

SHELLEY MOORE



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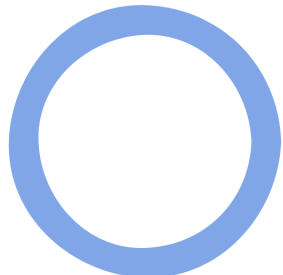





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What are you hoping
to get out of this
series?





What Infrastructure can
be put in place that will
make choosing
inclusion easier?

What does the Research Say?

1. Guiding conditions of inclusion describe that all students...

are presumed competent

are enrolled in and attending curricular classes

are in proximity to and participating in learning with peers

have purposeful roles and responsibilities

are planned for

2. Teacher professional development that...

supports collaboration and the changing roles of educators & support staff

is situated, ongoing and inquiry based

3. Systems frameworks that ...


support Universal Design for Learning

move away from a medical & deficit-based model of special education (IEPS)


School & District Infrastructure

Teacher & Staffing Infrastructure

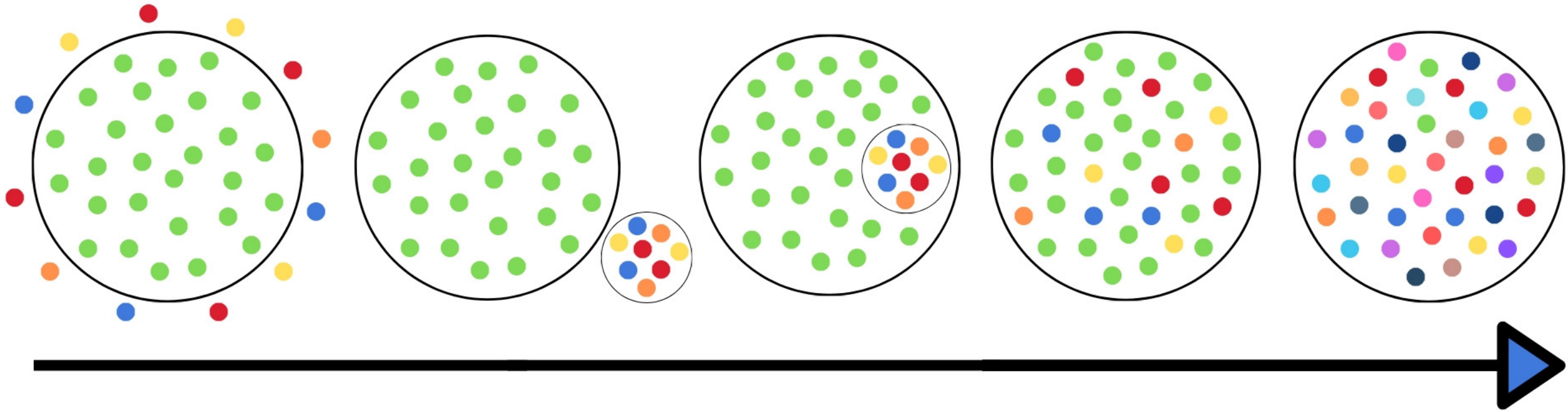
Student Infrastructure



What is **ALREADY**
happening to support
inclusion in your context?



WHAT IS INCLUSION?



Where are you on this continuum? What's the next step?



Now What?!

- Understand **WHAT** Inclusion is....



Understand **WHY** it is important...



How to we do it?

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Student Infrastructure



Mr. W Commercial

pre·sume com·petence

pri' zōōm/ 'kämpetens/

To presume competence is to acknowledge that all individuals have the ability to learn, to communicate, to participate in their own way. It means that we provide opportunities by creating accessible & inclusive spaces.

To presume competence is to respect the value of human diversity.

Not presuming competence is to actively harm.

facebook.com/AutismWomensNetwork

PRESUMING COMPETENCE

is an attitude—one that shapes actions in the classrooms and includes a default assumption that the student is capable.



BROOKES

From *Picture Inclusion!* by Whitney H. Rapp, Katrina L. Arndt, & Susan M. Hildenbrand

Presumption of Competence

by Donnie TC Denome

(they/them or xe/xem)

Presuming competence means we presume people are experts on their own bodies and minds and know what they need, even if they can't express it. Or, if they don't know what they need, they are still experts and should still be consulted and assisted in making a decision, not have a decision made for them.

