

# Shelley MOORE PH.D.



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# Transforming inclusive education for students with intellectual disabilities in secondary academic classrooms

Shelley Moore, Ph.D, 2023

SSHRC  CRSH

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada  
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada



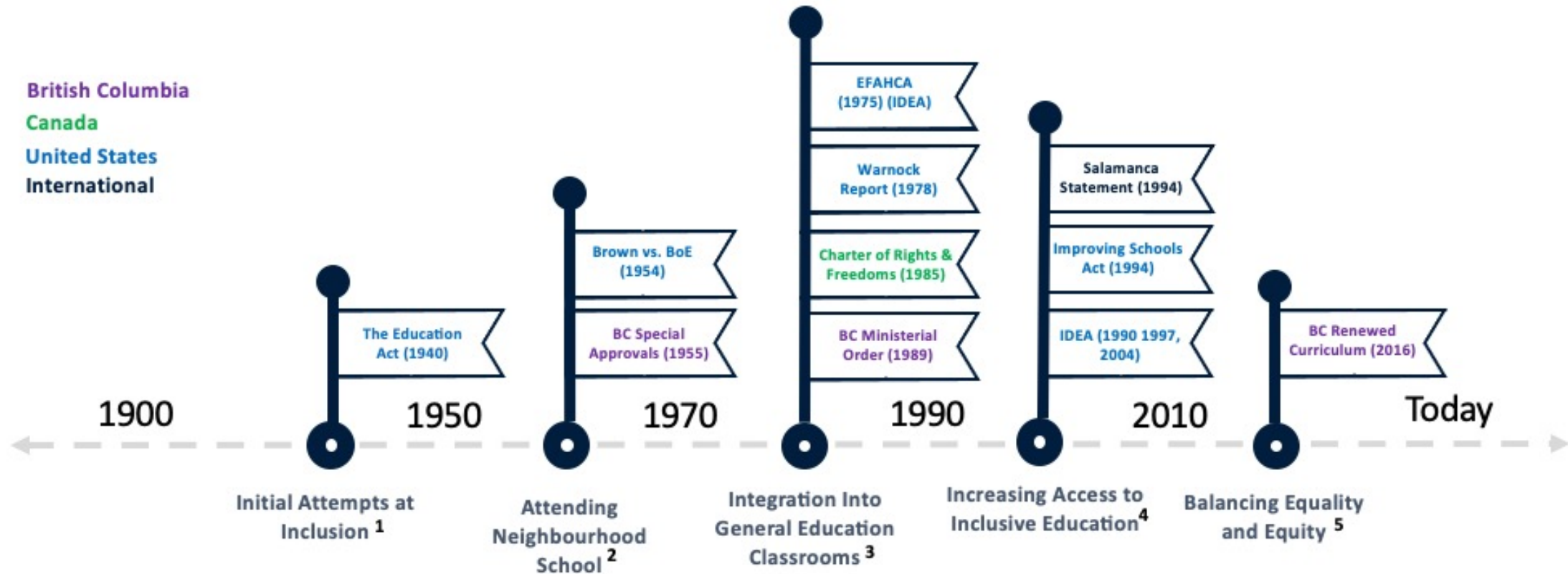
# Context of Study

- Educational efforts aim to **include students with intellectual disabilities** (SwIDs) and how to **support teachers** to do this work.
- **Legacies of history**, however, are still seen in **present day policies, assumptions, and decisions** about how to best provide educational programming for SwIDs, especially in secondary academic settings.
- This study took place in British Columbia, Canada, a province increasing their push towards inclusion. Many schools, however, **focus on inclusion as the retrofitting of an existing system**, instead of changing systems to allow for SwIDs to be **valued members** of academic classrooms. As a result, many SwIDs in secondary settings are still being educated in specialized and non-inclusive contexts.

