Supporting Black/ African American Families of Children with Disabilities

A guide for teachers and other professionals

April 8, 2025

WELCOME!

We would love to know who is here today!

Please take a minute to tell us your role/s.

About this series

This presentation is part of a series of workshops we are doing this spring as part of the Inclusionary Practices Technical Assistance Network.

This is a statewide collaboration between the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, WestEd, and education partners across Washington state.

One of these partners is the Family Engagement Collaborative, and The Arc of King County is part of this collaborative. This spring we are hosting workshops to help educators learn more about disability and ways to support families, and help families learn more about inclusive learning and ways to navigate the special education process.

INSIGHTS ON SUPPORTING FAMILIES

For educators who work with students with disabilities.

- Supporting Spanish-Speaking Families
- Supporting Black/African American Families
- Working with Families with High Support Needs
- Supporting AAC Users & Their Families

Produced by The Arc of King County for the state's Inclusionary Practices Technical Network.

Family Engagement Collaborative

UNDERSTANDING DISABILITY

A class series for anyone who works with or supports students with disabilities.

- Autism: The Basics
- Cerebral Palsy: The Basics
- Disability is Diversity

Produced by The Arc of King County for the state's Inclusionary Practices Technical Network.

NAVIGATING SCHOOLS

Accessibility & Belonging

Special Education Basics

Conceptos básicos de educación especial

A series for families using special education services.

Produced by The Arc of King County for the state's Inclusionary Practices Technical Network.

Who we are …

The Arc of King County promotes and protects the rights of people with intellectual or other developmental disabilities (IDD) so we can all live, learn, work and play in the community.

The Arc is driven by the fundamental belief that everyone deserves to write their own life story. That means:

- Real access to education

- Meaningful employment

- Quality healthcare

- Genuine community connections

At our chapter, we offer information and family support, systems navigation, education & civic engagement support. We also run a supported living program for adults with IDD.

We help (or refer!) on any topic. The most common are special education, housing, and Medicaid long-term supports.

Need assistance? ask@arcofkingcounty.org
https://arcofkingcounty.org/

The Arc.
King County

Agenda

- Introduction

- Purpose

- Addressing Cultural Biases

- The "3 Ls"

  - Look

  - Listen

  - Learn

- Call to Action

- Q&A

Todays' presenter:
Chanita Stone, Parent to Parent coordinator

Why are we here?

To discuss the importance of cultural responsiveness when supporting African American & Black children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families.

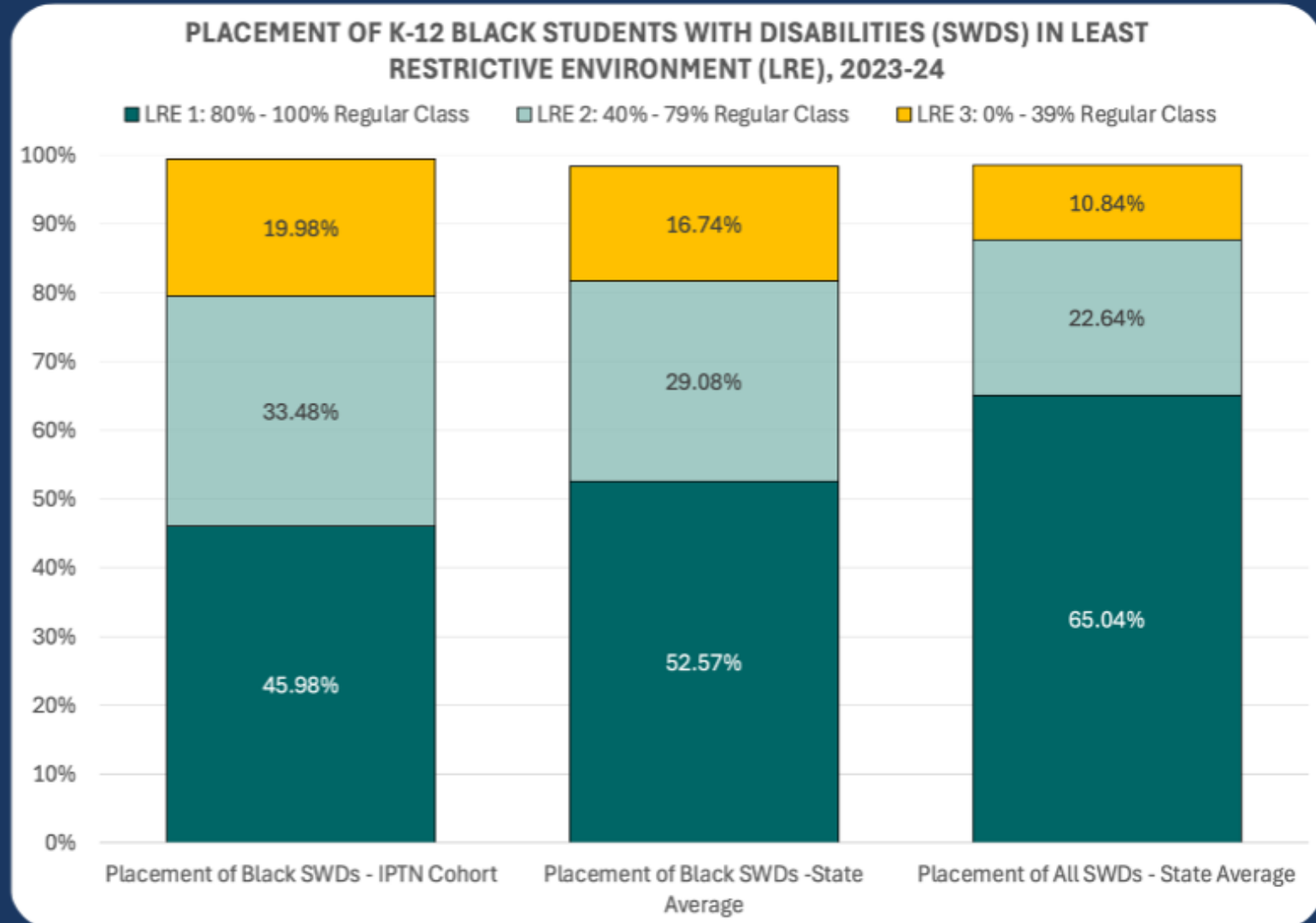# Percentage of Students with Access to General Education 80% or More of the Day

