

#ECISLEADERSHIP2026  
LOVE BASED  
*Leadership*  
CORINTHIA LISBON

ecis

23-25  
APRIL  
2026



# GROWING INCLUSIVE

*Roots To Branches*

# SCHOOLS

**Dr. Chad Wood**

Primary Principal  
Veinna International School

**Dr. Martha Ross**

Health and Inclusion Coordinator  
Cologne International School

**Amy Leino**

Director of Student Support Services  
International School of Helsinki

ECIS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP FOR INCLUSION



# Welcome

*we are glad you are here*

**11:00- 12:30**

## **SESSION ONE**

Grounding our Intentions and Sharing our Stories  
Growing a Culture and Commitment to Inclusion

**12:30-1:30**

## **LUNCH**

**1:30-3:00**

## **SESSION TWO**

Exploring Systems and Structures that Hold Inclusion Up  
Reviewing your Strengths and Identifying Areas for Growth

**3:00-3:30**

## **BREAK**

**3:30-4:30**

## **SESSION THREE**

Reviewing Strength Based Resources  
Turning Insight into Personal and Collective Action

# Grounding our Intentions

- **LEAD WITH CARE**

*positive intent and aware of impact*

- **STAY CURIOUS**

*be open to new learning*

- **RECOGNISE AND VALUE EXPERTISE IN THE ROOM**

*supportive and flexible*

- **CREATE SAFETY**

*hold confidentiality*



Inclusion SIG ECIS  
leadership 2026 Slides



*we begin with stories....*

WE NEED STORIES OF BELONGING THAT MOVE US TOWARDS EACH OTHER, NOT AWAY FROM EACH OTHER. WAYS OF BEING HUMAN THAT OPEN UP THE POSSIBILITIES OF BEING ALIVE TOGETHER.

WAYS OF NAVIGATING OUR DIFFERENCE THAT DEEPEN OUR CURIOSITY, THAT DEEPEN OUR FRIENDSHIP, THAT DEEPEN OUR CAPACITY TO DISAGREE, THAT DEEPEN THE ARGUMENT TO BE ALIVE.

THIS IS WHAT WE NEED.  
THIS IS WHAT WILL SAVE US. THIS IS THE  
WORK OF PEACE AND IMAGINATION.

*Padraig O Tuama*

# School Profile

International School of Helsinki

SCHOOL NAME



CURRICULUM

PYP · MYP · DP  
Early Years → Gr. 12

FRAMEWORK



LOCATION  
Helsinki  
FINLAND

**Engaged Inclusive Challenging**  
We inspire and empower one another to take thoughtful action.

**MISSION-VISION**  
WELLBEING  
BELONGING  
AUTONOMY  
CONNECTION  
**CORE VALUES**

500  
TOTAL ENROLLMENT

20%  
% of students receiving support

open admissions process  
for assuring resource matching

ADMISSIONS

Individualised Differentiated Teaching → universal ALL

Access Arrangements Modifications/Ind. Options 2%

Co-planning/co-teaching

EAL SEL Psyc - educational evaluations

Targeted Individ. Instruction

• 1:1 sm. group STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS outside consultation/referral

## SUPPORT STAFFING

<p><b>INCLUSION</b></p> <p>Director of Student support services LS coordinator EAL coordinator Wellbeing coordinator</p> <p>LEADERS</p>	<p><b>LEARNING SUPPORT</b></p> <p>PYP - 3 MYP/DP - 6</p> <p>TEACHERS</p>	<p><b>INTEGRATED OR EXTERNAL</b></p> <p>Speech path. consulting neuro psych social worker nurse psychologist</p> <p>SPECIALISTS</p>	<p><b>WELLBEING</b></p> <p>PYP - 1 MYP - 1 DP - 1</p> <p>TEAM MEMBERS</p>
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**School Profile**  
*Your Schools Story*

**Vienna International School**  
SCHOOL NAME



LOCATION  
**Vienna Austria**

MISSION+VISION  
**Inquiring, Inspired, Involved**  
CORE VALUES  
\* Empower, div. learning comm.

