

Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Celebrating Disability Identity, Community, and
Culture in Schools

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Abstract

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There is a broad disconnect between the beauty cultivated by disabled communities and the ways in which schools continue to position disability as a problem that resides in the individual student. To shift conceptions of disability in schools, there is a significant need to educate folks about disability history and pride, especially disabled students who are those most impacted by ableist educational institutions. In this study, I sought to design and implement a classroom curriculum that fostered authenticity, pride, and joy in disability identity, community, and culture in school. I drew upon academic and activist frameworks to conceptualize *Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies* (Crippling CSP), a multifaceted approach to uplift and sustain disability identity, community, and culture in school. Crippling CSP was used to design and implement a Disability Justice in Schools (DJS) unit with high school students who have a range

of disability identities and classifications. The DJS unit was co-taught by two disabled educators and incorporated a variety of arts-based activities exploring disability identity, community, and culture in schools. Throughout the DJS unit, youth were invited to reflect on their personal experiences of disability and ableism in school, work in cross-disability collaborations, and co-create artwork that illustrated their dreams for realizing the principles of Disability Justice (Sins Invalid, 2019) in school contexts. Based on analysis of classroom observations, student-generated classwork and artwork, and optional student interviews, this dissertation demonstrated (1) how disabled youth made sense of their own disability identity alongside Disability Justice more broadly, (2) how disabled youth engaged in disability community by navigating cross-disability collaborations, and (3) how disabled youth embody and expand the framework of Crippling CSP. This study contributes to theoretical, methodological, and practical shifts in the ways that disabled ways of knowing and being are centered and celebrated schools and in educational research.

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Rights Washington, Disability Justice activists, my disabled scholars writing retreat crew, and so many more. I name a variety of these folks throughout the dissertation as well because their presence in my life and this work have been the ultimate source of disabled knowledge and wisdom. They also keep me motivated and enthusiastic about community-centered teaching and learning. Extra special thanks to Adina, my chevruta, source of access intimacy, and partner in dreaming Disability Justice in schools. To Mai Li, for crip collaborations and contributions to data analysis. And to Dr. Saya, thank you for always being down for arts sessions, external processing, talks about the intricacies of language, random theorizing, and ultimately helping my dream come true to produce a comic version of this dissertation.

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Dedication

For all the students that I've had the honor to work with over the years, and special appreciation for the C3 students that participated in this project.

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CHAPTER 1: FRAMING DISABILITY AS AN ASSET IN SCHOOLS

I think of it as a whole, the entire disability community...because we all have disabilities. Even if we all have different disabilities, we all have shared experiences and we're all trying to make the world better. - Blue interview¹, 2022

As Blue, a student who proudly identified as disabled, expressed in this opening quote, disability goes beyond an individual experience to a broader community and culture. Neil Marcus, disabled artist and activist, once put it, “Disability is not a brave struggle of ‘courage in the face of adversity.’ Disability is an art. It’s an ingenious way to live.” Disability can, and should, be positioned as an asset. Disabled people create thriving communities based on mutual aid, artistic connection, and celebrating one another’s wholeness. Disabled people also exist within every community and organize in solidarity across markers of difference and broader movements for social justice. Disability culture affirms and sustains disabled ways of knowing and being, recognizing their beauty and worth.

However, disability is not positioned that way in schools. Despite the fact that Blue saw inherent value in their disability community, they experienced oppressive and stigmatizing structures within school. They shared stories of inaccessibility (“school has never accommodated me”), ableist expectations (“school is hard and scary and I don’t know why”), and a lack of attention to and representation of disability community and culture (“I want to learn more...so [disabled] people feel important”). The assimilative nature of schooling is oppressive for anyone who deviates from white, nondisabled, cis-hetero, English monolingual conceptions of “normal”

¹ All student participant names are pseudonyms that were self-selected.

and pathologizes any form of difference (Annamma et al., 2016). This is particularly problematic for disabled students whose school experiences are driven by the deficit views of disability baked into educational policies, procedures, laws, and classroom practices. Furthermore, unlike other marginalized identities, disabled students are less likely to have family and community with similar experiences of disability (Mueller, 2021). They often lack disabled adult mentors and connections to disability communities and culture. Without supportive in and out of school structures to uplift their disabled identity, disabled students experience a high level of stigma and internalized ableism.

