

News and Notes From Teacher Brianne

In the world of special education, what does inclusion mean? It means that even though a child has been identified with a disability and has an IEP to provide specialized instruction and supports, he or she still has a right to participate in the general education setting, learning the curriculum offered to all other children, alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible and appropriate. This is important in order for kids to feel a sense of belonging in the school as the child with an IEP forms relationships with his or her non-disabled peers, which fosters acceptance and understanding among the student population. Secondly, research shows that children in inclusive settings have greater learning outcomes compared to those being served in restrictive settings.

Coming Up...

- **April 3–7** No school/sessions for students—Spring Break
- **May 17–18** No sessions—Teacher Brianne's personal days
- **May 29** No school/sessions – Memorial Day
- **May 30–June 22** Riser Meetings scheduled individually with families of each student who will enter kindergarten in the fall
- **June 15** Last day of school/sessions for preschool students

Special Education

Just as there are different special programs to support preschool students who qualify for an IEP, there are different classrooms and supports for children starting in elementary school. In Everett School District. In kindergarten, there are two main special services models:

1. Developmental Kindergarten—these are self-contained classrooms with one teacher and two para-educators with around 10 children.
2. Resource room: Children attend a regular kindergarten classroom and either get pulled out for sessions with the resource room special education teacher or the resource room teacher pushes into the classroom to provide support.

Neurodiversity

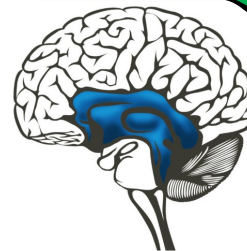
Many neurodivergent people report significant toll on their mental and even physical health due to relentless "masking". **Masking** is an intentional and effortful attempt to monitor and adapt one's behavior to be more "acceptable" or appear more neurotypical. Some examples are: forcing oneself to make eye contact, inhibiting "stims" (self-stimulatory, sensory regulating behaviors such as hand-flapping, rocking, humming, etc.), engaging in and monitoring their verbal communication, etc. The more we can allow people to be their authentic selves, without gatekeeping their sensory and communication quirks, the more we support their health, happiness and growth.



In The Community

The Everett School District offers a series of informational videos to guide parents through many questions and provide support in a variety of ways including: supporting their student's social-emotional learning, how to navigate district digital systems, how to advocate for your child in the education system, what to do about bullying, etc.

Social Emotional Learning:



Conscious Discipline Brain Model: Emotional State - Limbic System

This Brain State represents mid-level functionality and asks the question, "Am I loved?" The only way to soothe an upset emotional state is through Connection.

Conscious Discipline. In this state, we search for signs of relational safety. We do this very automatically by scanning facial expressions, body language, tone of voice, proximity, etc. We also make this judgment based on past experiences with the people in our surroundings. One essential way to communicate relational safety and attunement is by using empathic listening. In the book, *How To Talk So Little Kids Will Listen* by Joanna Faber and Julie King, the authors dedicate the entire first chapter on validating the child's feelings. They offer concrete tools such as acknowledging feelings with words, in writing, or with art; giving in fantasy what you can't in reality; and silent attention.

What we worked on

I was happy to meet with families for parent-teacher conferences or IEP meetings during the last week of March where I gave information about how each child is progressing and what we have been working on.

Coaching Notes

Conscious Discipline offers a wonderful strategy for establishing and strengthening emotional connection with children called "I Love You Rituals". These are playful one-on-one interactions between child and adult that include the following components:

1. Being present with the child
2. Playfulness
3. Physical touch
4. Eye contact

See the following link for more information and some examples: [I Love You Rituals](#)

Teacher Brienne's Recommendations

Book

How to Talk so Little Kids will Listen



Podcast or Blog

Five Moore Minutes with Shelley Moore



Social Media

The Neurodivergent teacher



Instagram