SCHOOLS FOR FREEDOM

@schoolsforfreedom

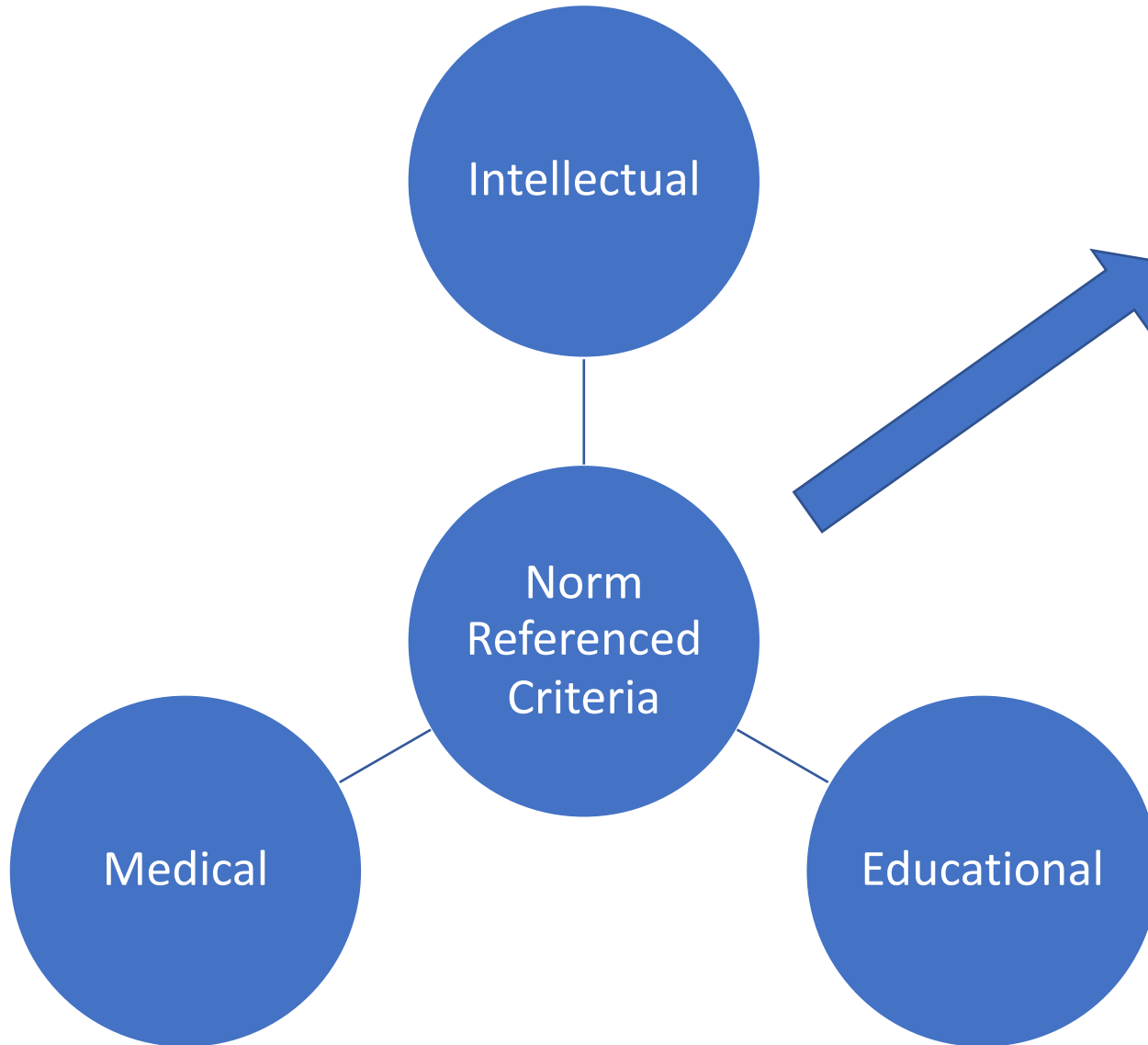
Presuming competence is nothing less than a Hippocratic oath for educators.

