Advancing Inclusive Principal Leadership: The Georgia Initiative

2019 GaPSC Certification and Program Officials Conference Middle Georgia State University, Macon October 24th, 2019

Dr. Sheryl Cowart Moss, Clinical Associate Professor, Coordinator for Advanced Leadership Programs, Georgia State University

Dr. Karen Bryant, Clinical Associate Professor, Coordinator for Educational Administration and Policy, University of Georgia

Mrs. Cindy Saxon, Associate Superintendent, Teacher and Leader Development, Georgia Department of Education

Dr. Penney McRoy, Director, Educator Preparation Division, GaPSC

Inclusive Principal Leadership

What is Inclusion?

- Inclusive education is a schoolwide culture and practice of valuing each student as a learner across general education classrooms, rather than a particular program or place.
- Inclusion provides students with disabilities equitable access and opportunity in the general education curriculum and ensures that each student receives the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education.

What is Inclusive Principal Leadership?

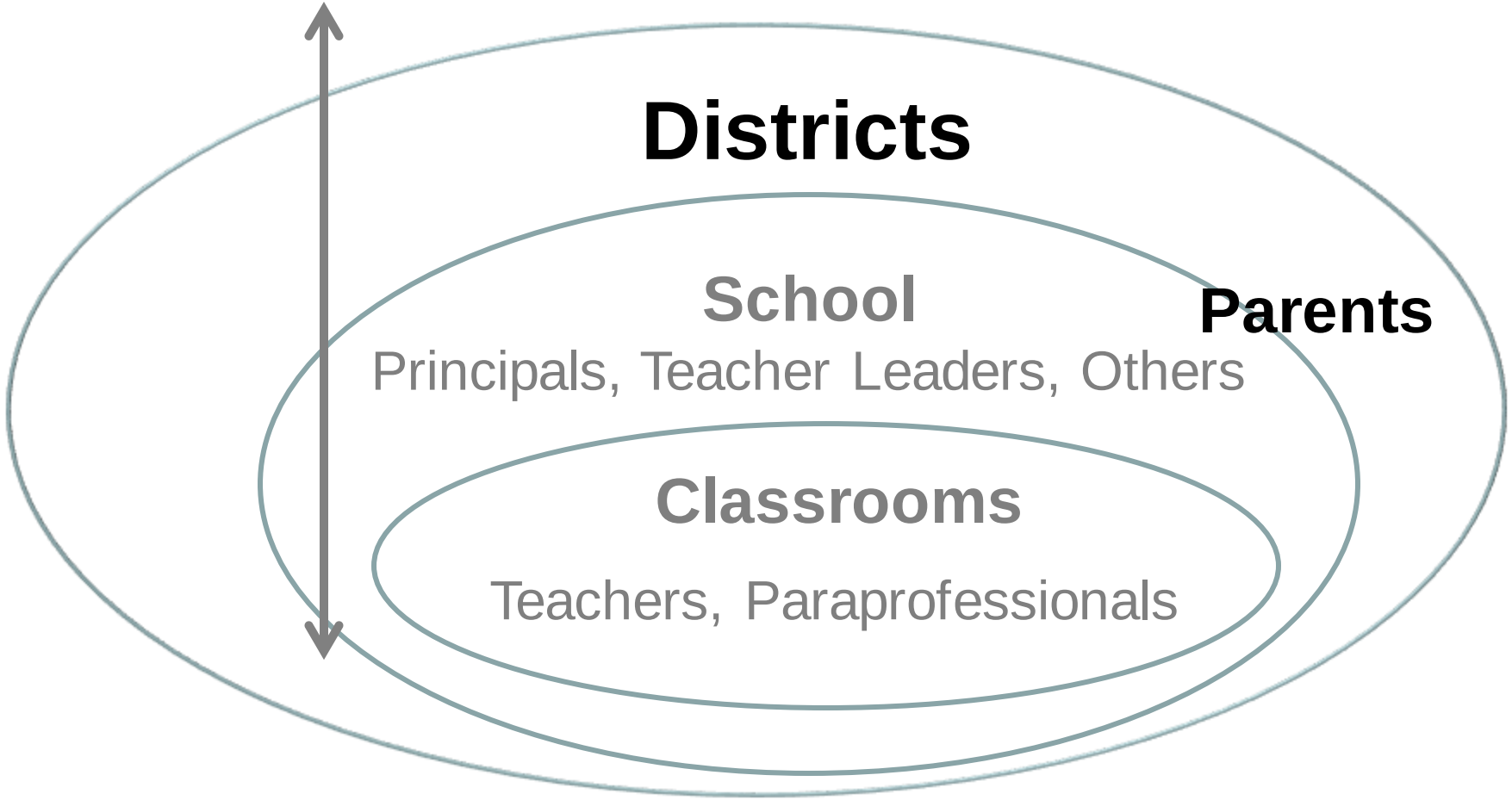
- Inclusive principals create strong school cultures and distribute leadership across staff to serve all learners well and ensure all students feel safe, supported, and valued in school.
- In promoting equity for "all," inclusive principals must respond effectively to the potential and needs of **each** student.
- Inclusive principals ensure high expectations and appropriate supports so that each student—across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income—can excel in school.