All Students with an IEP

Black Students with an IEP
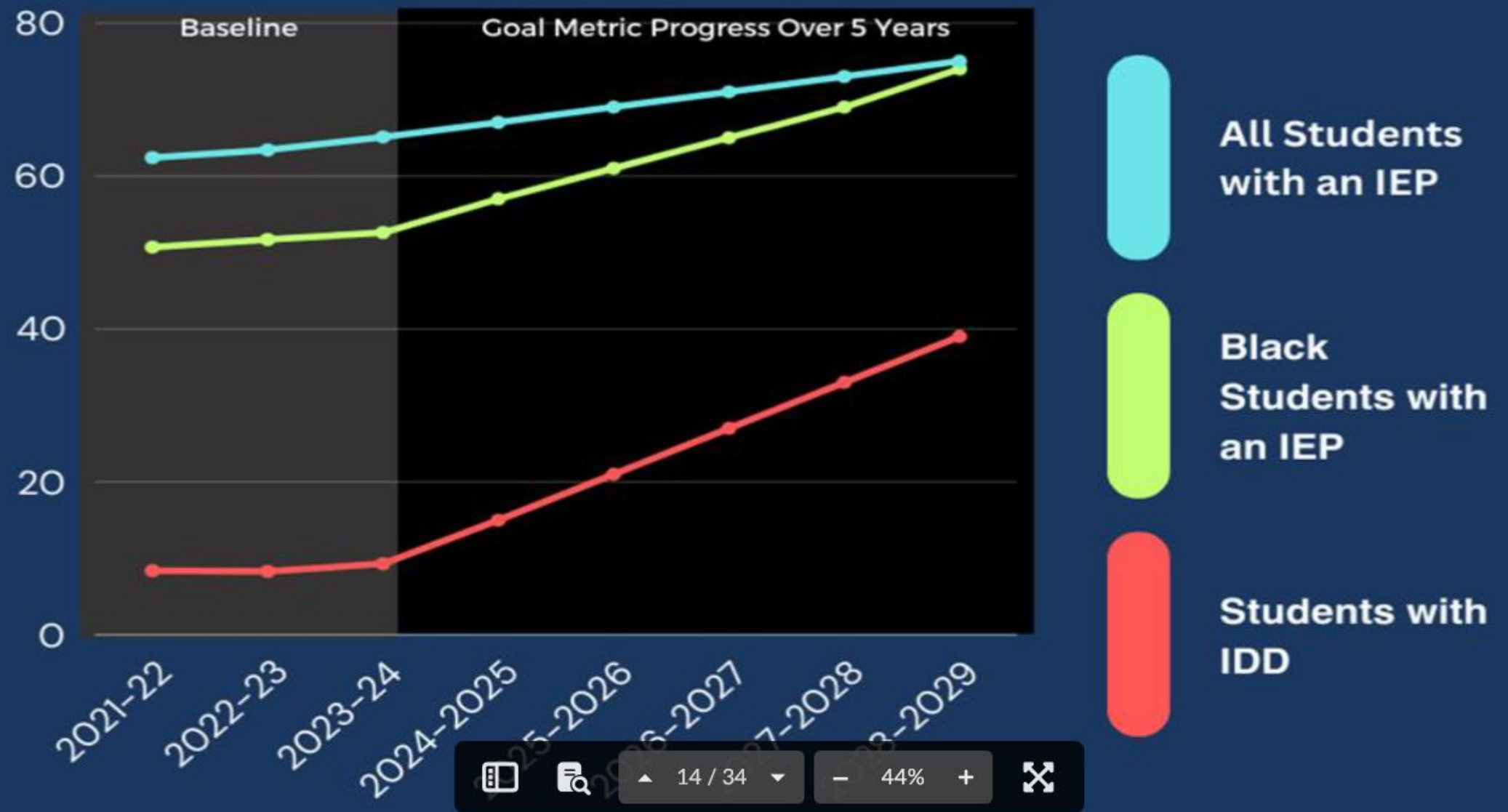
Students with IDD