CURRICULUM  
**ELC - 12  
IB - PYP,  
MYP, DP  
MSA, CIS**

**1418**  
TOTAL ENROLLMENT  
**~ 18%**  
% of students receiving support

ADMISSIONS  
**Open Enrolment**  
→ St. Support Team involved in Resource Matching

STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS  
**LS, ELA, Counselling** → Sm. group Intv.  
**MTSS** → UDL (Journey) → Indiv. Intv.  
~ Co-planning / Co-teaching-ELA 1:1 support  
→ Psych Ed → screeners  
Related Services: O.T. + SLP

SUPPORT STAFFING

INCLUSION <b>LS &amp; ELA coordinators, Counselling Team</b> LEADERS	LEARNING SUPPORT <b>PYP - 5 Sec. - 6.5</b> TEACHERS	INTEGRATED OR EXTERNAL <b>SLP O.T. Med. Dr. Ed. Psych</b> SPECIALISTS	WELLBEING <b>PYP - 2 Sec. - 3</b> TEAM MEMBERS
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<b>1,403</b> Students	<b>100 +</b> Nationalities	<b>90</b> Native Languages
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**School Profile**  
*Your School's Story*

Cologne International School  
SCHOOL NAME



CURRICULUM

PYP  
MYP  
DP

FRAMEWORK



Cologne  
Germany

LOCATION

To explore the full potential within ourselves  
To make a positive impact on tomorrow  
To connect with each other

MISSION-VISION  
CORE VALUES

500  
TOTAL ENROLLMENT

25%  
APPROX # OF STUDENTS IN SUPPORT

Open  
Enrolment

ADMISSIONS

MTSS - Tier 1 - SEN Teacher  
2 - Targeted Support - Dyslexia + Dyscalculia  
3 - 1-1 Support in Class

EAL School Psychologist  
STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS External Professionals

SUPPORT STAFFING

LEARNING SUPPORT  
SEN Teacher Assistants  
TEACHERS

INTEGRATED  
School Psychologist  
SPECIALISTS

WELLBEING  
Mentors  
TEAM MEMBERS



**We inspire our students to become global citizens and ignite their passion for lifelong learning.**

A diverse international community comprised of over 50 nationalities, fostering academic excellence and cultural competence. Bilingual, future-oriented education in a supportive environment that prepares students for a connected world.

**School Profile**  
*Your School's Story*

SCHOOL NAME

LOCATION

MISSION/VISION

CORE VALUES

CURRICULUM

FRAMEWORK

TOTAL ENROLLMENT

% of students receiving support

ADMISSIONS

STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS

SUPPORT STAFFING

INCLUSION LEADERS

LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHERS

INTEGRATED OR EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS

WELLBEING TEAM MEMBERS

**1 ONE**

# Your School's Story

Take a moment to fill out your school's profile. Keeping in mind these are rough notes for you and will form a base to reflect and connect.

**2 TWO**

When complete share with your table.

**3 THREE**

Introduce yourselves and your role. You may share why you are here today and a strength you bring to Inclusion in your school.



# Learner Stories

*your story of a student*

Find a group of 3, reflect and then share the story of a student with a unique learning profile who flourished in your school or program.

This can be a short chapter or a extended passage.....





# Learner Stories

*your story of a student*

Reflect on your stories and **identify the essential components** that provided the possibility for them to flourish.

Consider the **shifts** in environment, relationship, or practice.

*note them down..*

# Inclusion Resources Padlet

These strength based resources invite us into the collective work of removing barriers. By designing what is essential for some and good for all, we cultivate communities rooted in belonging and equity.

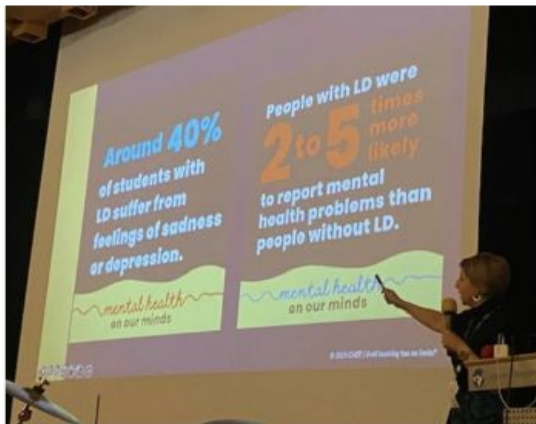


# ‘All brains are as different as our fingerprints’ Lindsay Jones, (2025)

“Variability is the dominant feature of the nervous system. Like fingerprints, no two brains are alike”.



