

JANET SLOAND: Good afternoon, everyone. I really want to extend a very warm, happy welcome to all of you for our annual Low Incidence Summer Institute. And this welcome is coming on behalf of not just the PaTTAN System of which I'm one of the three directors, but also the Bureau of Special Education and the Department of Education. Every year for the past almost 13 or 14 years, we've been convening a Summer Institute directed specifically to the needs of our students and their teachers and families who have what are called or what are considered Low Incidence Disabilities. And one of the things I think we really need to be thinking about when we talk about our students that have Low Incidence Disabilities, low numbers of kids, that while they maybe low in their numbers, they are significantly important and large in their needs. And so we really believe that the investment that we make in this week-long institute is so critical. So I really want to -- I'm so excited because every year we see some of the same faces, but this year, I'm also very thrilled to see so many new young faces because you are the future of our service provision for our students that have Low Incidence Disabilities. There's about 450 of you here and you represent parents who are always, always thrilled to have a part of our conference. We have school leaders here. We have therapists. And we have educators and school leaders. And I think that that really speaks very highly about the commitment that you are making that -- so that you are all working together to improve results for students. The education that we provide to students is just -- is critical. But unless it makes changes happen, unless that it improves their outcomes, we are not doing our job to the degree that we need to. This year, we have a number of strands. I'm just going to talk briefly about them. We have a strand for students who are visually impaired or blind. We have a strand on -- for students who have deafness or hard of hearing. We have a strand for students who have traumatic brain injury, students who have deafblindness. And then we have strands specifically related to what we call Great Start which is helping our very youngest kids get off to a great start after they've been identified with a sensory impairment. We have strands related -- sessions related to Adapted Physical Education because again, we know that for so many of our students, their ability to move and participate in Physical Education is critical and, really, that they need all the support that they can have in that regard. We also have sessions related to Assistive Technology because we know that for many of our students, Assistive Technology holds the key for them to be able to demonstrate what they know and are able to do and to be actively engaged in the learning process. And this year, we're also very excited to begin a new project called Project MAX which is looking at how to help school teams and intermediate units, make sure that they're providing standards-aligned grade level instruction to our students who have complex instructional needs. So I really want to thank you for being a part of this conference. I know that it's near the end of your summer for many of you and that you probably would rather be sitting on your back porch or at the beach, but we're very happy that you're willing to take time out to be here with us. Anybody that's ever pulled a conference together knows that the planning begins the day after the conference ends, so I'd like to ask the entire planning committee to stand so that you can get a round of applause. We really do appreciate your expertise and your forethought. Planning committee, please. Well, there's more than that. And I really want to especially thank Nan Rodgers. Nan, please stand. And Becky Fogle. They

have overseen the entire development of the conference and they really pulled together these -- a wide array of needs that our students have. So I really want to thank both of them, you know, very well -- for a job well done. And now, I'm going to turn over to Becky who's going to introduce our keynote speaker. I think you're going to be thrilled to hear from him. He -- yeah, no pressure, Bill. But it should be a really interesting and enlightening keynote, so Becky.

BECKY FOGLE: Thanks, Janet. As Janet said, we're thrilled to have everyone here today. When we were talking about, you know, what would be a good keynote, it's hard to find the right speaker to speak to so many different areas. And I happened to be driving to work one day and I heard the end of a little blurb on the radio about something called Blind Advantage. And the name kind of stuck with me. I thought I'm going to have to do a little more digging and check out what that was about. So I went online and I learned it was the book that you all received when you registered. Yay. And I happened to mentioned to our director, Janet and I was talking her about it. She said, "Oh, I have that book. It's right here in my shelf. I just read it. It's great." And I said, "Well, I'm going to find out a little bit more about this Henderson guy. I'm going to see what I can learn about him." So I got his contact information and chatted with him and set things up and what a great guy. And I tell you what, if there's anybody that can talk to us about perseverance and the importance of treating everyone equally and not letting someone tell you, "You can't do something." I mean, I think he's our guy. So he asked me not to go into a lot of droning on about his educational accomplishments and CV and the like, so I will respect that and not do that, but please join me in welcoming a wonderful, wonderful guy, Dr. William Henderson.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Here you go, put in your pocket.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Put it in my pocket. Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone.

AUDIENCE: Good afternoon.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: I need to hear you better, so I know where you are. Good afternoon.

AUDIENCE: Good afternoon.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Being blind, I guess I can say I'm a low incidence guy or LIG for short, L-I-G. And I thought I'd start out by sharing some humor because "Laughter is Good," L-I-G. And some funny anecdotes that I have found frequently happen to me being blind. I know when I travel, getting in and out of the restrooms at airports is quite interesting, the labyrinths and the maze of things going on. And occasionally, I try and listen for somebody and follow them. But there are times that I follow people into a stall instead of getting out. I go to my local YMCA a lot, you know, working out on machines or swimming in the pool. It is somewhat embarrassing when I go into a shower that is also being occupied by somebody else. And sitting at tables like this, I had Becky on my side, but sometimes my wife's on the side and she gets up, goes around and takes pictures without letting me know and there had been occasions I put my hands in somebody's thigh and it wasn't my wife's. But -- and I started out with this

