# DISABILITY TEACHES US:
REFRAMING POSSIBILITIES:
MEANINGFUL INCLUSION – NOT IF, BUT HOW

FACILITATED BY JEN CHONG JEWELL, PAVE · TAINA KARRU-OLSEN, INCLUSION FOR ALL · ROSE SPIDELL, OEO

GUEST PRESENTER PRIYA LALVANI, PH. D. - PROFESSOR OF DISABILITY STUDIES AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AT MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Register in advance for this free webinar: https://bit.ly/Meaningful_Inclusion_Not_If_But_How
- Saturday, March 26th, 2022
- 9:30-11:00 A.M. Pacific, 12:30-2:00 p.m. Eastern
- CART will be provided. Translation upon request - email: jchong@wapave.org
- Clock Hours available.

Washington State Governor's Office of the Education Ombuds

PAVE
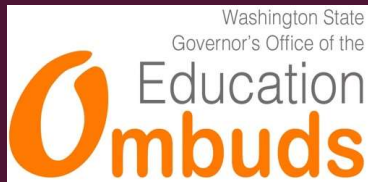
Family Engagement Collaborative

INCLUSION FOR ALL

USING ZOOM

Use Chat for comments

- Open chat (Zoom tool bar at the bottom of the screen)
- Select recipients in the "To" dropdown menu (panelists and attendees)

Use Q and A for questions

CART services are available

Webinar will be recorded

LIVE CART SERVICES

- We have live remote CART available today. For those folks who would like to view captions, you can click on the Zoom menu bar, and activate Live Transcript from the CC icon. If that doesn't work for you, you can also access captions from using a link which will take you to a separate web browser.

WELCOME AND ATTENDANCE

Please introduce yourself using the chat function.

- Open Chat (Zoom tool bar, bottom of screen)

- Select recipient in the "To" dropdown menu choose "panelists and attendees"

- Share your name, role, and what city or school district you are in. Attendance check in (especially for clock hours)

- Take a moment to ground and make this an accessible space for yourself

MEET YOUR FACILITATORS

- Jen Chong Jewell, PAVE, Family Engagement Collaborative
  - FEC members: Open Doors for Multicultural Families, Roots of Inclusion, and Education Northwest

- Taina Karru-Olsen, Inclusion for All

- Rose Spidell, Office of the Education Ombuds

Clock hours available: Please check in for 1.5 – 2 hrs
Clock hour forms will be sent out at a later time

Click here for a
Road Map

CASCADE RANGE

WASHINGTON

COLUMBIA
BASIN

PALOUSE

Washington State Land Cover and Relief
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COLLECTIVE BREATH

LEARNING GOALS

- Understand inclusion is not a place, but a practice

- Dispel various myths associated with inclusive education

- Learn about the difference between individual advocacy and collective advocacy

- Call to action: participants define next steps, which could include attending next two workshops in the Disability Teaches Us Series

DISABILITY TEACHES US SERIES

- Disability Teaches Us – Disability Justice in Schools (May 2020)

- Disability Teaches Us – Listen and Learn from Youth (August 2020)

- Disability Teaches Us – Reframing Possibilities: Meaningful Inclusion – Not If, But How (March 2022)

OSPI INCLUSIONARY PRACTICES PROJECT

- To support more inclusive schools in Washington, the State Legislature provided OSPI with $25M for the 2019-21 biennium and $12M for the 2021-23 biennium to provide educators with professional development opportunities in support of inclusionary practices across the state.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "INCLUSIVE EDUCATION"

What is Inclusive Education?

What is NOT Inclusive?