Douglas Biklen

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What is Presuming Competence?

What do we think when we think of someone with a disability?



- Measure deficits, not strengths
- Capture responses verbally/ written/ physically



- If students can't express in the way being captured



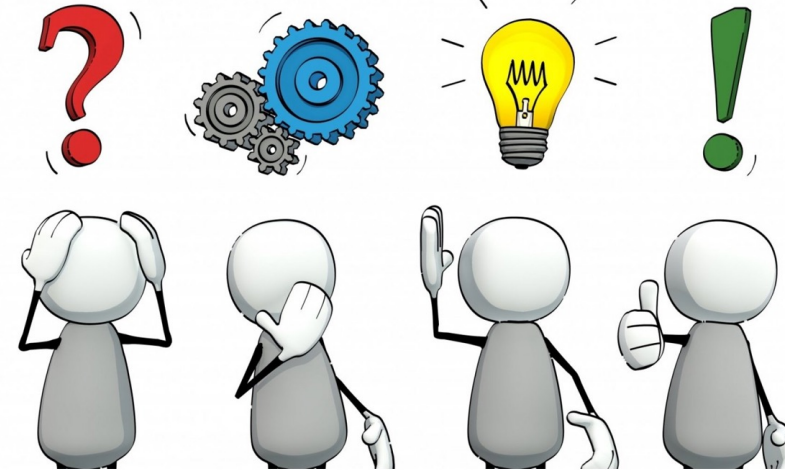
- It leads to the perceptions that "they can't"

What happens when there is a perception that students “can’t”

We **assume** that students with disabilities **will not benefit** from being in **general education** classes



We **assume** that students with disabilities **are unable to learn** much curriculum



Getty Images

So we put students with disabilities into **programs outside** of the general education curriculum/ classroom for the majority of their day learning “**life skills**”

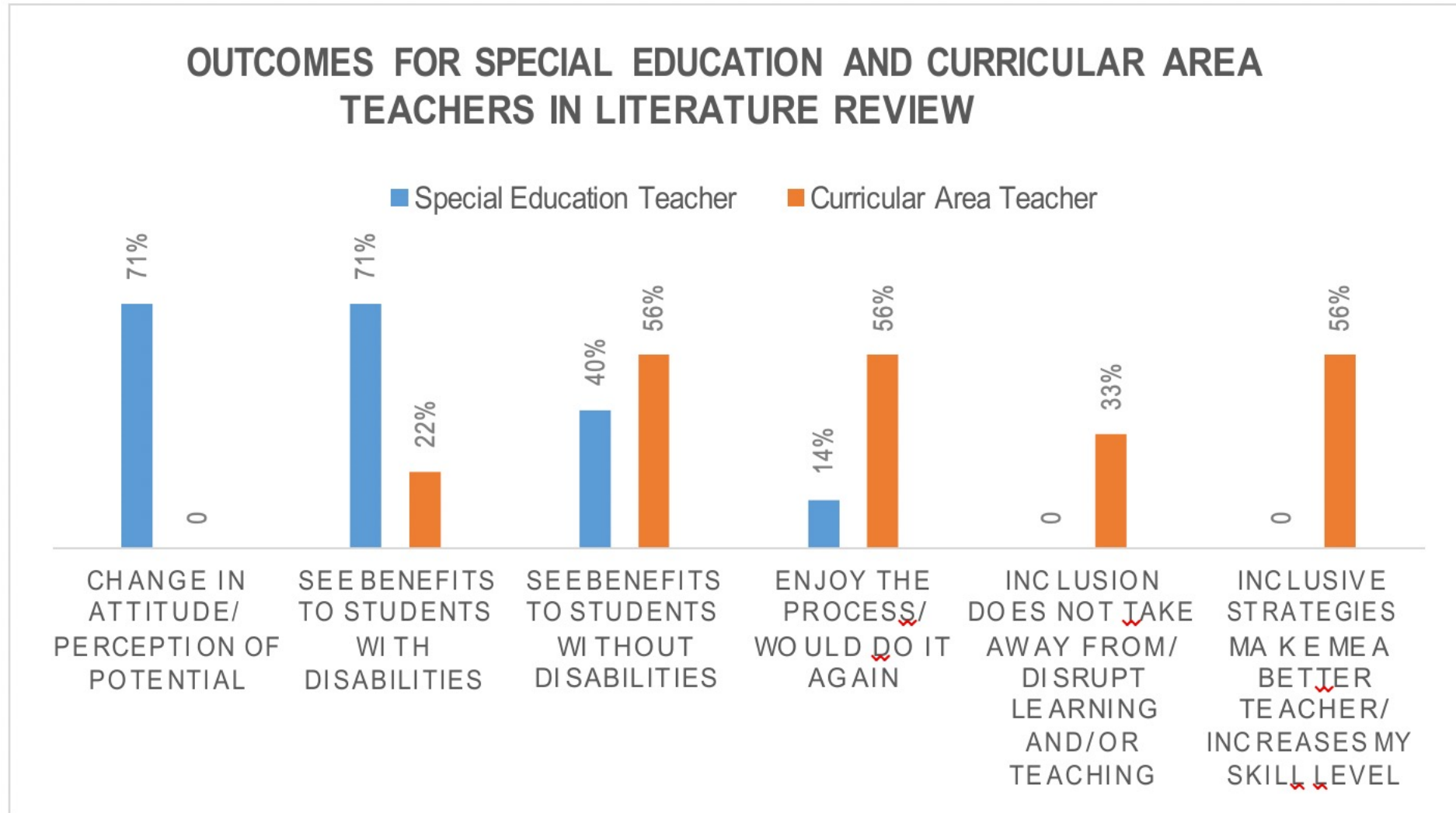
Even if students are enrolled in a class, they are **still not often expected to access** the general education curriculum, and focus is placed on social and/or **behaviour skills aimed to normalize them**