because once I became blind, I mean we all find ourselves in funny, humorous situations. I do believe though that having a low incidence disability, if you are going to be out and about, you're going to have some other probably more funny situations. And there are two ways of responding to that. Obviously, when they happen, I don't feel like laughing. I'm embarrassed. I want to hide, whatever. But at some point, we have a choice, those of us who have low incidence or those of you who have children or work with kids of low incidence, you know, getting out and about at conferences, to McDonald's, to parks, to your faith-based organizations, in school, sometimes funny things are going to happen and the ability to laugh along with and enjoy the humanity and the diversity of our abilities, I think is something important. That's different than laughing at somebody which is we don't want to do. And I also think it's a healthy attitude in schools. I know in the school where I was principal in Boston, a third of our kids had disabilities, two-thirds didn't. No -- nobody was perfect. We all make mistakes. We all find ourselves in funny situations. We have missteps, we need to pick ourselves up, move on and enjoy life. And one thing I want to say for those of you who have children who have disabilities or work with kids with significant disabilities, enjoy them, you know, have some fun with them. Life is short. We want to work hard and maximize growth and development and reading, writing, arithmetic and other skills, but don't forget that people, sometimes enjoying life and having fun is important, too. Now, there's a serious side of low incidence and disabilities. And I certainly encountered this myself. I started teaching in Boston as a substitute teacher. In my 20s, I went for a test with some new equipment to a retina specialist. He told me I had RP. I knew that. He said I might be losing my vision. I said, "Yeah, they told me I'm going to lose it when I'm in my 60s." When you're in your 20s, 60s is like, you know, the end of the universe. And then he said, "No, I think you're going to go blind the next five to fifteen years." So I was speechless. He asked me what I did for a job. I said I was a teacher. And he said, "You need to get out of education." That's wrong to tell someone with low incidence. You can't be part of what you dream and what you're -- you feel you're prepared for. And I bear that information, I was in denial. I'm sure many of you have received similar rejection proclamations by professionals about your children, your students. And I didn't know who to go for advice in because I wasn't going to go back to the medical profession. So I went to an education person, Deputy Superintendent. And now, I've been teaching seven years. I had certification, a master's degree. Our school had gone through major desegregation in Boston and I was helpful in that student council, track coach. And I said to him, "You got some advice what I can do, I might be going blind?" And he said, "You've been working in Boston for seven years." I said, "Yeah." He said, "Hey. No problem. You qualify for disability retirement." That way of dealing with people with low incidence or any disability or any ability, we need to fight against. That's not funny. We need to organize. We need to -- we need to advocate. It's wrong. And all of us need to help each other. And one of the things that's important for me and my life, it was important to meet other people who were blind and dealing with vision loss and learning that there were groups like the National Association of Blind Teachers, National Association of Blind Lawyers, National Association of Blind Scientists, National Association of Blind Entrepreneurs, National Association of Blind Bus Drivers. All right. That last one is a

joke. Laughter is good, LIG. I'm a low incidence guy, so I'll throw some jokes in. But the others were all true. And so one of the things I wanted -- it's really important that for deaf kids, even if they're included to meet other deaf kids and blind kids to meet other blind kids and kids with CP and Osteogenesis Imperfecta. And in fact, this month's newsletter from the Federation for Children with Special needs, the PTI group in Massachusetts, a teenager with a very rare condition, I don't even remember the name, talks about how liberating it was for her to go to a national convention on Facebook connect with other people with her issues. So although I'm going to be promoting inclusion, I'm also want to promote the fact that it's important to connect with other people who are -- have similar issues, the same way it was important for my daughter who's doing breastfeeding now to connect with other women who are breastfeeding and not just speak with their male gynecologist. You get -- okay? Okay. So we don't have to include ourselves all the time. Sometimes, it's good to connect with other people who experience what we experience. So I also want to say it bothered me and got me angry when in Boston in 1980s, and I met a lot of parents who had kids with Cerebral palsy, autism, Down syndrome, multiple disabilities, medical issues. There wasn't one school in the city of Boston that served 12,000 kids with disabilities and another 80 or 90,000 kids without. Not one school where their kids could go and learn together with their non-disabled peers. And -- from kindergarten to fifth grade with the -- there might maybe a Ms. Jones' class or the swimming class or the art class or this class, but not that it was just the norm and that's wrong. And these parents advocated, they organized and they put political pressure on our mayor and city councilors, not just in the school department, but in the people who had the power in the town. And say we demand this, it's our civil rights. And that's how our school started 1989 and we had no idea what we were going to be doing. And part of the reason they gave us our school, it was relatively, physically accessible. They need a whole lot of work because we have old buildings in Boston. There was also a school that have a lot of vacancies because in Boston we have choice and they were -- it wasn't a popular school. And out of the 80 elementary schools, it had test scores near the bottom, so we now had a -- eventually, a third of our kids are going to have disabilities, every kind of disability except kids who were totally deaf. We did have kids with hearing impairments and hearing loss and multiple disabilities, but kids who were totally deaf and use sign as they're primary communication. We'd opt for a school where everybody in the school staff and the students use sign. I'm not saying that deaf kids can't be included, they can, but there has to be a commitment for more than just an interpreter to sign, so that the deaf kids can feel part of the community. In fact, there's a high school in -- near Boston, Newton North High School. It takes -- it's a general high school, but it takes in a lot of deaf kids from not only from their community, but other communities and a -- lots of the kids in the school are learning signs. So it's possible there too. But we had kids with multiple disabilities who graduated from us developmentally working at a level like one or two year olds. We have kids, you know, with autism who -- every disability's a spectra, Down syndrome, blindness, you know, autisms with -- very high functioning, of -- kids with CP and very low functioning. And we had a kid, you're going to see with the Osteogenesis Imperfecta, very advanced and we had a kid with very, very low, basically, welcomed everyone. And what was -- how did

we do. I'm not going to say that every child we took in our school achieved all the success that we would like, we, being staff and/or parents. And indeed, there were some kids whose parents chose to go to other schools and other settings, General Ed kids. But 98% to 99% of our kids with disabilities stayed at our school and did quite well. And over our -- the years, our school, which was one of the lowest performing schools in the city became one of the highest performing schools on the State Assessment, the MCAS. In fact, last year, out of 80 elementary schools, both in English Language, Arts and Math, the school which now has my name was the highest performing school in the City of Boston. Now, what would they be saying if this -- and I don't want to say that test scores are the be all and end all. We also have a very popular school, so parents from all racial, ethnic, linguistic backgrounds, want to come into our school. And kids with and without disability choose this school, long waiting list, very active family involvement, strong Arts Program. But what would they say if our school were near the bottom of the 80 schools in test scores? They'd say, "Well, they got a lot of kids with disabilities. It's got a lot of low incidence students." Lot of LIS kids, right?