OUR PRESENTER, DR. PRIYA LALVANI

Professor of Disability Studies at Montclair State University and Editor of "Constructing the (M)other: Narratives of Disability, Motherhood, and the Politics of Normal." and Co Author of "Undoing Ableism: Teaching about Disability in K-12 Classrooms."
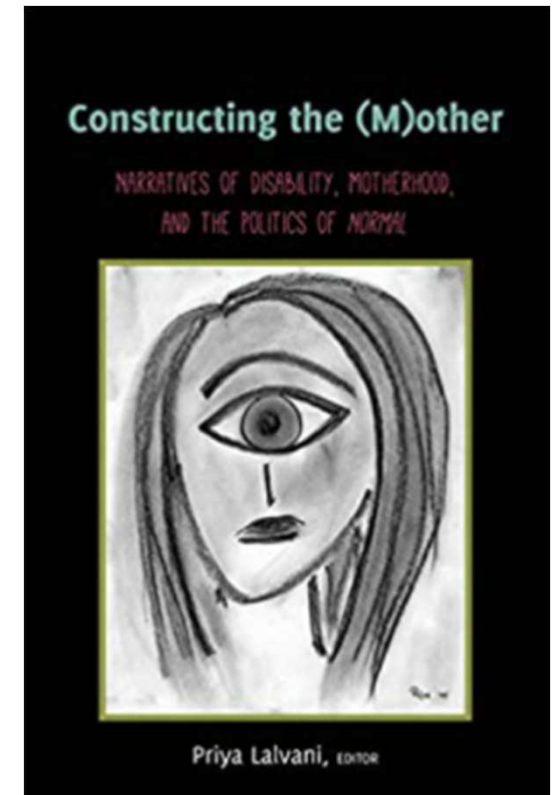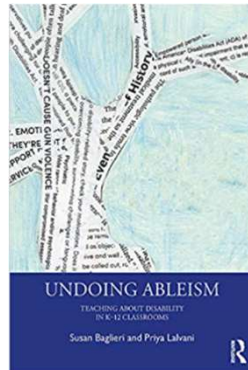
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The philosophy and practice of education diverse students in classrooms which are heterogenous in terms of ethnicity, class, culture, gender identity, (dis)ability and other identity markers, using strategies that are responsive to each student's strengths and needs.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IMPROVEMENT (IDEIA) EDUCATION ACT (PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS IDEA)

1. Students with disabilities should be educated to the maximum extent possible alongside their nondisabled peers.

2. Removal may only occur when education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aides and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

WASHINGTON STATE OF ~~INCLUSIVE~~ EDUCATION

WA ranks 44 out of 50 states for inclusive practices

- Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) is calculated by the time spent in general education settings

LRE 1: 80-100% of the time
57.7% of ALL students with disabilities are placed in general education settings

- 54.5% of students of color with disabilities are placed in these settings

LRE 2: 40-79% of the time
38.4% of ALL students with disabilities are placed in general education settings

- 31.1% of students of color with disabilities are placed in these settings

LRE 3: 0-39% of the time
12.4% of ALL students with disabilities are in general education

- 13.3% of students of color with disabilities are placed in these settings

Source OSPI (2019)

"INCLUSION" IS AN ACT, NOT A PLACE

- Students with disabilities are entitled to access the general education curriculum.

- Without the provision of necessary supports, it is inclusion in name only. Simply placing a student in a general ed classroom doesn't make it inclusive education!

- True inclusive education means that general education classrooms are set-up and re-structured to accommodate the learning needs of all students.

- A student does not need to "fit into" the existing program. Rather, the program is altered to fit the needs of students.

RESEARCH CONSISTENTLY INDICATES THAT MANY FAMILIES…

- Continue to perceive the need to advocate

- Experience institutional resistance

- Are often "steered" toward self-contained educational environments

- Perceive being in a "battle" for inclusion

ABLEISM

- Negative attitudes toward and devaluing of individuals with disabilities.

- Having a disability is perceived as an entirely undesirable way of living.

- Like other isms (racism, sexism, etc.) ableism unfolds as a pervasive system of oppression that operates at the institutional, individual and cultural levels.

- Results in a lack of access, and a preference for non-disabled ways of learning, moving or communicating.

- Schools are set to "work" for nondisabled students and based on expectations of neurotypical people.

MYTHS

- There are many misconceptions and myths about inclusive education among educators.

- Placement in self-contained settings are often based on highly problematic justifications, often in blatant violation of students' rights under IDEIA.