Students with and without disabilities **do not get** the opportunity **to learn with** and from **each other**

Teachers **do not get** to see what students with disabilities are **capable of**

Which would **lead to a shift in perception** in the competence of disability

The Power of Perception (Moore, Butler & Schnellert 2018)



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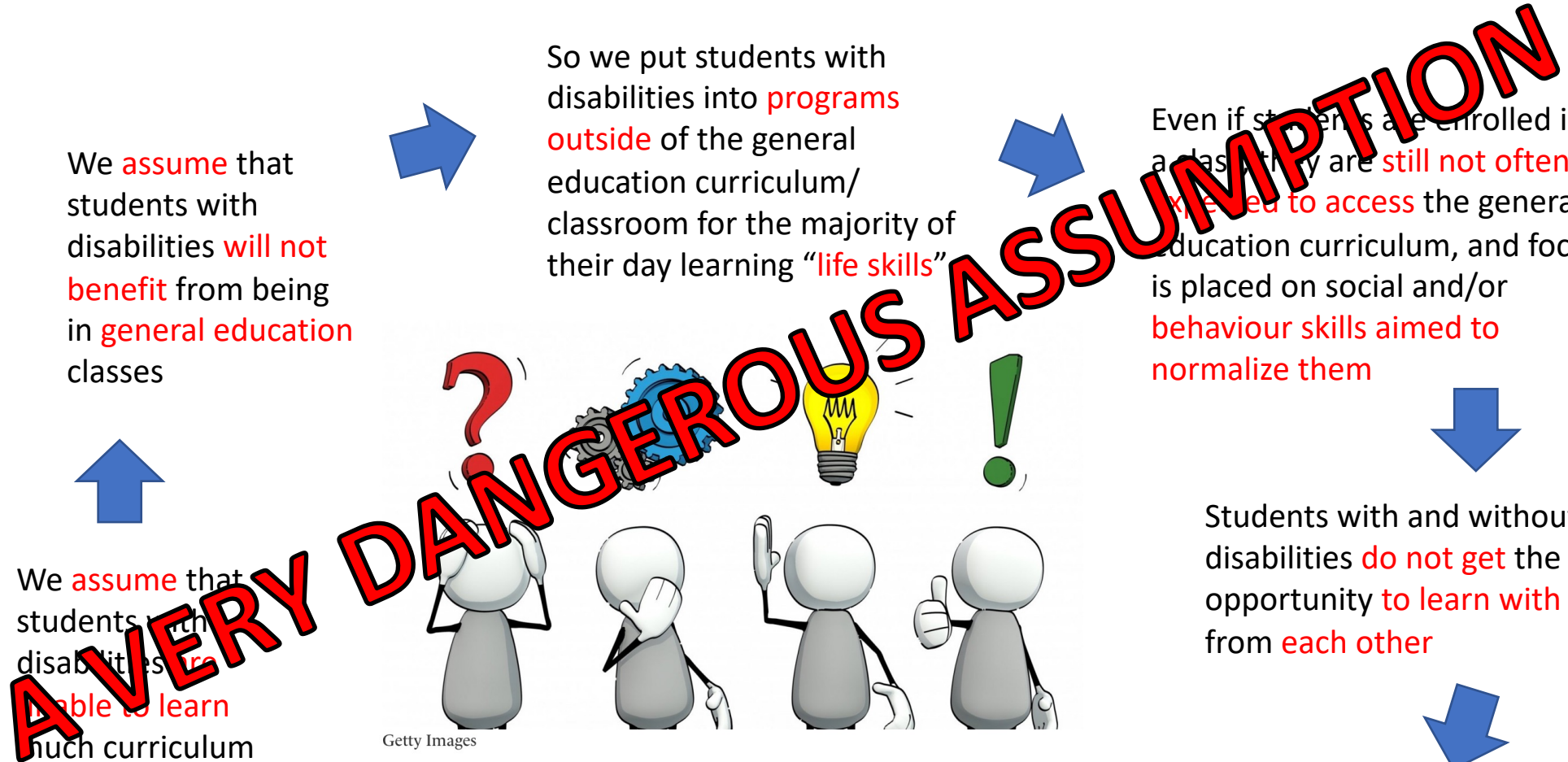
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Getty Images