AUDIENCE: Yeah. Yeah.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: So guess what we say and the principle says, "Why is the -- why is the school doing so well?" Oh, we got a low -- lot of low incidence students, got a lot of kids with disabilities. That's why we're a better school. We make the school better. Why? Because mediocrity doesn't work. The traditional way of doing things doesn't work. You have to change. And inclusion became the catalyst for whole school change and improvements in our school. And I'm going to briefly talk about three areas we had to change radically what we're doing. You have to become a good school for all kids and inclusion does not exist in a vacuum. So you have to have good general education, good school and all of the -- what the research and common sense tell us what are good schools, but in addition, you got to do some things for inclusion. And I want to talk more about how and less about whether. And I do want to say in -- I want to say right upfront, we did have some kids with disabilities, students who went onto juvenile detention place, student went onto residential place for kids with autism, kid who we -- it wasn't that the kids fail, the teachers fail. It just didn't work. It didn't work out. The kids have make as much progress, but again, 98, 99% percent of our kids with disabilities stayed and did substantially well. That was actually higher percentage than our kids without disabilities and overall, consistently, one of the top performing schools in the district and the state. So how did we do it? Oh, is slide one up already?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

DR. WILLIAM HENDERSON: Can you go to two, culture? We -- all of us, if we're going to have inclusion work, we have to become PHD's, and we cannot be WECHE's. And this is something that is not something that you are one day. It's really kind of like a daily struggle. Each of us, whether we are a parent, a therapist, a university person, a state person, a student can be a PHD or WECHE. So a PHD, when we talk about kids with -- it's not just the language, but we're focusing on the person first. Are we talking about their conditions and all their deficits, all the things they can't do. And there are a lot of things

that could -- folks could've talk about me. I had problems finding my water, I need help getting into the men's room, somebody get me dessert, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah. But that's not how -- that would be demeaning to introduce me that way. But so often -- so often, what happens at IEP meetings, you know, Maria, she's got this condition. She can't do this. She can't do this. She can't do that. If we don't speak up and say -- and most all, is both individual response and policy change. Individually, if you're at that IEP meeting, whether you're a parent -- say -- but Maria does really great with this, this and this. Okay? Be strong. Be courageous. Speak up and let it be known the gifts of that individual, the person-ness of that individual. Not just what their condition is. And a policy change means school community says, when we start our IEP meetings, we start on positives and strengths. When we have teacher-parent conferences, it's three glows and then we talk about the grow. Not just about the kids with low incidence, but for all kids, because guess what, we all have growth areas and we all have things we're doing well. It's actually good common practice when we talk about our spouses or partners, do the glows first when you go home and then talk about the grow; put the cap on the toothpaste, put your dirty dishes away, so a couple of glows first. It's very, very helpful. Good strategy. Okay. That was the policy change. And that meant you hire people and your school's mission statement, you talk -- that's what you do. It means that when you hear in the teachers' room or the staff meeting, a teacher go, "Oh, Johnny, that kid, he never sits down. He's all over the place. He can't spell. His writings are atrocious. He can't" -- well, you're describing someone who has Dyslexia and ADHD. We don't allow people to rant and rave about people publicly because of their color, their language, their gender. Why do we tolerate and allow that to happen? Our people are going to have the courage to speak up. Our school's going to set policies that we are going to be positive. We have growth -- look, we all have tough days with our own kids, with our own students, with our own loved ones, but when you allow that to become a pattern and a norm, that's divisive and corrosive. And if we don't speak up, we're wimpy and we're enablers and that's the start of the W and E for WECHES. Okay? And we have to change our policies that we put right in our job descriptions. People we hire, we celebrate the fact at our school that we have kids who are General Ed, kids with mild, moderate and significant disabilities, kids with intellectual disabilities, we celebrate. That's part of our -- who we are and that's the school's image and face and that makes us stronger and kids considered talented and gifted, by the way, some of the kids talented and gifted, have disabilities and many of them don't. And we -- and that's who we hire. So that it really be -- the same way I think people publicly wouldn't talk disparagingly about race the way we might have 40 years ago. We need to change that culture in our schools, in our communities about the way we talk about low incidence kids and kids with disabilities because it's still happening. And if we don't change this, nothing else matters. It doesn't matter what technology program you have, reading program, it doesn't matter if you can't do and be PHD. It also means the parents. I remember at the beginning of school, somebody said, "How's it going?" One parent said, "I don't know, my daughter seems to like the kindergarten class but she's in a class with a lot of retarded kids." That's the word they use 10 years -- you could've said that she's in a class with a lot of kids with intellectual disabilities. That's when parents have to speak up not just of a -- "Yeah, she's in a

class with Frankie and Maria. Oh, wow, isn't Frankie wonderful? My kids love him. He's coming over for the -- and Maria, they're talking about a kid -- one kid in a wheelchair. Well, I'm like, "Oh, isn't it so terrific?" This is -- individually, people need to share the good news. And by the way, General Ed parents need to speak up and be allies. And share the good news, how wonderful it is that the kids are involved and included. And again, that becomes part of your mission statement, parents come to look at your school. You celebrate. This is who we are, you come to this school, you're going to have kids on a huge spectrum of ability and I -- isn't that wonderful? And diverse ethnic, linguistic and ability backgrounds, isn't that a wonderful education, what we're teaching our kids? So you celebrate all of that and that's the P. And if we don't deal with that negativity, the focus and the limitations, whether it be in the -- in the cafeteria or the teachers' room or at the parent meeting, what we are doing is we're allowing people to lower expectations and we're actually enabling them to abrogate responsibility because if the kids don't do well, it's their fault because that's who they are. You see, we become huge enablers. So we got to be P, focus on the person first. And you know when it's worth when the kids talk about Victoria as the kid, "Oh, yes, she has a new baby sister. She loves chocolate ice cream. She's great in Science. She's -- she writes these incredible stories and she drives a cool wheelchair". You see? That's Victoria. And even with myself, I know with kids, you know, again my, Doctor Deputy Superintendent think I should get out of education. When a blind guy came to my school with a cane, the third graders saw him with a cane, they asked him, "Hey, sir, in what school are you the principal?" You know, when we include it -- I have some of our parents asked the kid -- their -- kids, "Can Santa bring me a wheelchair for Christmas?" Okay. So, you know, it becomes natural and we change the norm. And that's -- and even for something complex -- a -- I remember once in the cafeteria at lunch time, some visitors came around our school and they walked in and the visitors said, "How are things going?" You know, normally, visitors wouldn't interrupt the classroom but this is in a cafeteria and cafeteria's my -- and one kid started going -- again, the visitor goes, "How are things going?" The kid started going, "Fucking good, fucking good, fucking good, fucking good, fucking good." Excuse me, my language, ma'am. Okay. Now, this is a kid who was primarily non-verbal. So we got more language out of him than we normally would. And the adults were, [MAKES NOISE] and another kid said, "Allan, stop that. Stop that. Come on." And he said, you know, Allan -- and then the kid -- this was Chad, now, talking, "Yeah, Allan's a cool kid, you know, he's our classmate, you know", but -- now, it's not easy for me, let alone for a nine year old to explain that someone is on the spectrum with significant Tourette syndrome, okay? It's hard to say -- he said, "You know, Allan's a cool kid, you know, but sometimes, well, you know, he -- you know, he's got one of those swearing disabilities."