Leadership for Inclusive Schools

- What is inclusion?
- Where is inclusive reform initiated and supported?
- Why is principal leadership important?
- What do inclusive principals do?
- What do we know about principal preparation for inclusive schools?
- What resources are available to support leaders in learning about inclusive schools?

Where is Inclusive Reform Initiated & Supported? (Billingsley, 2019)

Office of Special Education States Universities Courts



Why is principal leadership important?

“Schools that function inclusively do so for a reason. … [and] the principals in these schools were the reason” (Salisbury, 2006, p. 79)

Principals play important roles in creating the culture and supports necessary for inclusive programs for students with disabilities

What do inclusive principals do?

1. Support a shared vision for inclusion
   - Articulate support to varied constituents
   - Help others see why inclusion is important

2. Foster a culture of high expectations and collective responsibility

3. Share decision-making with others
   - Solicit broad input from others
   - Create planning teams
     - Teacher leaders, parents, critical friends, others

What do inclusive principals do? (cont.)

4. Support teacher learning
   - Help staff understand what inclusion means and looks like
   - Focus on instructional practices
   - Formal and informal learning (e.g., Professional Learning Communities)

5. Create working conditions and structures that support inclusion
   - Teachers' roles
   - Supporting teacher collaboration/co-teaching
   - Schedules & resources

What do inclusive principals do? (cont.)

6. Monitor progress
   - Progress toward inclusion
   - Student progress (e.g., RTI, MTSS)
   - Problem-solve and celebrate successes
7. Plan for sustaining inclusion over time
   - New hires
   - On-going PD
8. Encourage questions, expect resistance, listen to concerns, & problem-solve

What do we know about principal preparation for inclusive schools?
(Billingsley, McLeskey & Crockett, 2017)

- Coursework typically addresses the legal aspects of special education
- Minimal preparation about inclusion and effective programs
- Principals are often uncertain about what special education teachers do
- Have concerns about general educators' readiness to teach students with disabilities
- In summary, there is a lot of work to do in preparing principals for inclusive schools