Why is Presuming Competence Important?

Changing our mindset about disability will change how we respond and make decisions about educational programming.

Access to general education curriculum, general education peers and general education classrooms promote student learning, inclusion, achievement and quality of life after school.

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THE LEAST DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION

Why is Presuming Competence Important?

“Even if **we are wrong** about a students’ **capabilities** to learn general education curriculum with their peers, **the consequences** of that presumption **being wrong** are **not as dangerous** as the **alternative.**”

Cheryl Jorgenson



Why is Presuming Competence Important?

Shelley Moore, 2021

5 reasons to PRESUME THE COMPETENCE of all learners

- ➔ Intelligence is multifaceted. Using a test as a sole measure of intelligence doesn't really capture the full picture of a student's capacity for learning.
- ➔ For students who have complex communication needs and movement challenges, it's difficult to accurately assess IQ scores.
- ➔ When people with intellectual disability have high-quality instruction and an effective way to communicate, many demonstrate that they're much more capable than originally presumed.
- ➔ Presuming incompetence could result in harm to students if we wrongly assume they aren't capable.
- ➔ If it turns out a student doesn't have the ability to learn the same content their peers are learning—it's okay, because we haven't harmed the student by presuming competence (that's why it's called "the least dangerous assumption"). The potential consequences of NOT presuming competence are much more dangerous to the student.

www.brookesinclusionlab.com

BROOKES
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Adapted from *The Beyond Access Model*,
by Cheryl Jorgensen, Michael McSheehan, & Rae M. Sonnenmeier

re

How can we Presuming Competence?

- Students with disabilities so often **need** to “**prove**” that they can learn **before given access** to general education
- Biklen & Burke suggest:
 - Rather than proving their ability, presuming competence is **assuming that all** students have **ability** in any and **all places**

How can we Presuming Competence?

What the literature says:

- Focus more on **strengths, interests, abilities** and **need** and less on deficits
- Provide students with a **means to communicate** other than words (visuals, gestures, voice)
- Include **academic curricular goals** on student IEPs that reflect their enrolled courses and subjects areas **similar to their peers**

How can we Presuming Competence?