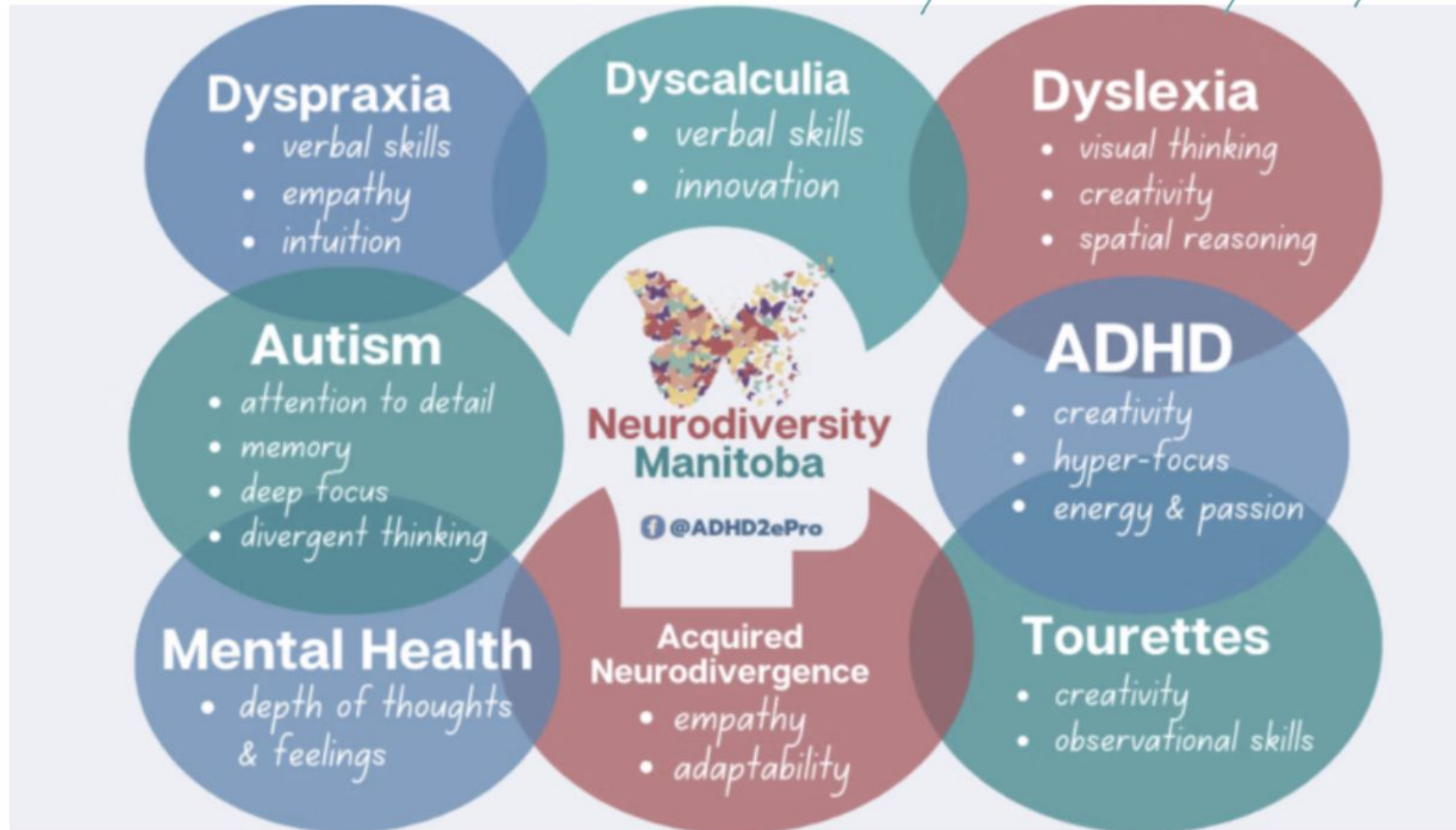
There is no such thing as an average brain.



