Inclusion in Catholic Schools: From Obstacles to Hope

Christie Bonfiglio, Ph.D.
University of Notre Dame

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Christie Bonfiglio, Ph.D.

- Alliance for Catholic Education
  - Notre Dame: Director & Faculty
  - Office of Professional Standards
  - Program for Inclusive Education

- School psychologist
  - Behavior & academic interventions

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INCLUSION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

From Obstacles to Hope

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Inclusion

- "The art of including students with disabilities in regular school classes." (Merriam-Webster)
- "...a philosophy of education that promotes the participation of students with disabilities in ways that are much the same as their non-disabled peers"
- "...valued members of the school community"

(Taymans, & Termini, 2010)

- "...planned and supported initiative that expands all students' opportunities to learn and achieve."

(McClesky, Rosenberg, & Westling, 2010)

Inclusion

- Active part of the community
- Access to resources for full participation
- Sense of welcoming
- Sense of being valued
- Balance of power

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Catholic schools are called to serve justly and inclusively to ensure success for ALL learners. We believe all are welcome, creating a vibrant,

Christian community that celebrates the God-given potential of every student.
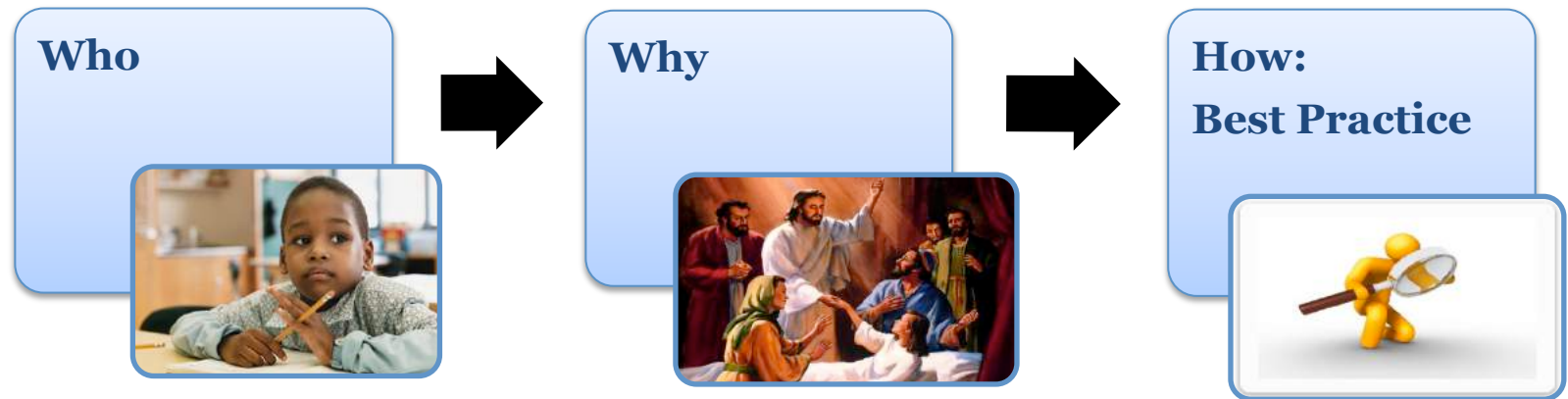
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Responsibility & Empowerment

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Serving ALL Learners

Who

Why

How:

Best Practice

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Prevalence of ADHD (7.0%)

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Prevalence of ADHD (7.0%)

Prevalence of Learning Disabilities (5.6%)

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Prevalence of ADHD (7.0%)

Prevalence of Learning Disabilities (5.6%)

Prevalence of Anxiety (8.0%)
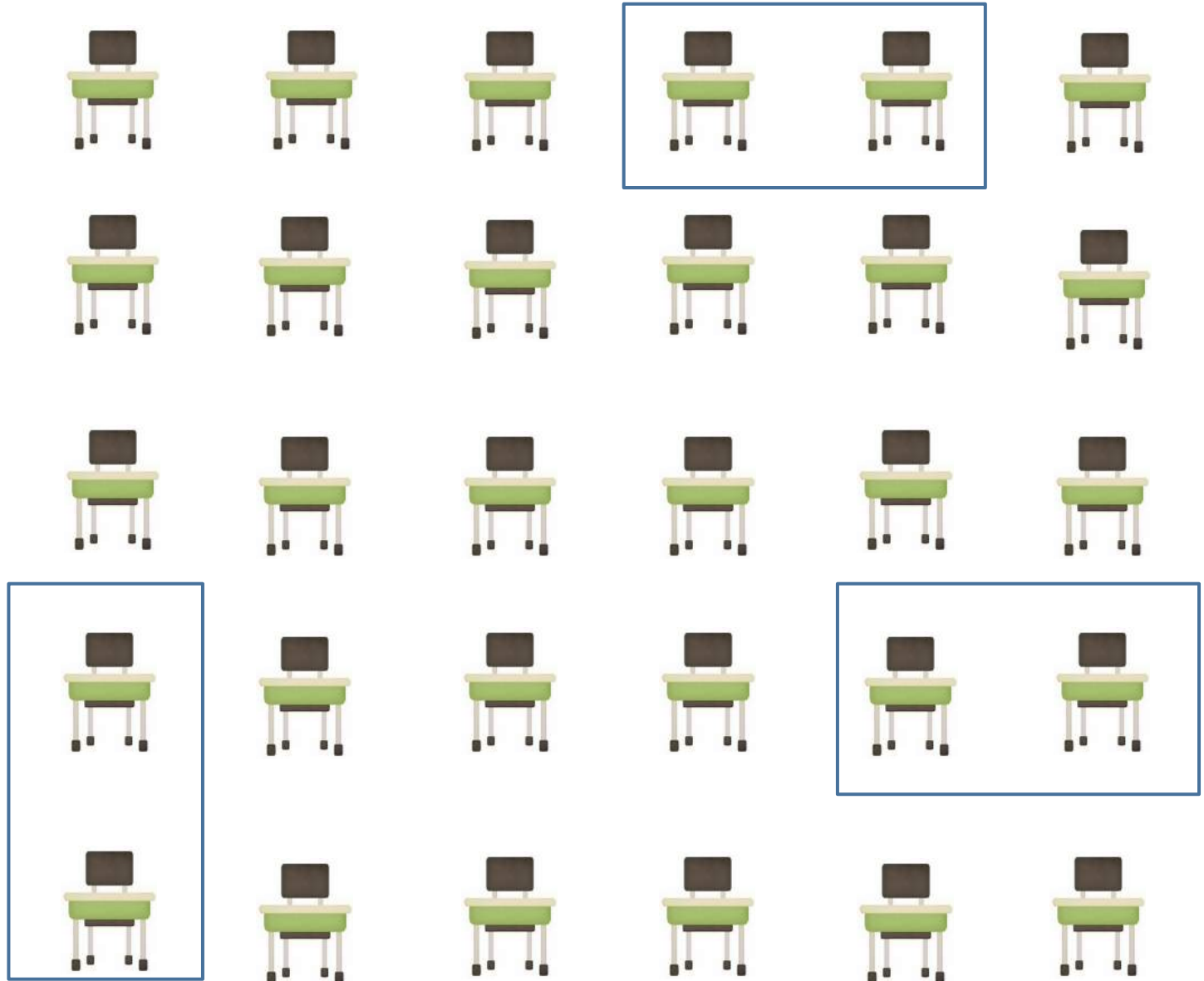
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Prevalence of ADHD (7.0%)

Prevalence of Learning Disabilities (5.6%)

Prevalence of Anxiety (8.0%)

Prevalence of Disruptive Behavior Disorder (6.1%)

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ADHD (7.0%)
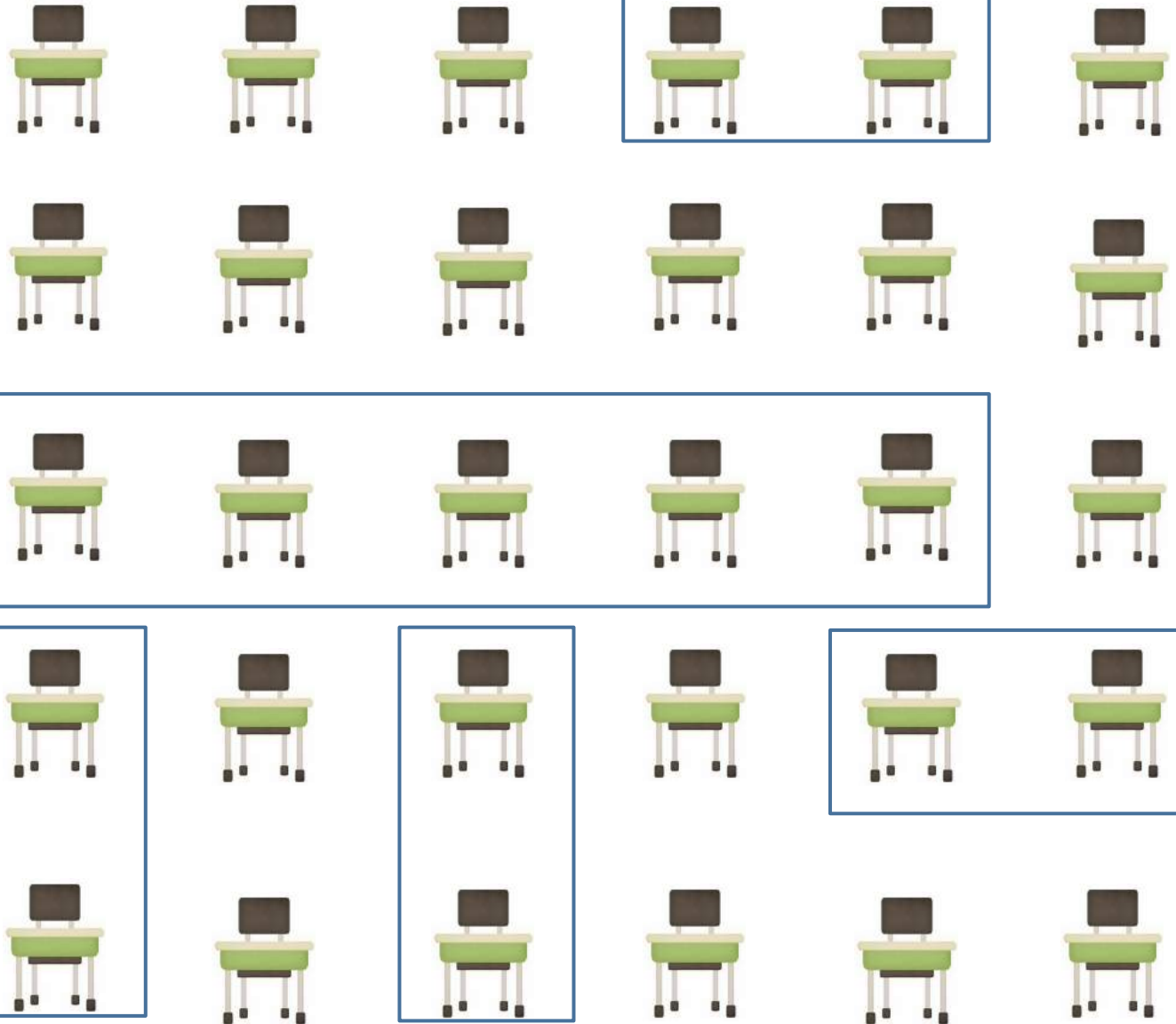
LD (5.6%)

Anxiety(8.0%)

Disruptive Behavior Disorder (6.1%)

Prevalence of Adverse Childhood Experiences; ≥ 5

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Also In Our Schools...

