



Agents of Their Own Success:

Self-Advocacy Skills and Self-Determination for Students with Disabilities in the Era of Personalized Learning

*Alliance for Excellent Education Webinar
Tuesday, June 5th, 2018*

Welcome

Mimi Corcoran

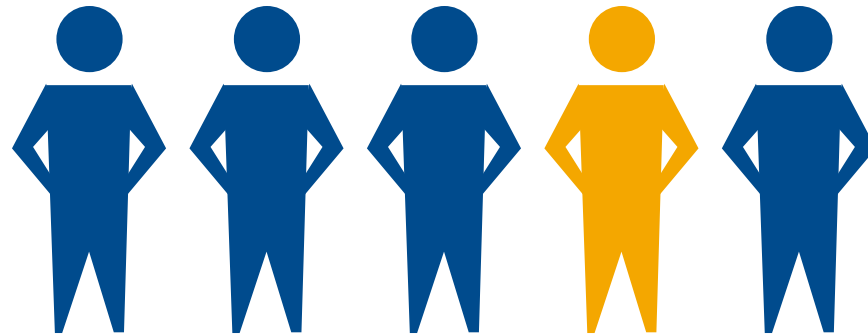
President & CEO

National Center for Learning Disabilities



NCLD's Mission

To improve the lives of the
1 in 5 children and adults
who struggle with learning and
attention issues.



NCLD's Strategy

Today, we work toward inclusion of the 1 in 5 in the following ways:



Engaging **parents** with online resources and community on Understood.org



Building the capacity of **educators** to support all struggling learners



Developing **young adult** leaders who can advocate for themselves and their peers



Informing local and national **policy** efforts to ensure equal opportunity and access



Strengthening the field through innovative **research** and collaborative partnerships