Partnerships in Georgia

Program Redesign

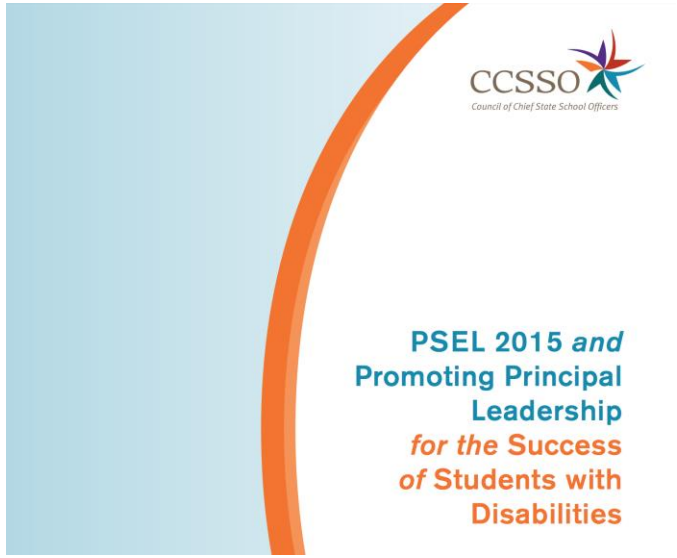
Emergent Themes

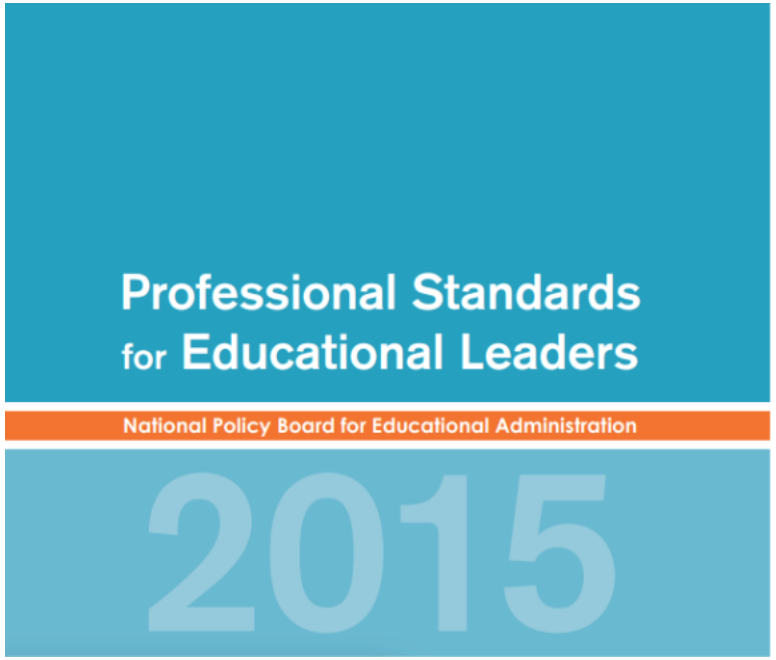
1. Relevance of content and need for an inclusive focus
2. Move beyond legalities
3. Need to equip leaders to support induction level teachers and inclusive assessment

Alignment Needs

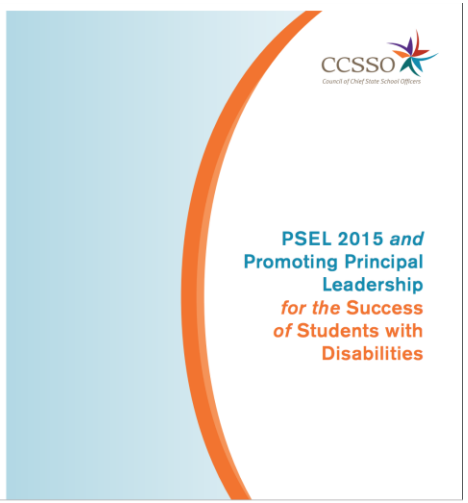
1. High Leverage Practices
2. Changes in certification across college
3. Eliminate “the course” and embed content in all courses

