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NEW BOOK OFFERS A SOLUTION TO THE INCLUSION CULTURE WARS: WHAT IF SCHOOLS WERE DESIGNED FOR INCLUSION FROM THE START?

Washington, D.C. – [March 12, 2025] – The so-called ‘inclusion debate’ in education has reached a boiling point. But what if we’re asking the wrong question? In *Six Principles for Building a Truly Inclusive School: A Call to Action for K-12 Leaders*, education expert Toni R. Barton argues that the real issue isn’t whether inclusion works—it’s that our schools were never designed to support all learners in the first place.

Now available for pre-order at the Publisher’s site and all major booksellers ([Barnes & Noble](#) | [Amazon](#) | [Routledge](#)), the book takes a hard look at why the special education system remains separate and unequal, how fixing this problem can make school work better for every student, and why shifting the debate from culture wars to structural change is the only way forward.

“Inclusion shouldn’t be controversial—it should be common sense,” says Barton, an education consultant, speaker, and founder of Spelligent. “The reason we keep struggling with it is that we’re trying to retrofit inclusion into a school system that was never designed for it.

Rooted in research and real-world strategies, *Six Principles for Building a Truly Inclusive School* lays out a practical roadmap that pushes educators to consider:

- What if schools were designed for inclusion from the start—would we even be having this debate?
- Why special education should never have been ‘separate’ in the first place—and what to do about it
- The radical but obvious idea: Design schools around students, not outdated policies

Barton, a recognized voice in education, has been featured in *Forbes*, *The Hechinger Report*, *Ed Post*, and hosts the *School DisruptEd* podcast, ranked in the top 10% globally on Listen Notes. She has spoken at SXSW EDU and is an upcoming speaker at ASCD’s International Educators Summit and the National Education Association’s Conference on Racial & Social Justice.

As the national conversation on education grows increasingly polarized, *Six Principles for Building a Truly Inclusive School* cuts through the noise with bold, actionable solutions that challenge the status quo and push educators, policymakers, and families to rethink what’s possible.

For interviews or speaking engagements please contact Toni R. Barton at toni@spelligent.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Toni R. Barton is an expert, international speaker, and founder of Spelligent, a movement dedicated to building inclusive schools. She is also faculty in the Teachers College at Arizona State University and a former teacher.

Six Principles for Building a Truly Inclusive School

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