A New Equity Imperative

Winsome Waite

Vice President of Policy to Practice
Alliance for Excellent Education



Overview of NCLD's Project

Lindsay E. Jones

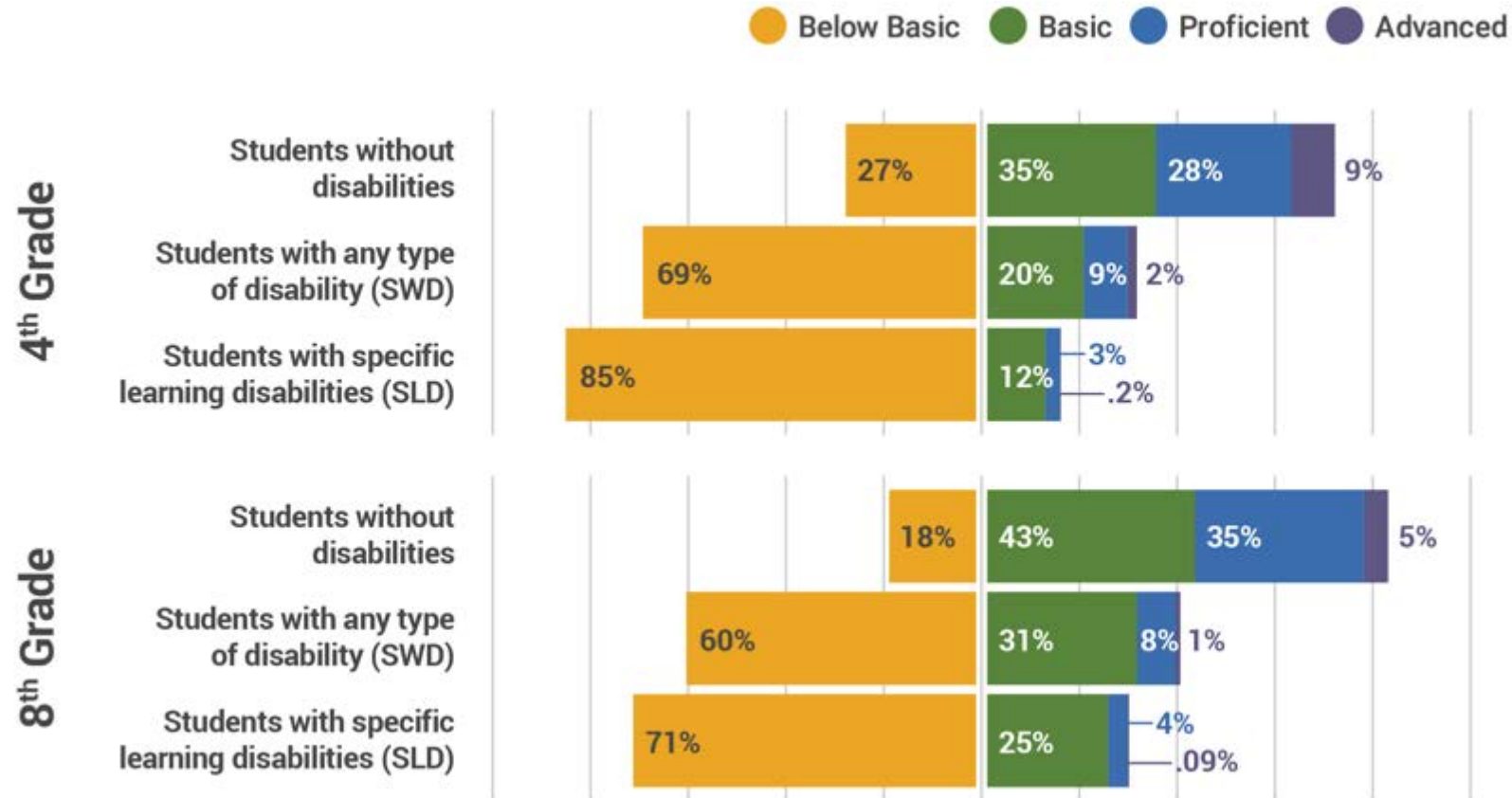
VP, Chief Policy & Advocacy Officer

National Center for Learning Disabilities



Achievement Gap

Reading Scores on the 2013 NAEP

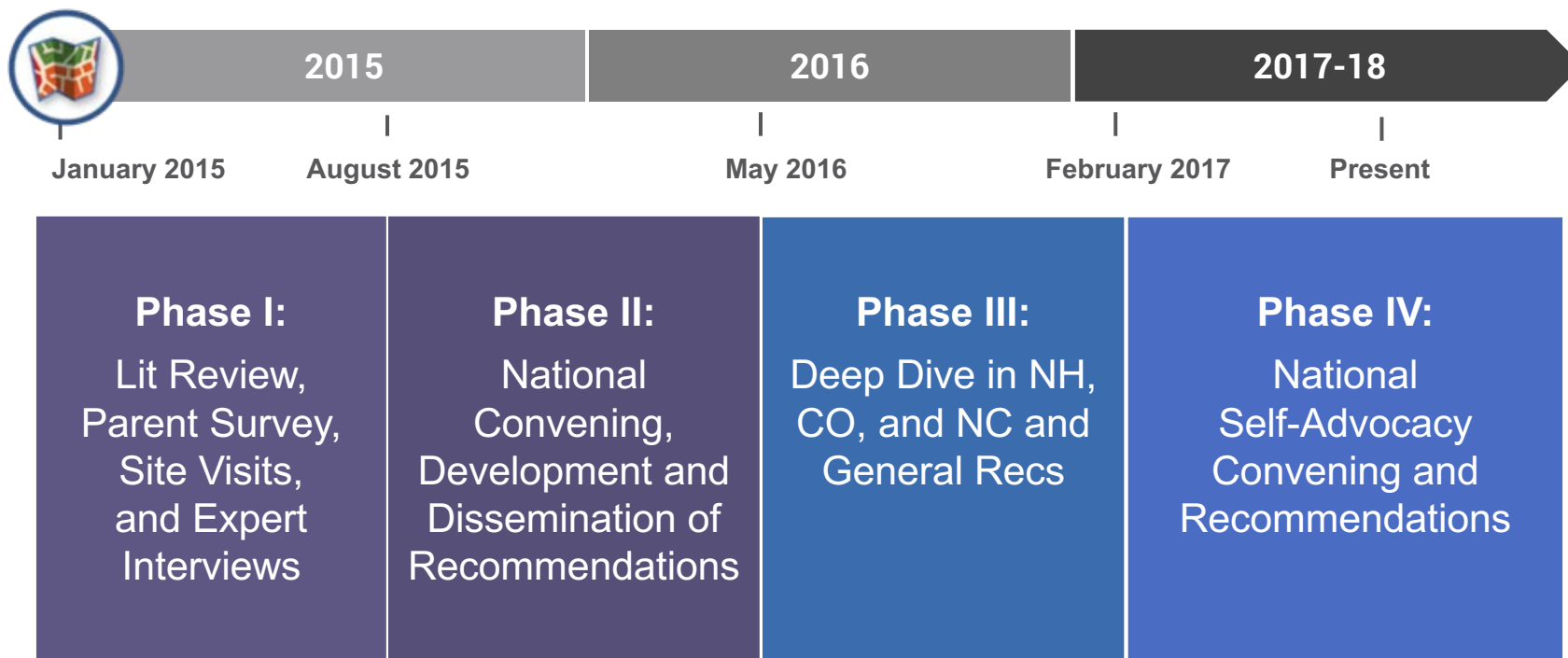


The State of LD, National Center for Learning Disabilities (2017)

Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) for 2013.

The NAEP category of students with disabilities (SWD) includes students with IEPs and 504 plans.

What we've done



What is “Personalized Learning?”

Working Definition:

Students’ **learning experiences**—what they learn, and how, when, and where they learn it—are **tailored to** their **individual needs, skills and interests**, and **enable** them to take **ownership** of their learning.

Although **where, how, and when they learn might vary** according to their needs, students also develop **deep connections** to each other, their teachers, and other adults.

(reference: Jobs for the Future, Students at the Center)

**Personalized learning systems should
include students with disabilities
*now.***

Avoid Retrofitting!!



What We've Learned About Self-Advocacy Skills & Self Determination in Personalized Learning Systems

Ace Parsi

Personalized Learning Partnership Manager

National Center for Learning Disabilities



What is “Self-Determination”?

A condition by which an individual is the “origin of his or her actions, has high aspirations, perseveres in the face of obstacles, sees more and varied options for action, learns from failures, and overall, has a greater sense of well being” (Little et. al)

Self-Determination is shown by...

- (1) The person acts autonomously
- (2) The behavior is self-regulated
- (3) The person initiates and responds to the event(s) in a psychologically-empowered manner
- (4) The person acts in a self-realizing manner. (Wehmeyer)

What is “Self-Advocacy?”

A concept related to student empowerment defined by four elements:

- (1) Knowledge of self
- (2) Knowledge of rights
- (3) Communication of one’s knowledge of self & rights
- (4) Leadership where a person moves from individual self-advocacy to advocating for others as a group of individuals with common concerns (Test et. Al., 2005)

