

Value diversity

A suggestion for implementing the strategy
'Commit to whole-school approaches' from
the Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Includes:

- Recognise diversity as a strength
- Create an inclusive, welcoming culture
- Why variability matters
- Know your learners
- Walk in learner's shoes
- Learn about diversity together

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Behaviour and learning](#)

Strategy: [Commit to whole-school approaches](#)

Suggestion: [Value diversity](#)

Date

18 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/behaviour-and-learning/value-diversity

Recognise diversity as a strength

Learn about diversity and equity with your students. See the [Universal Design for Learning](#) guide on this website for more information.

“Diversity” needs to be recognised as a strength for a future-oriented learning system, something to be actively fostered, not a weakness that lowers the system’s performance.

Diversity encompasses everyone’s variations and differences, including their cultures and backgrounds.

Rachel Bolstad and Jane Gilbert, with Sue McDowall, Ally Bull, Sally Boyd and Rosemary Hipkins

Source:

[Supporting future-oriented learning and teaching: A New Zealand perspective](#)

<https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/schooling/109306>

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Create an inclusive, welcoming culture

Inclusive education means all learners are welcomed by their local early learning service and school, and are supported to play, learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of life at the school or service.

- Welcome all learners regardless of the complexity of their needs.
- Develop systems for smooth and well planned transitions into school.
- Work in partnership with learners, whānau, teachers, teaching assistants and support specialists to provide support from the outset.
- Foster a caring, safe and respectful whole-school environment.
- Foster the identity, language and culture of all learners.
- Share clear and specific expectations for the student's individual learning journey.

Adapted from:

[What an inclusive school looks like \(PDF\)](#) – Ministry of Education

[Enhancing staff capability at Newtown School](#) – Education Gazette

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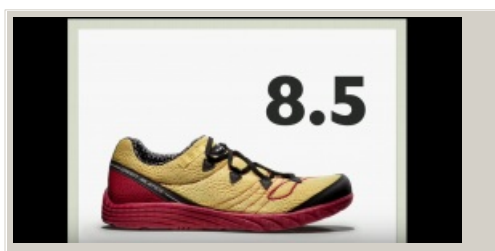
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Why variability matters

Dr Todd Rose, Harvard University, talks about why planning for variability is critical.



Video hosted on Youtube <http://youtu.be/8WClnVjCEVM>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Cyber Learning \(US\)](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8WClnVjCEVM>

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Know your learners

To plan learning experiences that will give all learners opportunities to make connections to new concepts, teachers need to understand what each student brings to their learning.

Gather and analyse a wide range of information about learners, from:

- achievement
- observations
- conversations with them
- conversations with their peers, families, and whānau.

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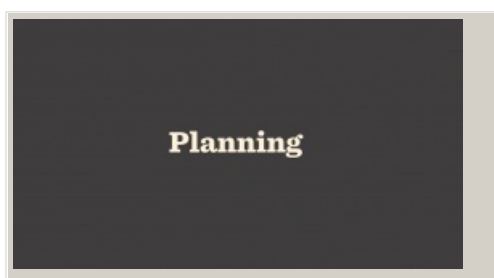
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Walk in learner's shoes

Anita describes how she begins her planning thinking about the students not the content or activities.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/220585051>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Ministry of Education, inclusive education videos \(NZ\)](#)

<https://vimeo.com/album/2950799/sort:date/format:thumbnail>

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Learn about diversity together

Create opportunities to discuss and build shared understandings about diversity and valuing all learners.

- ✓ Be open to learning from and with parents, whānau and your local community and make decisions together.
- ✓ Engage in genuine dialogue with whānau and make decisions together.
- ✓ Create multiple opportunities for your community to ask questions about inclusion and what it would mean for their own child.
- ✓ Invite your community to see activities that explicitly model inclusion at your school, or at another school.
- ✓ Offer presentations or workshops to parents and whānau about the value of including all learners.
- ✓ Create opportunities for students and their whānau to share what valuing diversity means to them.
- ✓ Be ready to articulate your vision for inclusion in language that your community can relate to.

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