Currently there is a broad disconnect between the beauty cultivated by disabled communities and what happens in schools. Schools continue to position disability as a problem that resides in the individual student, as opposed to addressing the barriers that make schools physically and instructionally inaccessible (Baglieri, 2022, Valle & Connor, 2019). To shift conceptions of disability in schools, there is a significant need to educate folks about disability history and pride, especially disabled students who are those most impacted by ableist educational institutions. However, there continues to be an epic lack of curriculum and instructional practices that affirm disability identity, community, and culture (Baglieri & Lalvani, 2019). In recent years, a few resources have surfaced (e.g., *One Out of Five: Disability History and Pride*, Disability Equality Education), but they continue to be designed primarily for general education and/or nondisabled audiences and therefore lack specific content and instructional techniques to foster individual and collective disability identity. Attention to curriculum designed for and by the disability community opens possibilities to create transformative affinity spaces for disabled youth and powerful sites of disability community and support.

Through this dissertation, I sought to design and implement a classroom curriculum that fostered authenticity, pride, and joy in disability identity, community, and culture in school. I drew upon academic and activist frameworks to conceptualize *Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies* (Crippling CSP), a multifaceted approach to uplift and sustain disability identity, community, and culture in school.

Positionality

As a special education teacher and teacher activist for eight years, and now a graduate student in special education for seven, I have both been complicit in and actively resisted racism and ableism throughout my own schooling, teaching, research, and scholarship. Part of my belief that youth can be agents of change in their schools and communities comes from my own experiences. I began anti-racist organizing as a high school student and continued that work in my college years and teaching career. As a special education teacher, I was active as an educator organizer at the intersections of anti-racism and anti-ableism.

Furthermore, as a white, queer, Jewish, disabled cis-woman, critical reflexivity is essential while working in solidarity towards transformative justice in schools through praxis and scholarship. Whiteness is my most visually apparent identity and therefore is the primary contributor to the ways that people interact with me and believe in my intelligence and potential. While I am part of the disability community, in this work I also recognize limitations of my own understanding of intersectionality. I refer to literature, artwork, and social media by those most impacted to deepen my own learning. I also look to frameworks such as Black feminist theory (e.g., hooks, 1994, Lorde, 1984), abolitionist teaching (e.g., Love, 2019) and Indigenous and decolonizing studies in education (e.g., Grande, 2018; Smith, Tuck & Yang, 2019) that may not explicitly name ableism, but simultaneously address intersecting histories of oppressive

schooling practices as well as pathways to emancipatory educational practice that center student wholeness, interdependence and intergenerational learning. While an in-depth incorporation of these pedagogical theories and practices is not within the scope of this research, they are integral to my thinking, teaching, and learning and cross-movement solidarity in teaching and research.

I have a strong commitment to resisting systems of oppression in our schools, and also recognize that “each educator is implicated in sustaining a system that divides humans into two clearly defined groups: the disabled and the non-disabled” (Connor & Gabel, 2013, p. 101). Although I have worked to undo this divide, I recognize that I am also implicated in ways that, knowingly or unknowingly, I uphold it simply through my continued presence in it. As often cited, Lorde (1984) asserted, “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (p. 110). Therefore, while making moves in schools and holding myself accountable to my students, I also work outside of academic institutions through community relationships and partnerships, holding myself accountable to my immediate and expansive community. I am dedicated to an intersectional framework based on not only on academic theory, but the felt experiences (Patsavas, 2014) of intersectionality that that students have shared with me over the years; feelings of exclusion and othering, frustrations with the ways that their sexuality was conflated with disability classifications, and resistance to discipline systems that hyper-surveilled and punished them based on their race and disability.

