



## Lessons from the Field in Brief

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SWIFT Center is grateful to the six schools that opened their doors and shared their successful experiences in educating students of all abilities. These “knowledge development sites” (KDS) not only inspired us, but also provided valuable insight into best practices that we carry in our work to promote whole-system transformations bringing about unified teaching and learning in K-8 grade schools, districts, and state education agencies across the nation.

Three themes emerged, suggesting implications for schools moving toward fully integrated teaching and learning and technical assistance providers, policy makers, and educational researchers.

### **1. Positive school culture is necessary for integrated education**

Positive school culture affirms that all adults in the school share responsibility for the teaching and learning of students in the school, including students of all abilities, languages, and backgrounds.

### **2. Inclusionary education changes where, how, and what students learn**

Schools reorganize physical environments, personnel, instructional practices, and support services to meaningfully engage all students with the general education curriculum.

### **3. Leadership is key to transformation and sustainability**

School principals build buy-in and capacity for systemic change and sustainability through shared decision making, collaboration, and professional learning among educators, staff, and families.

We are indebted to the school leaders, educational communities, and parents who shared these lessons with us, and who began and continue to work tirelessly to transform local schools into places where all students can experience academic and social success. As technology, policy, and other resources catch up with their vision for all students, we hope to honor their past efforts and join them in future innovations until “ALL Means ALL” is the standard for education everywhere.

For more information about the lessons we learned from the SWIFT knowledge development sites, the *Lessons from the Field* report will be available soon.