIONS

enable

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# **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**



# Article 24

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- Signatory nations to assure opportunities for “**appropriate**” and “**inclusive**” education for students with disabilities.
- One more factor in complex mix:
  - Law,
  - Policy
  - Practice

***... that makes the provision of education to students with diverse learning needs a controversial issue***

# No-Excuses ...

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- educational leaders & policy makers **LEAD**;
- **purge** our educational system of **segregation and discrimination** based on a diagnosis or clinically based label.
- Exceptions to inclusion **truly exceptional**
- these “**exceptions**” need to be restricted to “**individuals**” in the local school, not to groups based on clinical labels.
- A new wave of **principled school reform**.



# What kind of reform?

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- Actions that will contribute to accommodating the diversity of our student population,
- That will have inclusion as a guiding principle,
- A focus on school improvement on a broad basis for all our students.



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**What do we need to make  
our schools inclusive?**






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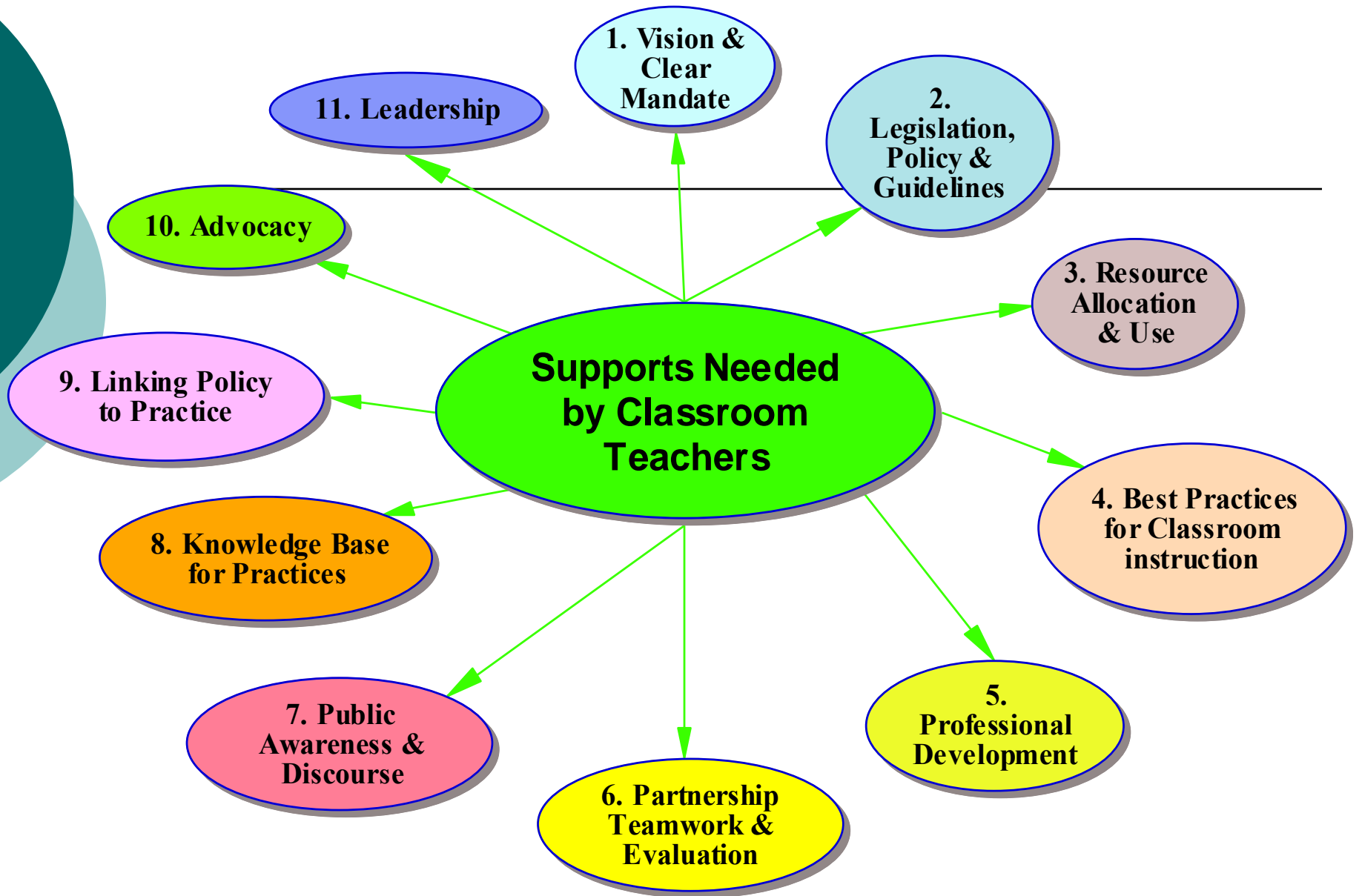
**Let me list a few of the critical steps needed to implement this approach ...**


