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[Dr. Shelley Moore](https://www.facebook.com/Dr.Shelley.Moore)

Session Plan

Agenda

- Review of learning outcomes

Connecting Activity

- Session Reflection Survey

Presentation: Infrastructure of Inclusion: Condition 1

Processing Activity: Reflecting Rotation

- Self/Team Assessment and Goal Setting

Transforming & Personalizing Activity

- Padlet Exit Slip



Learning Outcomes

Big Ideas -

Participants will understand that:

- Disability

Knowledge

Participants will learn about:

- What

Skills

Participants will be able to:

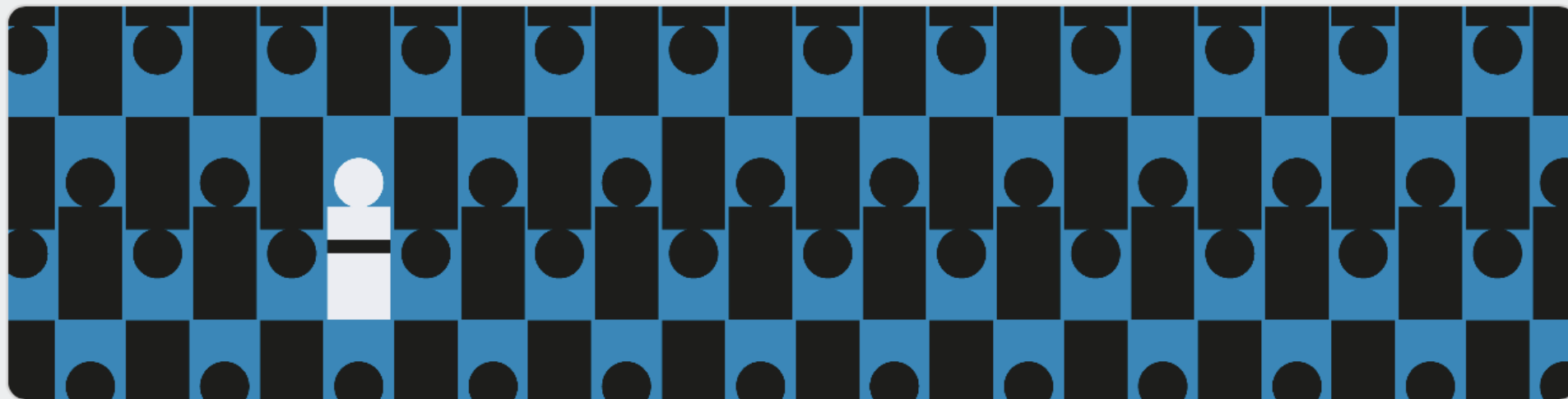
- Communicate

Competencies

Participants can be:



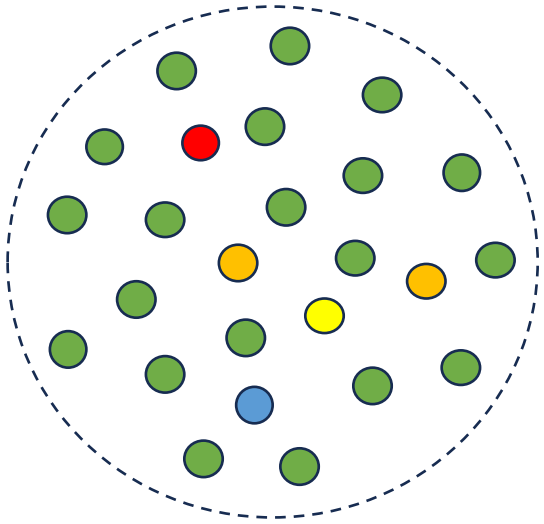
Connecting Activity: On Your Own or as a School Team



Condition 1: Positive Attitudes Towards
Inclusion and Presuming Competence &
Potential in All Students

Thinking Back!

inclusion looks like...

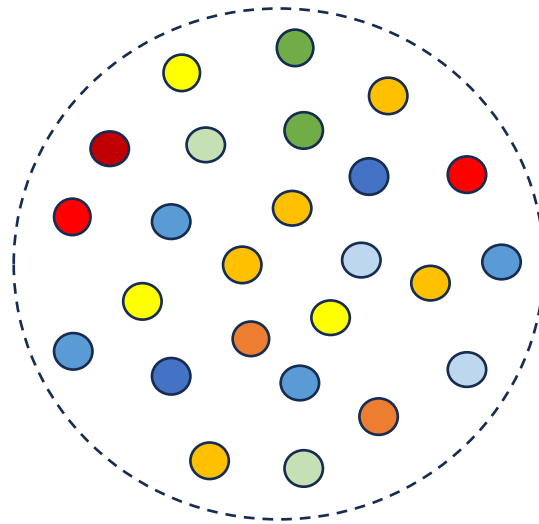
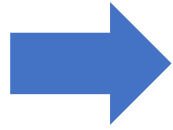
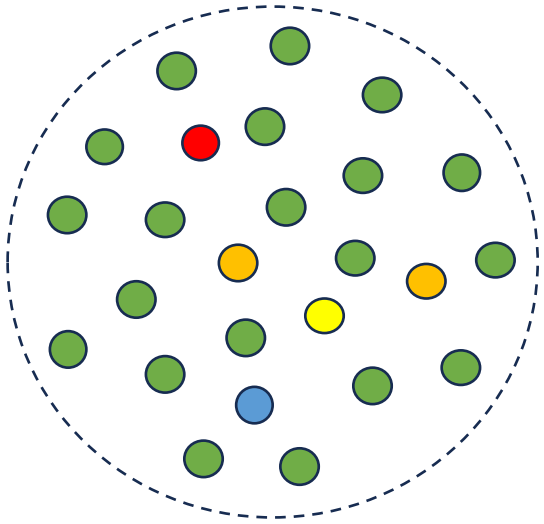


including

'special needs' students in
grade level general
education classroom

Thinking Back!

inclusion looks like...