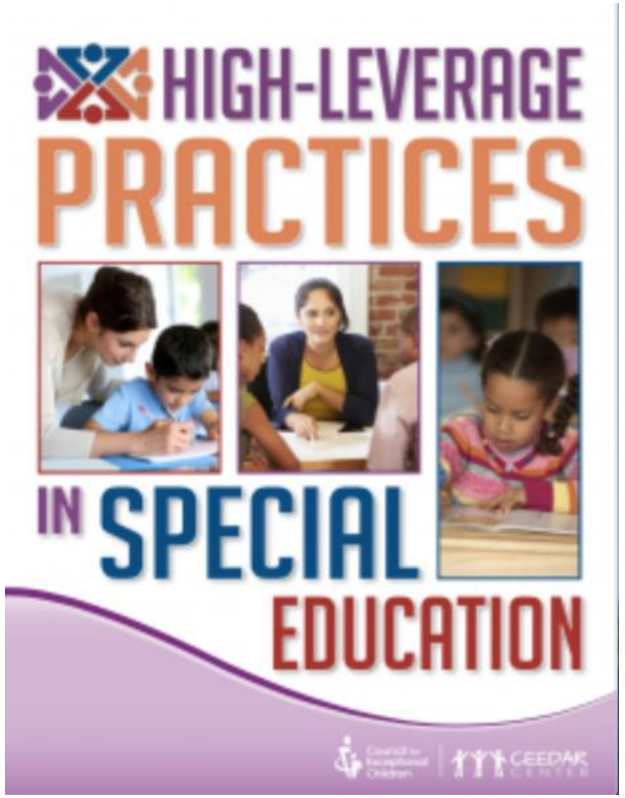
Informing our practice

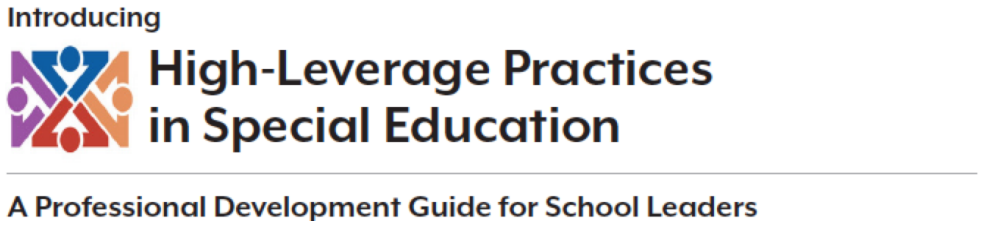




Re-imagining our work







Key concepts of inclusive leadership in EVERY course

Examples of restructured courses

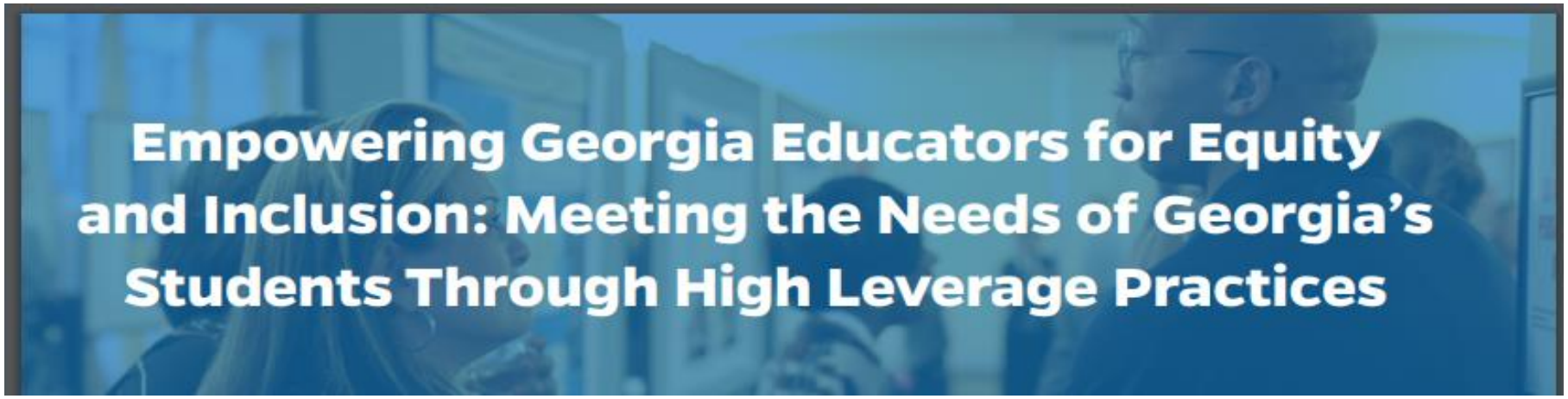
- Curriculum Design and Analysis
- Advanced Law, Policy, and Governance
- Advanced Instructional Leadership
- Leadership for Change in a Diverse Society
- Psychological Aspects of Leadership

Examples of restructured courses

- Developing, Supporting and Sustaining a Positive, Inclusive Learning Community
- Leadership in a Diverse Society
- Educational Leadership in High-needs Schools
- Educational Leadership for Instructional Improvement and Change
- Action Research Dissertation

2019 Georgia Practitioner Showcase

Sharing the work



CEEDAR.org/GA-HLPs

Georgia Educational Leadership Faculty Association

GaDOE Georgia Department of Education

Georgia Professional Standards Commission

CEEDAR CENTER

Policy Structures

- Preparation
  - Teacher
  - Leader
- Certification
  - Induction
  - Tiered approach

Implementation Partnerships

- A collaborative team is working to ensure alignment across multiple sectors:
  - P-12 practitioners
  - EPPs
  - GaDOE
  - GaPSC
  - USG
- CCSSO's Advancing Inclusive Principal Leadership (AIPL) initiative is providing support to this collaborative team

Advancing Inclusive Principal Leadership (AIPL)

