



## Combating Racism in Teacher Education

Webinar 1:  
Why Discussing Race is an  
Essential Skill for Educators

January 25, 2020

# Housekeeping

01

Option to Select  
Closed Captioning

02

Use Chat Box to  
network and share  
reactions and  
reflections

03

Use Q&A to submit  
formal questions you  
would like addressed  
by the panel

# Panel



Dr. Erica McCray



Dr. Kent McIntosh



Dr. Rebecca Zumeta Edmonds

# Agenda

- Historical Context: Dr. Erica McCray
- School Discipline: Dr. Kent McIntosh
- Special Education: Dr. Rebecca Zumeta Edmonds
- Q & A with panel





Take a moment to observe your thoughts to this question:

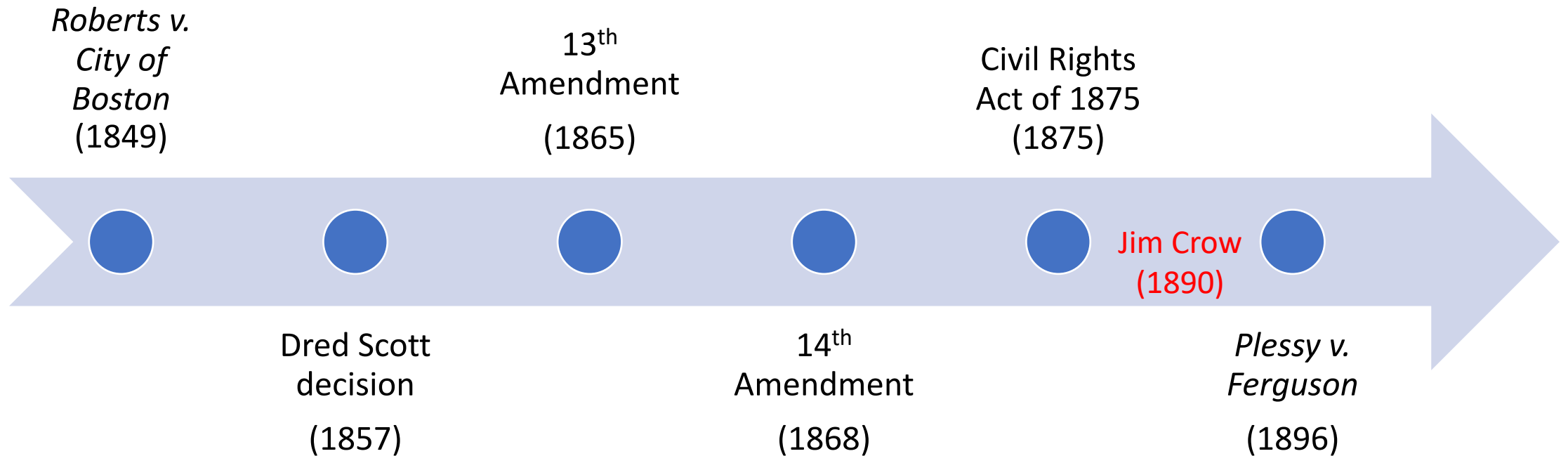
How do you feel (physically and emotionally) when you discuss race with others?

While you watch this video, use the chat box to share

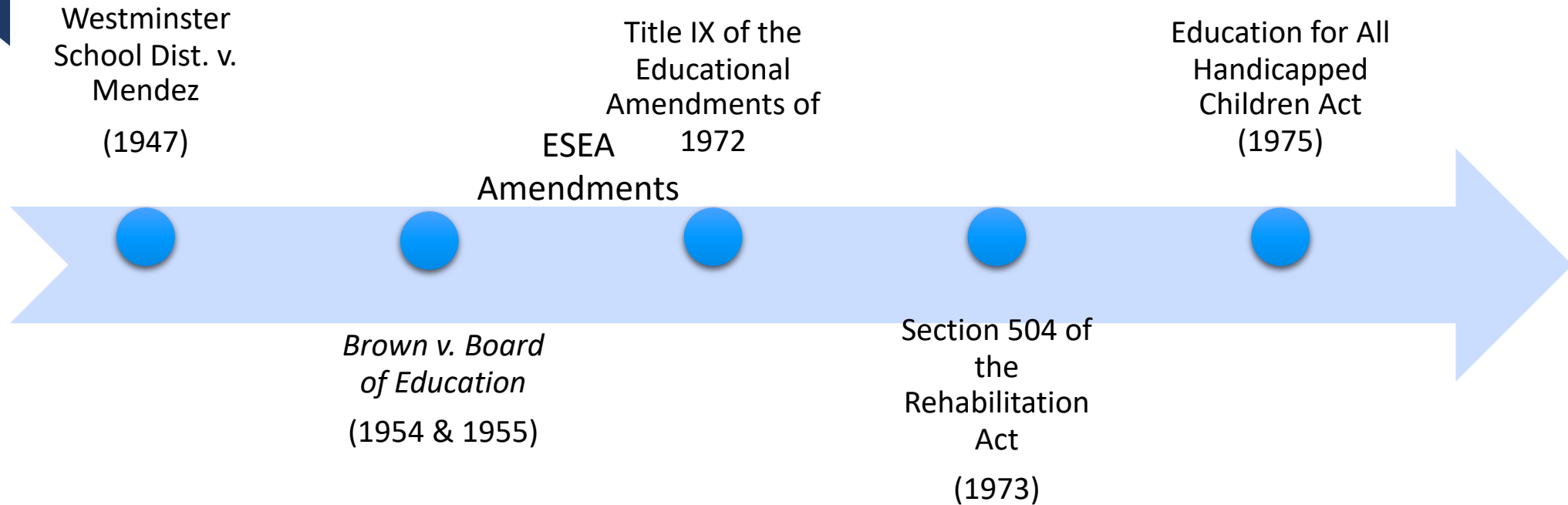
- anything that resonates
- A new question or topic of inquiry you now have after watching this video