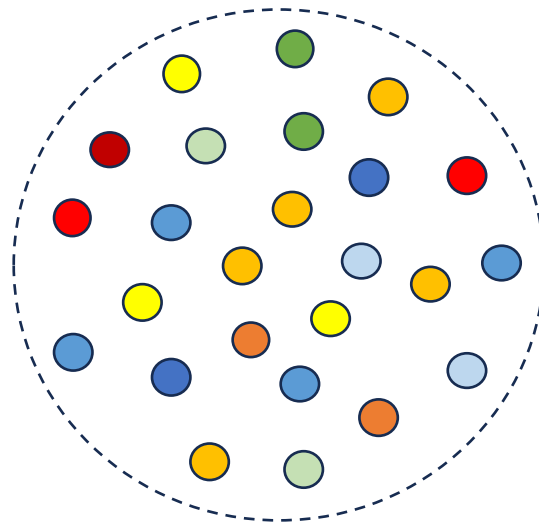
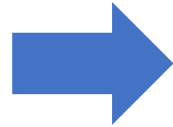
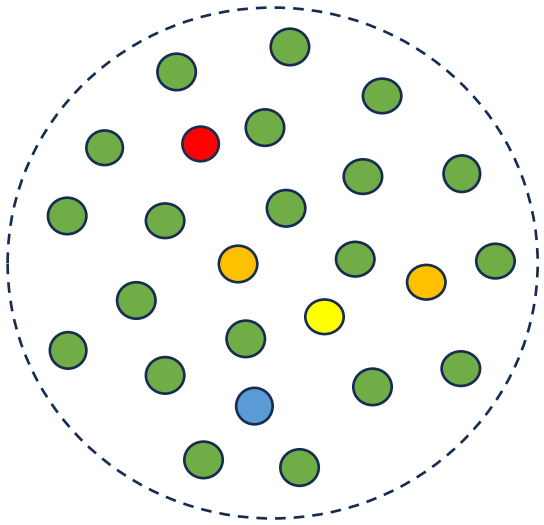


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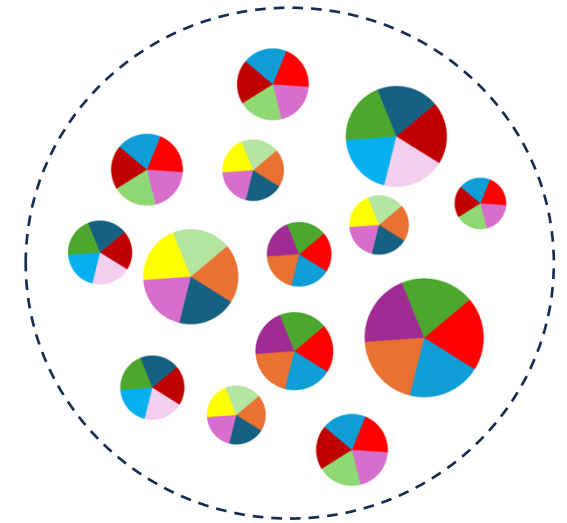
teaching and planning for
diversity
in grade level general
education classrooms
(where Diversity includes
Disability)

Thinking Back!

inclusion looks like...



So that
students
can...



including
'special needs' students in
grade level general
education classroom

teaching and planning for
diversity
in grade level general
education classrooms
(where Diversity includes
Disability)

feel confident and safe to
identify
in ALL classrooms and schools
(and where Disability is an
identity)

When the **conditions** are
right, everyone can be
successful

Guiding Conditions of **inclusion** describe that all students...

are **PRESUMED**
competent and
as having
POTENTIAL
(positive mindset)

are **PLACED** in
and attending
inclusive
classrooms and
schools

are in **PROXIMITY**
to and
PARTICIPATING
with **PEERS**

have
PURPOSEFUL
roles and
responsibilities

are **PLANNED** for
from the start

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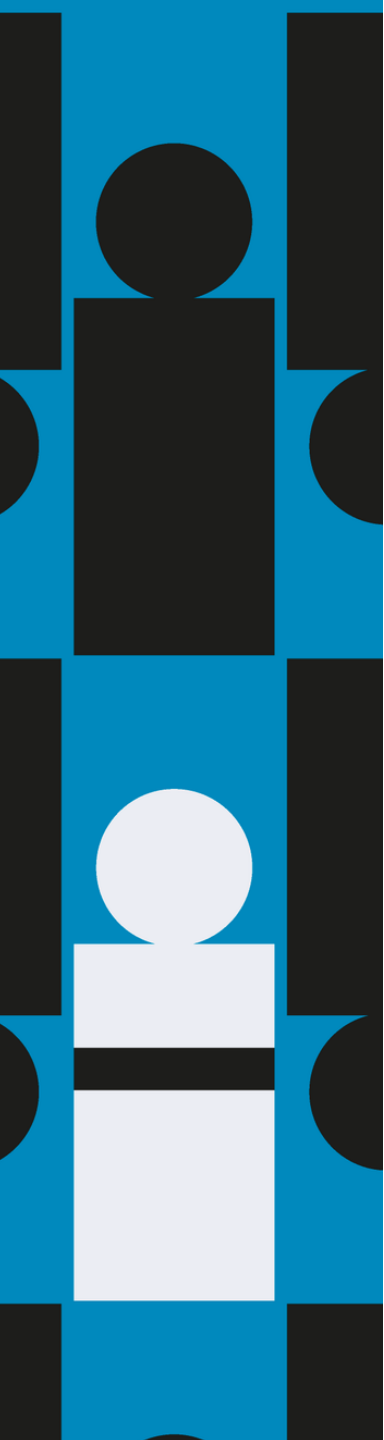
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Where are you ALREADY seeing:

- **Positive attitudes**
- **Presuming competence**
- **High expectations**

What do you notice about students when these mindsets are in place?



**Pillar 1: Positive Attitudes towards
inclusion and presuming competence &
potential in ALL students**

(The easiest and the hardest condition)



What does it mean to have a **positive attitude** towards inclusion?

A positive attitude toward inclusion means believing **that all students**—regardless of ability, background, or need—**are capable of learning, participating, and contributing** meaningfully in **neighbourhood schools and grade level classrooms.**

It involves valuing **diversity as a strength**, maintaining **high expectations** for every learner, and **taking responsibility** for **designing intentionally** so all students can succeed.

Rather than seeing **differences** as barriers, teachers with positive attitudes view them **as opportunities** to build **supportive environments**, and ensure every student feels **respected, capable, and included.**

What does the research say?

When teachers have **positive beliefs & attitudes** towards inclusion...