BECKY FOGLE: Twenty minutes, Bill.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: How many?

BECKY FOGLE: Twenty minutes.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Twenty minutes. Okay. Oh, good. I could go this way more. All right. So it just -- you know, I'm not denying that there are issues and conditions there but you put them in context. Now, the H is really critical. I think it's the most important variable for -- it's the heart. It's the enthusiasm.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: How the teacher, the principal, the nurse, the secretary, greet you coming in, and then he tell you, "Have any of you felt the cold shoulder because kids have significant disabilities?" I know a school -- we had a kid that had to move to another because of violence in our neighborhood and a shoot -- a [inaudible] was killed and moved to the neighbor -- neighboring suburb. And by the way, our school in Boston is in one of the poorest sections of the city. And so this person moved out and the -- this is a kid with multiple disabilities, medical issues. The principal didn't want the kid in the school, you know, we -- the nurse didn't want -- the school -- there's somewhere else that you got to take her. And I -- and I called up and I asked how things were going, the family said, "The kids are fine. The teacher's fine. The principal won't talk to my kid. And when the nurse, you know, does something with the G-tube, she hardly talks to him and she's like cold." And this is because somebody didn't want somebody. You know, this is in the 21st century. I knew the Superintendent. I called the Superintendent up, I explained the deal. That afternoon at dismissal, the Superintendent was there. As the kid with medical issues came out in front of the principal, she hugged the kid, she said, "Welcome, Avery to our school. We are so happy you're here." And she did that and then she closed the door and she said to that principal and the nurse, you know, "You change your attitude with this kid. You show him the enthusiasm, anybody else or you're out the door." So that heart takes some courage too. Now, it's -- we -- it's okay for people and staff members to say -- to be nervous about working with some of our kids. Hey, I was nervous about blindness and I went blind, you know. You know, so, it's okay not to know. I don't know what to -- you know, Osteogenesis Imperfecta, I haven't even heard of it, you know. What do you do with a kid with fragile -- but then we -- you get over it. We figure it out. You ask some experts. You ask the parents, you figure out the expertise within your school and you work it. So that's okay to be nervous. Some thing else that people do now is they will formally and officially accept the kids but they're in the class but -- you know, there's -- sit over there, don't bother me and I don't bother you. And they don't call on the kid, you know. And it takes -- that needs to be individually -- parents, teacher assistance -- need to speak up and say, "You know, Johnny's a good kid. Why don't you lighten up? Why don't you, you know, invite him to be part of the group? Why don't you welcome him?" And if they don't do that and if they give him the cold shoulder, let the administrative know because it's unacceptable to treat people as if they're pariahs because of how they were born. And we can't allow that to continue and if we do we're CH, we're cool hearted. And that's part of WECHÉ's too. But, Becky, do you have car keys?

BECKY FOGLE: I do.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Would you pass them to me, please? A bigger problem that I cite under the H is a lot of people take kids with disabilities -- I take everybody, I like everybody and I start everybody out the

same way in September or August and I want to see what they can do. You want to see, Becky, what I can do with your car? You want to see what I can do? Just treat everybody the same, we're all God's children. It's nice. Becky, what -- you can't tell me what color but will you lead me to your car the same way you lead me to the urinal before and I'll take it for a test drive? I ruined the poor lady's reputation. If you need to find the urinal, you ask Becky. All right. All right. That is a wreck waiting to happen and I'm going to speak up for a group of kids that is high incidence that we publicly humiliate as educators. These are kids with print disabilities whether they have minor vision impairments but particularly kids with Dyslexia, that we start come out in August and September and we pass out the worksheets and we pass out the books and we go around them and say, read and these are kids that can't read cold that way or struggle or it takes a lot of energy and effort and that's public humiliation. And I know what it's like in Pennsylvania but in Massachusetts, 50% of the kids' in juvenile lockup, have learning disabilities. They have print disabilities. We fail them because we don't provide the accommodation that they need that is their civil right and that doesn't cost a whole lot of money. And guess where it happens worst? In the poorest communities. The data in Massachusetts shows that kids, middle class and upper income far better likelihood of being included and getting accommodation supports and poor kids, they use the excuse that's not even the money. First of all, as many of your leaders here know, frankly, you can get books scan for free so you can either hear them or see them or both. And the equipment that you use to put this on is get -- is not costing much more than your eye glasses or your contacts. How many of you would be great independent leaders without them? And if we don't advocate and fight for the minimal equipment for our kids with significant print disabilities, they can't keep up with the rigor. These kids know when they're in the second grade. We are now asking second grade kids with common core to read more rigorous material, more advanced material, more of it. Before No Child Left Behind, kids with disabilities, their test scores didn't count so we use to say, oh, do your best but if you can't do it -- it's the same way for kids who have significant autism and they're on a positive behavior support plan and we had a kid, you know what -- you -- if you read -- one of our kids, every 15 minutes, we had to give him a reward because he had been through a lot of abuse and other -- and that's not easy to do, to pull off, but if we didn't do that -- he was already kicked out of two schools in kindergarten by November. What do we -- what are we doing? If that's the plan and you don't follow the plan, that's being cool hearted and you're becoming the last E in WECHÉ which is exclusionist. You -- we are, by commission or on mission, working to have that kid either excluded or failed. Now, the D in PHD is determination, pushing kids to do their best and I like the lingo for MAX, because one of the things in our school, disability is an excuse for working hard and doing as much as you can. So we had a requirement that our kids with cognitive delays had us -- had to read as much or be read to for --part of homework, home reading as our most gifted students. Maybe they're reading differently, different material but they have to read or be read to as much. For our kids with mobility impairments had to exercise as much as our top athletes. Our kids with speech and language disorders and social anxieties had to interact as much as our social butterflies. And that takes a lot of energy and push -- and that means there has to be consequence, you know, we have to be careful,