# Contextualizing the issue(s)



# Contextualizing the issue(s)



# Special Education for the Mildly Retarded—Is Much of It Justifiable?

**A Preface** *In lieu of an abstract to this article, I would like to preface it by saying this is my swan song for now—as I leave special education and this country for probably the next two years. I have been honored to be a past president of The Council for Exceptional Children. I have loyally supported and promoted special classes for the educable mentally retarded for most of the last 20 years, but with growing disaffection. In my view, much of our past and present practices are morally and educationally wrong. We have been living at the mercy of general educators who have referred their problem children to us. And we have been generally ill prepared and ineffective in educating these children. Let us stop being pressured into continuing and expanding a special education program that we know now to be undesirable for many of the children we are dedicated to serve.*

A better education than special class placement is needed for socioculturally deprived children with mild learning problems who have been labeled educable mentally retarded. Over the years, the status of these pupils who come from poverty, broken and inadequate homes, and low status ethnic groups has been a checkered one. In the early days, these children were simply excluded from school. Then, as Hollingworth (1923) pointed out, with the advent of compulsory attendance laws, the schools and these children “were forced into a reluctant mutual recognition of each other.” This resulted in the establishment of self contained special schools and classes as a method of transferring these “misfits” out of the regular grades. This practice continues to this day and, unless counterforces are set in motion now, it will probably become even more prevalent in the immediate future due in large measure to increased racial integration and militant teacher organizations. For example, a local affiliate of the National Education Association demanded of a local school board recently that more special classes be provided for disruptive and slow learning children (Nashville *Tennessean*, December 18, 1967).

The number of special day classes for the retarded has been increasing by leaps and bounds. The most recent 1967-

## Special Education and the Inner City: A Challenge for the Future or Another Means for Cooling the Mark Out? JOHN L. JOHNSON, Ed.D. Syracuse University

The general body of special education is proceeding along the course of “special education and programs for disadvantaged children and youth” (Tanenbaum, 1968) with assistance from 15 percent of Titles I and III, all of Title VI, P.L. 88-164, and more recently from EPDA. These efforts have the clear support of the special education establishment.

In spite of research and clinical evidence which show that current models of general education are less than successful, efforts continue to be directed toward the establishment of a parallel and separate school structure called special education. The indictment against the general educational enterprise includes special education, for it is both passive and active in perpetuating the present conditions of inequality, failure, and the rendering of impotence, especially in the inner city.

The inner city itself is a problem which is deeply imbedded in America, but for no one is the problem more severe than for professional educators. Education, and special education in particular, faces a major challenge in the coming decade. Whether to take up the challenge or to continue business as usual is the major question to be considered in this paper. This question has political, social, psychological and educational ramifications.