1

...Teachers are more likely to enact inclusive practices

2

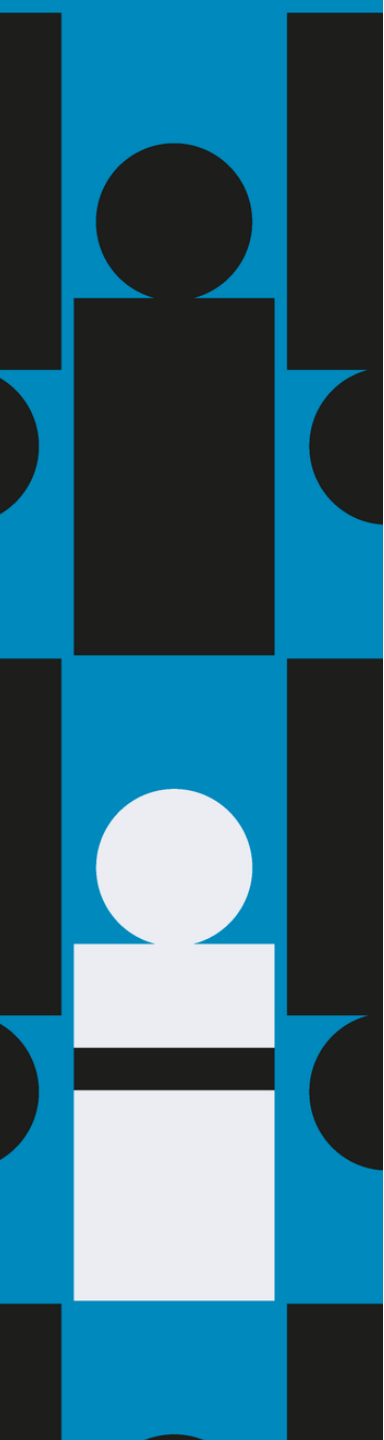
...Teachers have higher expectations of students

3

...Teachers feel more capable of supporting diversity in their classrooms

4

...There is an Increase in positive classroom culture (belonging, respect, peer acceptance)



What are you thinking and connecting to?

- What confirms what you already know & believe?
- What challenges your current thinking?

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Students show higher engagement, participation, achievement when they feel like their teachers believe they can succeed

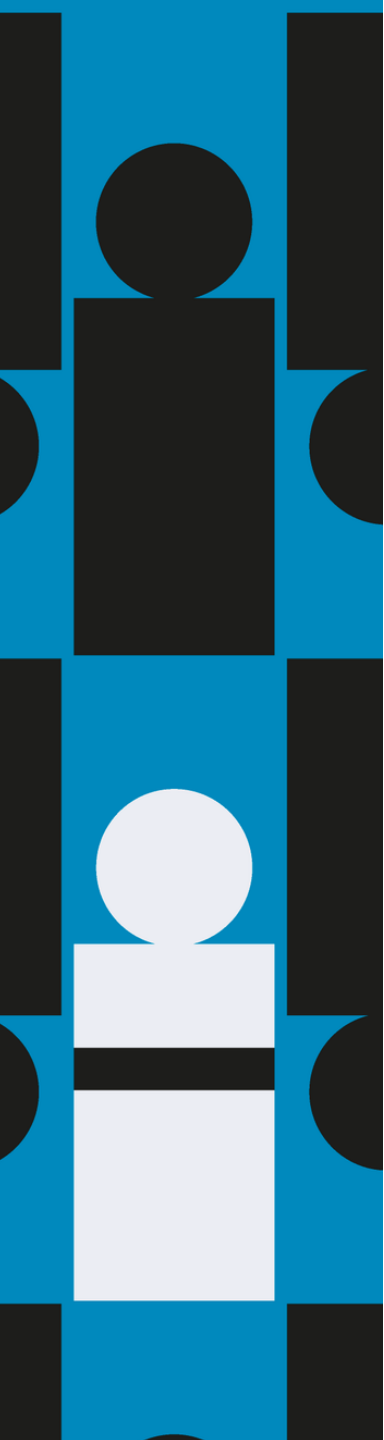
Mr. W

YouTube · Gaïoum · Jun 4, 2007

YouTube



Mindsets & Attitudes Towards Inclusion & Students



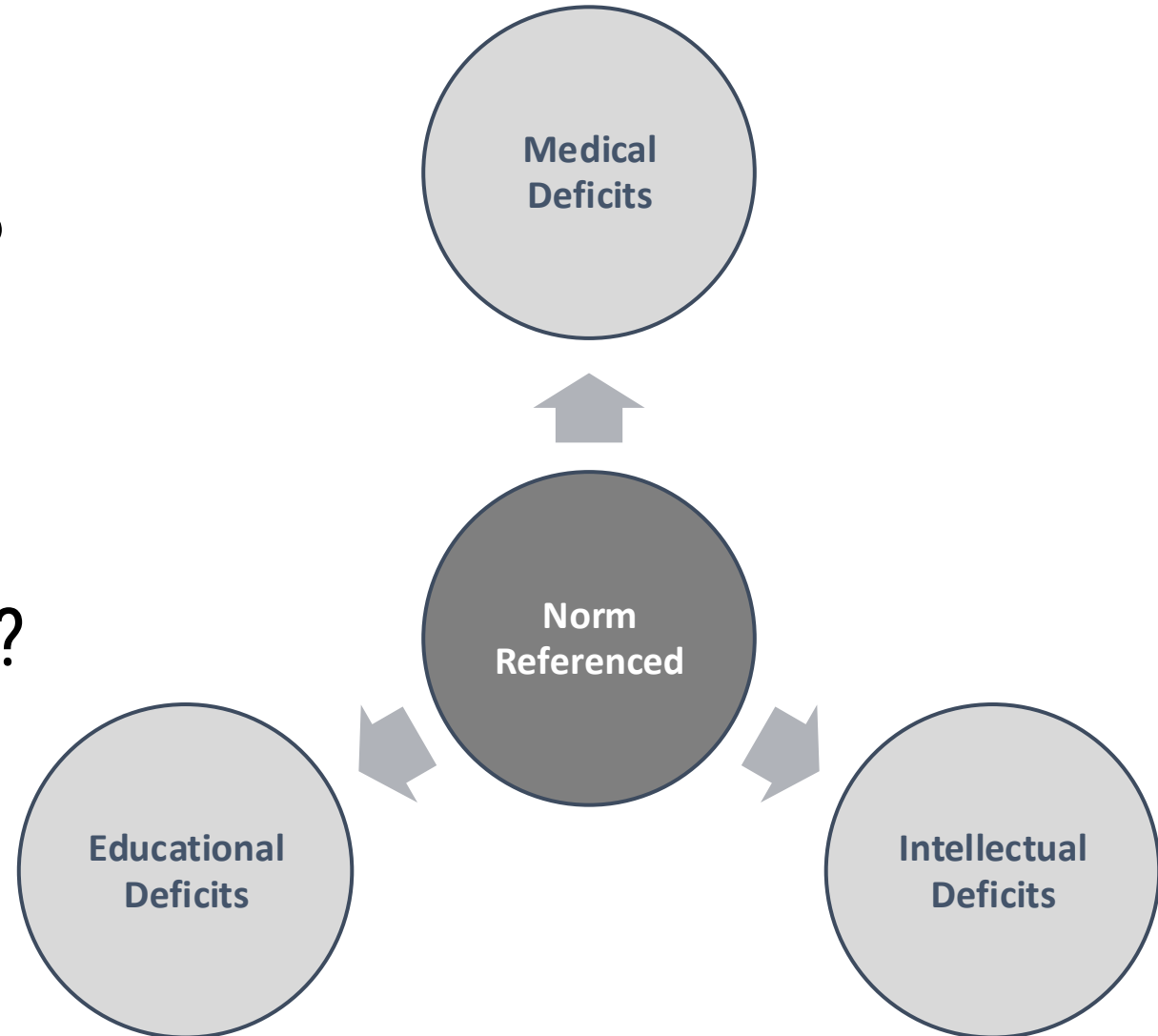
What are you thinking and connecting to?

