TOWARD CONSERVING DISABILITY & RIGHTFUL PRESENCE IN MATHEMATICS EDUCATION

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October 14, 2020

Presentation Outline

- Conserving disability and rightful presence
- Powerful Mathematics IEPs
- Inclusive Mathematics Classrooms & Community

Conserving Disability (from medical to social to revolutionary)

- Disability as a culture & pride (e.g., Autistics, Deaf)
- Disability as an essential characteristic of being human (Garland Thompson, 2012)
- Disability as resource and new ways to understand our world (and mathematics)
- Challenge the notion of disability as
  - tragedy
  - deficit, lacking, needing to be fixed, eradicated, hidden
  - stigma (e.g., “my SPED babies”, “special needs”)
  - unable to do and think mathematically -> remediation
  - disconnected from issues of race

Rightful Presence in Mathematics Education

Mathematics education as a human rights issue

- Rightful presence (Calabrese Barton & Tan, 2020)
  - Everyone belongs (not a debate)
  - Immediate (vs. earning rights to inclusion in the abstract future)
  - Human rights not an extension of rights akin to the IDEA (e.g., guests, temporary, conditional)
  - Shared burden, solidarity, justice-oriented
- UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRDP)

Zooming Out

TOWARD CONSERVING DISABILITY AND RIGHTFUL PRESENCE (CD-RP)

Aim: CD-RP
+Immediate
+Anti-racists & anti-ableist
+leverage students' gifts
+foster interdependency

- United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [**right to inclusive education**; U.S. has not ratified]
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA) & Assistive Technology (AT)

- Multitiered systems of support (MTSS)
- Differentiated instruction (DI); Accommodations & modifications

- MTSS: Response to Intervention (RtI); Social & Emotional Learning (SEL)

Outcomes: Segregation, disproportionality, low-expectations, and disability stigma, erasure, and pathologization
-racists, ableist, & conforms to neoliberalism (e.g., efficiency, competition, market/monetary value, zero-sum game)
-dysfunctional learning ecologies (e.g., students' gifts go unrecognized)
-largely blames students & families for failures while ignoring systemic factors & political struggles
-extension of rights is incremental (e.g., working towards "full-inclusion" which rarely materializes)

Immediate vs. Incremental

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2019). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2018* (NCES 2020-009), Chapter 2.

Percentage distribution of students 6 to 21 years old served under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, by educational environment and type of disability: Fall 2017

Type of disability	All environments	Regular school, time inside general class			Separate school for students with disabilities	Separate residential facility	Parentally placed in regular private schools[1]	Homebound/hospital placement	Correctional facility
		Less than 40 percent	40–79 percent	80 percent or more					
All students with disabilities	**100.0**	**13.3**	**18.3**	**63.4**	**2.8**	**0.2**	**1.4**	**0.4**	**0.2**
Autism	100.0	33.2	18.3	39.7	7.0	0.4	1.1	0.3	#
Deaf-blindness	100.0	36.7	12.6	23.6	18.1	5.1	0.9	3.0	0.0
Developmental delay	100.0	14.7	19.0	64.7	0.8	#	0.5	0.2	#
Emotional disturbance	100.0	17.7	17.5	48.5	12.4	1.2	0.4	1.0	1.2
Hearing impairment	100.0	10.8	15.1	62.4	7.9	2.1	1.6	0.2	#
Intellectual disability	100.0	49.0	27.2	16.9	5.7	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.1
Multiple disabilities	100.0	45.6	17.1	13.7	18.1	1.3	0.6	3.5	0.1
Orthopedic impairment	100.0	22.5	15.5	53.6	4.2	0.1	1.4	2.7	#
Other health impairment[2]	100.0	8.7	20.7	66.6	1.7	0.2	1.3	0.6	0.2
Specific learning disability	100.0	4.8	21.9	71.4	0.4	#	1.1	0.1	0.2
Speech or language impairment	100.0	4.0	4.8	87.4	0.2	#	3.4	0.1	#
Traumatic brain injury	100.0	19.6	21.7	50.8	4.8	0.6	0.9	1.5	0.1
Visual impairment	100.0	9.4	12.3	67.9	5.8	2.6	1.3	0.7	#

Powerful Mathematics IEPs as a Path

- Most IEP mathematics goals are
  - Narrow
  - Target very specific content standards
  - Signal low expectations
  - Lack input from teachers of mathematics
  - SMART: measurable, achievable -> racists & ableist practices

- IEP as a site for innovative mathematics practices
  - Advocate for and with your students
  - Advocate for rightful presence and conserving disability
  - Solidarity with disabled students and their families
  - You are the mathematics expert
  - Harness the power of the IDEA for pollical struggle (shared burden)

Mathematics Classrooms and Community Guided by Conserving Disability & Rightful Presence

- Advocate for **and** with disabled students: Nothing about us without us (Charlton, 1998) (avoid: mansplaining, whitesplaining, spedsplaining, abled-bodiedsplaining)

- Immediately challenge dysfunctional learning ecologies (Annamma & Morrison, 2018)
  - Dysfunctional b/c students' gifts and resources are not recognized, affirmed, and leveraged
  - Focus on curriculum, pedagogy, & solidarity

- Become a leader of abolitionist teaching (Love, 2019); conscious of standards but not standards-driven; change the game while playing the game (Gutiérrez, 2013); read and write the world, (Gutstein, 2006),

Thank You!

References

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