Why does the IPTN focus on Black students with IEPs?

52.57% of Black students with disabilities spend at least 80% of the school day in a general education setting.

In comparison, **68.45%** of White students with disabilities spend at least 80% of the school day in the general education setting.

PLACEMENT OF K-12 BLACK STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (SWDS) IN LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT (LRE), 2023-24

- LRE 1: 80% - 100% Regular Class
- LRE 2: 40% - 79% Regular Class
- LRE 3: 0% - 39% Regular Class

	Placement of Black SWDs - IPTN Cohort	Placement of Black SWDs - State Average	Placement of All SWDs - State Average
LRE 3	19.98%	16.74%	10.84%
LRE 2	33.48%	29.08%	22.64%
LRE 1	45.98%	52.57%	65.04%

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Bridging the Gap: Addressing Inequities for Black Children with Disabilities

Underrepresentation in Early Intervention: Black children are less likely to be identified for certain disabilities. For example, Black children are 58% less likely to be identified as having learning disabilities

Overrepresentation in Specific Disability Categories: When Black children are identified with disabilities, they are more frequently classified under categories such as intellectual disabilities and emotional disturbances.

Disciplinary Actions and School Environment: Black students with disabilities face higher rates of disciplinary action. Although they have smaller representation, they are found to have higher disciplinary responses.

Addressing Cultural Biases & Barriers

Stereotypes and Prejudice: Negative stereotypes can affect perceptions and interactions that lead to discrimination in classrooms, patient rooms, and social services.

Systemic Racism: Institutional practices often disadvantage African American and Black people

Healthcare Disparities: Black people frequently encounter inequities in healthcare access and treatment.

Cultural Representation: Underrepresentation can perpetuate stereotypes.

Language and Communication: Dialects and Cultural expressions may be misinterpreted and or devalued, leading to misunderstanding and biases

Disability/Health Stigmas: Cultural perceptions around mental health can discourage one from seeking help and support

Look

Photo by Brooke Anderson | @movementphotographer

- Seek out the communities that African American and Black families already belong to.

- Ensure marketing and services are accessible in pivotal community drivers (for example)

  - Church events

  - School functions

  - Parent groups

LISTEN

• Understand cultural nuances and validate concerns expressed by the families

• Be an effective listener (for example)

- Don't assume
- Ask questions
- Try not to minimize or dismiss a parent or caregiver's concerns and feelings

LEARN

Commit to ongoing education.

This can be done in several ways.

- Attending workshops
- Participating in community conversations
- Talking with community partners who work directly with African American and Black families

Understand spaces of strength and support.

- Family structure
- Educating extended family
- Religion

Let's talk about it!

How can knowing the cultural strengths in the African-American community assist you with supporting parents in navigating their child's developmental disabilities?

How can you ensure that developmental disability support services are accessible and responsive to the needs of African-American families?

How can you address systemic barriers such as racism and discrimination that may disproportionately affect African-American families seeking support?

Call to action

What can you do to foster an environment where African American and Black children with IDD and their families feel safe, seen, and heard?

BEFORE YOU GO...

Please let us know what you thought of today's presentation.

Your feedback allows us to understand and improve upon our training.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KV2N7FT

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