



A Checklist for Embracing All Families

Using Inclusive Language

- Are online school forms and paperwork friendly to different family structures? Do they use language such as “parent/parent,” “parent/guardian” or “caregiver”?
- Do your forms ask for the names people want to be called and the pronouns that they use—she/her/hers, he/him/his and they/them/theirs?
- Do you model inclusive language for students, colleagues, and parents and caregivers when talking about families?
- Do you send school/home communications in the home language of your students?
- Do you address class letters to families or caregivers?
- Can forms/permission slips be signed by any caregiver?

Providing Windows and Mirrors for Your Students

- Do the books in your school reflect the lives of your students? Do your books offer perspectives on families not found in your school?
- Do your books feature single-parent families, adoptive and foster families, two-mom and two-dad families, grandparent-headed families, and multiracial or multiethnic families?
- Do classroom and hallway images include racial, ethnic or cultural diversity?

Stopping Mean Words and Actions

- Do teachers and staff interrupt teasing or put-downs about a student's family?
- Does your professional development include the opportunity to practice ways to respond to students' questions on diverse families?

Recognizing Family Diversity in Family/School Connections

- Are your classroom family and caregiver events welcoming for all students and the diversity of families and caregivers that are in your students' lives?
- Do staff and educators treat all families with respect and avoid stereotyping or judgment when communicating with two-mom and two-dad, single-parent, racially/ethnically diverse and/or multilingual families?
- Have you held events recognizing and celebrating family diversity that welcome all students and their families to your school community?
- Do you offer food and childcare at school events?
- Do you have bilingual staff present to translate for families?
- Do you hold school meetings at community centers or other accessible locations for your families?
- Does your school calendar reflect important holidays and celebrations for all families? Are you mindful not to schedule events on Jewish or Muslim holidays as well as Christian?
- Are resources or materials visible so that LGBTQ caregivers can identify you as an ally even if they do not choose to come out?

Next Actions for Welcoming All Families

Write down three changes that you are willing to implement next week, next month or over the next year.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____