out of well wishing, the hovering teacher, the hovering parent, "Oh, honey, sweetie pie, just do your best", we're talking to an 18 year old with CP who doesn't feel like working. That's no-go. So in my school there were consequences, if the kid with Down Syndrome was lazy all afternoon, didn't do the work, keep him after school. What message do you think that gave to the other kids? Or if the kid with some mobility issues didn't want to exercise at recess, you know, you don't go into lunch yet, you got to do a couple of laps. We'll have a friend doing with you or the teacher, you don't have to do the seven laps, but you got to do two. That's it. Then you can eat, but you had to do this first. And for kids without -- we had a kid, you know, he always want to be first in line so then we need to say, "Okay, today you can be fourth in line." because you don't always want the kid disability to be first in line. That's not life. You got to learn to be last in line and in the middle of the line. Some...

BECKY FOGLE: Back this way, Will...

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Back this way. Thank you.

BECKY FOGLE: You got it. You got it.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: All right.

BECKY FOGLE: You're good.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: I like that. So we all need help in different ways. Good.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Thirty minutes.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: All righty. And so it means that for that kid -- I remember one day, you know, the teacher, substitute teacher forgot to tell him he was going to be fifth in line and he was in front of the line and somebody went in front of him and he boom, he pushed him real hard to the floor, hurt the kid. Disability is not an excuse for hurting kids, you know. The kid was telling me, "It's not in my nature to apologize." Oh. I called the mother, "It's not in his nature to apologize." I said, "Guess what? He's going to be with me until he figures out how to apologize, all right?" And I had a kid, five years old, cerebral palsy, telling -- who would be in a newspaper with the mayor, who had more social adult connections. He's telling the kindergarten teacher, he doesn't have to draw a circle because he have CP. You got to draw the circle. I don't care if you have CP. And you don't get to go out to recess -- now, we didn't take recess as a rule away from kids but sometimes you got -- you got to get your work done before you do the next thing. And so parents and teachers, I'm going to tell you, in the disability community, they'll say paternalism is enemy number one. We're not tough enough. We're not pushing kids with determination, who have disabilities to excel, to max at high levels and if we don't do that we're wimps and that's why we're WECHES instead of PHD's. So are you going to be wimps? Are you WECHES or are you going to be PHD's?

AUDIENCE: PHD's.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: All right. And that's -- we have to remind ourselves. And then now, you can help other people be PHD's. Speak up, don't be cowardly, let people know when you injustices happen. Could we go to the next slide? I want to give some examples of instruction. And you know, now, we have the general curriculum which comes first and this could be Common Core Rigorous High Standards. Everybody's talking about universal design, multiple ways of accessing information, being engaged, showing understanding, special education service is still important, we found technology in the arts that made a huge difference. Let me give you some concrete examples of -- I like to expand some vision. All right. I can -- I can say that. I like to expand it. So these are some stories I've heard of -- from Massachusetts and around the country, and I'm going to -- and I'm going to give some secondary examples too. So the high school student with Down syndrome who's in an Honors English class, they're studying Shakespeare. What's she going to do? Well, she's going to have some simplified versions of Shakespeare either commercially bought or adapted by a special education teacher. Excuse me. She's also going to be listening to the Shakespeare and watching it on a DVD because she's going to learn some actual lines, she's going to be involved in a play. She can join the drama club. In the high school, she can also as the -- work beyond the -- cheerleaders group. She can take a child study. So, there are different ways that she can be included there with a lot of flexibility and creativity. Another kid with intellectual disabilities takes two Physics classes. Okay. And when the teacher is lecturing, he's in the back of the room, either on his own or on a computer working with some simplified material on electricity, you can get programs like a G3000 and all that things that have material from university to kinder to first grade level. Or he's working with the teacher. But he participates in the experiments and he works with that teacher in setting up the labs, collecting materials. It doesn't even need to have another adult there. And by the way, in Delaware, DuPont, the CEO had a kid with intellectual disabilities and they hire a lot of these people. So they can do it at DuPont, can't we figure it out in our labs? And then you have -- in a middle school Math class, you got a kid on the spectrum. And one kid -- because sometimes, in middle schools, the schedules rotate, you get B-A day and B day, C, so you might have Math where it's first period one day and another is the last period. You know, and if it's last period, this kid on the spectrum, he needs a sensory integration break before the end of the day, you know, special room, special activities that's built in, you worked out in advance, you make sure he doesn't miss the important introduction of class, some scheduling needs to happen. He has to have his schedule, you know, pictorially not just what he does for the day as whole, but he likes to know what's happening in this, make it a Math class, going on. And then the speech therapist is working with him, when the teacher makes a mistake or a student makes a mistake, ways he can be more tactful and letting them know that they got the answer wrong, okay? Also allowing him because he doesn't like pencil or paper, so he's working on an iPad, you know, but he's doing his work and guess what? Ten percent of the people at MIT are probably in the spectrum so he's going to be going there, okay? Now, there's another kid in the Math class who's on the spectrum who's cognitively very low and it's a middle school but they're doing Algebra. I personally, don't push -- oh, who did I smack?

BECKY FOGLE: It's Becky. It's okay.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Oh, the right person. Okay. Thank you.

