



# Process for Developing Inclusive Forms

Using inclusive language in your documents sends the message that all students are welcome and supported within the program. The below resource provides suggestions to bear in mind when developing forms.

## Considerations when developing program forms:

1. Does the program use any boilerplate language that lets families of students with disabilities know that they are welcome? If not, craft a message to include on forms as appropriate. E.g., “ABC Afterschool Program seeks to support and celebrate students of all backgrounds and abilities.”
2. On appropriate forms, be sure to highlight families’ rights to request accommodations to policies, practices and procedures to support the student.
3. Determine what information is truly needed versus nice to have. If it is nice to have, consider indicating that it’s optional. E.g., known allergies are truly needed, a child’s medical history is nice to have.
4. Allow individuals to self-describe.

For example:

Typical Question	Variation
Does your child have any of the following? <input type="radio"/> Physical disabilities <input type="radio"/> Intellectual disabilities <input type="radio"/> Severe allergies	So that we may best support your child, would you care to share any information about his or her disabilities, if any?  _____

5. Avoid idioms, slang and colloquialisms. Use plain, clear language.
6. Consider updating language.

For example:

Older Language	Recommended Update
Mother/Father	Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
Is your child a special ed student?	Does your child receive special ed services during the school day that you care to share?
Does your child suffer from any severe allergies?	Does your child have any severe allergies?

7. Clearly label each section and field of the form.
8. Use colors that are easy and clear to see, even after the form as been repeatedly copied.
9. Increase the print size as much as possible.
10. Offer opportunities to have the form read aloud and/or offer scribes to family members.
11. Ask Program team members and stakeholders with knowledge of students with disabilities to review and provide feedback on all forms.