- Misinformation about inclusive education is often communicated to parents by educators.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

IN THE CHAT, WHAT ARE SOME MYTHS ASSOCIATED WITH INCLUSIVE EDUCATION YOU ARE AWARE OF?
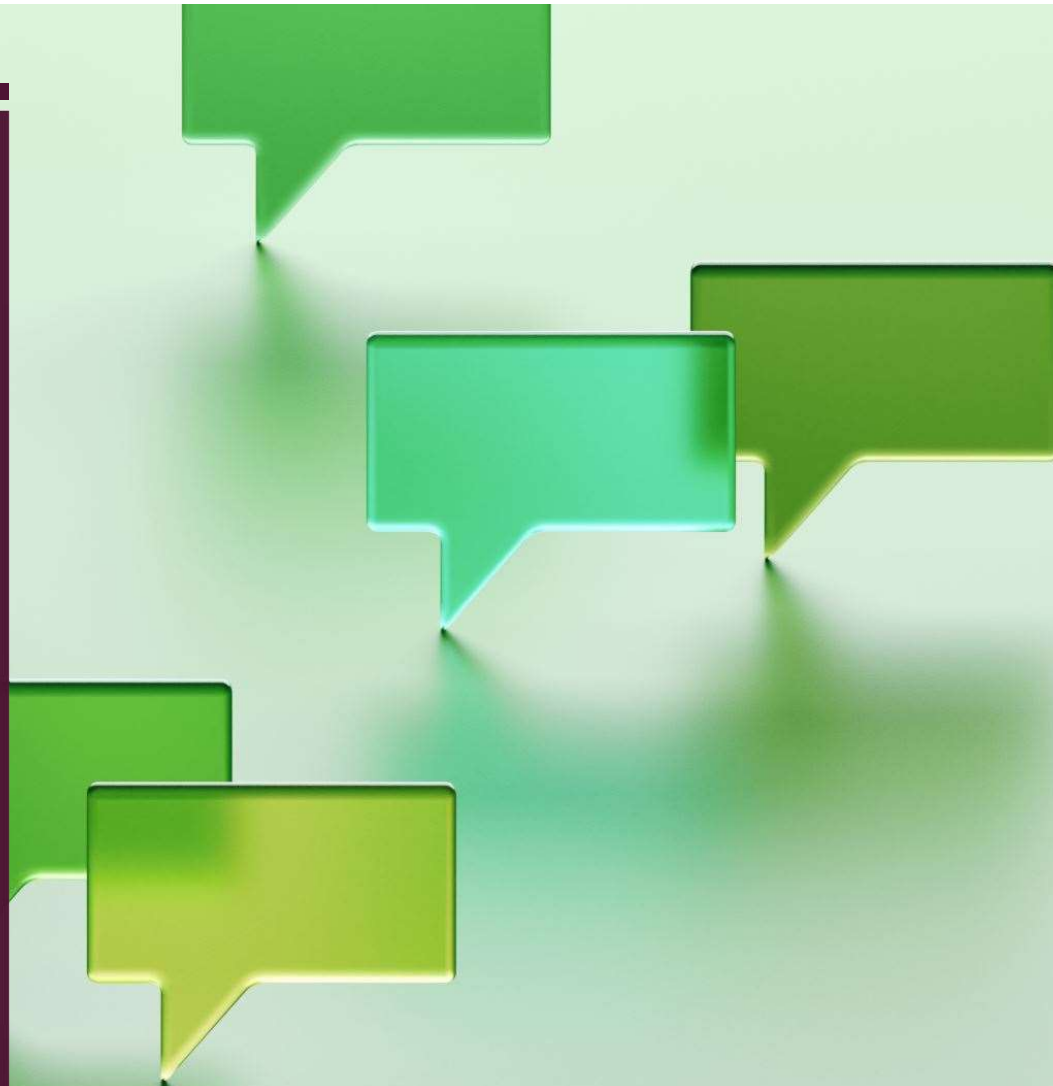
MYTH #1

"In the self-contained class, they feel very much at home."

- Many teachers hold beliefs that self-contained classrooms are "best" for some students with disabilities; here they can be with "other kids like them" and they can "fit in."

- In students, parents reported that school team professionals convinced them that self-contained classrooms were the right place for their children, because in inclusive settings, their children may get rejected, teased, or feel isolated.

QUOTE

- "(In self-contained classrooms) they feel very much at home, and the advantage it's really like a family. It's not like they're a stranger in their room. And sometimes with a special ed. kid, especially one with a big, big, disability, it's kind of like they're a stranger in the class because they're not getting what everybody else is getting. In a special ed. class – they're getting it."

MYTH #2

"They won't be able to "keep up" in a general education class."

- Students in inclusive education are not expected to demonstrate that they can "keep up".