### Who and what are we talking about?

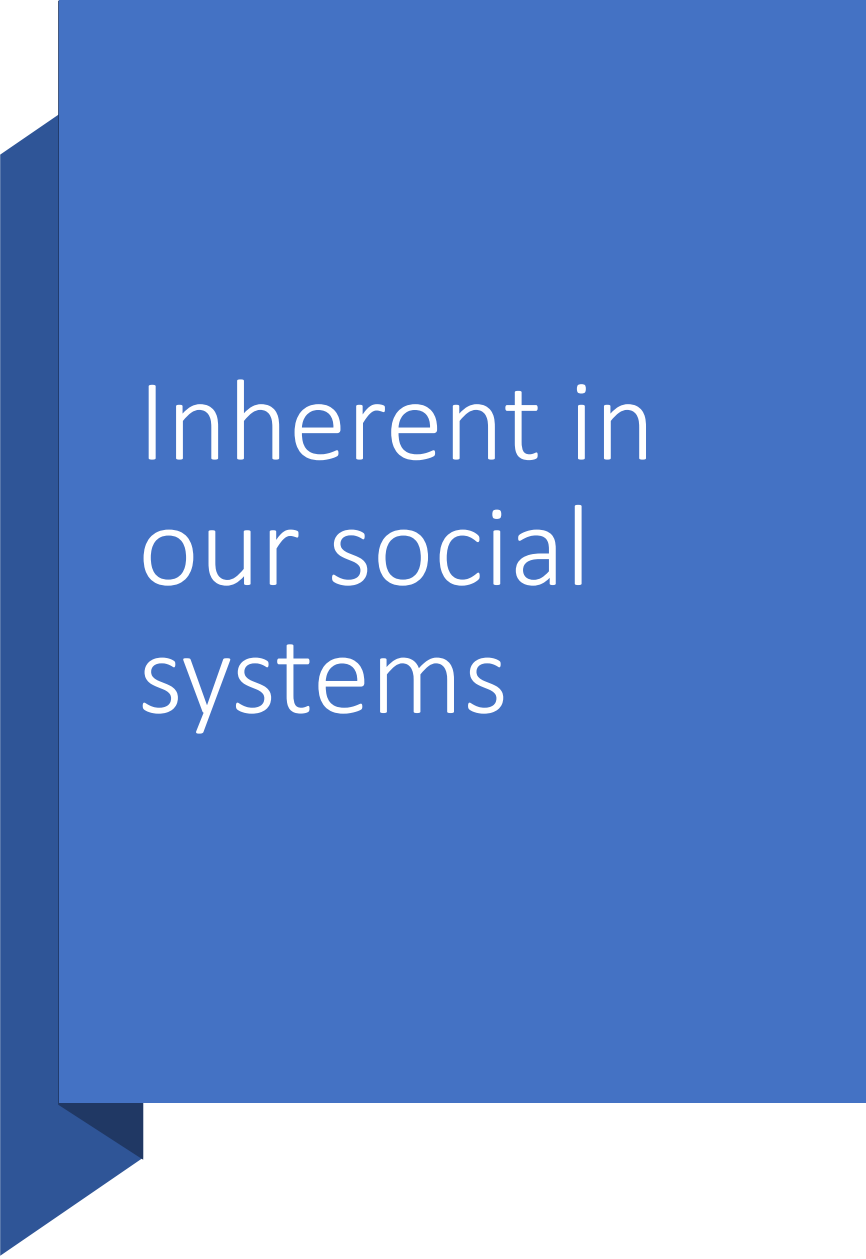
When we speak of inner city, or ghetto, or core area, and when we use euphemisms such as educationally disadvantaged, culturally deprived, and poverty-ridden, we are really talking about Black people or Afro-Americans. While Puerto Ricans, Indians, and poor whites may be included, at

the heart of the matter is the fact that inner city means Black. Based upon 1965 estimates (Clark, 1968, p. 119) Black Americans constitute 66 percent of the total population in Washington, D.C.; 44 percent in Atlanta; 34 percent in Detroit; 31 percent in Philadelphia; and 22 percent in Kansas City. The school-age populations for these cities—which are among the 15 having the largest percentages of Blacks—are even larger: for instance, the school population in Washington, D.C., is more than 90 percent Black and in Chicago it is more than 70 percent Black. This is mainly because of one pervasive reason: Blacks are forced to live in the inner city, mainly in depressed, ghetto conditions. The Kerner Report (1968) has clearly cited the cause for this condition:

What white Americans have never fully understood—but what the Negro can never forget—is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it (p. 2).

What is most distressing is that in spite of what is termed a massive effort to improve the conditions under which Black Americans live, they appear to be worsening in both intensity and extent. Clark's chapter, “The Negro and the Urban Crisis,” in the Brookings Institutions Papers (1968) amply documents the problem. He stated:

The fact of the ghetto—the involuntary restriction of the masses of Negroes to a particular geographic area of the city—underlies every other aspect of the problem. The ghetto results in de facto school segregation, which affects middle and low-income Negroes alike, and the inferiority in education that is invariably related to it. Inferior education, in turn, reinforces the overriding economic fact of disproportionate Negro unemployment and underemployment (p. 119-20).