# Purpose of the Study

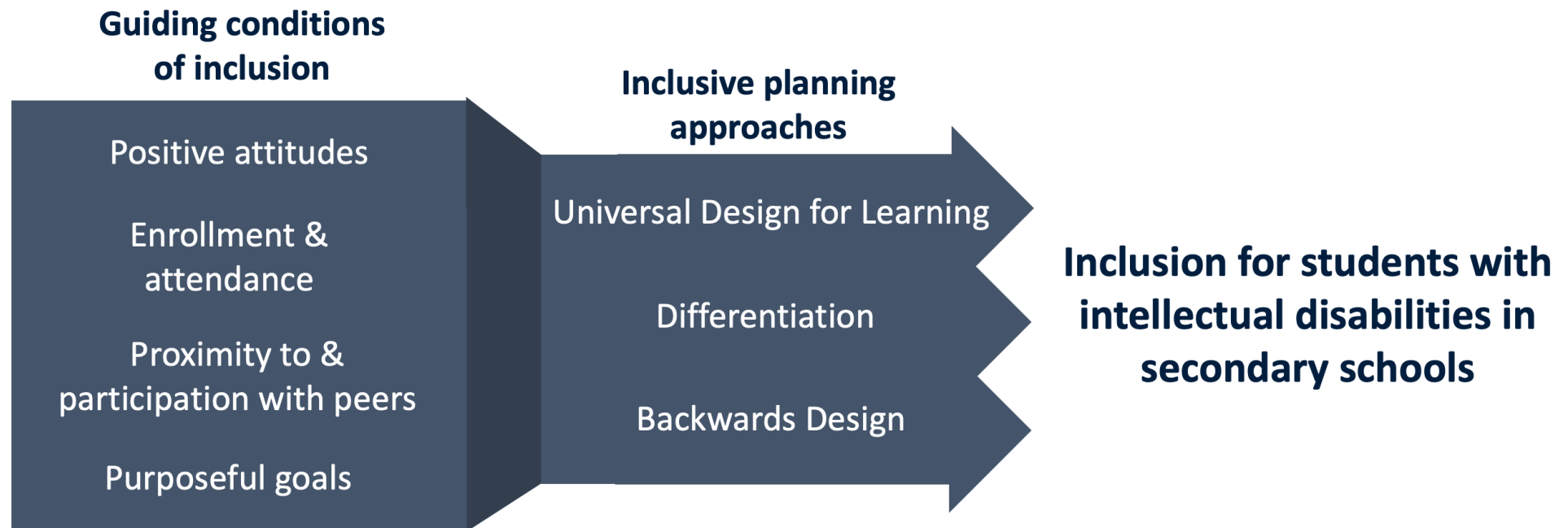
- Understand how **professional development (PD)** that engages with **inclusive curriculum design approaches** can support **secondary educators** to build inclusive practices that consider **students with intellectual disabilities (SwIDs)** in **academic classrooms**
- Explore how these design approaches were **experienced by students**

# The History & Evolution of Inclusion for Students with Intellectual Disabilities



# Theoretical Framework

- What does research & literature say about what teachers need to **know** and **do** to foster inclusion for students with intellectual disabilities in secondary schools?



# Theoretical Framework

- What does research & literature say about **how** teachers can be supported to shift practices towards inclusion?

## Professional development that is

- **Collaborative** Ainscow, 2005; Butler et al., 2007; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Erickson, Minnes et al., 2005; Schnellert & Butler, 2021; Wenger, 1998
- **Situated & on-going** Ainscow, 2005; Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Cherkowski & Schnellert, 2017; Palincsar, 1999; Schnellert & Butler, 2014
- **Inquiry-oriented** Ainscow, 1999; Cherkowski & Schnellert, 2017; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Palincsar, 1999; Schnellert & Butler, 2014; Timperley, Halbert & Kaser, 2014
- **Specific to inclusion** Brownlie & Schnellert, 2009; Carter, Sisco, Melekoglu, & Kurkowski, 2007; Downing, Ryndak, & Clark, 2000; Harrower, 1999, Thousand and Villa, 1995, 2017



# Research Questions

Within an inclusion focused, situated, collaborative, and inquiry-oriented PD initiative:

1. How were teachers in secondary academic classrooms aligned to and/or moving towards some ***guiding conditions of inclusion*** that increase opportunities for SwIDs to be included?
2. In this context, how were teachers moving ***towards planning for and enacting practices*** for all students in secondary academic classrooms?
3. What are the ***experiences of students***, both with and without disabilities in secondary academic classrooms, when teachers were moving towards more inclusive practices?