Why are students not often viewed through a **competencemindset**?

Where **should** a student be?

What is **wrong**?

How do we help to **fix them**?



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

We **assume** that students with disabilities are **unable** to be successful and **will not benefit** from being in **grade level classrooms** or in **neighbourhood schools** with their peers



Students with disabilities being enrolled in self contain **programs** and **schools** learning **skills** that are perceived as better matched to what they are **capable** of



If students are enrolled in **grade level classrooms** or in **neighbourhood schools** with their peers, they often do **not have access to shared grade level** activities, and emphasis is placed on **compliance-oriented skills** in **isolation**



Students with disabilities **lose access** to **grade level curriculum** and shared **social** and **learning opportunities** with their peers



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



Non - disabled students, teachers, and families **do not get** to see what students with disabilities are **capable of**



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A VERY DANGEROUS ASSUMPTION

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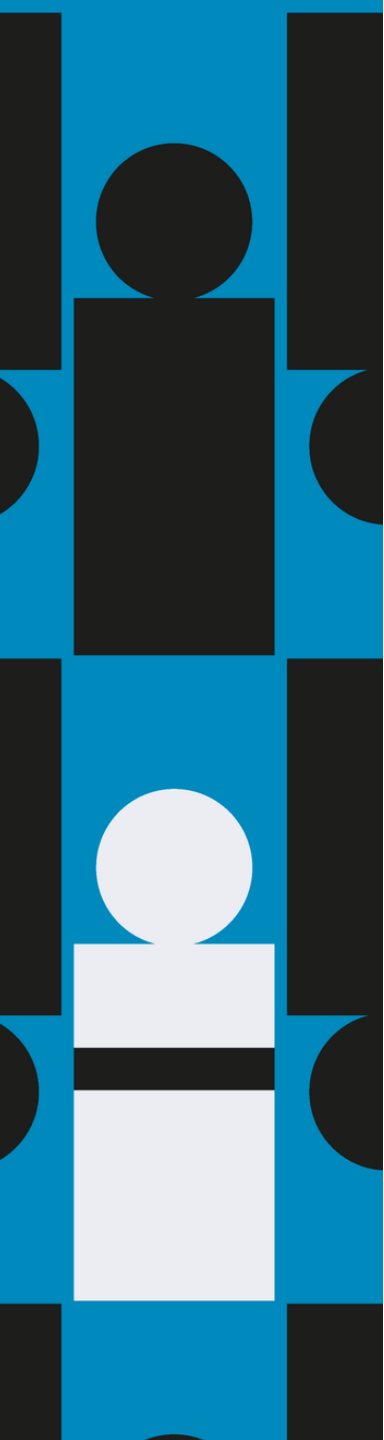
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Which would **lead to a shift in perception** in the competence of disability



What are you thinking and connecting to?

- What confirms what you already know & believe?
- What challenges your current thinking?



What does it mean to Presume Competence & Potential?

It means we start from the belief that **every learner can understand, communicate, and grow**—then we **design access** (instruction, supports, time, tools, relationships) so students can show what they know in multiple ways.

It shows up as **high expectations** paired with **proactive design**, instead of “wait-and-see” or “prove you can first.”

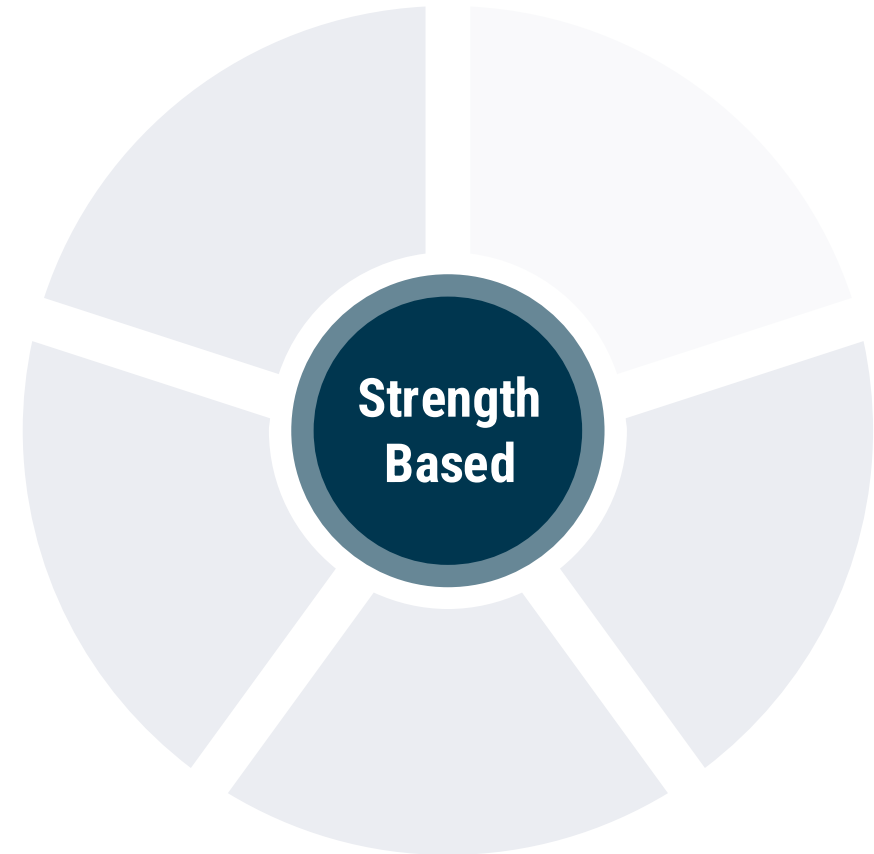
What does it mean to **Presume Competence & Potential**?