BECKY FOGLE: Yeah, it's okay. It's okay.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: I personally don't put a whole lot of energy and for kids with significant intellectual disabilities in Abstract Mathematics and Quadratic Equations. I mean, my rule of thumb is you try kids out and you see what they can do but at some point, it emerges, you know. And so what do you do there in that Math class? He's going to be working in the back of the room with another adult teacher aide or -- and some more functional, simplified Math. Or if we want to include him, we can also have that student involved, if the Math class comes around lunch time, working in the school's store in the cafeteria where they're selling real items like pencils and yoyos and erasers and notebooks with money and he's dealing with the public doing this. Or in my school where I was sure I didn't want to do the supply closet neither did the -- and neither did the secretary. I had the OT and speech therapist, get a group of kids with more significant intellectual disabilities, they counted all the pencils, they categorized them and when teachers made the request, they took them to classrooms and they socially had to know what to say or they had a communication box to say it. So, there are creative things we can do there. And in instruction, we can have -- you can have -- if -- for Physical Education, you're going to see in just a minute a girl with brittle bones talking about skiing. And Victoria, who I mentioned before, the girl with cerebral palsy, we pushed her to exercise. She -- we're actually hiring her next year to work as a teacher aide and she hopes to go to graduate school. So we push those kids and we're creative and flexible in a way. So, we're involving them. The girl with brittle bones is not outside when you're using the hard soccer ball or soft, the, you know, the baseball or softball because her bones will break, but you find other ways to involve her in activities and sometimes use an earth ball and you work things out. She's going to talk about skiing. And Honors English -- in Honors History class, the kids with print disabilities. You know, the blind kid or the kid with significant Dyslexia should be doing all the same readings. We don't make it easier. That's being a WECHER, it's wimping out. We need a PHD, we push them to do that honors work, read everything but they're reading it multimodal either text and speech or braille and speech but they -- the expectation, they keep up and they might need -- the kid with Dyslexia might need help with the notes, but by the way, he has gifts and I want to talk about -- we're talking about LIG, low incidence guy, laughter is good, low incident gifts. That kid, you know, with the learning disabilities is exceptionally good at murals and drawing and he's doing a historical mural on American history which other kids are involved in. And by the way, he also can be on the school's football team and one of the vice presidents of the class. But being creative and thinking about -- and this takes technology, it takes the arts and takes teaming and problem solving which I'm going to talk about next. But basically, our rule of thumb, there is no formula out there for our kids with disabilities. You're right. Right on, the kid who made the noise. There's -- I can't -- no one can tell you this is exactly what you're going to do with Johnny. We don't know. You try anything out, anything that works as long as it is humane and legal, anything. And if it works, you

go with it. And guess what, sometimes what works in September may not work in December. And sometimes what works in the morning doesn't work in the afternoon. And isn't it the same way with our loved ones? Okay? But we just need to bring in all the expertise to figure out. And I want to show you a video clip of this girl who is -- talks about skiing. This is a second-grader. We have a writing curriculum, Six Traits. They're supposed to be working on voice and rubrics. And she doesn't write with a regular pencil and paper but she gets her story out. And then we're going to go in and show how we use the arts also to teach learning about bones, to learn about literature, learn about history. Want to roll it? It's a three-minute video.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yup.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you. Nice and loud. Where do I sit, Becky?

BECKY FOGLE: Over this way. Right here is your chair. Right there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: And we're at 39 minutes.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Okay. Good.

[VIDEO BEGINS]

CHILD: As there are peoples with disabilities are people who can't walk or see, and so everybody can ski no matter what. Do you...

[VIDEO ENDS]

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Stop the PowerPoint if you can.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Okay. So, well -- what -- this was the interesting thing in our school. We had no idea -- when you're ready, let me know. I'm just filling. We had no idea -- we had no idea what we were going to do in 1989. We start -- and fortunately, very special arts, my deputy superintendent said -- not the one who told me not to get out of education, a different one. He said "Why don't you..."

[VIDEO BEGINS]

CHILD: As there are peoples with disabilities...

WILLIAM HENDERSON: ...know, get into very special arts -- oh, here we go.

CHILD: ...are people who can't walk or see. And so everybody can ski no matter what. Do you know how you go up the mountain? You go on a special ride called a ski lift. It takes you up the mountain so you can ski down the hill. I was nervous but I got over it. I felt so alive. The wind felt cool on my face. I felt excited and jiggy. I said to myself "I can do this." And I did. My dad and brothers have been skiing for a long time, and now, it's my turn. When I sat in the sit ski, I felt special. And now the adventure begins. I went back six times that day. Sometimes my dad pushed me and sometimes my brothers did. Every time I had a blast. And can you believe this? I thought it was even better than shopping.

CHILD: Mandible, clavicle, spine, pelvis.

CHILD: Mr. Warbucks is giving out a \$50,000 worth...

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Kids with learning disabilities.

CHILD: ...to the couple who can prove that they are Annie's parents.

CHILD: \$50,000.

[VIDEO ENDS]

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay, stop, 15 minutes.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: It was a good video? Did you like it?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Oh, yeah.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Yeah. The amazing thing is we turned to the arts because we had no idea what to do with these kids with significant disabilities. And so we have these visiting artists come in. And then it forced us to look at the artist that the system provided and they weren't, you know, one of them said they don't work with those kids, so we changed the job description and we only hired dance teachers, and -- that would work with those kids. All right? You know, so we want people who are going to work with everybody and collaborate with special need teachers and therapists to figure out how to involve kids in dance, in drums, and drama. And that art which was essential for the kids with disabilities, the technology which we needed to do for kids to access the curriculum, kids with disabilities. Guess what, it may -- teaching and learning are far more engaging for the kids without disabilities. So, it was -- it was the catalyst, as I said. We need to change our culture. And now we had to change our instruction with kids with low incidence and other disabilities. And it made the teaching and learning better for everybody particularly the talent-gifted kids, you know. And because in Boston they had an opportunity, the fourth grade, of going to talented and gifted schools, you know, and the parents would all stay, because it was richer and they like the inclusion because inclusion is about teaching down, inclusion is teaching up. It's teaching creatively. It's taking every kid and taking them higher. And working towards those common core standards and if those standards are too low and if you have a kid in the fifth grade reading at the eleventh grade, give him eleventh grade reading. Why? You know, and if you have a kid in the fifth grade who -- intellectual, let's say, give him something at a second grade level. But they're all reading about famous characters. They're all reading about desserts. They're just doing it differently. The final area that I'd like to talk about is that -- that forced us to change is how we became a team. We had to become a problem-solving team. Did you put the last one on, Timmy?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-hmm.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: All right. Thank you. Because you can't do inclusion with kids unless you do the inclusion with the adults. And the inclusion with the adults in some ways was trickier. And before I