# Research Questions

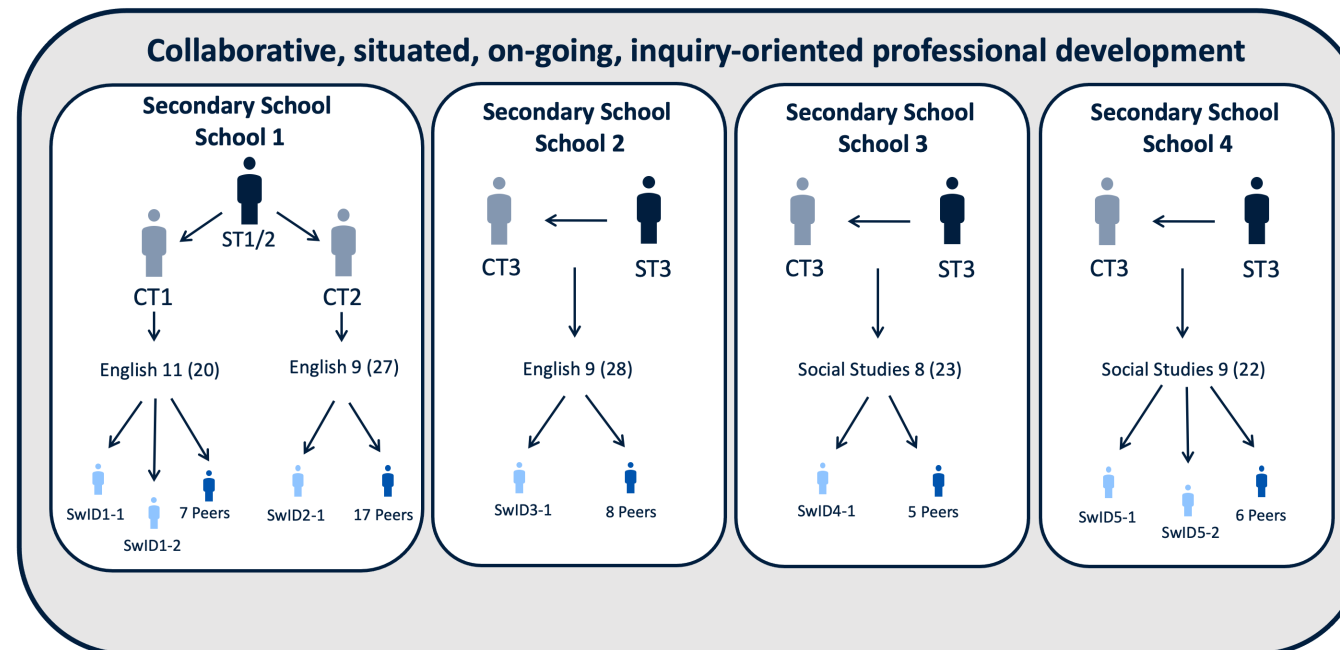
**Within an inclusion focused, situated, collaborative, and inquiry-oriented PD initiative:**

1. How were teachers in secondary academic classrooms aligned to and/or moving towards some ***guiding conditions of inclusion*** that increase opportunities for SwIDs to be included?
2. In this context, how were teachers moving ***towards planning for and enacting practices*** for all students in secondary academic classrooms?

# Methodology

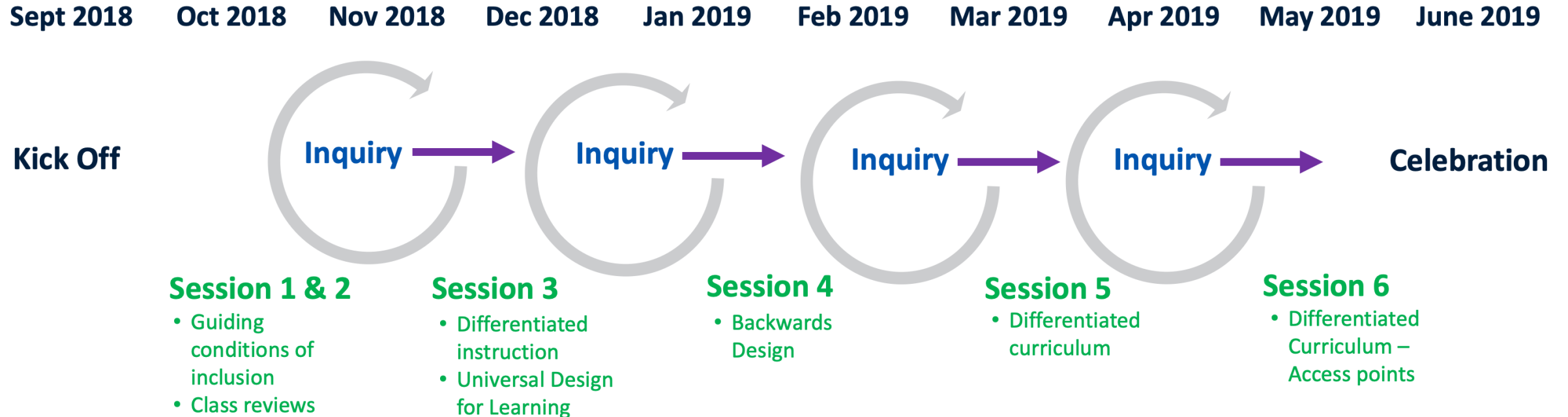
- **Instrumental Case Study** (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014 )
- **Context**
  - Suburban school district in British Columbia with established district professional development (PD) focused on inclusive practices and already showing some alignment to guiding conditions of inclusion