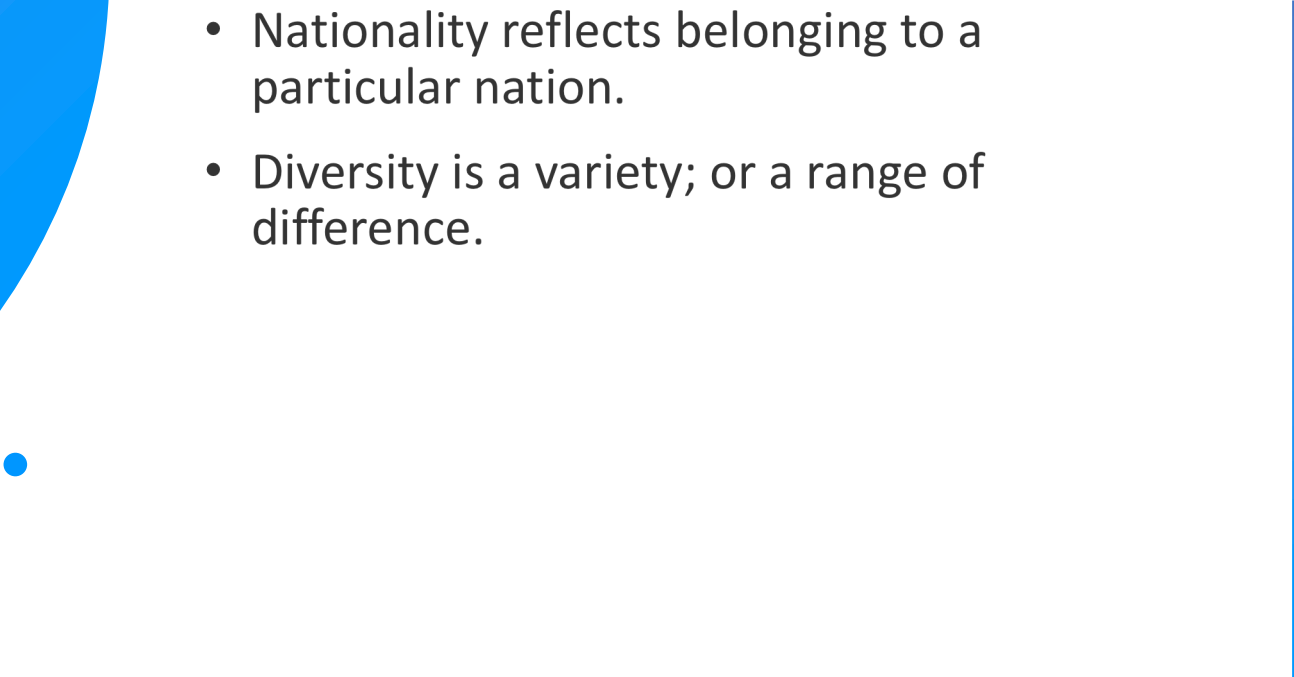
# Inherent in our social systems

- White normativity and anti-black racism
- Classism and socioeconomic status
- Patriarchy and gender bias
- Ableism







# Race is...

- socially (not biologically) constructed, but has material consequences.
  - Culture is shared, shaped, and transferable.
  - Ethnicity refers to groups with common traits such as place of origin, language, or religion.
  - Nationality reflects belonging to a particular nation.
  - Diversity is a variety; or a range of difference.
- 





# Race in education: Hot (smoldering) topics

- Racial mismatch among educators and students
  - Disproportionality in special education and gifted & talented programs
  - Disproportionate discipline
  - Achievement discrepancies
  - Education debt (Ladson-Billings, 2006)
- 



# STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Disproportionate  
Discipline:  
Type in the chat-box

**How does race and racism play  
into the teacher decision of  
whether to send a student to  
the office for discipline?**

# Disproportionality in Preschool Discipline

(OCR, 2016)

- Black children represent 19% of preschool enrollment, but 47% of preschool suspensions
- White children represent 41% of preschool enrollment, but 28% of preschool suspensions



# Implicit Bias in Early Learning

(Gilliam et al., 2016)