get to the staff, I just want to give a shot how wonderful our parents were. It was their advocacy that got our school going. You know, and we started -- we had very few resources. And they bailed us out in so many ways. And here are some ways that parents helped. And it was parents of kids with disabilities, parents of kids without and it was parents of kids with disabilities doing things that benefit kids without disabilities and parents of kids without -- so, it's like we're helping each other, make the school better for everybody because we're here together. So, it wasn't just one group focusing on their issue and this is the disabled and that's the non-disabled, you know. This is the low incidence issue, this is whatever, you know, we're doing it together to benefit all kids and knowing who they are by name. We found we had a problem in our school in reading, and a lot of our kids weren't reading at home for a variety of reasons, poverty, disability, different languages. So, we started a home visitation with parents and particularly trying to get -- change the situations to help parents to read or read more with their kids, which is critical. And now, we're going on with technology programs that both support reading. We have achieved 3,000 in different Math individualized programs, because what we -- we don't have enough time during the school day to do all that we need to do. Parents are the primary educators and we have to figure out how to help each other to help the kids. And so, we had parents coordinate on a whole lot of that, and providing support. And sometimes the issues for a family was they're just three kids, they were alone, and just getting them through supper and into bed was hard. So, coming up with strategies at how you could do some reading mom with the three kids and how important that was. And our participation in home reading on a regular basis went from 50% up to 98% and it's a huge part of our development there. Our school day was only six hours in Boston, we're shortchanging kids, nine to three. A lot of kids with low incidence didn't have the same access to recreational facilities. So, our parents with at the time, Department of Mental Retardation, wrote some grants and started an after-school program, an inclusive after-school program. But one that was welcoming kids with disabilities. And probably 90% of our first to fifth graders participate at least one day a week and we'd have to charge sliding fee scale and we don't have, you know, a lot of resources for this and we used parents and staff, members, and bring people in from the community and retired folks. But it's a wonderful way of extending the learning and they were also on our school site council and writing job descriptions and talking about our school's mission, and our priorities, and our budgets, and our advocacy. And it's why there's now a pathway for middle and a high school. It's because of parents and their advocacy. You know, professionals can only do so much. Parents can push a lot harder of their elected officials. So, we need that strength and that advocacy there to make it work. We had our kids collaborating. And I'm very suspect here because a lot of time when people talk about peer tutoring program in schools, what are they talking about? They're talking about how the normal kids helped the handicapped. I hate that. I hate help the handicap. But yeah, do the handicap, "Need some help sometimes?" Sure, we do. But the kids with disabilities, they need to be helping too. And so, you, if you have little kids, there are jobs they should be doing at home and chores. And when they go to school, help in their class. And in our school every third, fourth and fifth grader, I needed so much help. When kids with disabilities were expected do this one day a week, give up a lunch

and recess, they still got D. When the secretary went to lunch, I had nobody to answer the phone and open the door, you know. We took three fifth graders, one without -- with the disability and two without, and they were busy sorting mail, run and getting -- picking up -- the kindergarten can answer the door. Sometimes, they made some mistakes, you know, but they learn. We had kids taking around, picking up the recycling. We only had one custodian. He had a sore back. He's getting tired, so he did the trash with the kids doing the recycling, going around with a cart, picking up. We had them helping out in the classrooms of younger kids. That girl who wrote about skiing, when they played with a hard soccer ball, she went with a friend and she went in a classroom and helped with writing. Wasn't she an excellent writer for then an eight, nine-year-old? She helped kids develop their writing. How powerful was that? That girl with such brittle bones that if she rolled over in bed could break her leg, and she is teaching, inspiring other students in showing them how to write.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's 50 minutes.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Fifty. So, you know, the kids were involved and then of course, we meant the staff. And people say, "Well, how much staff do you have?" And I'm going to be the first one to say I don't believe that our federal government or our state is giving us enough resources that we really should have, education being a priority. But even -- given what we got, I still want to go -- I'm not saying I'm happy with that. And we need to advocate more. You know, when I hear politicians, one of them was the governor of our state who ran, saying that class size doesn't matter for little kids. Yeah, invite Governor Romney, invite 25 five-year-olds over to your house for just 2 hours alone, your wife can't be there, nor the dog. And tell me class size doesn't matter. And then you're sending your kids to a school that's only got 12 kids in the class. But be then as it may, we have to advocate for inclusive resources. I know in the city of Boston for kids with the most significant disabilities who might be served in classrooms with substantial separate classrooms with seven kids, a teacher, and two teacher assistants. They're spending \$20,000 a kid on just teacher cost. So, if I got 30 of those kids, I'm demanding 30 times 20, 600,000. That's budget neutral. Doesn't cost any more. And with that 600,000, maybe we can get, you know, eight or nine teachers or maybe we want to get 20 teacher aides or some combination of the above. But make sure we advocate -- and the kids coming out of private places, and cost a district a hundred grand, you know, advocate for 50. And then we're saving money in transportation and other administrative cost. But we have to get more astute that way. And budget directors have never advocated. What's trickier than how many people you have in the classroom? It's how are they being used. Are they teaming? You know. So, if you have the general ed teacher over there with most of the kids and you'll have the inclusion corner over there with a SPED teacher. That'd be like Rosa Parks in all that effort and bus boycott. And then they have the integration section on the bus. But we allow that to happen in many schools. And be weary other people that say "My SPED kids. They're so -- they're so cute and so wonderful." They're your kids. And SPED is a stigma in school. We talk about it for data purposes. But if you went to a bunch of kids and say "Who here is SPED?" They're all ducking and hiding, including me. So, that's not helpful language. Now, we need to counteract that image by doing