UDL and the Learning Brain, CAST 2018

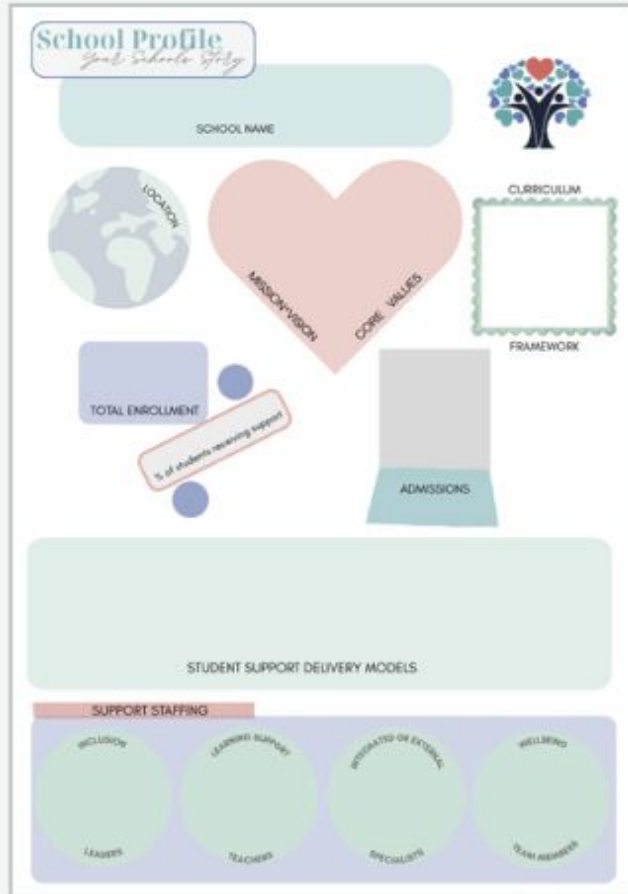
# Reframing to Strengths

*From deficits to assets*



THERE IS NO POWER FOR CHANGE GREATER  
THAN A COMMUNITY DISCOVERING WHAT IT  
CARES ABOUT

•  
*Margaret Wheatley*



## 1 ONE

Find a group of up to 5 that share a likeness with your school's **mission, vision and core values**

## 2 TWO

To what extent does your school's mission, vision and values reflect a commitment to inclusion?

## 3 THREE

What are the primary barriers and/or tensions to inclusion currently faced in your school?

An International School is inclusive, when it has made the intentional design to develop diverse student and faculty populations that reflect society as a whole, including multilingual learners and students with diverse learning profiles. These schools take a systems approach to building capacity amongst stakeholders offering universal design for access to all aspects of school life.

Next Frontier Inclusion Revised Definition 2020

TOTAL INCLUSIVITY MEANS RECOGNIZING, VALUING, PROTECTING AND NUTURING DIVERSE IDENTITIES, INCLUDING THOSE OF RACE, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, CLASS, DISABILITY, AGE, RELIGION AND LANGUAGE.

*Becoming a Totally Inclusive School*  
Aow, Hollins, Whitehead

Inclusion is the ongoing process that aims at increasing access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers.

International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO)

Inclusion is the intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity- in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum and in communities-in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication and empathetic understanding of complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.

*Council of International Schools*



**INCLUSION  
IN ACTION**

# Strength Based Approach

Strength-based practice is a fundamental shift in how we view and support individuals and their communities: moving away from 'fixing' what is perceived to be broken and towards valuing and elevating the unique strengths and contributions everyone brings to the community.

*From*

*Towards*

assuming can't



presuming can

fixing



flourishing

deficit based



asset driven

managing



empowering

labeling



affirming identity

compliance



autonomy

reacting



designing

access for some



equity for all

# Strength Based Perspective

## *Centering Learners*



Start with knowing who your learners are. Focus on what they can do rather than what they cannot. We build on existing abilities to support future growth.



Recognize that learning is complex and non-linear. Learners demonstrate their knowledge and progress in diverse, multifaceted ways.



The barriers are within the environment, not the person—this prioritises adjusting the design to fit the student's needs, rather than requiring the student to fit the design.



Center the learner's voice. When one understands and articulates their own strengths and needs, they become active agents in their development.



It is **not** about ignoring concerns or "watering down" challenges. It requires consistent, transparent communication about areas for growth while using strengths as the foundation.

EVEN IF WE ARE WRONG ABOUT A CHILD'S CAPABILITY  
TO HAVE ACCESS TO INCLUSIVE LEARNING WITH THEIR  
PEERS, THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT PRESUMPTION  
BEING WRONG ARE NOT AS DANGEROUS AS THE  
ALTERNATIVE.