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- 
- 1. We need to make a plan for transition and change and accept that this will take at least 3-5 years to do properly**



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**2. Understanding that ...**  
**teachers need support to**  
**accept and meet this**  
**challenge,**  
**- we need to work with them**  
**and their associations to**  
**develop supports they need.**

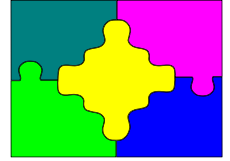





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**3. School staff must know how to make their schools and classrooms effective for diverse student populations, and so we need – Educational Innovation – at both the school and classroom levels.**

# Critical Innovations ...




- 1. School-based Support Team***
- 2. The Support Teacher Model – Support teachers, & Others helping teachers***
- 3. Focus on Instruction for diversity – “Differentiated Instruction” or “Multi-level Instruction”***
- 4. Staff Development & Training***
- 5. Problem Solving***
- 6. Partnerships with Parents***
- 7. Connecting inclusion to school improvement***



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**4. We need to start by creating positive models of success – classrooms, schools and communities that do a good job and can share their success and strategies with neighbors.**



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**5. We need to identify a cadre of leaders and innovators at all levels and assist them in building networks where they can produce and share knowledge unique to their communities.**





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**6. We need to identify and share “best practices” from research and knowledge that is already available and can be enriched and enhanced by local experience.**



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**7. We need to understand that innovations and changes that will make a difference will require resources. That means money and people.**



# What does experience tell us about the process of creating inclusive schools?

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- Inclusive education is a reality in many places – it can be done.
- Political & Policy issues
- My personal observations



## What about the cost?

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- Money is not the issue in moving from segregation to inclusion.
- Money spent on segregated special education needs to be re-directed to support teachers in inclusive regular schools
- Investment in schools is critical



**The Payoff ...**

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**The Benefits of  
School  
Inclusion**

# Social Capital



**-Robert Putnam  
Harvard University**

**“Bowling Alone”**

# What is social capital?

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- **The fabric of our connections with each other.**
- **The collective value of our “social networks” [who people know] ...**
- **... and our will to do things for each other [norms of reciprocity].**



# Who needs Social Capital?

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- **We all do.**
- **People with disabilities need it more than most.**
- **An essential way to get it is through inclusive education.**



# Inclusive Education Knowledge Exchange Initiative: An Analysis of the Statistics Canada Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS)

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*Are parents more likely to report that their children with disabilities are in good general health and that their children are performing well in school in settings where children are attending inclusive education programs?*