- Students with disabilities need only to benefit from inclusive education; "keeping up" is not a criterion for inclusive placement.

- Removal from general education classrooms based on this reason is not consistent with student's rights under IDEIA.

QUOTE

- "The best learning environment would be in the self-contained classroom...I think the self-contained classroom where they can work at their own pace and master skills on their level, you know, and then move onto the next skill – I think that would be the best setting for their cognitive level."

MYTH #3

"Self contained classes are better for students who need high levels of support."

- Inclusive education is beneficial for all students with disabilities; not only those who are "high functioning."

- As per IDEA, the full range of supports and services should be provided in LRE; that a child needs intensive levels of support is not a criterion for removal from the general education classroom.

QUOTE

- "Well, you see, he's not really speaking that much yet. He need a lot of assistance with communicating, and so we're observing that he doesn't really participate in these activities. Because it's hard. For his needs, he needs a lot of assistance, which we don't have in *this* class. The class we are recommending is where he can get a whole lot of support and help."

MYTH #4

"Inclusion works for some kids…"

- Educators may hold beliefs that inclusive education is beneficial for certain students only (i.e.., so called "high functioning" students with disabilities).

- Many educators (mistakenly) believe that the criteria for inclusion is based on:

Type of disability

1. Level of impairment / "functioning level"

2. Cognitive abilities or IQ

3. Absence of disruptive or maladaptive behaviors

4. Being verbal

- The general education classroom is the natural environment for all students with disabilities, not only those who are "high functioning."

MYTH #5

"She's not *ready* for inclusion."

- Many educators hold beliefs that readiness is a prerequisite for inclusion.

- Programs, not children, need to be made ready for inclusive education.

- Students should NOT be expected to earn their way to the general education classroom. The burden of proof is not on the child to demonstrate they belong (and nor on the parents).

QUOTE

- "We all agree about inclusion, and we'll get there. But for now, she's just not ready for inclusion. Our recommendation is that, you see, it makes sense she should be in the smaller classroom, to help her to get ready for an inclusion class in the future." (Communication, IEP meeting, 2020)

HAVE YOU HEARD THESE MYTHS? POLL (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

Myth #1 "In the self-contained classroom, they feel very much at home."

Myth #2 "They won't be able to "keep up" in a general education class."

Myth #3 "Self contained classes are better for students who need high levels of support."

Myth #4 "Inclusion works for some kids."

Myth #5 "She's not ready for inclusion."

INSTITUTIONAL ROADBLOCKS ON THE ROAD TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Parents reported that:

- They experienced institutional resistance when they seek access to inclusive learning environments for their children.

- They were "steered" toward self-contained spaced o informed by professionals that they are the "best" for their children.

- They perceive being in a "battle for inclusion."

Overall, decisions pertaining to the placement in inclusive learning environments continue to be parent-driven.

"They said: "We have a small classroom where Billy won't be overwhelmed. We don't want him to be overwhelmed in a bigger class setting, you know, … the kids do great there in this class." I'm trying to remember how exactly she phrased it, but more or less it was presented in a very positive way. So how could I say no to that? Especially because I didn't understand least-restrictive, I didn't understand inclusion, I didn't understand any of that stuff… so that's why, you know, I took the advice."

MARKETING OF SELF-CONTAINED SPACES OR "STEERING"

- Overall, studies indicate, decisions pertaining to students' placement in inclusive learning environments are too often parent-driven.

- There is a long tradition of advocacy

- Grassroots family movements were a driving force

- Individuals with disabilities, their families, and allies organized for radical change – leading to the passage of PL 94-142 in 1975

PARENT ADVOCACY AND THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

THE PROBLEMS WITH PARENT ADVOCACY

1. *Battle Fatigue*

Many parents expend inordinate amounts of time and resources in order to secure inclusive placement.

Parents perceive they are in a "fight" or "struggle" which drain them.

Many parents rely on the cultural and economic capital available to them to secure an appropriate education of their children.

THE PROBLEMS WITH PARENT ADVOCACY

2. *Who's advocating and Who's not?*

- Those with the most resources are empowered to access their children's educational rights leaving some others in the margins.

- Many parents do not share dominant cultural beliefs about individual advocacy.