- What Self Advocates say:
 - **Talk to me**, not my support dog, or my support staff, or my parents
 - **Do not** call me “**low functioning**” or refer to me as a developmental age, E.g., “**like a 2-year-old**”
 - Use **age-appropriate** tone of voice, inflection, vocabulary, and conversation topics when **interacting** with me
 - **Respect my privacy** when talking about my personal care, medical needs and/or personal and sensitive information



Is Presuming Competence Enough?

- Nope!
- Now we need to **focus** on the **decisions** that we make that are **based on our perceptions** and assumptions about students



Next Steps

- How do we start to make more inclusive decisions about the **places** where students learn?

BUT FIRST...

Taking Action: Choose your Challenge

Everyone

- Your team:
 - **Needs** watch the 5MM video (presuming competence) and have a conversation with your team about your reflections

Choose your challenge

- **Must:** choose an article or a video from the resource list. As a team eat lunch together one day and have a discussion about what you are learning
- **Can:** choose another resource and talk to someone not on your team about what you are learning
- **Could:** to share a summary of what your team learned with your staff at a staff meeting or a professional development session
- **Can try** go and visit a specialized program or site and reflect on what you notice about what students can do
- **Have another idea?** Let me know in your google form



Resources

- Articles:

- Abbott, A. C. (2020). Presuming competence and capability. In A. C. Abbott, A. Bourdeau, R. Seidman & E. Cruz-Torres (Eds.), (1st ed., pp. 14-31) Routledge.
- Douglas Biklen & Jamie Burke (2006) Presuming Competence, Equity & Excellence in Education, 39:2,166-175.
- Biklen, D. Presuming competence, belonging, and the promise of inclusion: The US experience. *Prospects* **49**, 233–247 (2020).

Resources

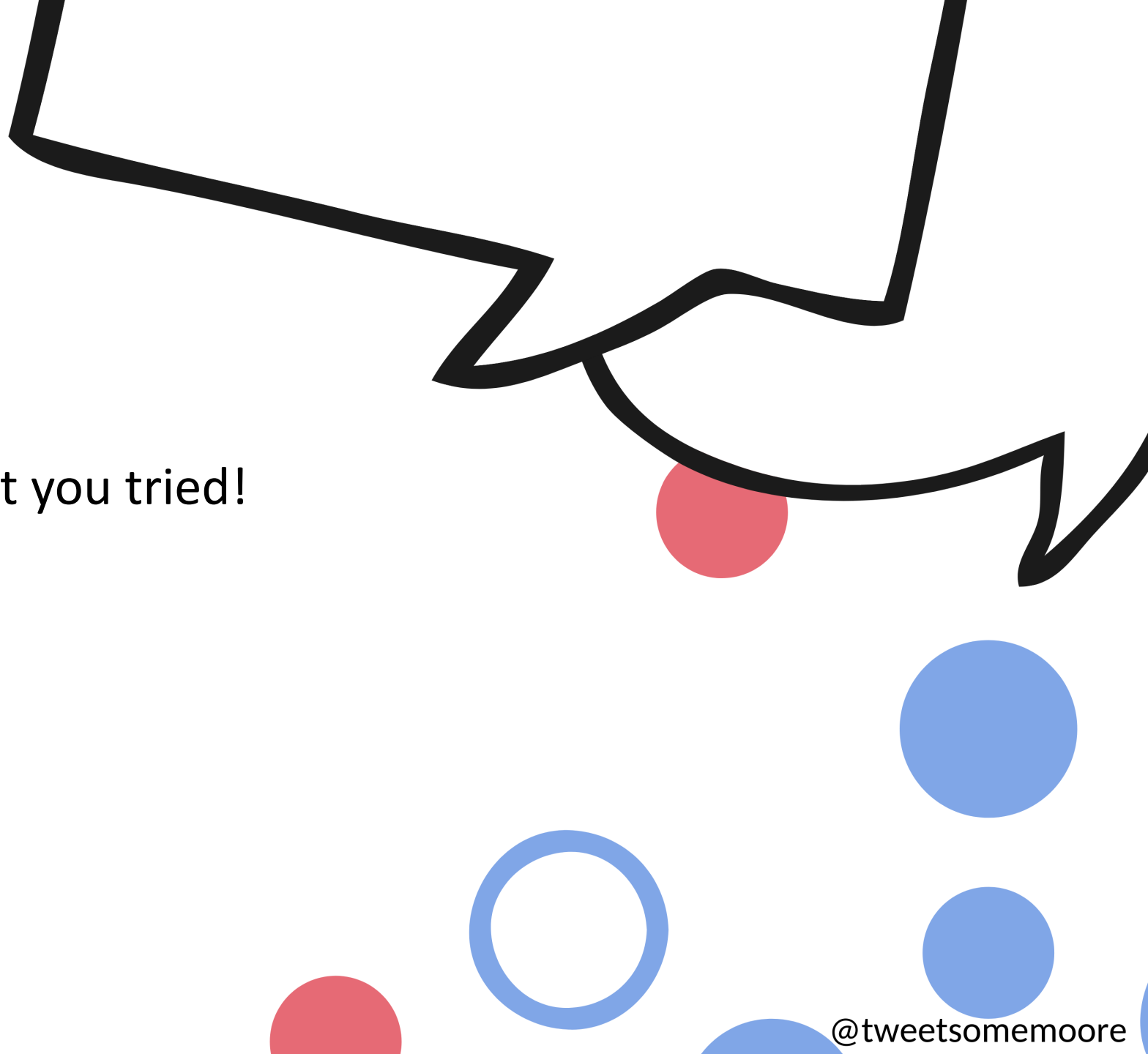
- Website Commentaries
 - Presuming Competence: What it is, and what it looks like
 - <https://blog.brookespublishing.com/presuming-competence-what-it-is-what-it-looks-like/>
 - 21 Tips for Presuming Competence
 - <https://the-art-of-autism.com/21-tips-for-presuming-competence/>
- Videos:
 - **Under the Table - Shelley Moore**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AGptAXTV7m0>
 - **Disabling Segregation – Dan Habib**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=izkN5vLbnw8>
 - **Presume Competence! – Nate Trainor & Jean Trainor**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qMdNsYVpVI>
 - **In my language**
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnylM1hI2jc>