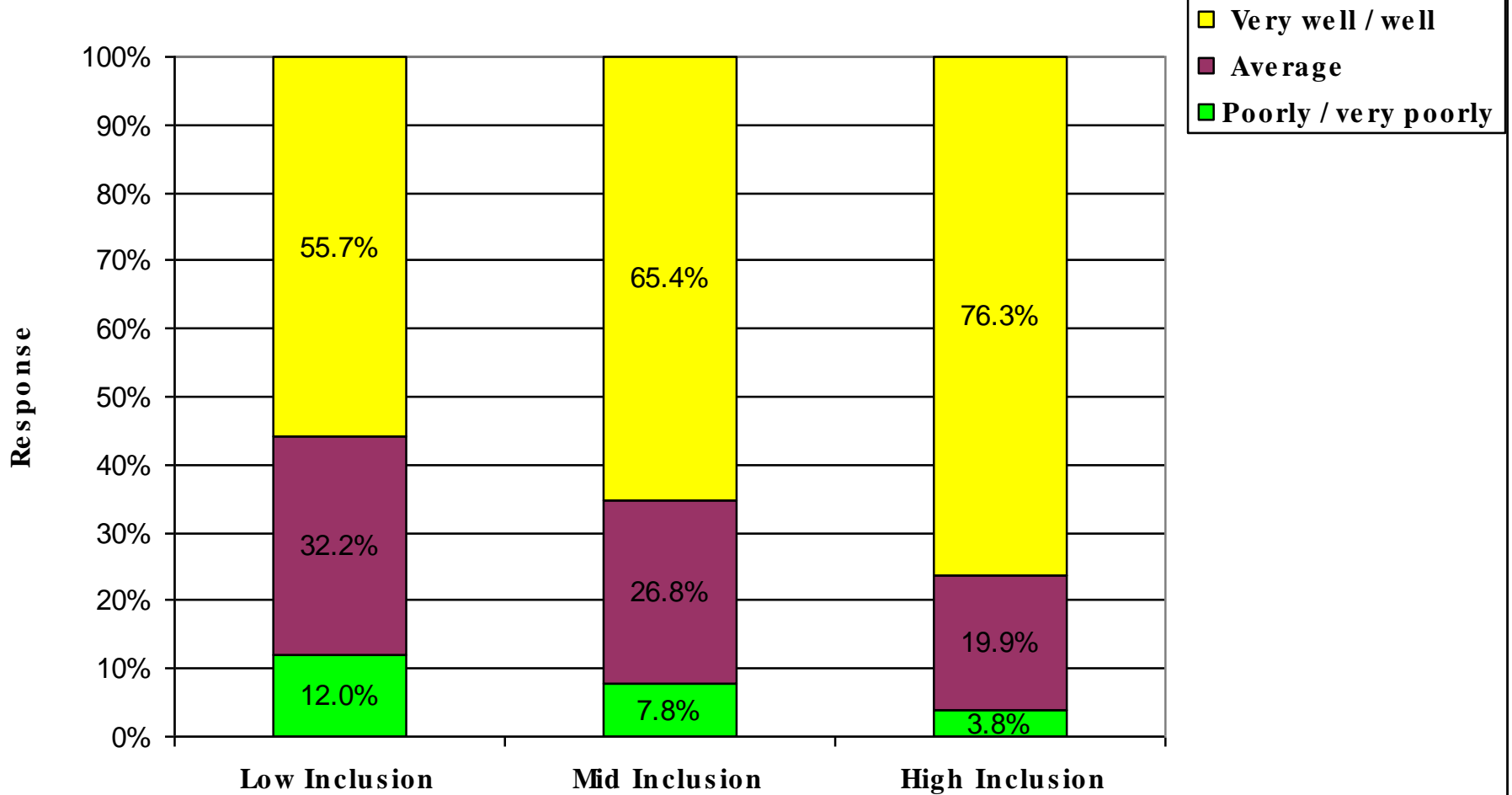
**Maryam Wagner**  
**Dr. Vianne Timmons**  
**University of Prince Edward Island**  
**May 31, 2008**