# Implicit Bias in Early Learning

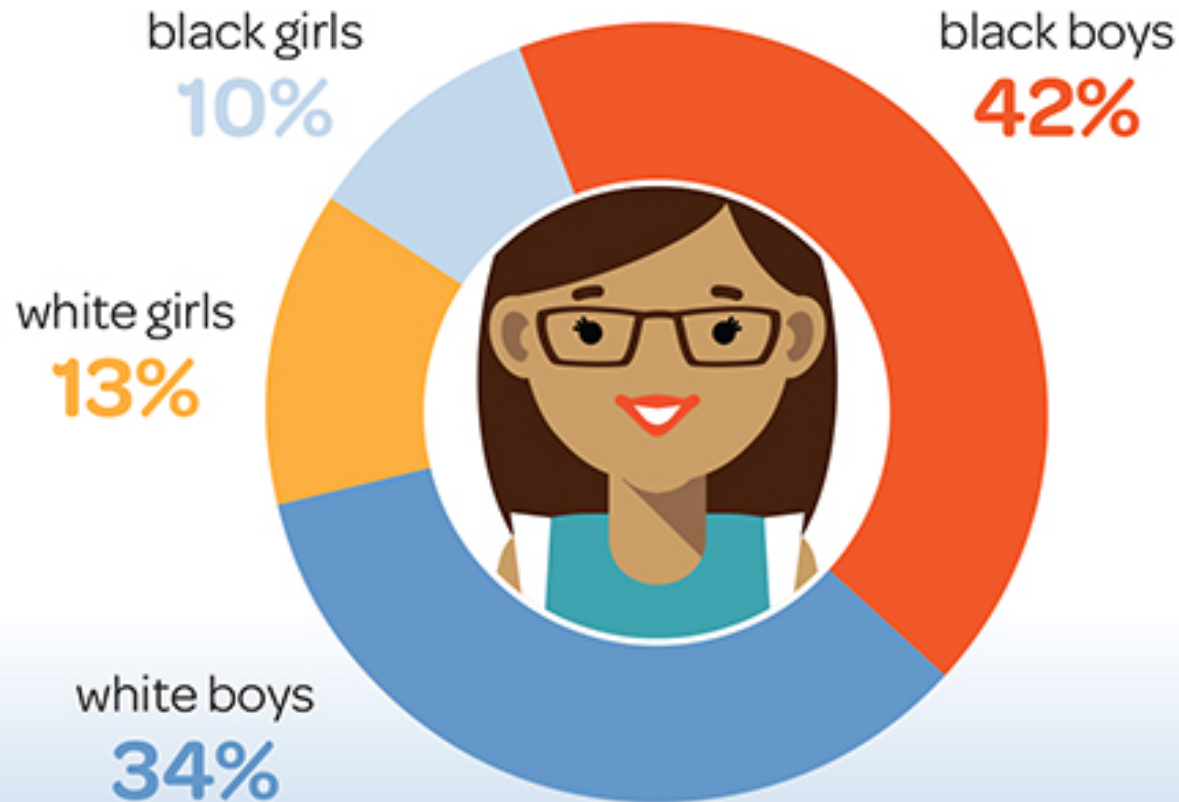
(Gilliam et al., 2016)



# Implicit Bias in Early Learning

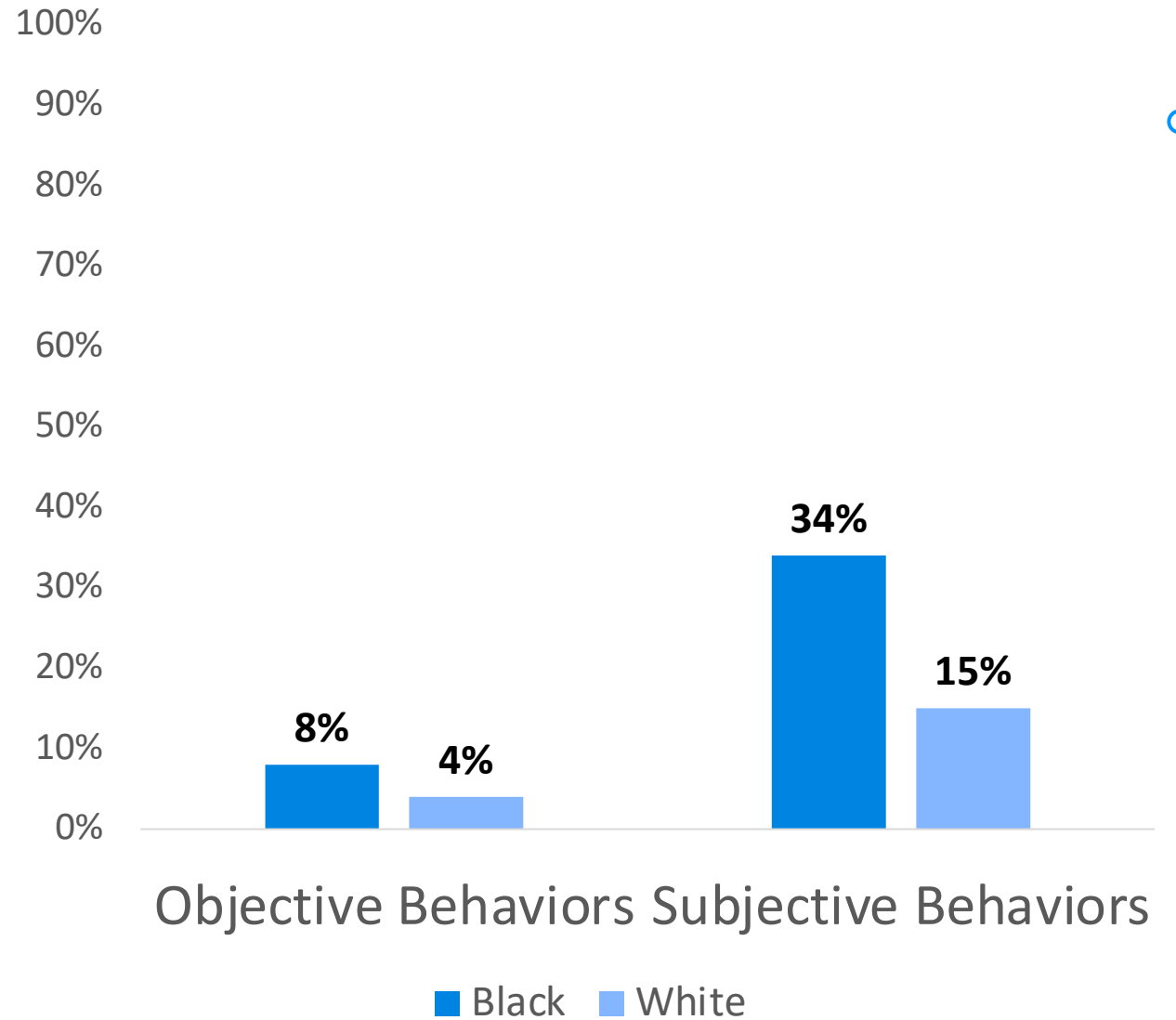
(Gilliam et al., 2016)