Strength-Based **Perspective**

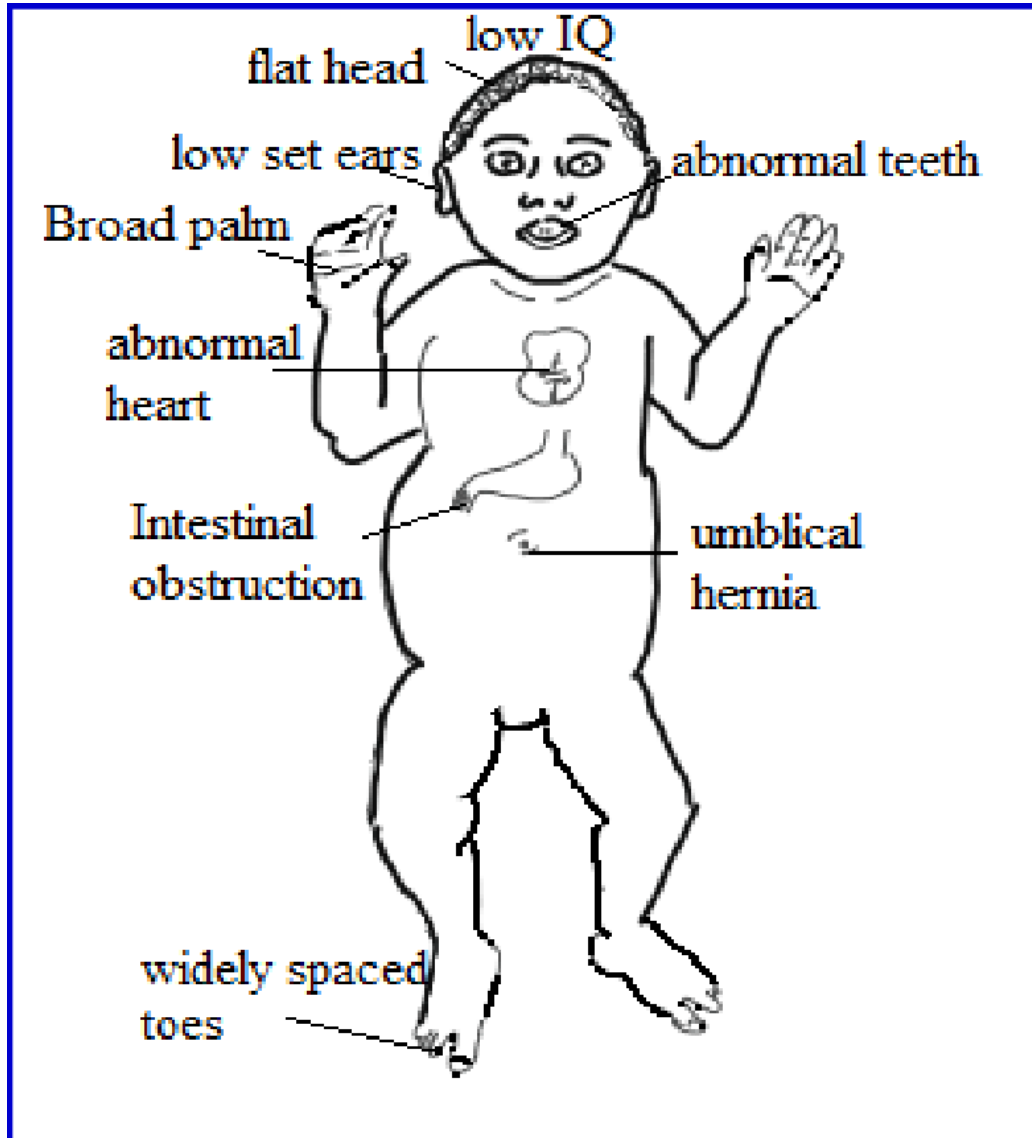
Where **could** a child be?

What is **right**?

How do we help them **grow**?



Is this true?



Down's Syndrome

Trisomy of chromosome 21.

Alzheimer's disease can occur.

Dysmorphic Round Face

Learning difficulties & Developmental Delay (Mean IQ of 50%)



Epicanthic folds

Brushfield spots on iris

Protruding tongue (not macroglossia though!)

Small Ears

Flat occiput

Abundant Neck Skin

Atlantoaxial instability

Hypothyroidism

Single palmar crease

Incurved little fingers (Clinodactyly)

Cardiac defects in 50% (Ventricular septal defect, Patent ductus arteriosus, Atrial septal defect)

Respiratory infections

Increased risk of Leukaemia

Gap between 1st & 2nd toes (Sandal toe gap)

Duodenal atresia (double bubble sign on AXR)

We cannot design for who a student isn't.

What does it mean to Presume Competence & Potential?