- State Core Team
- State Advisory
- GA's AIPL team will provide
  - Guidance
  - Resources
- Three Goals:
  - Toolkit
  - Preparation program content
  - Ongoing professional learning

Resource Links

Guidance Document for Inclusive Leadership: Elaborating on the PSEL Standards

- Council of Chief State School Officers & Collaboration for Effective Educator Evaluation, Development, and Reform (2017). *PSEL 2015 and promoting principal leadership for the success of students with disabilities*. Retrieved on February 18, 2017 from http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2017/PSELforSWDs01252017.pdf

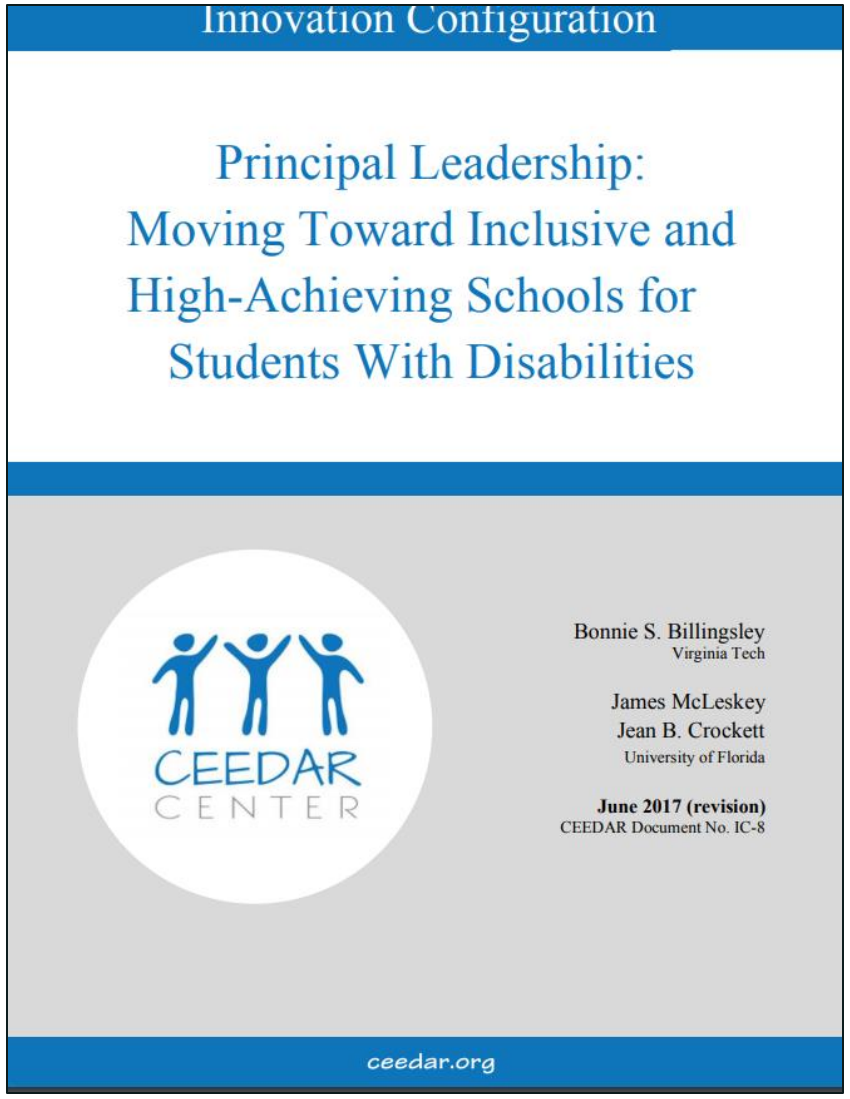
Supporting Inclusive Schools for the Success of Each Child

We released Supporting Inclusive Schools for the Success of Each Child!