- **Case Studies**



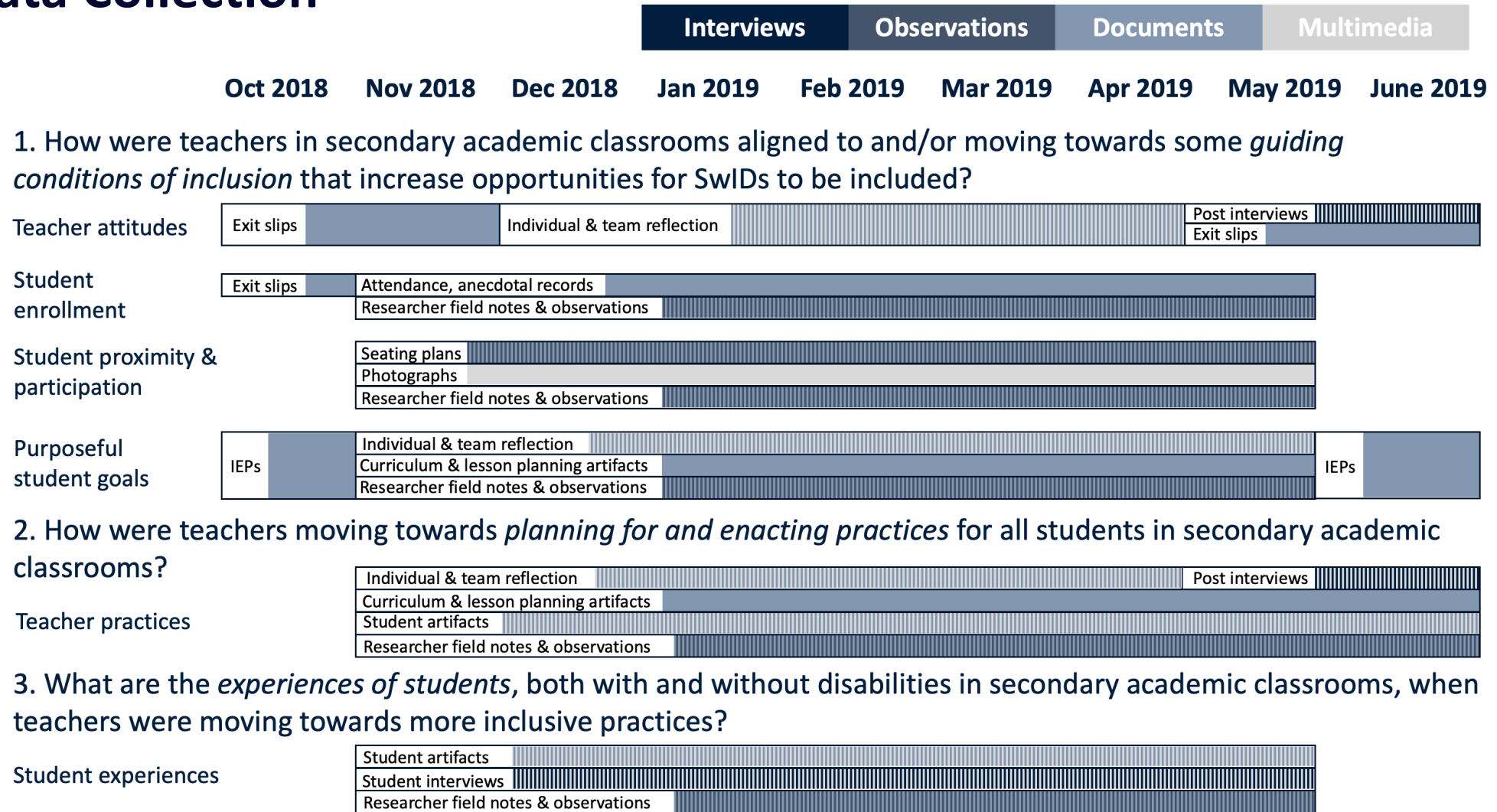
# Methodology

## • Professional Development Activities



# Methodology

## • Data Collection



**Findings Q1:** How were teachers in secondary academic classrooms aligned to and/or moving towards some ***guiding conditions of inclusion*** that increase opportunities for SwIDs to be included?

- **Teacher Attitudes**

Case	Role	Recognized abilities of SwIDs	Provided opportunities to SwIDs that were similar to peers	Challenged assumptions in themselves and others about SwIDs	Recognized the need for SwIDs to feel a sense of belonging and pride
1	CT1	•	•	•	•
	ST1/2	•*	•*	•	•
2	CT2	•	•	•	•
3	CT3	•	•		•
	ST3	•	•	•	•
4	CT4	•	•		•
	ST4	•*	•*		•
5	CT5	•	•	•	•
	ST5	•*	•*	•	•