UNIVERSITY of  
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

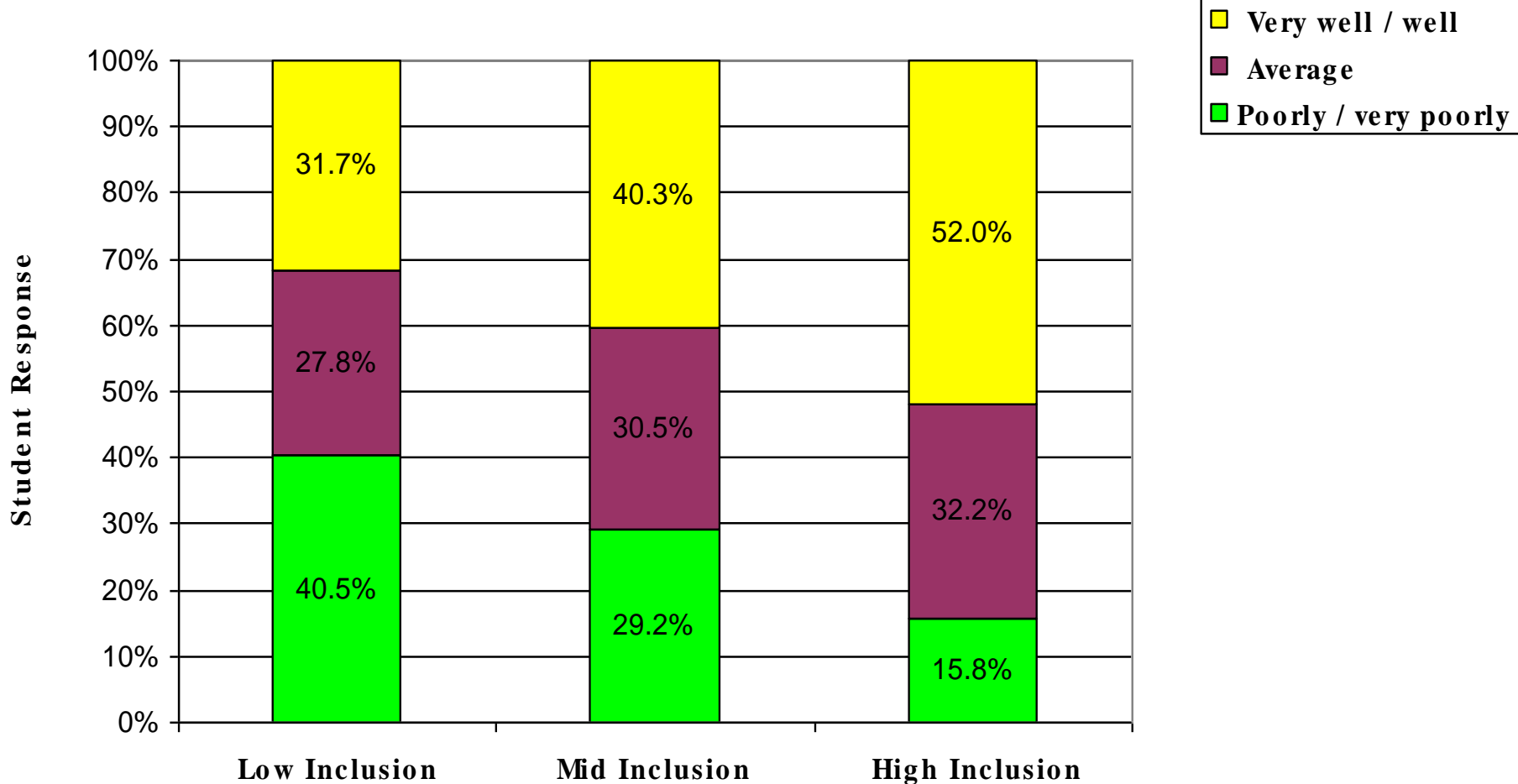
# General Health

## Student Health by Inclusion Scale



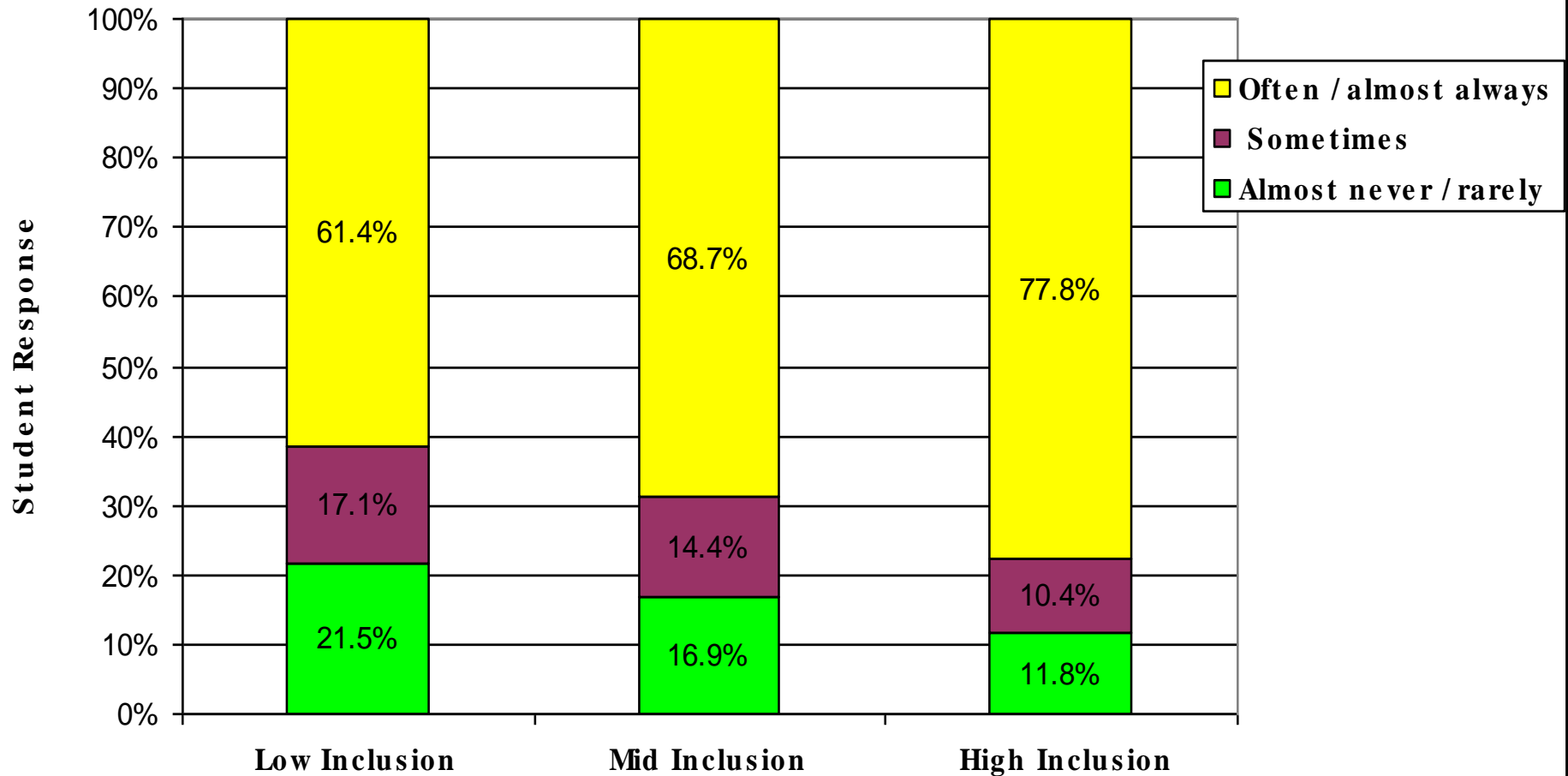
# Academic Progress at School

Progress at School by Inclusion Scale

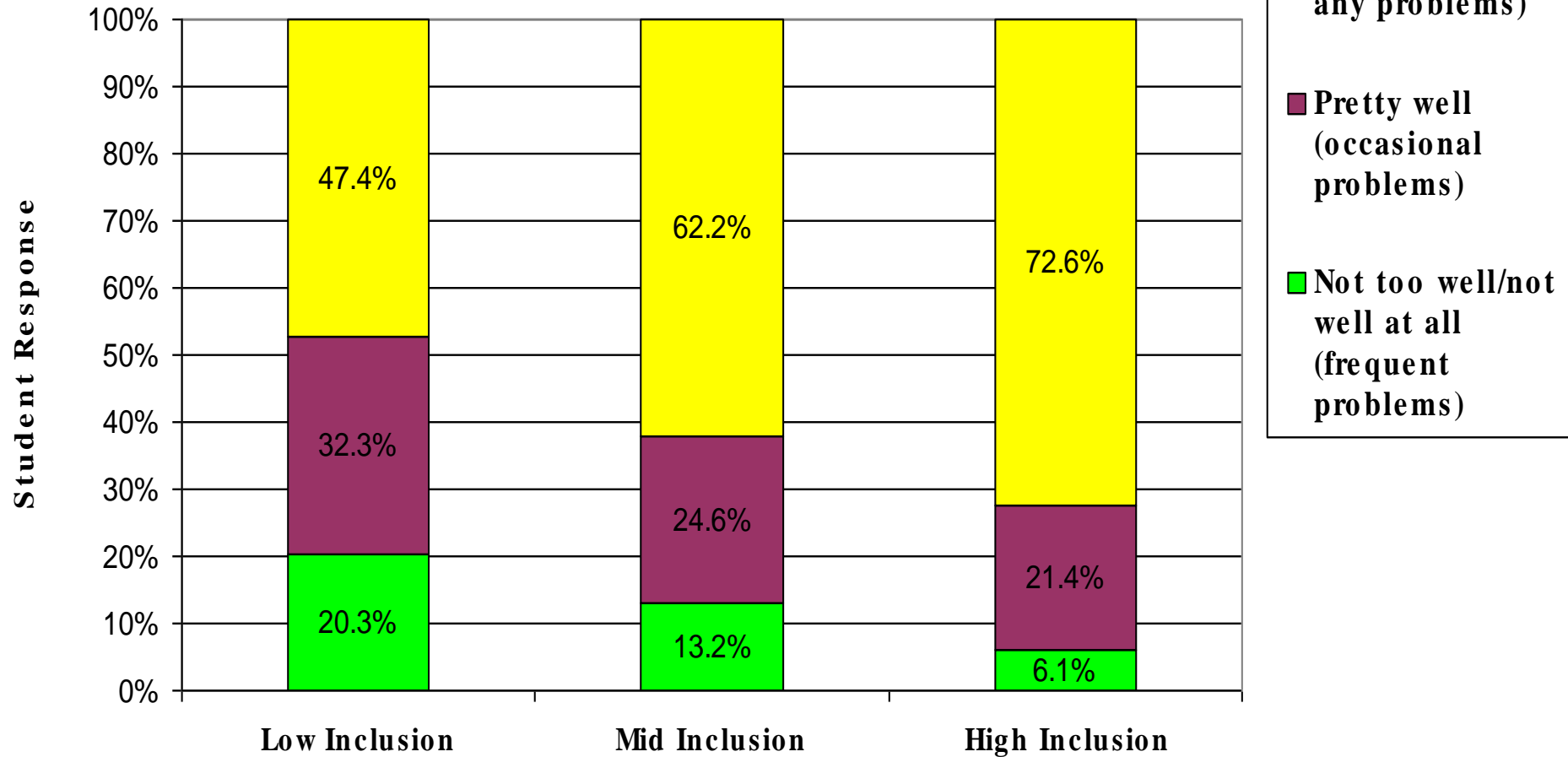


# Looking Forward to Going to School

**'Looking Forward to going to School' by Inclusion Scale**



## Interaction with other children by Inclusion Scale





# What about the future?

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- Inclusion as one of the sustaining pillars of public education in 21st century
- To educate all our children, and do it well, we need to ensure that **every school is both effective and inclusive.**



# Human Rights

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- Accommodating students with disabilities – there is a ***duty to accommodate***
- The **UN Convention** – will we make it real?



# No Excuses!

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**Let's – just do it!**





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**Thank you.**