Cheryl Jorgenson

# Presuming Competence: Positive Attitudes Towards Disability & Inclusion

	Access	Essential	Developing	Confident	Extending
	Awareness	Attitudes	Practices	Collaboration & Communication	Personal & Professional Growth
<b>Attitudes Towards Disability &amp; Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are aware of the variety of disabilities in the school community</li> <li>• Staff are aware that there are students who may not be included in their classroom/school communities</li> <li>• Staff have a common understanding of what inclusion is</li> <li>• Staff are aware of how students with disabilities are perceived by the school community</li> <li>• Staff are aware of what language to use when describing students with disabilities</li> <li>• Staff respectfully address students with disabilities in age-appropriate language and their privacy and integrity is respected</li> <li>• Staff is aware that Disability is an identity to be celebrated as a unique contribution to diverse communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff have a positive attitude towards disability and inclusion</li> <li>• Staff have a common understanding about why inclusion is important</li> <li>• Staff understand how perceptions of disability influence decisions about educational acceptance, placement, and programming</li> <li>• Staff understand value in including students' voice in educational decision making</li> <li>• Staff know what ableism is and are noticing examples of ableism in classroom and school communities</li> <li>• Staff understand that Disability needs to also be considered in diversity, inclusion and equity (DEI) oriented initiatives</li> <li>• Staff describe students in ways that are Disability affirming and non-ableist that avoid derogatory terms that perpetuate negative stereotypes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff members are trying inclusive practices in their classrooms</li> <li>• Staff are getting to know students from a strength-based perspective</li> <li>• Staff are using strength-based perspectives as part of their data collection and formative assessment techniques that inform their practice</li> <li>• Community and school-based job activities are an inclusive experience and not the sole responsibility of students with disabilities and not done during instructional time</li> <li>• Educational programming and enrollment is based on equal opportunity not ability levels</li> <li>• Staff are including Disabled students' voice in decision making processes (and ensuring communication tools are available to do so)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are working together to better understand and enact inclusive practices in their classroom and school</li> <li>• Staff are learning about disability from multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Staff are advocating for inclusion and increasing access and opportunity for disability in classrooms and school</li> <li>• Staff are intentionally taking action to combat ableism in their school community and beyond</li> <li>• Staff are advocating for resources that increase accessibility and situate Disability and Inclusion as a critical and equity-oriented practice</li> <li>• Staff provide space for (and are responsive when) students with disabilities self-advocate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are constantly reflecting on their hidden bias towards disability and inclusion</li> <li>• Staff understand when their experiences, beliefs and attitudes are the barrier to inclusion and/or the success of a student with a disability</li> <li>• Staff are engaging in learning and growth opportunities to learn more about, and from, Disabled perspectives</li> <li>• Staff challenge Disability stereotypes (e.g. inspiration porn, infantilization etc.) and correct misconceptions that they encounter in others</li> <li>• Staff display allyship by leading by example and influencing others around them to contribute to a more inclusive culture in the school and community</li> </ul>

**School Profile**  
*Great Schools, Great Futures*

SCHOOL NAME

LOCATION

MISSION-VISION

CORE VALUES

CURRICULUM

FRAMEWORK

TOTAL ENROLLMENT

% of students receiving support

ADMISSIONS

STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS

SUPPORT STAFFING

INCLUSION LEADERS

LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHERS

INTEGRATED OR EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS

WELLBEING TEAM MEMBERS

## 1 ONE

Welcome back! As you come in find a group with those who have a likeness with your school's **support delivery models.**

## 2 TWO

Introduce yourselves and your role. You may share something you appreciated from the first session.

# Structures & Systems

*holding inclusion up*



The trunk holds, stabilizes, and nourishes everything else.



Inclusive practice is not a program. It's not a department. It's not just learning support.

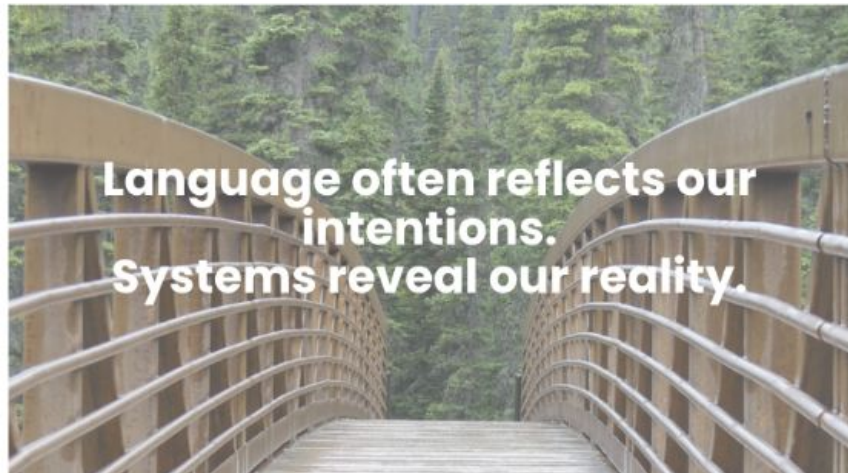


It's the backbone of how we design systems, relationships, and decisions.