**Findings Q1:** How were teachers in secondary academic classrooms aligned to and/or moving towards some *guiding conditions of inclusion* that increase opportunities for SwIDs to be included?

• **Student Enrollment & Attendance**

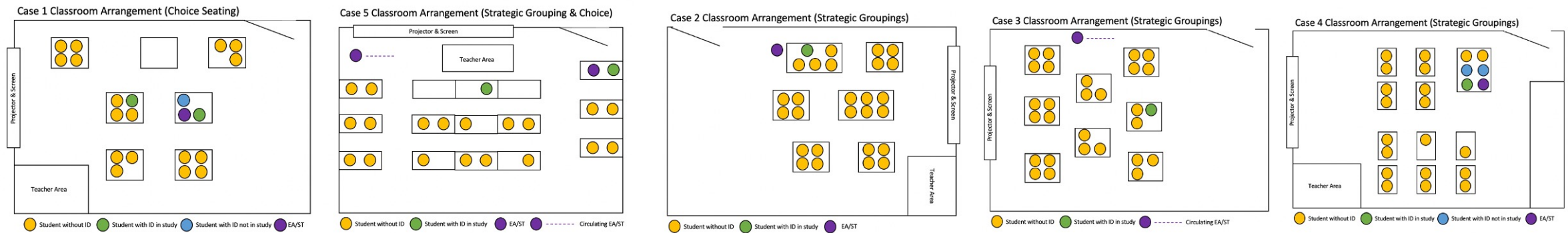
Case	Role	Enrollment based on grade of SwID (elective)	Enrollment based on grade of SwID (academic)	Enrollment based on strengths and/or interest of SwID	Enrollment based on readiness/ capability of SwID
1/2	ST1/2	.	.*	.	.
3	ST3	.			
4	ST4	.	.*		.
5	ST5	.*	.*	.	.

Case	Individual need	Arbitrary routine	Competing activities	Lesson complexity
1	.	.	.	
2	.		.	
3	.			
4	.	.	.	.
5	.		.	



# Findings Q1: How were teachers in secondary academic classrooms aligned to and/or moving towards some *guiding conditions of inclusion* that increase opportunities for SwIDs to be included?

