

Flyer on Student Rights

What do families need to know about the right to education?

Inclusive education is a right for all.

Most countries have signed and ratified something called the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which gives all learners with disabilities the right to go to school in an inclusive setting with their peers without disabilities.

Inclusive education benefits everyone. If children with and without disabilities go to school together and learn together in the same class:

- ✓ Teachers are prepared to support diverse learners, all students benefit.
- ✓ Children and adolescents learn to live as an inclusive society, accepting everyone's diversity.
- ✓ Learning in inclusive classrooms equips all children with the necessary skills to live and interact in a diverse society.
- ✓ Education becomes more enriching, because when students work collaboratively in diverse groups, this allows them to learn more, have better learning experiences and put into practice values such as respect, solidarity and empathy.

Inclusive education is characterised by three fundamental principles – the 3 Ps:

Presence

Presence is about access and attendance in regular school - all students attend and remain in a school until they complete compulsory educational levels.

Participation

Participation is about the active participation of students in the school, with a feeling of belonging and emotional wellbeing. Not only are students include inside the classroom, learners with disabilities also participate in all school activities like their peers without disabilities even if accommodations are needed.

Progress

Progress refers to learning achievements by students with disabilities. These must be in accordance with their needs and goals at the time of learning. All people have the ability and potential to learn, and everyone should have goals and be making progress. Evaluations (psycho-pedagogical or pedagogical) to determine these goals should focus on the student's qualities and strengths and the student's learning style – it should not be based solely on a diagnosis.

Some things that schools might ask parents to do can be in violation of the students' rights – these are non-negotiable and cannot be allowed in an educational institution:

- Parents cannot be forced to hire a chaperone or "support teacher" as a condition for the school to accept the child at the school.
- The family should never have to make an additional payment to enrol or reserve a seat for a student with a disability.
- Parents providing a psycho-pedagogical report, neurological report, psychiatric examination, or a certificate of disability should never be required for a student to be enrolled at school.
- School progress cannot be conditional on medical diagnoses.