

*"We cannot say we want our children's classrooms to reflect the diverse world in which we live, but only in the politically correct, pretty way that children are a rainbow of colors. Part of that diversity includes kids who scream because they do not have words, kids who throw things because they are filled with anger and rage, kids who act out because the adults in their lives have hurt them, kids who don't listen to directions because they can't process them with all of the other noises in their heads. Yes, bringing them into classrooms with typically developing children makes teaching harder. So do poverty, hunger, and home lives filled with uncertainty and chaos. So do children who don't speak English and children who have witnessed violence. But this is our world.*

*"To love being a teacher is to love children and embrace them as they come to you. It's easy to love the child who does all of the homework, has the right answers, stays in her seat, and colors in the lines. The true test of a great teacher is to be able to love the square pegs who will never fit into the round holes. To stop pounding on them in an effort to force them to fit and to start appreciating them as the unique but beautiful children they are. In a just and truly diverse classroom community, every child belongs."*

*—Laurie Levy*