- **Student Proximity to Peers**





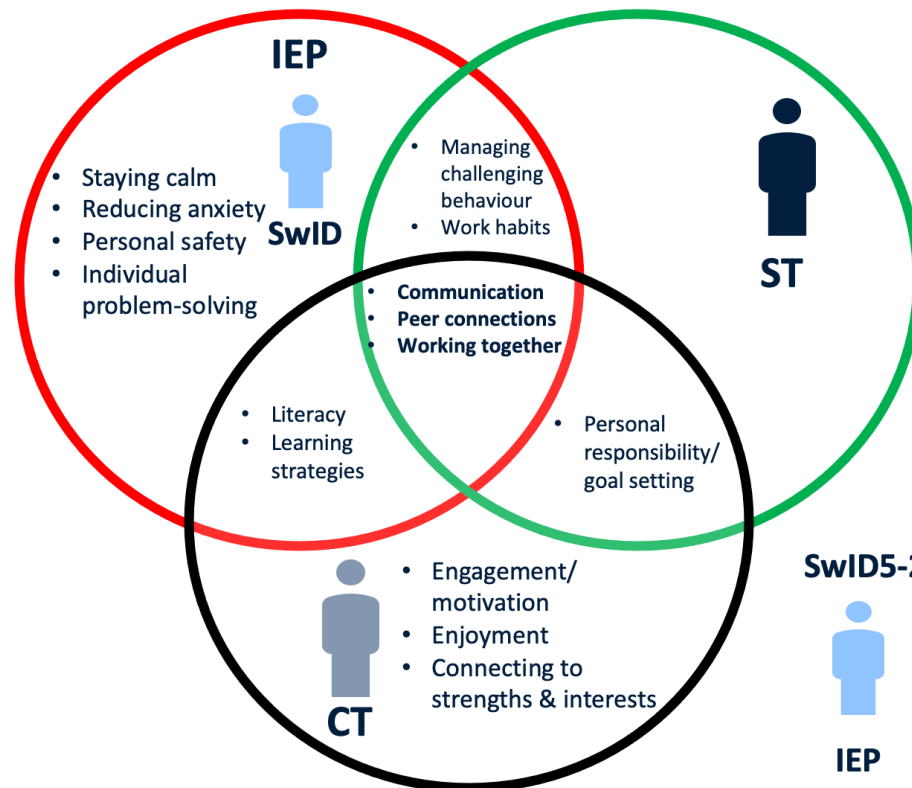
# Findings Q1: How were teachers in secondary academic classrooms aligned to and/or moving towards some *guiding conditions of inclusion* that increase opportunities for SwIDs to be included?

- Peer Participation

	Participation in learning opportunities				Participation in social opportunities			
Case	Role	SwID participated with peers in modified learning activities	SwIDs participated with peers in accessibly designed learning activities	SwIDs participated when receiving learning support from peers	SwIDs participated with peers in shared supports and strategies	SwIDs participated in activities when receiving behavioural/ social support from peers	SwIDs participated in social peer invitations/ peer-initiated activities	SwIDs and peers participated in activities outside of class
1	SwID1-1		•		•			
	SwID1-2	•	•	•	•		•	•
2	SwID2-1	•	•	•	•		•	•
3	SwID3-1	•		•	•	•	•	•
4	SwID4-1	•	•	•	•		•	•
5	SwID5-1	•	•	•		•	•	•
	SwID5-2							

# Findings Q1: How were teachers in secondary academic classrooms aligned to and/or moving towards some ***guiding conditions of inclusion*** that increase opportunities for SwIDs to be included?

## • Purposeful Goals



**Finding:** There were purposeful goals areas that were targeted by all three sources: Communication skills, peer connections and working together



CT3

“it’s about teaching students to work together with one another and make contributions to society in the ways that they can.”

**Finding:** Many of the skills targeted for SwIDs, which could be applied class wide – were not. Resulted in many of the IEP goals and objectives being disconnected from the class

