

PIE'S GOALS:

- Promote all New York City schools to be accessible to all students with disabilities.
- Advocate for the Department of Education to promote a policy of inclusion throughout the school system.
- Encourage training for all Department of Education employees on the effective methods of including students with disabilities.
- Ensure that all Individualized Education Programs (IEP) and allocated resources promote the goal of inclusion.



Recent Achievements of PIE

In October 2010, PIE was awarded the National Outreach Award from Kids Included Together, a California-based organization. The award recognizes PIE's efforts in regard to inclusion of students with disabilities in New York City.

During the 2009-2010 school year PIE co-sponsored with the NYC Department of Education an Inclusion Contest and Celebration which provided all students in the City the opportunity to express their ideas about inclusion and what it means to be a part of an inclusive school community through a creative and artistic medium. The contest culminated with 100 students coming together to celebrate inclusion and share their artwork with one another.

PIE worked with another special education coalition within NYC to host a series of Speak Outs for parents of students with disabilities in October 2008 and January 2009. The events provided parents a chance to share stories about their children's educational experience and to meet other parents with similar issues and concerns.

PIE issued "Small Schools, Few Choices: How New York City's High School Reform Effort Left Students with Disabilities Behind," in October 2006. The report detailed how New York City's small high school reform effort left students with disabilities behind. It also influenced significant policy changes within the Department of Education that resulted in more schools admitting students with special needs and the creation of a Frequently-Asked-Questions Guide for students transitioning to high school.

Increased access to information for parents of children with special needs entering Kindergarten - specifically advocating for and assisting in the creation of the Turning Five Transition Fairs and Orientation Guide

Influenced policy makers at the NYC Department of Education to adopt a number of policy changes that affect students with disabilities, access to information for parents, and raise awareness of inclusion.

Provided a parents' perspective to ongoing advocacy efforts of others, such as meetings with the attorneys representing the plaintiff's class in *Jose P. v. Mills*, an ongoing class action lawsuit challenging the Department of Education's failure to provide all New York City school children with disabilities with a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.



Parents for Inclusive Education is a group of parents, educators and advocates working together to make inclusion a viable option for all students with disabilities in New York City.

“Inclusion” means:

Bringing special education services to the student in his/her classroom. More specifically: primary instruction and the provision of appropriate special education services to a student with a disability, provided in an age appropriate general education class in the school the student would have attended if he or she did not have a disability – with appropriate additional supports for the student's teacher.

Inclusion is NOT

- “Dumping” students with disabilities into regular classes without adequate preparation and ongoing supports for both the students AND teachers.
- Locating students with disabilities in separate wings of the school, in separate classes, or in separate corners of classrooms.
- Maintaining separate schedules for students with disabilities.
- A single model that all students with disabilities can benefit from.

Why Inclusion is Important for Everyone:

- Non-disabled children develop more accepting attitudes and respect for human diversity while students with disabilities are provided with appropriate peer role models.
- All children are able to attend school with their neighborhood peers and access the curriculum with modifications and instructional supports that meet their needs.
- The opportunity for all children to experience varied settings and programs for learning that are reflective of real life communities.

MEETINGS

PIE members meet on a regular basis to work together to further PIE’s agenda and achieve our goals. Additionally, our meetings provide education, information and support to families struggling with the challenges of including their children with disabilities in school communities.

Join us at our next full membership meeting. New members are always welcome.

pieinyc@gmail.com

www.parentsforinclusioneducation.com

For more information: