

# Pursuing Equity for Black Students in K–12 Education: **Exploring the Intersection of Race and Disability Thought Leader Conversation (TLC) Series**

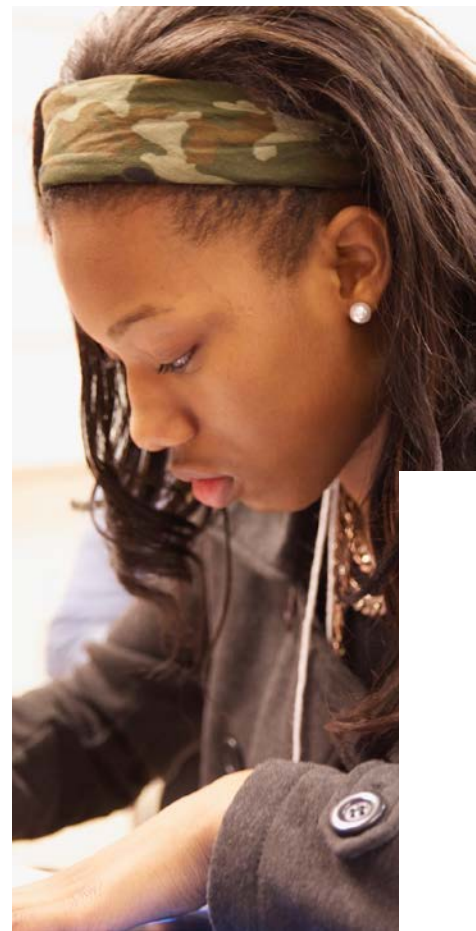
## Equitable Research-Informed Practices

**Thank you for being here!**

We will begin shortly. In the meantime, please reflect on this quote and provide your thoughts in the chat.

“Every system is  
perfectly designed to get  
the results it gets.”

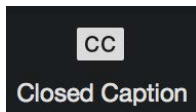
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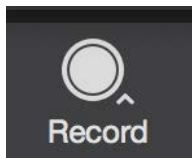
# Zoom Housekeeping



- Microphones and videos have been disabled for this webinar.

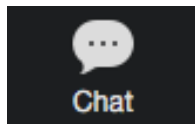
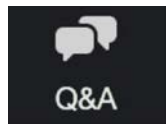


- Closed-captioning is available by clicking on the CC button at the bottom of your Zoom screen.



- This webinar is being recorded. The recording, presentation slides, and other materials will be made available on NCSI's website, and a link will be sent to you directly in the next few days.

# Webinar Cultural Norms



We encourage you to use the **chat box** for conversation and collaboration. Direct chat any technical inquiries to Jessica Arnold. Use the **Q&A Feature** to ask specific questions of our presenters. Look for the flashing orange alert, which will take you to the chat box when it is active.

**We expect respectful engagement and thoughtful participation.**

Any attempts to dominate the chat box with personal agendas and/or continuing behaviors that detract from the group's learning are not acceptable and may result in a request to relevant individuals to cease such actions. At the extreme end, possible removal from the webinar may occur if necessary.

# Twitter

Please feel free to Tweet @TheNCSI



# Session Agenda

Framing the TLC and Today's Session

Meet Our Thought Leaders

Historical Biases of Research in Special Education

Becoming Critical Consumers of Research

Equitable Research-Informed Practices

Future TLC Sessions



# Welcome & Introduction to NCSI

- The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) supports states to transform systems to improve outcomes for students with disabilities
- We are committed to helping state agencies and their stakeholders understand the intersection of race and disability in education **in order to resolve inequities that disadvantage Black students with disabilities or those who may be identified as needing special education services**

# Purpose of Thought Leader Conversation (TLC) Series

- A series of conversations with experts focused on the intersection of race and disability in K–12 education
- Exploring ways systems can improve teaching and learning conditions and outcomes for Black students with disabilities or those who may be identified as having a disability



# Series Recap

**Foundational Session**  
(held November 10, 2020)

**Data Literacy Session**  
(held December 15, 2020)

**Stakeholder and Family Engagement Session**  
(held February 16, 2021)

Session recordings, webinar materials, and related resources  
are available at:

<https://ncsi.wested.org/resources/pursuing-equity/>

# Framing Today's Session

**Educators must be equipped to critically examine evidence-based programs and practices to determine how well they move toward optimal experiences and outcomes for Black children with disabilities**

# Today's Session Objectives

Presenters, panelists, and participants will:

- Examine the historical biases in research in special education rooted in dominant culture that reinforce *and fail* to address inequitable experiences and outcomes for Black students
- Consider criteria for critically analyzing research in special education that is often rooted in dominant culture
- Identify equitable research-informed practices to dismantle inequitable experiences and outcomes for Black students with disabilities or those who may be identified as needing special services

# Please Meet Our Thought Leaders...



# 2020–2021 Thought Leaders



**Heather Calomese**  
California Department of  
Education



**Dr. Eddie Fergus**  
Temple University



**Dr. Alexandria  
Harvey**  
WestEd



**Debra Jennings**  
National Center for  
Systemic Improvement



**David Lopez**  
WestEd



**Dr. Kent McIntosh**  
Positive Behavioral &  
Interventions Support Center

# 2020–2021 Thought Leaders cont.



**Dr. Tom Munk**  
IDEA Data Center



**Esley Newton**  
OESE, US Department of  
Education



**Heath Peine**  
Wichita Public Schools



**Christine Pilgrim**  
OSEP, US Department of  
Education



**Dr. Zelphine  
Smith-Dixon**  
Georgia Department of  
Education



**Dr. Saroja Warner**  
WestEd

# Today's Presenters



**Amanda Byrd**  
North Carolina Department of  
Public Instruction



**Natasha Capers**  
New York City  
Coalition for Educational  
Justice



**Dr. Erica McCray**  
CEEDAR Center



**Dr. Fatima Morrell**  
Buffalo Public Schools



**Dr. Seena M. Skelton**  
Midwest and Plains Equity  
Assistance Center



**Dr. Kathleen King Thorius**  
Great Lakes Equity Center



# Historical Biases of Research in Special Education



# Research in Special Education

Much of the research in special education is still aimed toward “fixing students” with the undergirding assumption that something is “wrong” with students with disabilities and students of color (deficit perspective)



# Research in Special Education cont.

Historically rooted in  
quantitative methodology

Qualitative methods  
examine the contexts and  
experiences that numbers  
can obscure

Research produced by  
scholars of color often  
generates important, useful  
findings but is often  
qualitative and not as visible  
as quantitative research

# Refocusing Our Gaze

We must begin by examining our perspectives on research and accepted methods





# Becoming Critical Consumers of Research

# What does it mean to critically consume research?

Approaching research with a critical consciousness that reflects an understanding that implicit cultural assumptions, frames of references, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways that knowledge is constructed within it (Banks, 1997)

# Critical Consumers of Research



# Critical Consumers of Research cont.

Examine the applicability and credibility of  
evidence presented for the population of  
students





# Critical Consumers of Research cont..

Question the knowledge that has shaped the research to determine how and to what extent educational research animates settler colonialism (Patel, 2015)



# Examples of Questions as a Critical Consumer of Research

What types of logic and relationships are being created through the research?

What values or lines of reasoning are centered and normalized?

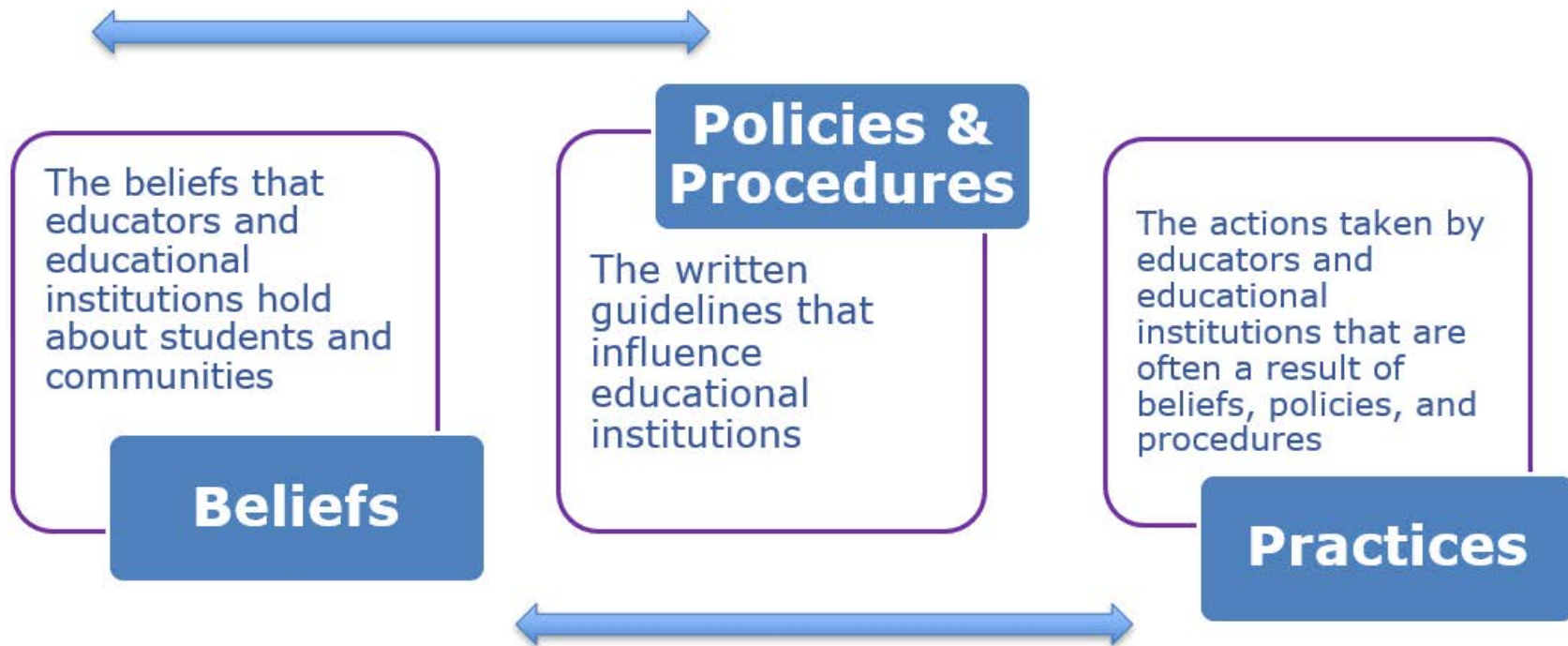
What types of practices are legitimated?

What practices are reinforced by the research?

Does the practice move students closer or further away from authentic, quality academic and social learning opportunities?

Does the research perpetuate a deficit model of education?

# Factors That Influence Inequities



# Reflect and Share

What are your next steps toward becoming a critical consumer of research?



# Equitable Research-Informed Practices



# Selection and Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

## **Read, study, and apply**

research epistemologies that arise out of the social histories of people from non-dominant identities (e.g., Black, Indigenous, and people of Color, people with disabilities, women, people who identify as LGBTQ, etc.)

(Boveda & McCray, 2020; Scheurich & Young, 1997)

# Selection and Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

**Critique** research that solely focuses on marginalized populations to bridge the “gap” between themselves and privileged populations rather than the search for interventions to transform the interconnected structures that marginalize some populations while privileging others

(Patel, 2015)

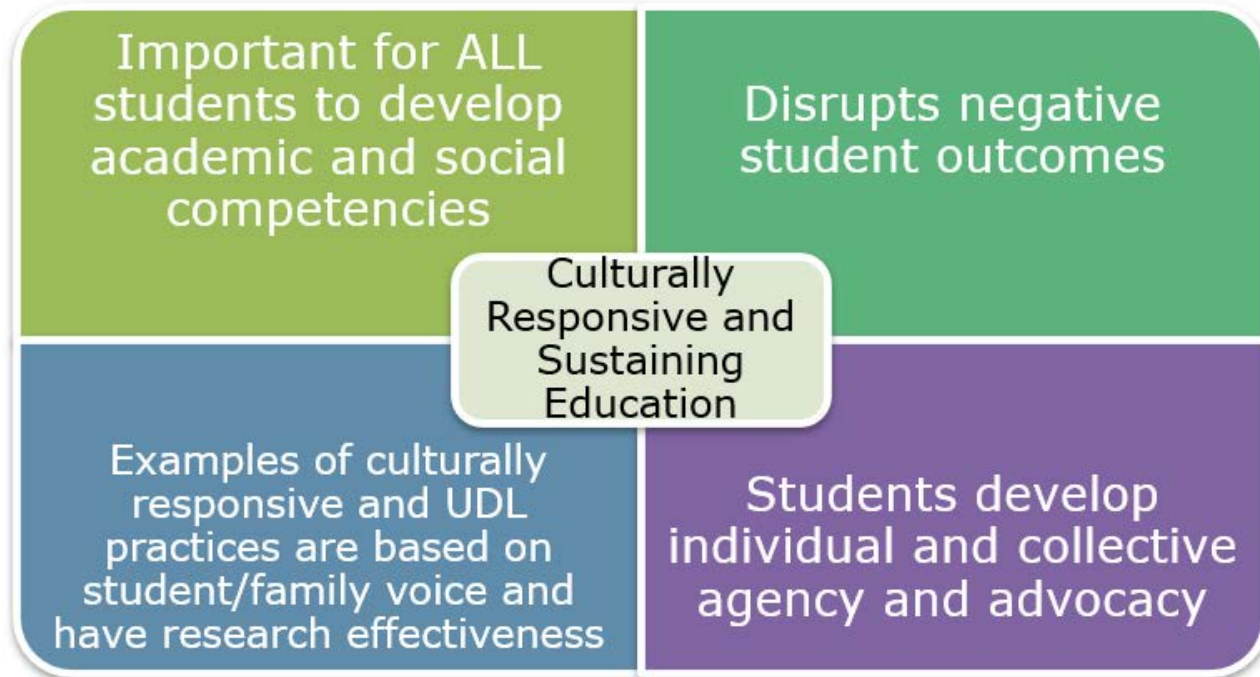
# Selection and Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

**Examine** the impact of the intervention and maintain a level of criticality pertaining to the evidence of outcomes

**Refrain** from decoupling evidence-based practices from their implementation



# Culturally Responsive & Sustaining Education



# Anti-Racist Educational Practices

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Address explicit and implicit racial bias head-on

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Dismantle disproportionality and racialized outcomes for students of color (special education and suspensions)

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Implementation of a liberatory curriculum and pedagogy based upon historical accuracy and veracity

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Where do educators and communities begin their own anti-racist journeys and actions?

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Anchor top-notch anti-racist research and national experts in the work of cultural responsiveness and anti-racist educational practices

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# Reflect and Share

Who is one of your favorite scholars of color?



# Panel Discussion



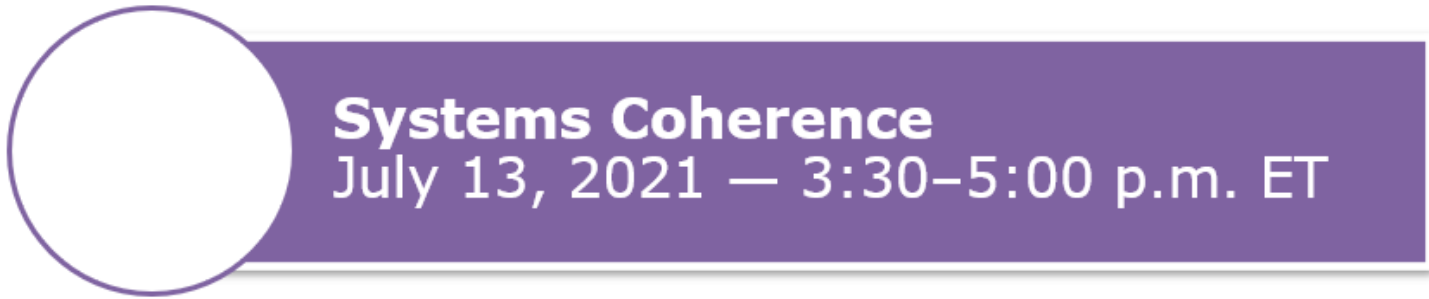
# Discussion Starters:

- What does it look like to be a critical consumer?
- How can states and districts use COVID funds to boldly address inequities that were exacerbated by the pandemic?
- How do we work to make clear, concrete investments that will benefit students who have historically been marginalized?

# Looking Ahead

Upcoming Thought  
Leader Conversations

# Future Thought Leader Conversation Sessions



# Where to Find TLC Information

- Materials, including the PowerPoint and recording from today's session, will be posted to the NCSI website under "Resources":  
<https://ncsi.wested.org/resources/pursuing-equity/>
- Registration information for future sessions will be posted to our home page at [ncsi.wested.org](https://ncsi.wested.org)
- Please sign up for our mailing list to receive emails about future TLC sessions and registration details:  
[ncsi@wested.org](mailto:ncsi@wested.org)



# Session Evaluation



- We appreciate your feedback on our session today so we can continuously improve
- The link to the evaluation is in the chat box and will also be emailed to today's participants

# With Gratitude...

Thank you to our **Thought Leaders** for initiating and framing this important conversation



Thanks to **each of you** for your commitment to creating inclusive, equitable systems that support all students to succeed and thrive

Thank you for your commitment to making systemic change for equity  
Questions can be sent to [ncsi@wested.org](mailto:ncsi@wested.org)

The contents of this document were developed under a grant from the US Department of Education, #H326R190001. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the US Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Project Officer: Perry Williams (October 2019)