## Track the eyes: Which students are teachers watching?



Preschool teachers tend to more closely observe blacks than whites, especially black boys, when challenging behaviors are expected.

# Racial Differences in Risk for Classroom ODRs (Girvan et al., 2017)





# Do students notice inequitable treatment?

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In schools with higher discipline disproportionality, Black students...

- Perceive their schools to be less equitable and inclusive
- Feel less school belonging
- Report more adjustment problems

Bottiani, Bradshaw, & Mendelson (2017)



Racial bias related to  
cardiovascular fatalities  
(Leitner et al., 2016)





# Disproportionate Discipline:

Type in the chat box:

Given this information, why is it important for teachers to discuss race and racism in the classroom?

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# What is Significant Disproportionality in Special Education?

Differential identification and placement of students from different racial or ethnic groups in special education.



Access to appropriate  
instruction

Differential  
outcomes

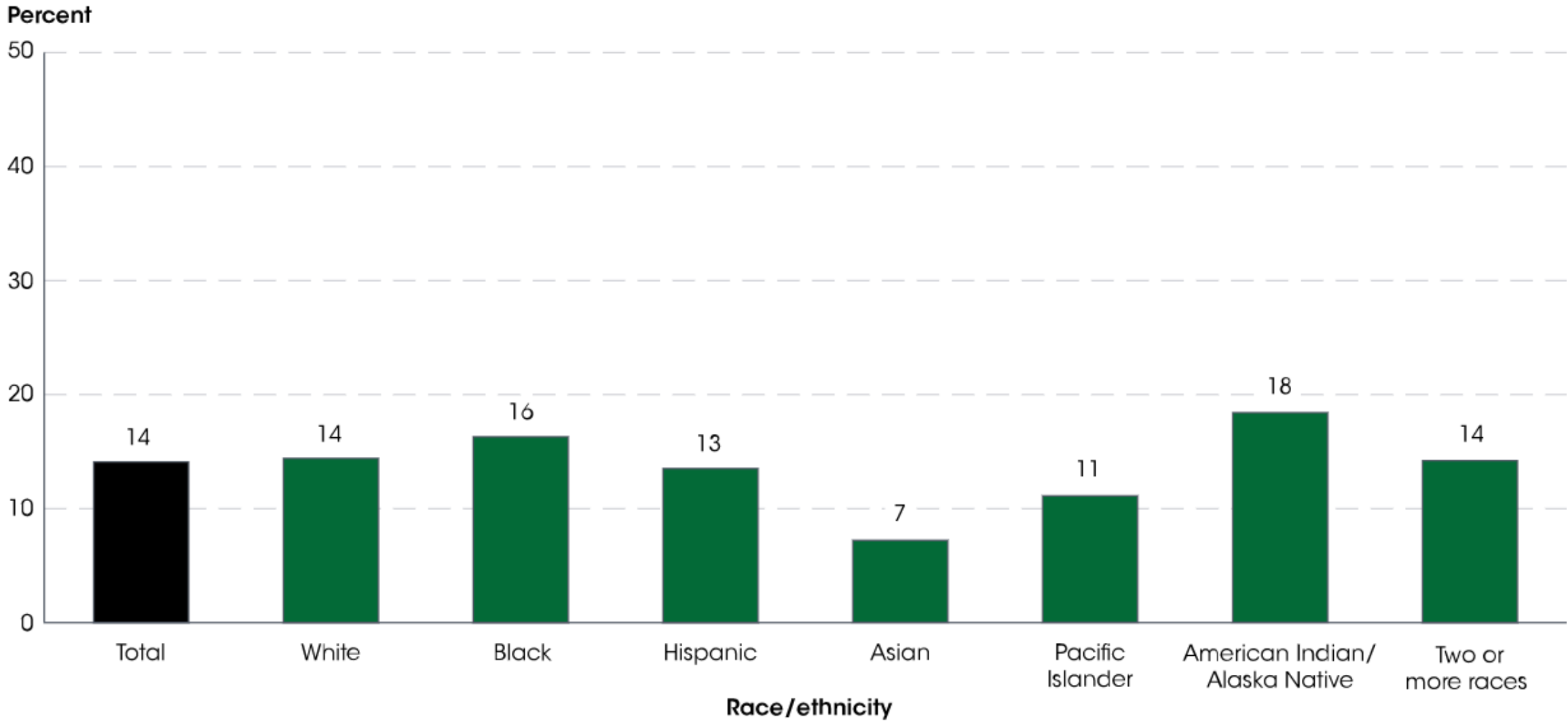
Why should  
educators be  
concerned about  
disproportionality?

