

Writing Strength-Based IEPs

Professional Development Video



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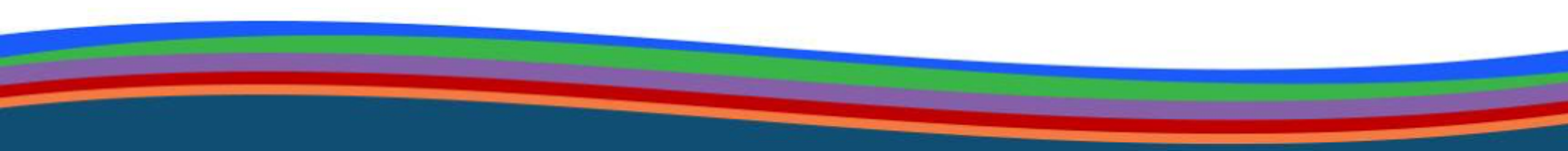
Agenda

- Brief introduction
- New Jersey statistics on inclusive education
- Why social justice is necessary for inclusive education
- Overview of strength-based approaches to writing IEPs

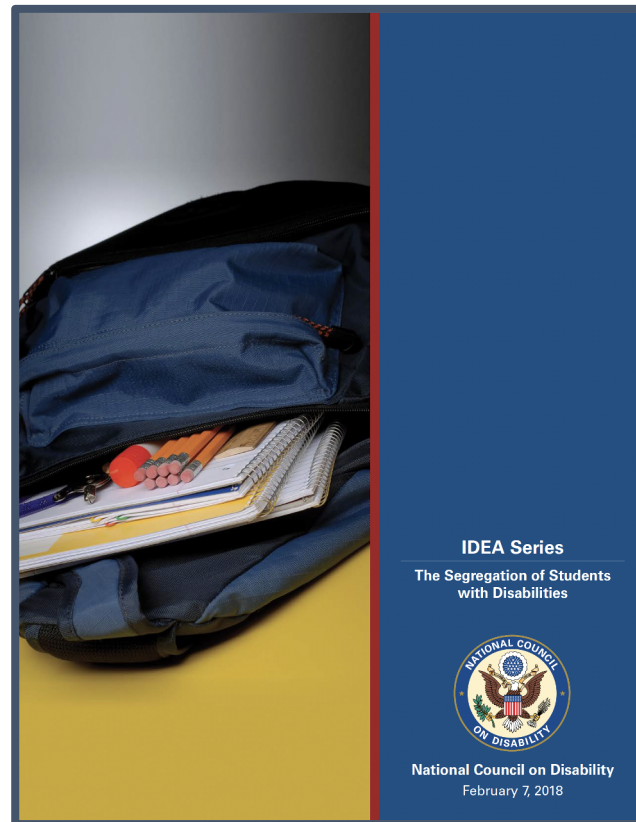


Who am I?

- Inclusive school teacher
- PhD in Special Education and Disability Studies
- Assistant professor
- Creating inclusive schools
- Inclusion in schools/countries with extremely limited resources

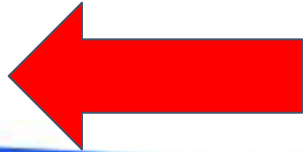


New Jersey Statistics on School Segregation (National Council on Disability, 2018)



Where does NJ rank for inclusive education practices in the US?

- In the top 10?
- In the top 11-20?
- 21-30?
- 31-40?
- 41-50?



Where does NJ rank in the US?

Random Sample of Publicly Available State Policy Guidance for Educating Students with Disabilities in LRE, *continued*



- **New Jersey** is the third most segregated of the U.S. states and territories when it comes to including students with disabilities for at least 80 percent of the time. In New Jersey, only **46** percent of its students with disabilities included 80 percent or more of the time, and 15 percent spent more than 60 percent of their day in special education settings.

Where does NJ rank in the US?

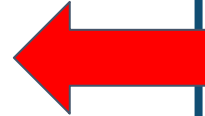
National and State Placement Practices

Table 1: Percent of Students Ages 6 through 21 Served Under IDEA, Part B, by Educational Environment and State: 2015–2016

State	Inside Regular Class 80% or More of the Day (%)	Inside Regular Class 40% through 79% of the Day (%)	Inside Regular Class Less than 40% of the Day (%)	Separate School or Residential Facility (%)
Hawaii	36.83	41.32	20.24	0.84
Guam	45.23	45.18	5.81	0.00
New Jersey	45.99	27.30	14.72	7.19
Montana	46.96	38.83	12.02	1.29

Where does NJ rank in the US?