WHAT SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES MAKE YOUR INCLUSION TRUNK STRONG OR HOLLOW?



# Are these systems and structures strong or hollow?



## Activity:

- **Two headings:** Strong Trunk / Hollow Trunk
- You will have 10–15 statement cards
  - **Categories:** Student Support & Learning Structures, Leadership & Decision-Making, Culture & Psychological Safety, Family & Community Partnership, Staffing, Wellbeing & Sustainability



## Instructions:

1. Sort the statements
2. Discuss disagreements
3. For any: "it depends" statements, ask and identify:
4. "What would make this structurally strong?"



## Share:

Each table group will share answering these reflective questions:

**"WHICH STATEMENTS CREATED THE MOST AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT? WHY?"**

# What systems and structures currently exist in your school that support inclusion?



## Step 1:

### Identify Systems (With your Group)

Discuss what systems already exist in your school that hold inclusion upright?  
Which systems do you think need some support?

*E.g.: Student Support Systems (MTSS? referrals? wellbeing teams?), Collaborative Planning Structures, Professional Learning, Communication & Parent Partnership, Hiring & Onboarding...*

## Step 2:

### Group into Themes (On your own)

- Strong (Embedded): Documented, protected, measurable, sustainable
- Developing: Some shared practice, partial consistency
- Hollow (Emerging / Fragile): Informal, inconsistent, personnel or personality-dependent

# What systems and structures currently exist in your school that support inclusion?



## Step 3:

### Identify areas for growth (Share with your group)

For anything you labeled Strong (Embedded), ask and discuss:

“Would this survive staff turnover, conflict, or pressure?”

For anything you labeled Hollow, ask and discuss:

“Is this dependent on people, time, or goodwill?”

*Then:* Take it a step further and discuss:

What would “embedded” actually look like?

What structure is missing?

Who needs to co-own and co-create this?

# From Insight to Action:

## *Strengthening Your Trunk*

So far: You've explored what strong and hollow systems look like. You've mapped your current reality. Now is your opportunity to create an action plan.

### Step 1: Choose a System/Structure for your Focus

- 1–2 systems only
  - ◆ Where do you feel there is tension?
  - ◆ Where would strengthening the trunk make the biggest difference?

### Step 2: Complete the Strength-Based Review

- Current Status – Evidence → What is actually happening (not intention)
- Strength(s) → Because... (e.g., Because time is protected in the timetable, or, Because all staff are trained in...)
- Growth Needs / Gaps / Challenges
- Self-Rating:
  - ◆ Emerging → informal, inconsistent, dependent on individuals
  - ◆ Developing → partially consistent, some shared practice
  - ◆ Embedded → consistent, protected, sustainable, system-owned
- Prioritize: Low / Medium / High
- Next Leadership Action: What is one concrete step you can take in the next 4–6 weeks?