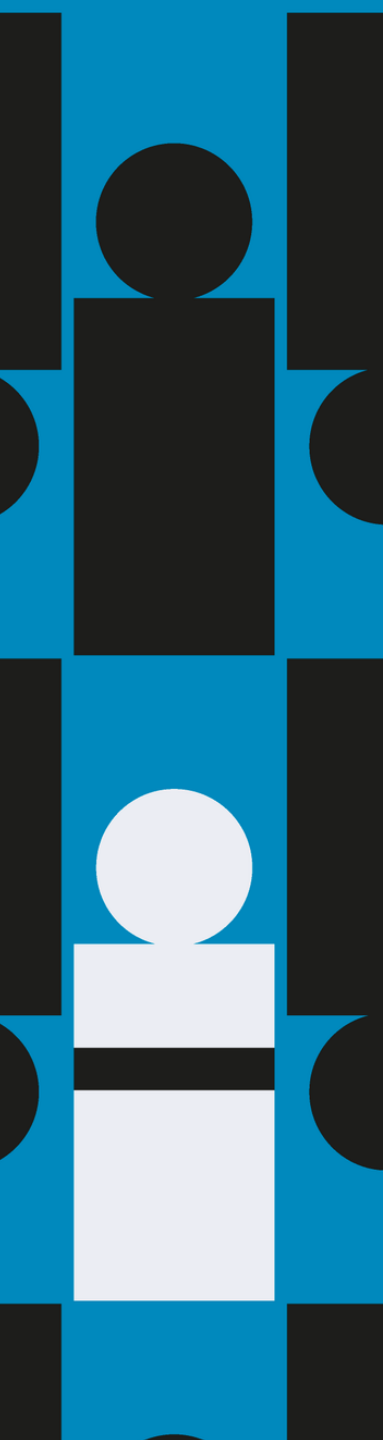
Strength-Based Perspective

Where **could** a child be?

What is **right**?

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What are you thinking and connecting to?

- What confirms what you already know & believe?
- What challenges your current thinking?



Example: Two Urban Secondary Schools

Context

- Neighbourhood schools
- Diverse student population (about 1500+ students each school)

Data Collected

- Anonymous online surveys for staff
- In person staff focus groups
- In person student focus groups
- In person/ virtual individual staff interviews

What does it mean to Presume Competence & Potential?

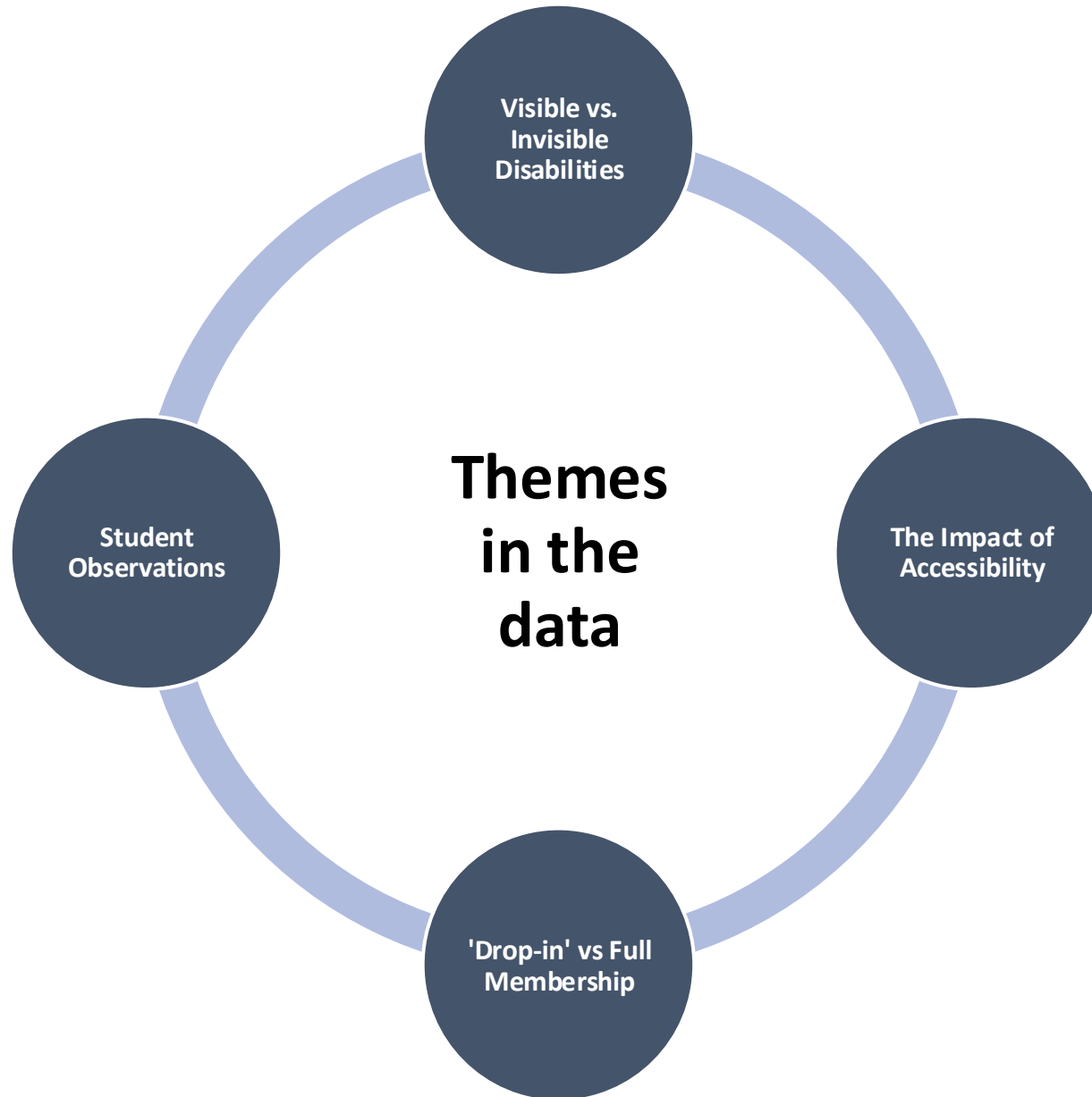
Teacher — Focus Group

“...the kids are capable. We have some of the best kids we’ve ever seen.”

Student — Focus Group

“I feel like the teachers here are like really respectful... as long as you... ask them... ‘I don’t really understand this’... they would be understanding...”