some disability awareness and showing the contributions and the gifts and talents of people with autism and Down syndrome and cerebral palsy and we do that in our literature, we -- that we read, the stories that we tell, the history we look at, and the people we invite into our classrooms. And I want to tell you, I found -- I had to find -- I had to bring in to our school what, you know, younger people with significant learning disabilities. Every time they talk to our kids, after that, kids felt that, you know, I read and write like the Derek, you know, a poet, a playwright, and someone with significant dyslexia. Now, they have kids say that, I had some staff members come and admit it to me. You know, "I'm like the Derek too," because there's still the shame. We need to take it out of the closet and we shouldn't be embarrassed about disability. You know, celebrate the gifts. There's a conference going on right now, you know, the -- I don't know, The Center for Dyslexia and Creativities. See, how it's changing? And Harry Belafonte and the Council for Exceptional Children or Daley Boldens [ph], Harry Belafonte is going to a haven and he's dyslexic. But higher percentage of creativity, higher percentage of entrepreneurs have dyslexia, higher percentage of inventors have -- are on the spectrum, higher percentage of people with emotional issues are great actors. Okay? So, let's figure out and help people get there. But getting back to this teaming. So, the problem is it's -- people have to work together for all kids. Any one of the SPED teacher or the speech therapists is coming and then working primarily with Becky, where are you Becky?

BECKY FOGLE: Right here.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Okay. You're also going to go over and check on Frank. Are you still here, Frank?

FRANK: Yes. I'm still here.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: And the other people here and check on their writing too. So, you're not stigmatizing, Becky.

BECKY FOGLE: Thank you

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Oh, I messed it up.

FRANK: Here you go. Here you go.

BECKY FOGLE: Oh, here. Here.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We found you.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Okay.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We've got about five minutes.

DR. WILLIAM HENDERSON: And five minutes.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yeah. Here we go.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Good. So, thank you very much. And you're doing it in a sensitive way, and by the way, I use a speech therapist in our OT. It's everybody. You need everybody. Our custodian, I use for behavior modification, you know, the kid with Down syndrome want to do his work. If he did his work, you know, you can't give a 12-year-old happy faces, you know, because they've gone onto different things. So, you know, he -- we -- what did he like, what was it? He wanted to push the cart around with Joe at the end of the day. So, if he finished 10 work assignments, he got to do that. We went from 20%, you know, performance rate to 90% performance. And every afternoon he pushed the cart around as Joe collected the trash and he's saying "Happy trails," and everybody knew him. And now the kid, Chuck, is working for the city hall and he's doing recycling and work there. Okay? So, it was the whole school has to be -- and secretaries are critical and when kids come up who, you know, bring the attendance and they don't talk traditionally, you know, they have to use their communication device and say "Good morning," and "How are you?" and you don't let them go back and you say "Where are you going?" and they have to find, "I'm going back to room 10." So, you got to have these plans that everybody isn't bored and, you know, and this means the speech therapist sometimes, we need you at -- in the cafeteria, what a great place to practice speech versus your closet, okay? So, they -- so -- and they say "Well, I'm a pathologist. I don't work in a cafeteria." Well, guess what, if you want to work at this school, you're working in the cafeteria, okay? You can bring some other kids to the closet afterwards. Okay? And you know I've been helping out at dismissal. Toileting, you know, we have a lot of kids. You can't put it all on one pad. What if the parent is sick? "Okay. Can't come to school today. We don't have -- Mr. Toilet's not here." Okay? You know, so we put in our -- everybody worked in our school because we had a lot of kids with physical issues, had to be available to assist with toileting. But they didn't want to assist, we didn't want them. Now, I'm not saying you're going to get that in every school. But you can -- if you're going to include kids with disabilities, you can't just have one person there to do something. You have to have a few people who are there ready to go. And we have to do it in a way -- actually, you know, and the -- and the kids can help each other out, but there's some things, as adults, you have to do. And it's interesting that how we improve staff -- wait, five minutes? Three?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Uh-hmm. A couple. Yeah.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Two. Two things that were really critical, looking at student work where in writing, in Math, reading, we would look at some -- we'd look at a kid, a high performing kid, average. A couple of kids -- one kid needing accommodations, one needing modifications. And we also started visiting each other's classrooms. That was the most powerful professionals [inaudible] trying being committed to figure it out for every kid within the school and what we didn't know going to the district, going to our state leaders, going to universities, you know, going on the Internet, trying anything that worked. And many teachers having to get over their personal agendas, well, his voice is too loud and she's wearing pants that are too tight and talking about the adult issues. And sometimes, we have

legitimate questions. I had to deal as a blind principal with some other teachers who have said that the young -- one young teacher had pants that were too tight. Let me tell you, I had to deal with that. It was not an easy one to figure out. I never had to deal with cleavage though, all right. In school. All right. But, finally, I do want to -- that -- what was easier than school than me trying to figure out any of your personal relationships, you know, was that, there is a rule of thumb. Because some people say, "Well, this kid with low incidence, we think the mumbo jumbo methods are best." Somebody said "Well, I think it's the rumba dumba method." Okay. Okay. And they don't do the -- Okay. Guess what, we'll try the mumbo jumbo for four weeks and we'll try the rumba dumba and we'll see which one the kid does better. Whatever works best for the kid, that's where we're going. And finally, for the last slide, we have to celebrate our successes. We know there are problems in Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, the United States, particularly in our city in poor class communities, lower class neighborhoods. But in every one of those neighborhoods that I mentioned, there are great things happening. Find a good kindergarten teacher. Let it be known. Get the good news out. Go to your local cable TV station. Go to the newspaper. Talk about them on the talk radio. Don't let the media dominate the bad news about education and the bad news about public servants. We know there are some illegal lazy perverts in public service but it's not the majority of folks out there. We need to get the good news that it's working because part of how inclusion is going to happen is continuous hard work and we need to -- we've come a long way since the 1970s. We got a long way to go before we get to the 2050s. But it's finding out what's working well, celebrating it, trying to replicate it and keep helping each other get there. So, I wish you all in your conference, keep helping each other.

BECKY FOGLE: Right over here. To the left. A little bit further.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Can I [inaudible] some time?

BECKY FOGLE: Yup. Right there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Nice work there.

WILLIAM HENDERSON: Thank you.