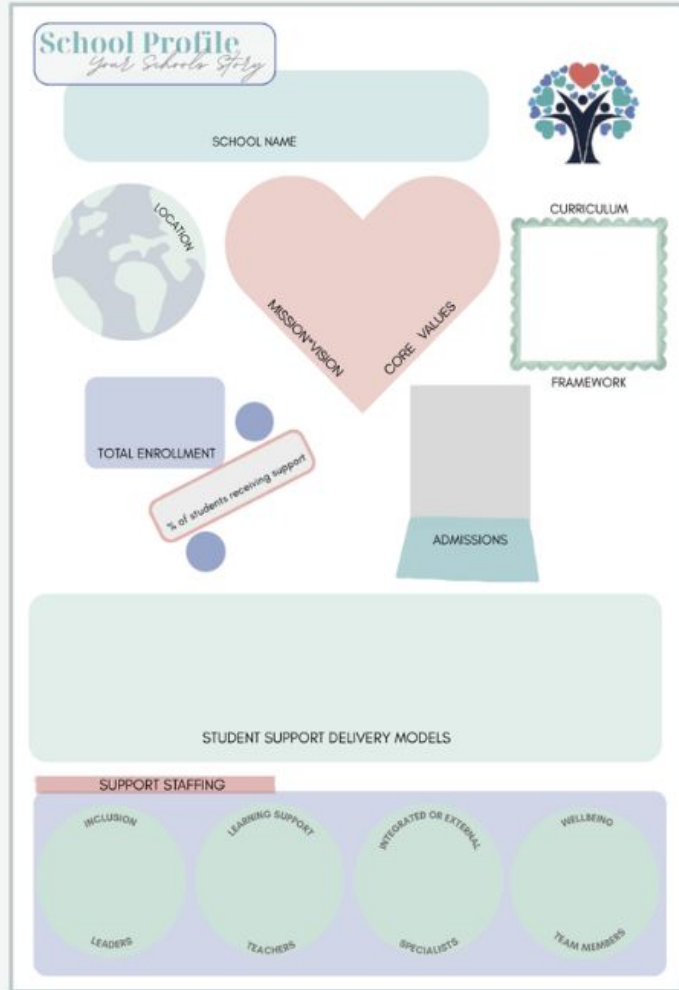


# Strength Based Review

*Link:*

[Leadership Decision-Making Tool](#)





## 1 ONE

Find a partner with a school that is distinctly different to yours for reflection.

## 2 TWO

Possible prompts for reflection:

Which system, if strengthened, would transform your culture?

If your most vulnerable student or staff member mapped your systems, would they experience belonging?

What system do you personally influence the most?

Where are you unintentionally maintaining hierarchy?

Where could inclusion become operational, not aspirational?

**School Profile**  
*Great Schools. Great Start.*

SCHOOL NAME

LOCATION

MISSION+VISION

CORE VALUES

CURRICULUM

FRAMEWORK

TOTAL ENROLLMENT

% of students receiving support

ADMISSIONS

STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS

SUPPORT STAFFING

INCLUSION LEADERS

LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHERS

INTEGRATED OR EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS

WELLBEING TEAM MEMBERS

# 1 ONE

Welcome back!

As you come in make a small group as you wish!

# 2 TWO

What questions or ideas are you sitting with that you haven't answered or shared yet?

# Creating a culture of Inclusion and Belonging

*The whole tree*

Roots, Trunk, Branches and  
Leaves

Identifying all the roles and  
responsibilities in our  
organisations to create an  
inclusive culture



# School Profile

*Great Schools Story*

**Vienna International School**  
SCHOOL NAME



LOCATION  
**Vienna Austria**

MISSION/VISION  
**Inquiring, Inspired, Involved**  
\* Empower, div. learning comm.

CURRICULUM  
**ELC - 12  
IB - PYP,  
MYP, DP  
MSA, CIS**

TOTAL ENROLLMENT  
**1478**  
~ 18%  
% of students receiving support

ADMISSIONS  
**Open Enrolment**  
→ St Support Team involved in Resource Matching

STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS  
**LS, ELA, Counselling** → Sm. group Intv.  
**MTSS** → UDL (Journey) → Indiv. Intv.  
~ Co-planning / co-teaching-ELA → 1:1 support  
→ Psych Ed → screeners → Related Services: O.T. + SLP

SUPPORT STAFFING

<b>INCLUSION</b> LEADERS LS + ELA coordinators, counselling Team	<b>LEARNING SUPPORT</b> TEACHERS PYP - 5 Sec. - 6.5	<b>INTEGRATED OR EXTERNAL</b> SPECIALISTS O.T. SLP Med. Dr. Ed. Psych	<b>WELLBEING</b> TEAM MEMBERS PYP - 2 Sec. - 3
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# School Profile

*Great Schools Story*

**Cologne International School**  
SCHOOL NAME



LOCATION  
**Cologne Germany**

MISSION/VISION  
**To explore the full potential within ourselves**  
**To make a positive impact on tomorrow**  
**To connect with each other**

CURRICULUM  
**PYP  
MYP  
DP**

TOTAL ENROLLMENT  
**500**  
APPROX # OF STUDENTS IN SUPPORT  
**25%**

ADMISSIONS  
**Open Enrolment**

STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS  
**MTSS - Tier 1 - SEN Teacher**  
**2 - Targeted Support - Dyslexia + Dyscalculia**  
**3 - 1:1 Support in Class**  
EAL School Psychologist External Professionals

SUPPORT STAFFING

<b>INCLUSION</b> LEADERS Director of Student support services LS coordinator EAL coordinator Wellbeing coordinator	<b>LEARNING SUPPORT</b> TEACHERS SEN Teacher Assistants	<b>INTEGRATED</b> SPECIALISTS School Psychologist	<b>WELLBEING</b> TEAM MEMBERS Mentors
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# School Profile