SA and SD: A Historical Context



Full Exclusion Lens

*(Early to mid
20th Century)*



Rehabilitation Lens

*(Post-World War II
to Late 20th Century)*



Inclusion Lens

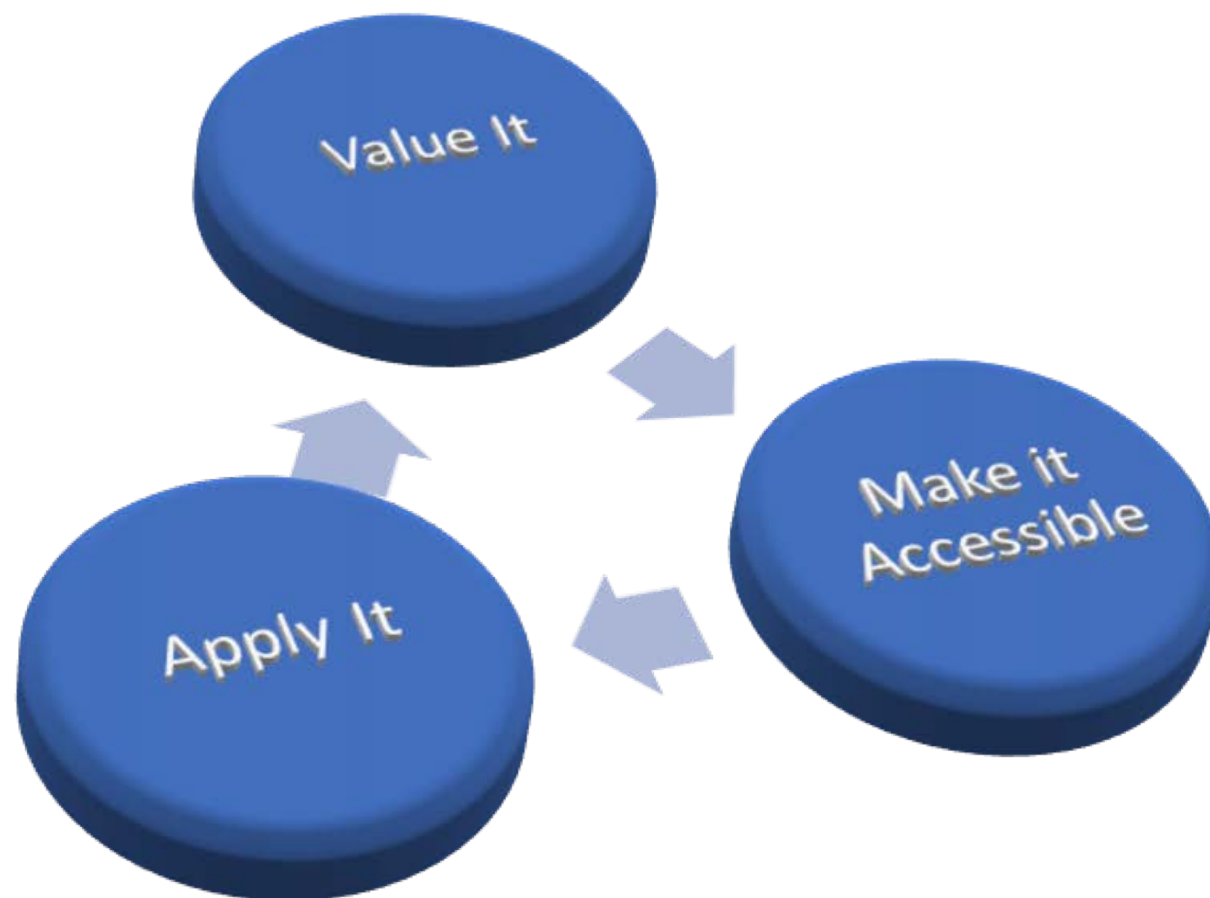
*(Late 20th to
21st Century)*

Research-Based Benefits of Self-Advocacy and Self-Determination

- Students with disabilities have less SA/SD skills than peers;
- SA/SD can be influenced by interventions; and
- SA/SD have significantly positive impacts on educational and life outcomes



PL Self-Advocacy/Determination Recommendations



PL Self-Advocacy/Determination Publications

Find More Resources at
www.ncld.org/selfadvocacy



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for Students With Disabilities in the Era of
Personalized Learning**

by the National Center for Learning Disabilities

**Self-Advocacy Skills and Self-Determination
in Personalized Learning**
Considerations for Families and Communities

Personalized learning (PL) offers students more decision-making authority over where, when, and how learning takes place and is demonstrated. For students with disabilities to succeed in personalized settings, they must learn, practice, and develop strong self-advocacy skills and self-determination (SA/SD), which have been shown to improve educational and life outcomes. Families and communities can support students in the development of SA/SD by helping them understand themselves, explore their interests, and practice SA/SD, and by advocating for students' inclusion in meetings (such as IEP and transition meetings) where decisions are made about their education and lives.

1 DEFINING KEY TERMS

Personalized learning is a process in which students' learning experiences are tailored to their individual needs, skills, and interests, enabling them to take ownership of their learning.

Self-determination is a dispositional characteristic that enables a person to act in service of freely chosen goals and make or cause things to happen in their own life.

Self-advocacy skills include understanding yourself, your rights, and your needs, and communicating that understanding—leading to self-determination.