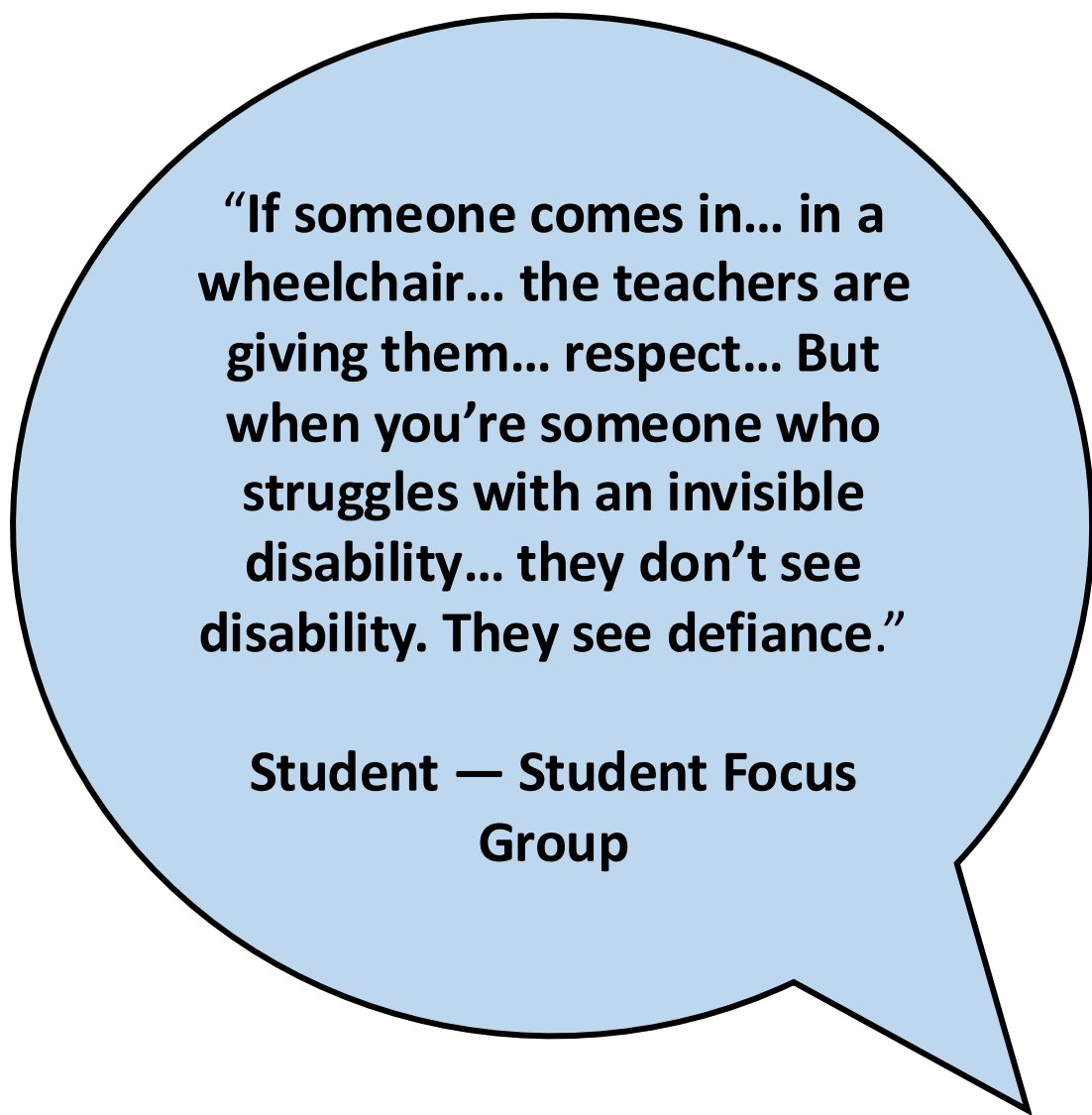
What else did the data say?





Theme 1: Invisible vs. Visible Disabilities

Students describe a split: when disability is visible, staff are more likely to respond with respect and accommodation; when needs are invisible (e.g., neurodivergence/mental health), students describe being interpreted as defiant rather than needing access supports.



“If someone comes in... in a wheelchair... the teachers are giving them... respect... But when you’re someone who struggles with an invisible disability... they don’t see disability. They see defiance.”

Student — Student Focus Group



Theme 2: **Impact of Accessibility**

Staff describe presuming competence as designing for entry points: finding ways students can participate meaningfully at different levels and show what they know using appropriate structures.

“Designing... tasks so students with modifications can still work on the same theme but at an adjusted level... Planning for multiple entry points... (visuals... choice boards... scaffolded activities)... They can do it!”

Paraprofessional — Survey

Theme 3: 'Drop-in' vs Full Membership

Staff raise tension between short, visible 'drop-in' inclusion (minutes at a time) versus full participation where the student can be included for complete lessons without being spotlighted. This is framed as affecting belonging and learning flow.

“I had some students from [the life skills program] who come and do like a half an hour with us... and then other times I've had students come in just for the first five minutes... for the social aspect... and then go off and do something with their para”

“There's an expectation that they'll come in, get a little bit of socializing, and then... go off and do something with their EA.”

Teacher — Survey

Theme 4: Student Observations

Students describe group work and social belonging as places where judgements show up (who gets partnered with, who gets left out).

In middle grades, students connect inclusion to whether adults intervene when peers bully or exclude students with IEPs.

“Designing... tasks so students with modifications can still work on the same theme but at an adjusted level... Planning for multiple entry points... (visuals... choice boards... scaffolded activities)... They can do it!”

Paraprofessional — Survey



What are you thinking and connecting to?

- What themes are you connecting to?
- What challenges your current thinking?
- Where do you see tension between belief and practice?
- What feels hard or uncomfortable?

Taking Action: What can we do?

Guiding Conditions of **inclusion** describe that all students...

are **PRESUMED**
competent
and as having
POTENTIAL
(positive mindset)

are **PLACED** in
and attending
inclusive
classrooms
and schools

are in
PROXIMITY to
and
PARTICIPATING
with **PEERS**

have
PURPOSEFUL
roles and
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are **PLANNED**
for from the
start

Research also shows that the more we align to these 5 pillars, the more positive our attitude towards inclusion and the more we presume competence and

Processing Activity: On Your Own or as a School Team

Being Inclusive is not about doing everything, it is about moving forward.

The attached continuum is strength-based reflection tool to assist individuals and collaborative teams to identity what is already happening in this context, and what a next step could be to move forward.