*Great Schools Story*

**International School of Helsinki**  
SCHOOL NAME



LOCATION  
**Helsinki FINLAND**

MISSION/VISION  
**Engaged Inclusive challenging**  
**We inspire and empower one another to take thoughtful action.**

CURRICULUM  
**PYP · MYP · DP**  
Early Years + Gr. 12

TOTAL ENROLLMENT  
**500**  
20%  
% of students receiving support

ADMISSIONS  
**open admissions process**  
for assuring resource matching

STUDENT SUPPORT DELIVERY MODELS  
**Individualised Differentiated Teaching** → universal ALL  
**Co-planning/co-teaching**  
**Targeted Individ. Instruction** → 1:1 sm. group  
**Access Arrangements**  
Modifications/Ind. Options 2%  
**EAL SEL**  
Psych-educational evaluations  
Outside Consultation/referral

SUPPORT STAFFING

<b>INCLUSION</b> LEADERS Director of Student support services LS coordinator EAL coordinator Wellbeing coordinator	<b>LEARNING SUPPORT</b> TEACHERS PYP - 3 MYP/DP - 6	<b>INTEGRATED OR EXTERNAL</b> SPECIALISTS Speech path. consulting neuro psych social worker nurse psychologist	<b>WELLBEING</b> TEAM MEMBERS PYP - 1 MYP - 1 DP - 1
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# Roots, Trunk to Branches Inclusive Practitioners

*All students belong to all of us*

Who is reaching out across your organization to ensure inclusive learning practices?

Within the entire team of Staff, who is implementing inclusive learning practices?

Who is creating an **Inclusive culture** of learning?

Who is creating **equitable access** to learning?

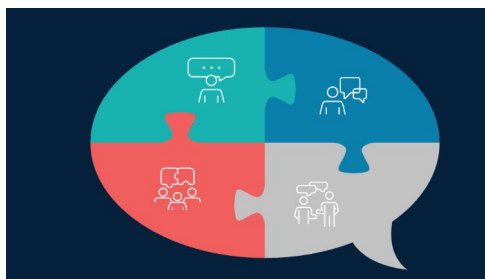
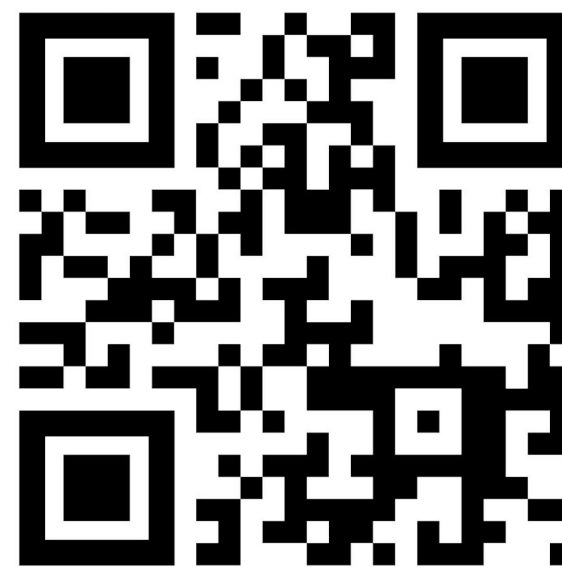




# Roots, Trunk, Branches and Leaves

*Inclusive Practices*

Using the [resources in the Padlet](#) and the [ECIS Inclusion SIG website](#), explore Inclusion Practices





# Leaving with a Commitment to Inclusion

Based on your Strength Based Review identify two leaves- two commitments to grow Inclusion 🌱

You are invited to add a reminder to your Calendar on the following days;

Monday May 24th (30 days after today)  
Monday 2nd August (90 days after today)

In 30 days I will plan to .....

In 90 days I will plan to .....

🌱

2 Aug 2026 9:00am to 10:00am 2 Aug 2026 Time zone

All day  Does not repeat

Save

CONSIDER;  
YOUR CURRENT BELIEF  
REGARDING STRENGTHS,  
STRUCTURE YOU COULD  
CHANGE, STRATEGY OR  
SKILL YOU WOULD WANT  
ALL TEACHERS TO KNOW  
OR IMPLEMENT, AND  
ACTION YOU WILL TAKE

THERE IS NO POWER FOR CHANGE GREATER  
THAN A COMMUNITY DISCOVERING WHAT IT  
CARES ABOUT

•  
*Margaret Wheatley*