ADVICE FROM PARENTS:
"Parents of children with disabilities—children like my daughter—strive day and night to secure the resources they need to grow and develop. But as she matures, we also must ensure that she is equipped and empowered to identify her own strengths, skills, and interests, and that she's able to self-advocate for learning opportunities that will help her determine her own path and achieve her dreams."
—Karla Phillips, Policy Director, Personalized Learning, Excellence and parent of a child with a disability


**Self-Advocacy Skills and Self-Determination in Personalized Learning
Considerations for Policymakers**

Not Encouraging Student Self-Advocacy
What students need is...

Encouraging Self-Advocacy
How can we think together about creating a more student-centered system?

TO HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP SA/SD IN PLS, YOU CAN:

1. **Adopt a strengths-based approach to PL by emphasizing student development of SA/SD skills.** Example: Adopt a definition of strengths-based Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) through reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
2. **Provide students with opportunities to practice skills associated with SA/SD.** Example: Adopt policies that allow students to receive academic credit for out-of-school learning opportunities that meet high standards of rigor including quality service and work-based learning experiences.
3. **Make sure students have meaningful options and choices by emphasizing accessibility in education.** Example: You can provide incentives for schools that adopt the principles of Universal Design for Learning in reform efforts.
4. **Incorporate measures of SA/SD into the evaluation of student, educator, and school success.** Example: Adopt capstone requirements, performance assessments and school climate surveys that measure self-advocacy skills and self-determination in students.



**SELF-ADVOCACY SKILLS AND
SELF-DETERMINATION IN
PERSONALIZED LEARNING**
**CONSIDERATIONS FOR
SCHOOL COUNSELORS**

AMERICAN SCHOOL COUNSELOR ASSOCIATION
National Center for Learning Disabilities

Meet Elijah



Panelists

Will Marsh

Student

St. Joseph's University

Amanda Fitzgerald

Director of Public Policy

American School Counselor Association

Joey Hunziker

Program Manager

Innovation Lab Network, CCSSO

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Questions???



Everyone Has a Role to Play!!!



EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY ACTIONS TO ADVANCE SELF-DETERMINATION IN PERSONALIZED LEARNING SYSTEMS

It will take more than educators and policy-makers alone to bring our empowering and inclusive vision of personalized learning to fruition. All stakeholders in the education system play a role in making it a reality. Students must believe in the importance of these skills. Families can help students develop confidence and think more deeply about their learning needs and goals. Community partners can work with schools to provide students real-world experiences that nurture self-determination. Teachers can confront their own biases and dispel stigma.

Here are 10 steps that – when taken as part of a collaborative effort by all stakeholders – can promote self-advocacy skills and self-determination for all students:

Students: Take ownership. Consider your current capacity, use a personalized learning plan to set goals, engage in IEP and transition meetings, and learn more about your disabilities and rights.

Families: Learn from educators how you can support the school's efforts to help your student develop self-advocacy skills and self-determination. Participate in meetings with your child's school and voice your support for instruction that helps students develop self-advocacy skills and self-determination. Work collaboratively with teachers to provide students real-world opportunities to advocate for their own needs and preferences.

Employer and Community Partners: Work with schools to provide rigorous and relevant work-based and service-learning opportunities that give students ways to practice the skills required for competent, independent and effective lives.



EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY

Teachers: Provide explicit instruction on self-advocacy skills and self-determination and use tools and assessments to gauge your students' progress.

School Counselors: Work with students and teachers to develop personalized learning plans, emphasizing positive experiences that encourage developing self-advocacy skills and self-determination.

School Leaders: Adopt peer and adult mentoring programs in your school that support students with disabilities in personalized learning efforts as they develop these abilities.

School District Administrators: Ensure that commitment to Universal Design for Learning is built into your procurement process, and communicate this priority to your vendors.

Higher Education Partners: Expand the nation's capacity to support self-advocacy skills and self-determination by making these values an important part of training for teachers and leaders.

State Policymakers: Adopt policies that allow students to receive academic credit for out-of-school learning opportunities that meet high standards of rigor.

Federal Policymakers: Emphasize the importance of self-advocacy skills in the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, through the definition of strengths-based Individualized Education Programs.



What will YOU do?

Let us know by e-mailing
policy@ncld.org



Closing Thoughts

Winsome Waite

Vice President of Policy to Practice
Alliance for Excellent Education



Thank you!