Activity Instructions:

I Must: Reflect

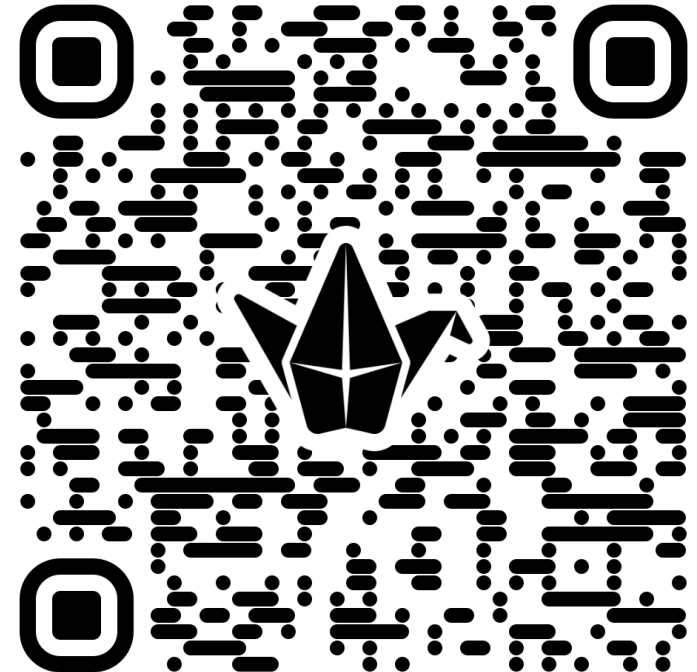
- Decide if you are reflecting as an individual (page 2) or as a team about your school (page 3)
- Choose one highlighting colour
- Read through the continuum and highlight indicators reflective of what is already happening for you and/or your context

I Can: Look Forward

- Choose a second highlighting colour
- Read through the continuum and highlight indicators reflective of possible next steps for you and/or your context

I could: Make a Commitment

- Choose a third highlighting colour
- Read through the continuum and highlight ONE commitment to learning more about/ shifting practice in
- Share your commitment Padlet



Positive Attitudes Towards Disability Presuming Competence & Potential in ALL students

	Access	Essential	Developing	Confident	Extending
	Awareness	Attitudes	Practices	Collaboration & Communication	Personal & Professional Growth
Indicators of Success and Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am aware of the variety of disabilities in the community I am aware that there are students who may not be included in their classroom/ school communities I know what inclusion is and know that it evolves over time I am aware of how students with disabilities are perceived by the school community I am aware of what language to use when describing students with disabilities I address students with disabilities in age-appropriate tones and their privacy and integrity is respected I am aware that Disability is an identity to be celebrated as unique contribution to diverse communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have a positive attitude towards disability and inclusion I understand why inclusion is important I understand that perceptions of disability influence decisions about educational placement and programming I understand the value in including all students' voice in educational decision making I know what ableism is and am noticing examples of ableism in my classroom and school communities I understand why Disability needs to also be considered in diversity, inclusion and equity (DEI) oriented initiatives I know how to describe/describe students in ways that are Disability affirming and non-ableist that avoid derogatory terms that perpetuate negative stereotypes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am trying/supporting inclusive practices in my classrooms I know how to/ am getting to know my students from strength-based perspectives I know how to/ am using strength-based perspectives as part of my data collection and assessment techniques that inform my practice I include Disabled students' voice in decision making processes in my classroom (and ensuring communication tools are available to do so) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am working collaboratively to better understand and enact inclusive practices in my classroom and school I am learning about disability from multiple perspectives I am advocating for increasing access and opportunity for students with disabilities to be enrolled in grade level classrooms I am intentionally taking action to combat ableism in my school community I am advocating for resources to increase accessibility and situate Disability and Inclusion as a critical and equity-oriented practice I provide space for respond to students when they self-advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am reflecting on my hidden bias towards disability and inclusion I understand and recognize when my experiences, beliefs and attitudes are the barrier to inclusion and/or the success of a student with a disability I am engaging in learning and growth opportunities to learn more about, and from, Disabled perspectives I challenge Disability stereotypes (e.g. inspiration porn, infantilization etc.) and correct misconceptions that I encounter in others I display allyship by leading by example and influencing others around me to contribute to a more inclusive culture in the school and community

Why does having a Positive Mindset Matter?

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

Why does Presuming Competence & Potential Matter?

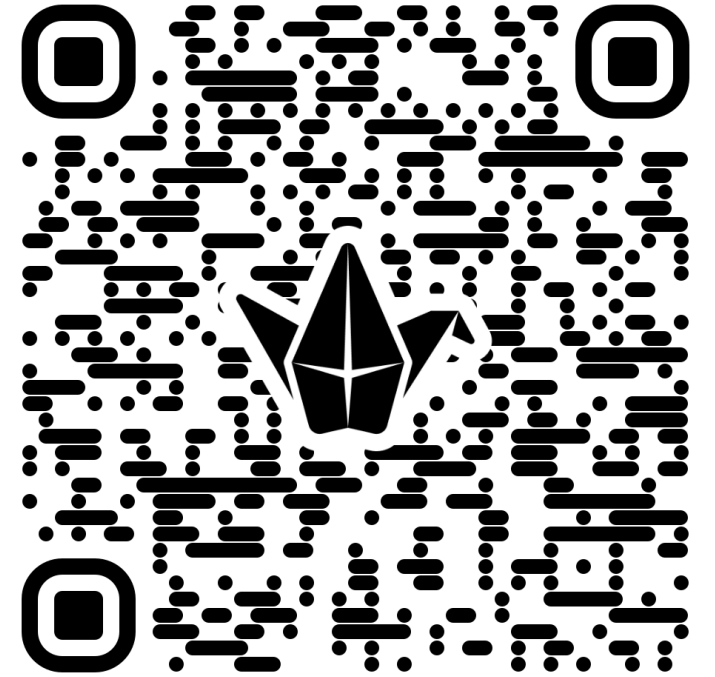
Even if **we are wrong** about a student's **capability** to have access to inclusive grade level learning opportunities with their peers, **the consequences** of that presumption **being wrong** are **not as dangerous** as the **alternative**.

Cheryl Jorgenson

Personalizing & Transforming Activity: On Your Own

Think about your **experience** from this session

- Scan the QR code or go to the Padlet link on the dashboard
- Choose a question/prompt on the Padlet
- Respond with word or picture



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[Dr. Shelley Moore](https://www.facebook.com/Dr.Shelley.Moore)