- When parents advocate for their children alone, the children of parents with the least access to forms of capital are most vulnerable to institutional biases and professional dominance.

3. *It's not changing the system!*

When families advocate for their own children, it undoubtedly helps the child. However, it allows the system to remain unchanged.

Schools are able to respond on a "one at a time" basis – providing services to the children of "squeaky wheels."

Children from low-income or cultural and linguistic minority families most likely to be placed in self-contained classrooms. The results in re-segregation of schools through a disproportionate representation of children of color, economically disadvantaged or otherwise marginalized groups in segregated classrooms.

THE PROBLEMS WITH PARENT ADVOCACY

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO…TOGETHER?

If inclusivity in schools and society for our children is our goal, we need to consider ways to achieve this that are sustainable and durable, beyond "fixing" the immediate issue for individual children.

Parents can consider joining forces; moving away from individual advocacy, we can invest in collective activism.

NEXT STEPS

- Reflect on today's learning and consider what inclusive education and an inclusive community means to you. If you are a parent or caregiver, ask your child also.

- Explore your district parent groups and committees, special education advisory groups, equity groups, parent teacher association or organizations. What are the student groups available to your child?

- Look at your school board meeting agendas and attend meetings.

- Request training on Least Restrictive Environment for parents and educators.

- Review your district's data and history on including students with disabilities in LRE settings.

- Learn about The Inclusive Practices Project and your district's level of involvement and activity in the project.

- Check out the Family Engagement Collaborative for future learning opportunities, including two more learning opportunities with Dr. Lalvani on April 21 and April 28th.

INTEGRATION OF LEARNING: CALL TO ACTION

Add to chat: Based on what you've learned, what's a next step you will take?

- Scroll through people's next steps.

- How can we work in solidarity with one another to promote meaningful inclusion in our schools and communities?

QUESTIONS?

RESOURCES

- OSPI Inclusive Practices Project : Find an interactive map shows where the Professional Development Cadre is engaging educators, and where our Pilot LEAs and Demonstration Sites are located, and much more

- Family Engagement Collaborative : Partnership of four non-profit organizations committed to strengthening family-school partnerships to support culturally-responsive approaches that center the experiences of students with disabilities.

- Washington Ed4All : Knowledge mobilization for Educators

- Educational Justice Roadmap : Funded by the Washington Education Association (WEA) and the National Education Association (NEA), this roadmap outlines systemic educational inequities from the perspective of families, students and communities that have been historically underserved in Washington.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Rethinking "We Are All Special": Anti-Ableism Curricula in Early Childhood Classrooms by Priya Lalvani, & Jessica Bacon (2019): Goals and resources to interrupt ableism in schools

- Moving Beyond Anti-Bias Activities: Supporting the Development of Anti-Bias Practices by Lisa P. Kuh, Debbie Leekeenan, Heidi Given, Margaret R. Beneke: Provides a framework for anti-bias teaching and concrete tools and resources to support it

- An Introductory Guide to Disability Language and Empowerment: Lists accessible definitions of disability and language, including "differently abled" and "d" v "D." .

- One Out of Five Book Resource Guide: List of books that may be used in the classroom or recommended to students, organized by grade level and topic.

- Disability in KidLit: Blog posts and resources about children's literature featuring people with disabilities.

- Constructing the (M)other: Narratives of Disability, Motherhood, and the Politics of Normal Edited by Priya Lalvani (2019); Peter Lang Inc. International Academic Publishers

- Undoing Ableism: Teaching about Disability in K-12 Classrooms by Susan Baglieri & Priya Lalvani (2019); Routledge

CLOCK HOURS

- Please email Rose at Rose.Spidell@gov.wa.gov
- She will send a form for you to fill out. Attendance will be verified through Zoom today.

■*Special appreciation for Debbie Esposito, Co-Director of START EPSD at SPAN Parent Advocacy Network*

"Inclusion is a right, not a special privilege for a select few."

-Judge John F. Gerry, Oberti vs. Board of Education, 1993

THANKS! ATTENDANCE AND EXTENDED DISCUSSION

PLEASE COMPLETE SURVEY:

HTTPS://WWW.SURVEYMONKEY.COM/R/REFRAMING_POSSIBILITIES_MEANINGFUL_INCLUSION_NOT_IF_BUT_HOW

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