Overwhelming  
the system

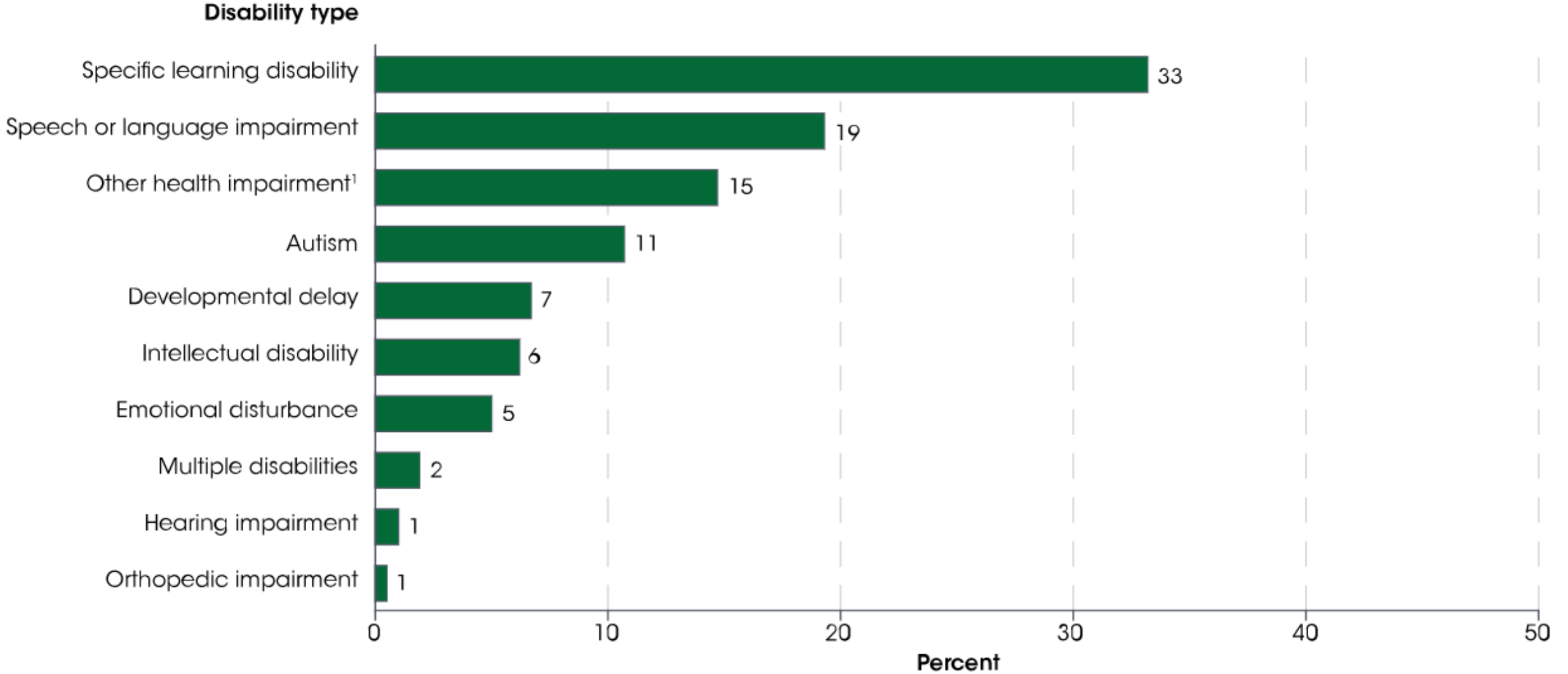
Indicator of  
underlying systemic  
problems



**Figure 2. Percentage of students ages 3–21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), by race/ethnicity: School year 2018–19**



**Figure 1. Percentage distribution of students ages 3–21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), by disability type: School year 2018–19**