States with the highest rates of placing students in separate classes are California, Hawaii, New York, and New Mexico; . . . Connecticut joins New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Maryland with the highest rates of placements in special facilities (special schools or residential programs).



Foundations of Inclusive Education

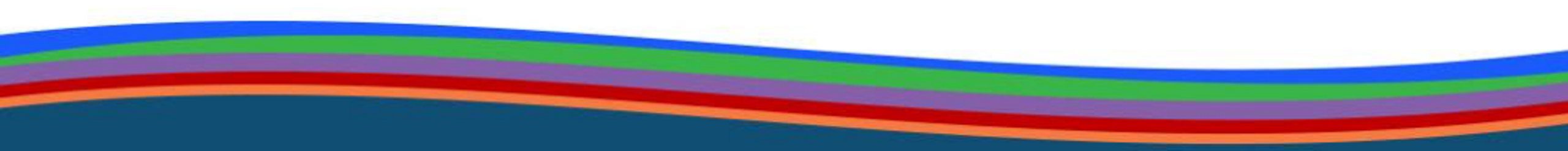


Presumption of Competence

how teachers think makes a big
difference

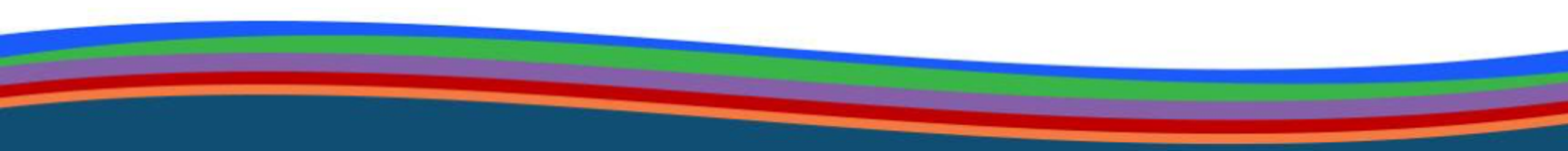
**“...the obligation of
educators is always to
presume competence or
educability and then to
discover ways a student
may achieve it.”**

(Biklen, 2000, p. 446)



Disability Studies in Education (DSE)

- Privilege the interests, agendas of people labeled with disability/disabled people
- Promote social justice, equitable and inclusive educational opportunities, and full meaningful access to all aspects of society for people labeled with disability/disabled people; and
- Assume competence and reject deficit models of disability (Connor, Gabel, Gallagher, & Morton, 2008, pp. 447-48)



Legal Foundation for Inclusive Education



- Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) (1975)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)
(Reauthorization in 1990 & 1997)
 - Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
 - Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Endrew v. Douglas County School District (2017)

What does this mean?

- Special education is not a place
- It is a service that follows the student
- Neighborhood schools
- Students do not have to all have the same goals and outcomes to get benefit
- Supplemental supports, aids, and services
- Shift from, “Can we?” to “HOW can we?”



What is social justice?

- Fairness, dignity, equity
 - Valuing race, culture, family, economic, sexuality, spirituality, disability
 - Abolishing segregation
 - Equity in schools
 - Heterogeneous neighborhood schools
 - Civil rights
 - Removing harmful double standards
 - Removal of we/they binaries
- (Connor et al., 2008)



Inclusive Education as Social Justice

- [Unok-Marks \(2011\)](#)- Resource



Tools/Approaches that Promote Writing Strength-Based IEPs

- Strength-Based Language
- Person-Centered Planning
- PLAAFPs and Benchmarked IEP goals
- Action Plan Meetings
- IEP Matrices
- In-Class Checklists and Strategies



A Deeper Dive

- For a more in-depth explanation of writing strength-based IEPs, see [Elder, Rood, & Damiani \(2018\)](#)
- Can be read as individual sections or read as a whole
- Taken together- well-oiled inclusive education machine



References

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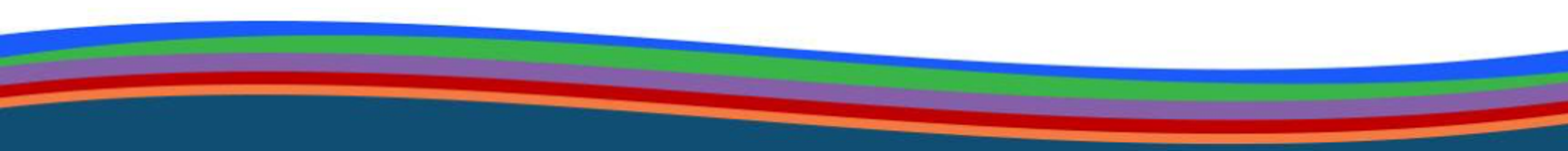
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