- 9-year-old boy who habitually falls asleep in class
  - This child is frequently awakened in the night by the sounds of his mother groaning and pleading as his father strikes her repeatedly

- High schooler who doesn't complete required homework
  - At home are two parents, one who drinks too much, the other undergoing chemotherapy for cancer

- A middle schooler whose frustrations explode into angry displays of emotion
  - His fear: he and his older sibling may be "taken away" from home because of violent behavior. Where will they sleep? Will they be safe?

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Catholic Framework for Supporting the Whole-Child & Meeting Needs

- Scriptural
  - Old & New Testaments
- Church Teaching
  - Church Documents: Holistic education
  - Papal Statements: Inclusion of those with disabilities
  - Special education

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All Are Welcome (Scanlan, 2009)

- "…this is an effort to present a compelling case to **bridge theory with practice.** In the end, our successes and our failures are measured not through abstract theory, but rather in specific action in our daily work as educators. In terms of Catholic schools, the successes and failure come in our ability to **match rhetoric with reality,** and to sing the words *"All are welcome"* robustly, in a tune ringing true."

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Catholic Social Teaching & Faith-Filled Inclusive Cultures of Learning

- Life and Dignity of the Human Person
- Call to Family, Community, and Participation
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
- The Dignity and the Rights of Workers
- Solidarity
- Care for God's Creation

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Program for Inclusive Education

- Root Beliefs
  - All students are made in the image and likeness of God.
  - We are called to educate ALL students inclusively regardless of need.
  - Inclusion is intentional.

- **Mission:** *Inclusion to Catholic Schools*

Obstacles to Inclusion

FEAR

- Culture
- Resources
  - Time
  - Money
  - Knowledge

"Do not be afraid" is written in the Bible 365 times.

That's a daily reminder from God to live every day being FEARLESS!"

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Parable of the Lost Sheep

- Gospel of Matthew (18: 10-14)
  - "See that you do not despise one of these little ones...in the same way, it is not the will of the Father that one of these little ones perish."

- Must ask...
  - Where are the children that have been left behind and what are we going to do?

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Feel Empowered

- You are not building from scratch!
  - Heart for inclusion
  - Intentional strategic planning
  - Dedication to professional development
  - Differentiated instruction
  - Teams and the use of data

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Feel Empowered

Inclusion is a "good" thing!

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Prepared to Act

What Can We Do Now?

INCLUDE

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Inclusive Orientation

"INCLUSION REQUIRES THE TEACHER TO BELIEVE THAT *all students* HAVE SOMETHING *important* TO OFFER IN THE CLASSROOM AND THAT WE REALLY ARE BETTER OFF *learning together.*"