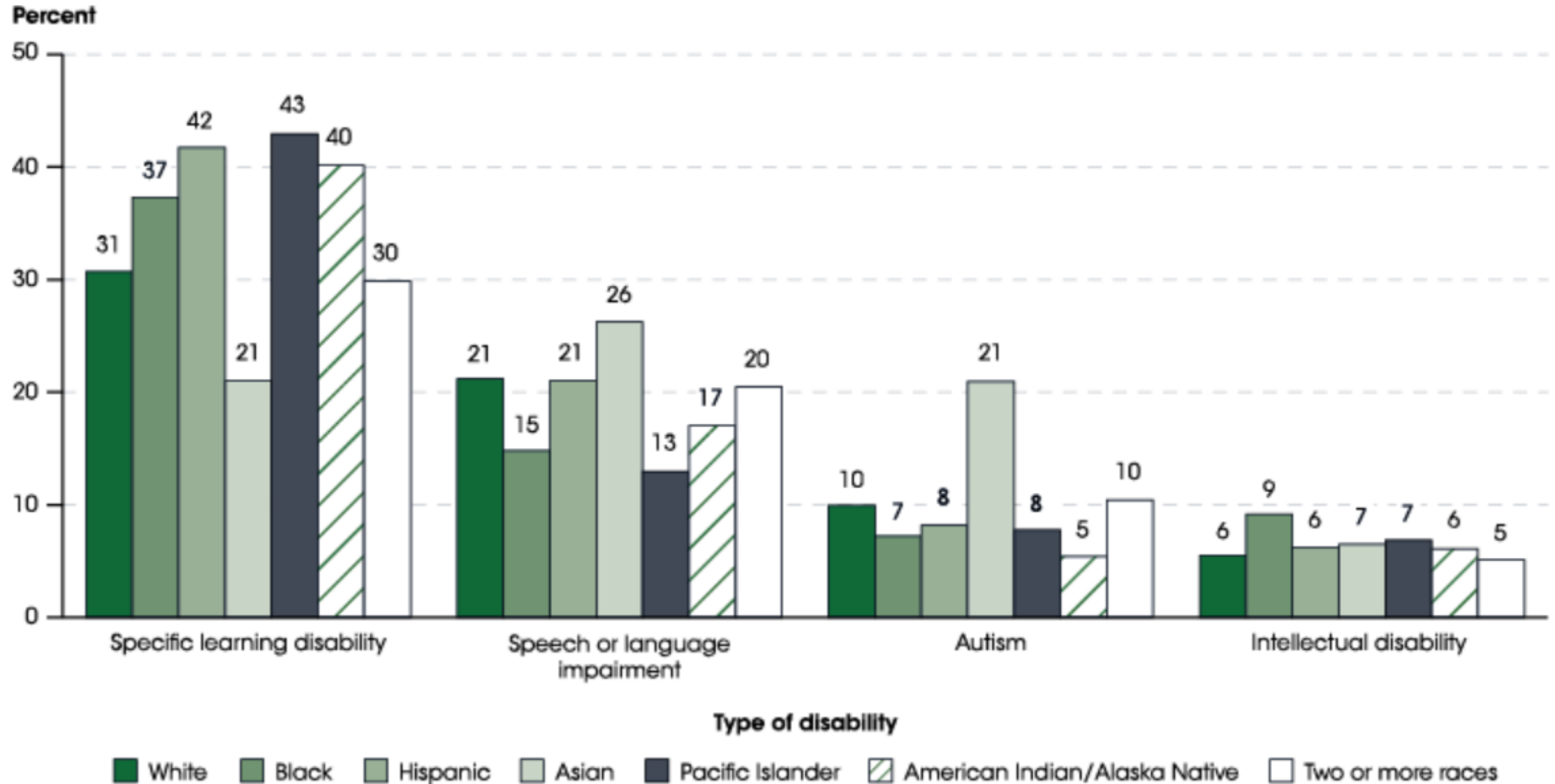




# Does disproportionality occur equally across disability categories?

- ☐ Specific learning disability
- ☐ Intellectual disability
- ☐ Emotional disturbance
- ☐ Autism
- ☐ Other health impairment
- ☐ Traumatic brain injury
- ☐ Speech or language impairment
- ☐ Orthopedic impairment
- ☐ Multiple disabilities
- ☐ Visual impairment, including blindness
- ☐ Hearing impairment
- ☐ Deafness
- ☐ Deaf-blindness

**Figure 9.2. Percentage of 3- to 21-year-olds served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, by type of disability and race/ethnicity: School year 2015–16**



# Who is impacted?

- Variation by disability category
- Boys (over-identification)/ Girls (under-identification)
- English learners (delays in identification)
- Under-representation of students of color in gifted and talented programs
- Students living in poverty



What does this suggest  
about how racism, bias,  
or other  
institutionalized  
policies may lead to  
disproportionality



# How does disproportionality occur?

- ✓ Differential referrals for evaluation for special education eligibility
- ✓ Differential eligibility by disability category
- ✓ Differential placement decisions, including restrictiveness of placement



Given this, who in the school should be responsible for understanding and addressing significant disproportionality?



# Q & A



Dr. Erica McCray



Dr. Kent McIntosh



Dr. Rebecca Zumeta Edmonds



# Next Month's Webinar



Foundations of Inner-Work for Antiracist Educators



Case Study of program's DEI Initiative on Inner-Work