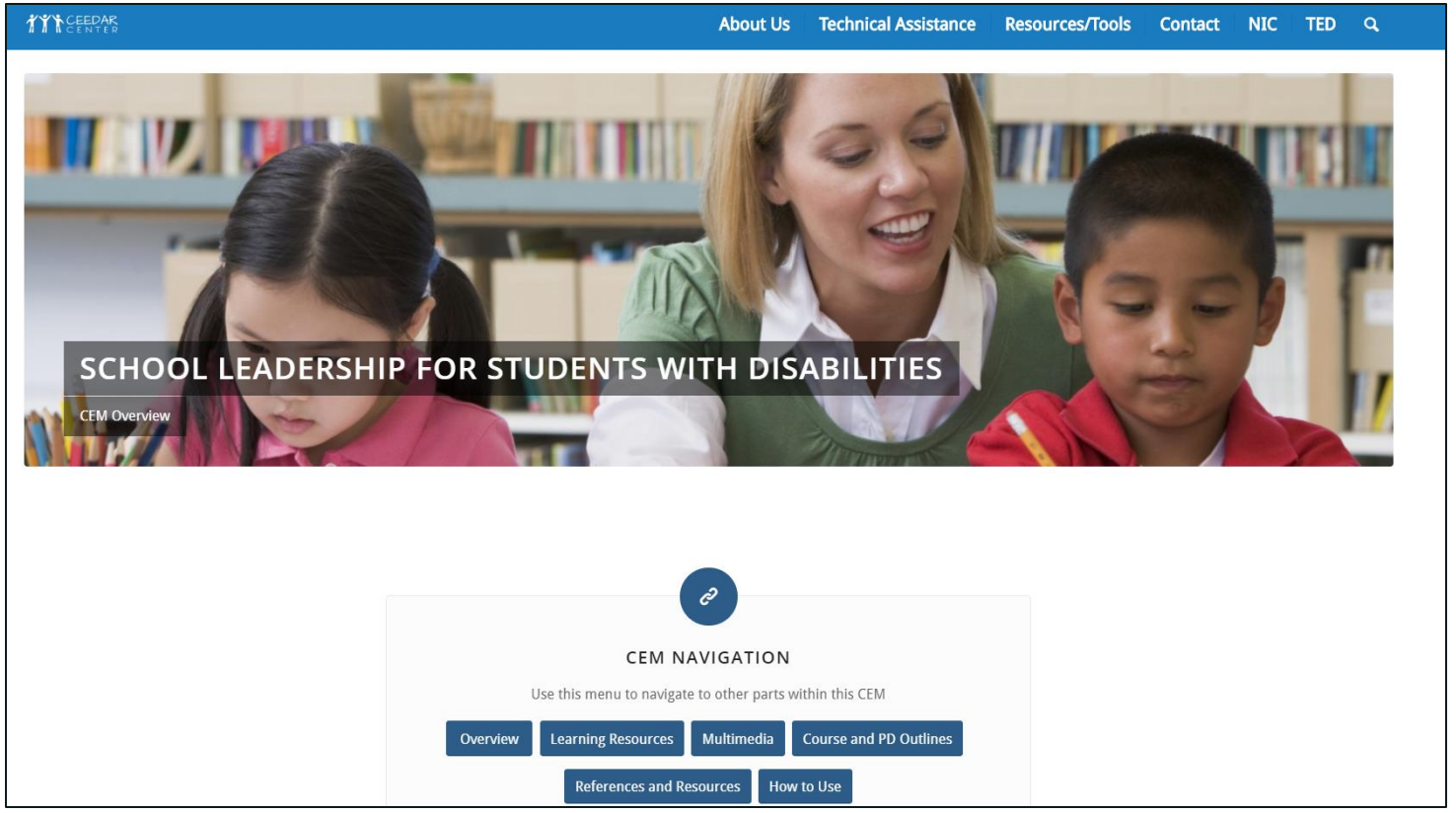
(https://ccssoinclusiveprincipalsguide.org)

CEEDAR Principal Resources

http://ceedar.education.ufl.edu/cems/leadership/



This CEM provides a syllabus and 7 lectures,
with activities and resources for 21 hours of instruction



IRIS Resources: School Improvement/Leadership

- Examples of Modules
  - IEPs: How administrators can support the development and implementation of high-quality IEPs
  - RTI: Considerations for school leaders
  - Teacher retention: Reducing the attrition of special educators
  - Differentiated instruction: Maximizing the learning of all students
  - Effective school practices: promoting collaboration and monitoring students' academic achievement

https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/resources/iris-resource-locator/

QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

- Sheryl Cowart Moss - smoss13@gsu.edu
- Karen Bryant - bryantkc@uga.edu
- Cindy Saxon – csaxon@doe.k12.ga.us
- Penney McRoy – penney.mcroy@gapsc.com