BETH FORAKER,
NATIONAL CATHOLIC BOARD ON FULL INCLUSION

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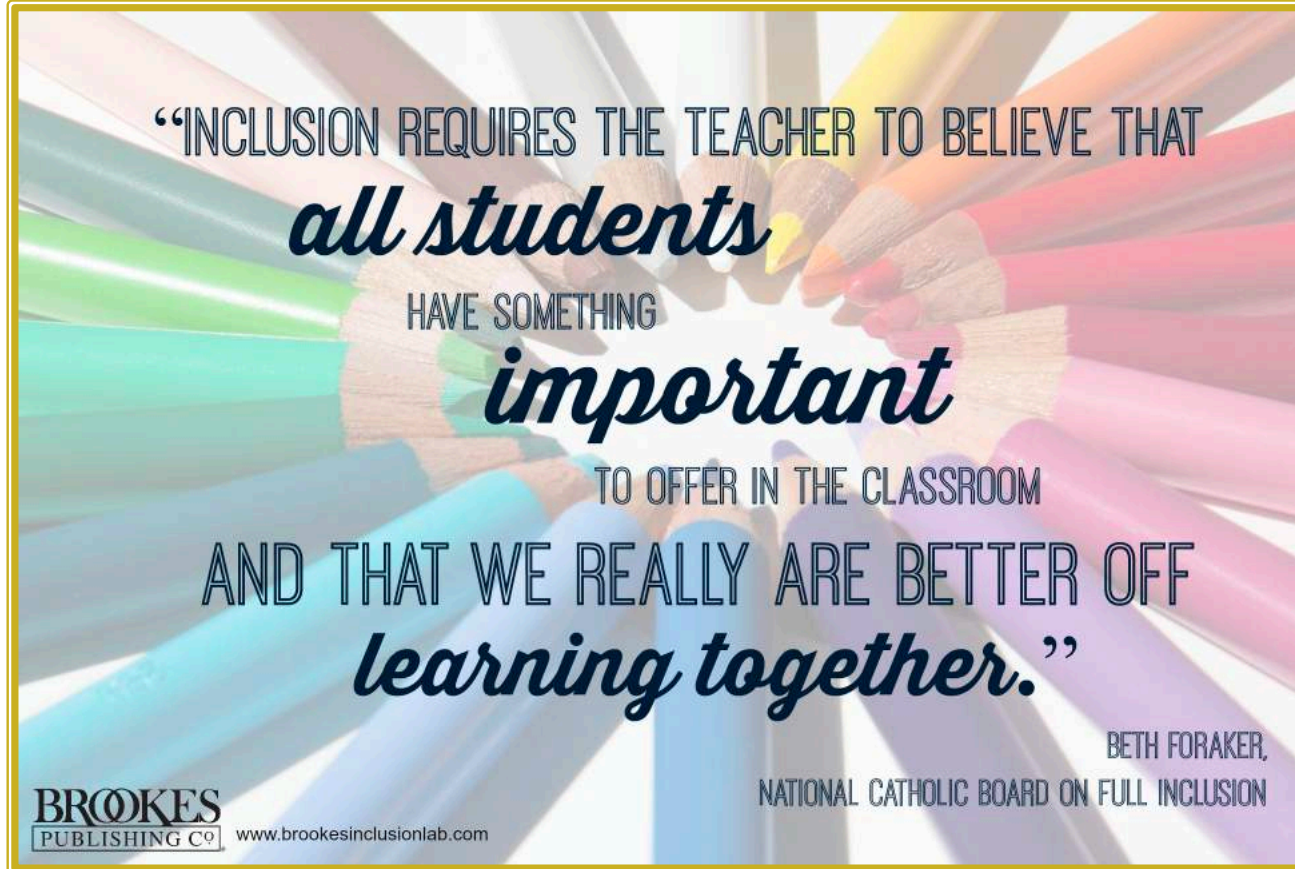
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Inclusive Orientation Beliefs

- Each student has strengths and needs
- Each student can and will learn and succeed
- Each student has unique contributions to offer
- Diversity enriches us all

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Nominate Teacher Leader(s)

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Nominate Teacher Leader(s)

- Focused PD for long-term change
- Lead/reinvent a "team"
- PLC leads
- Grade band leads
- *Program for Inclusive Education*

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Common Professional Development

- Educators need:
  - Professional development learning
  - Guided practice
  - Feedback
  - Opportunities to problem solve with colleagues

Villa & Thousand (2017)

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Common Professional Development

- Empower and motivate school staff
  - Offering choice based on how they learn
    - Live or online coaching and workshops
    - Mentoring opportunities
    - Summer institutes
    - Book studies and study groups

