

# Let's Chat... *about* *Inclusive Education*

*Hosts Gordon L. Porter, Jacqueline Specht and Diane Richler*



**Guest:**  
**Lynn Aylward**  
*Professor of Education  
Acadia University  
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Lynn Aylward is a teacher educator and researcher at Acadia University in Nova Scotia. She has expertise in intercultural teacher development, community schooling and has been involved in inclusive education since her first days as a teacher in the mid-1980s.

She recently co-produced the documentary film *"The Case of Luke Elwood"* - Frictive Films (2020). It documents an historically significant chapter in the journey toward inclusive schools in Canada. The link to the film is <https://bit.ly/3Abi934>

Lynn Aylward is an activist teacher educator, curriculum designer, and researcher with expertise in intercultural teacher development, community schooling, and inclusive education. She has researched, taught and consulted across Canada (living and working in 4 provinces and 2 territories) as well as internationally through collaborative projects with colleagues in Chile, Malawi, Tanzania, China, Dominica, and Guyana. Capacity building and reciprocity form the cornerstone of her professional and research practice. Dr. Aylward's research projects examine equity as it intersects with; culturally responsive pedagogy, indigenous education, disability studies, technologies for accessibility, place - based curriculum, rurality and gender diversity. Dr. Aylward is a Professor at Acadia University.

## Key Issues in this Chat Session:

- 1. Keeping the Mission Front and Centre:** In 2017, tension was growing between teachers and the government in Nova Scotia with inclusive education as a central topic of debate. Lynn felt like both parties had lost sight of the goal, providing inclusive education to all Nova Scotian students, and decided to undertake a project to remind those involved in education of their mission. This project was a film on a Human Rights Charter challenge, involving the Ellwood family who wanted their son to be included in his neighbourhood school.
- 2. Students Should Not Have to Earn Their Place in Classrooms:** Lynn expressed that although there have been major improvements in inclusive education since the Ellwood case, students must still earn their place in regular classrooms through mainstreaming practices. Lynn explains that often, students with barriers to learning who are deemed as disruptive are not included in classrooms with their peers.
- 3. Structural Changes:** Lynn explained that inclusion is more than just inviting students into schools and classrooms as they have always existed, but instead altering educational structures to accommodate all learners.
- 4. Valuing Families' Input:** In Lynn's opinion, a major progression in inclusive education in Nova Scotia since the Ellwood case is that schools seem to value families' input on their children's learning. This is critical because parents are the experts when it comes to their children!
- 5. The Next Generation of Teachers:** Through her experience working with Bachelor of Education students, Lynn has noticed that these students approach teaching holistically, considering the whole child and their multiple identities. Lynn believes the next generation of teachers will look more deeply into inclusion rather than focusing on inclusive classroom placements.

## Potential Discussion Questions (before viewing):

1. Are you familiar with the Luke Ellwood case in Nova Scotia? If so, what can you remember about it?
2. What do you think about mainstreaming practices? Do you see any inherent problems with mainstreaming students with barriers to learning?

## Potential Discussion Questions (after viewing):

1. Considering Lynn's input on changing structural aspects of education to facilitate real inclusion, what are the critical elements of inclusive education?
2. How do you think the idea of intersectionality plays into inclusive education? Can embracing diversity add momentum to the movement towards inclusive education?

# More from Lynn Aylward:

- Jacqueline Specht, Donna McGhie-Richmond, Tim Loreman, Pat Mirenda, Sheila Bennett, Tiffany Gallagher, Gabrielle Young, Jamie Metsala, Lynn Aylward, Jennifer Katz, Wanda Lyons, Scott Thompson & Sarah Cloutier (2016) Teaching in inclusive classrooms: efficacy and beliefs of Canadian preservice teachers, *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 20:1, 1-15, DOI: 10.1080/13603116.2015.1059501
- Lynn Aylward & Gregory Mackinnon (1999) Exploring the use of electronic discussion group coding with pre-service secondary teachers, *Journal of Information Technology for Teacher Education*, 8:3, 335-348, DOI: 10.1080/14759399900200065
- MacKinnon, G. & Aylward, L. (2000). Coding Electronic Discussion Groups. *International Journal of Educational Telecommunications*, 6(1), 53-61. Charlottesville, VA: Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE). Retrieved May 16, 2022 from <https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/8016/>.
- Citation: Aylward, M. L. (2007, June 26). Discourses of cultural relevance in Nunavut schooling. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, 22(7). Retrieved [date] from <http://jrre.psu.edu/articles/22-7.pdf>
- Aylward, M. Lynn; Bruce, Cynthia. (2014). Inclusive Post-Secondary Education in Canada: Transition to Somewhere for Students with Intellectual Disabilities. *Journal of the International Association of Special Education*. Fall2014, Vol. 15 Issue 2, p42-47. 6p.
- Bruce, Cynthia, and M. Lynn Aylward. "Disability and self-advocacy experiences in university learning contexts." *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 23, no. 1 (2021).
- Aylward, Lynn. "Promising Practices in Indigenous Teacher Education." *Teachers College Record*. Teachers College Record, Date Published: December 06, 2018 <https://www.tcrecord.org> ID Number: 22597.



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