SwID5-2



IEP

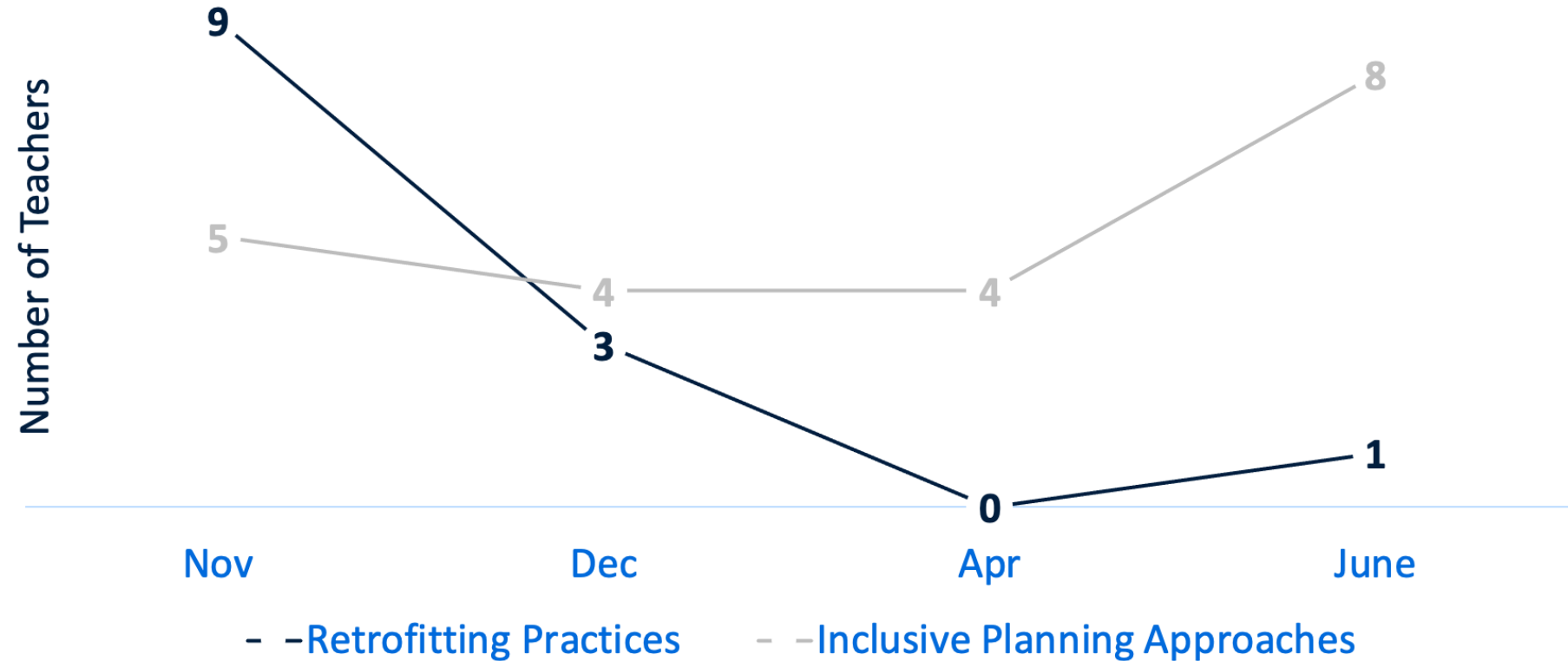
“[SwID] will 100% of the time be able to express when he is agitated by a quick change in his schedule to a familiar adult in the Life Skills room by June 2019.”

**Finding:** There were no IEP goals or objectives that addressed the curriculum of the course that SwIDs were enrolled

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**Findings Q2:** In this context, how were teachers moving ***towards planning for and enacting practices*** for all students in secondary academic classrooms?

- Teachers started to move away from retrofitting planning and practice for individual students



## Findings Q2: In this context, how were teachers moving *towards planning for and enacting practices* for all students in secondary academic classrooms?

- Teachers developed inclusive understandings and practices through collaboration

		Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
1	CT1	•	•	•	•	•
	ST1/2	•	•	•	•	•
2	CT2	•	•	•	•	•
	CT3	•	•	•	•	•
3	ST3	•	•	•	•	•
	CT4	•	•	•	•	•
4	ST4	•	•	•	•	•
	CT5	•	•	•	•	•
5	ST5	•	•	•	•	•

Note. • retrofitting practices for individual students • designing practices for all students

		Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
1	CT1	•	•	•	•	•
	ST1/2	•	•	•	•	•
2	CT2	•	•	•	•	•
	CT3	•	•	•	•	•
3	ST3	•	•	•	•	•
	CT4	•	•	•	•	•
4	ST4	•	•	•	•	•
	CT5	•	•	•	•	•
5	ST5	•	•	•	•	•

Note. • retrofitting practices for individual students • designing practices for all students • collaborating with colleagues

# Implications for The Field

- **The promise of intentionally designed PD Structure & Content**
- **The need to include SwIDs in secondary academic classrooms**
- **The power of collaboration & multiple expertise**
- **The need to evolve IEPs**
- **The role of Educational Assistants in inclusive classrooms**

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