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Leverage Relationships
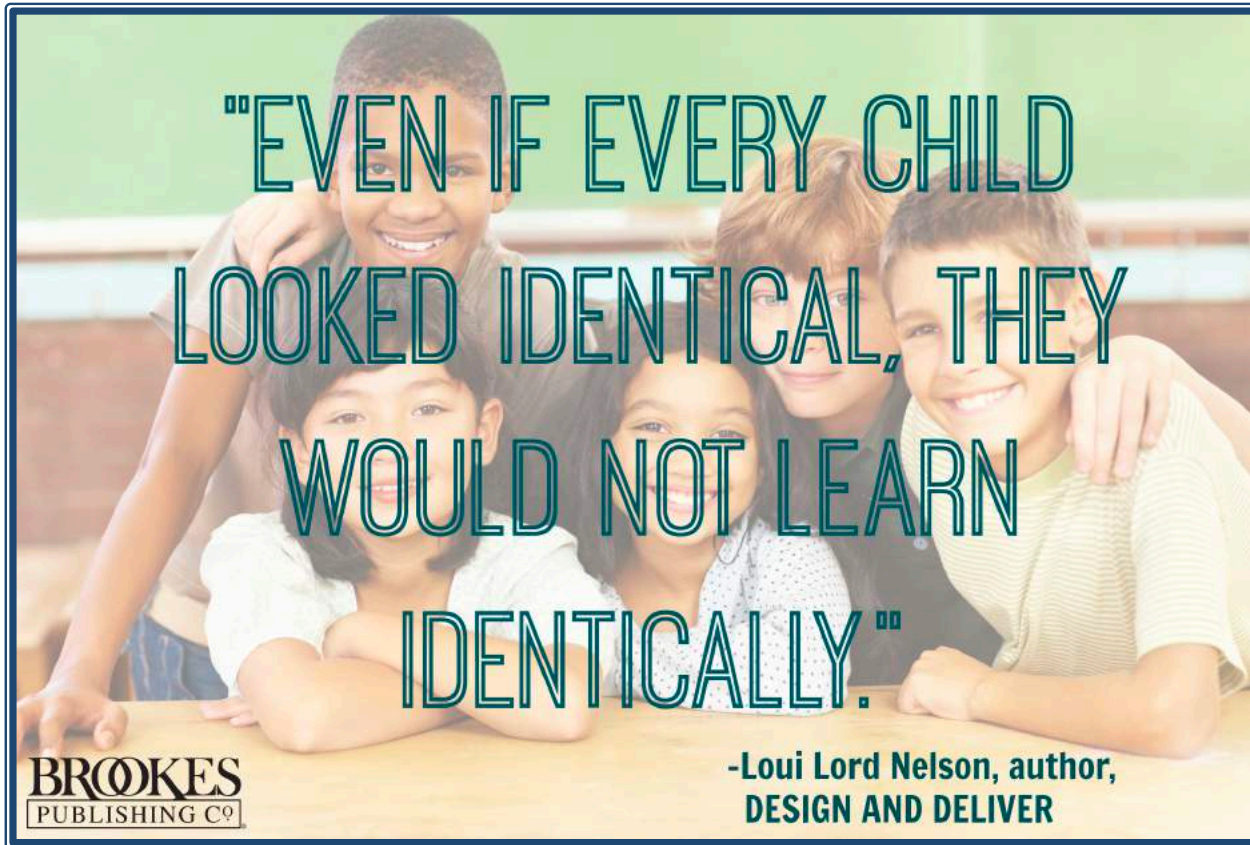
- LEA
- Parents
- Students
- Teachers

Universal Tier

- Universal Screening
- At least 80% of students should respond
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- "You cannot intervene your way out of ineffective core instruction."

Differentiate

"EVEN IF EVERY CHILD LOOKED IDENTICAL, THEY WOULD NOT LEARN IDENTICALLY."

-Loui Lord Nelson, author, **DESIGN AND DELIVER**

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Differentiate

- One size does not fit all
- Universal Design for Learning
- Proactive Differentiation
  – Process, content, and product
  – Knowing students

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Evaluate Effectiveness

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From Fear to...

HOPE

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HOPE

Inclusion aims to do nothing less than to find a way *"to meet and match the moment of hope!"*

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