Research & Literature that Supports this Session:

- Biklen, D., & Burke, J. (2006). Presuming competence. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 39, 166–175.
- Carter, E. W., Sisco, L. G., Melekoglu, M. A., & Kurkowski, C. (2007). Peer supports as an alternative to individually assigned paraprofessionals in inclusive high school classrooms. *Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*, 32(4), 213-227.
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- Fisher, D., & Frey, N. (2001). Access to the core curriculum: Critical ingredients for student success. *Remedial and Special education*, 22(3), 148-157.
- Giangreco M. F., Dennis R., Cloninger C., Edelman S., Schattman R. "I've counted Jon": Transformational experiences of teachers educating students with disabilities. *Exceptional Children* 1993; 59(4)359–372
- Harrower, J. K. (1999). Educational inclusion of children with severe disabilities. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 1(4), 215-230.
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- Jorgensen, C. M., McSheehan, M., Sonnenmeier, R. M., & Miranda, P. (2010). *The Beyond Access model: Promoting membership, participation, and learning for students with disabilities in the general education classroom*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Pub.
- Kliewer C., Biklen D., Kasa-Hendrickson C. Who may be literate? Disability and resistance to the cultural denial of competence. *American Educational Research Journal* 2006; 43(2)163–192
- Kunc, N. (1992). The need to belong: Rediscovering Maslow's hierarchy of needs. *Restructuring for caring and effective education: An administrative guide to creating heterogeneous schools*, 25-39.
- Maras, P., & Brown, R. (1996). Effects of contact on children's attitudes toward disability: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 26, 2113-2134.
- Thousand, J. S., & Villa, R. A. (1995). Managing complex change toward inclusive schooling. *Creating an inclusive school*, 51-79. Thousand, J., Rosenberg, R. L., Bishop, K. D., & Villa, R. A. (1997). The evolution of secondary inclusion. *Journal for Special Educators*, 18(5), 270-284.

For Next Session

1. Try something
2. Bring the evidence of what you tried!



Next Session

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