As a classroom teacher and now as a researcher, I was/am always seeking ways to showcase the amazing gifts that multiply-marginalized disabled youth bring to our classroom community. I am in solidarity with them and believe in teaching practices, community organizing, and research that are a journey guided by and alongside youth. I prioritize

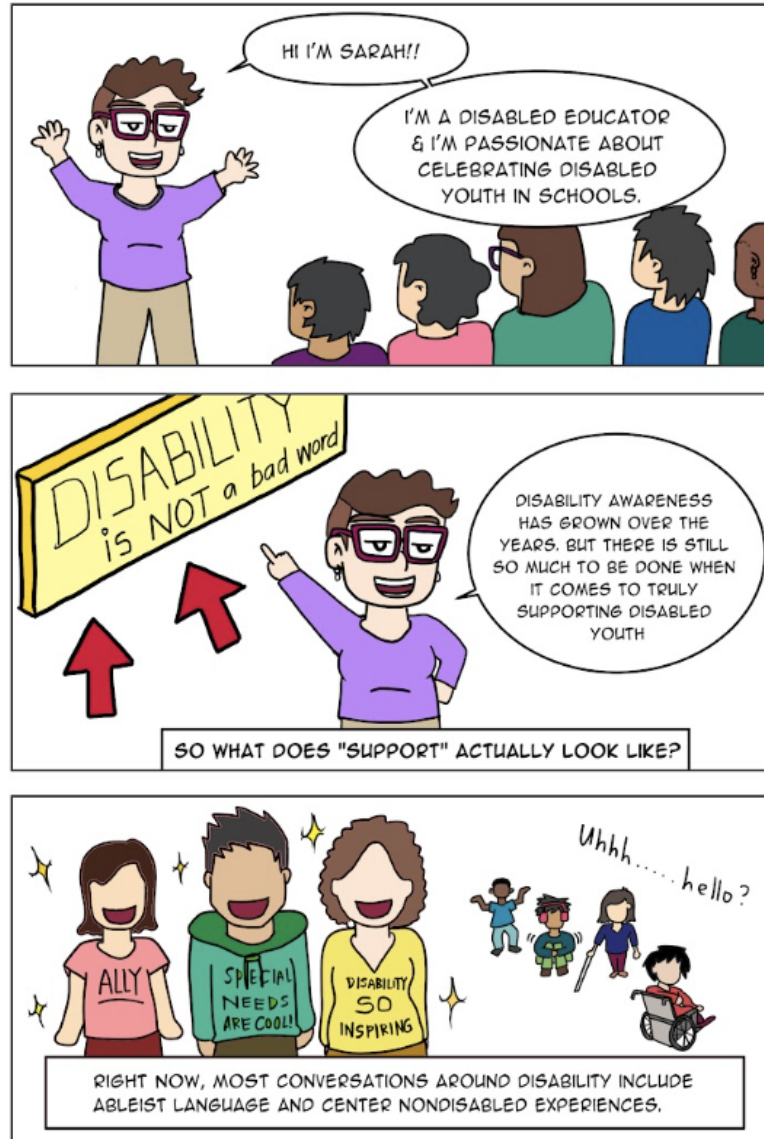
relationships in all of my work and believe that relational praxis is the heart of authentic, accessible, inclusive, and equitable educational spaces.

My own relationship to disability identity, community, and culture also deeply inform my work and relationships with disabled youth. I was diagnosed with disabilities as an adult and therefore do not have insights from personal experiences navigating a disability in K-12 schooling. However, disabled youth have shared that it makes a difference for their educators and other adults to disclose their disabilities because they can then serve as confidantes and mentors. I've had similar experiences with getting to know disabled professors, scholars, activists, and artists in my work. My dissertation is born of my own process of finding disability communities and connecting with disability culture. For me, that meant intergenerational spaces, learning from the wisdom of disabled elders while including and centering disabled youth.

I am writing this as my final milestone as a doctoral student, I also hope that it serves as a tribute to my disabled kin with all of the joys, resistance, exhaustion, critique, brilliance, and myriad of experiences and perspectives that we share, honor, and cherish together. Desiring a way to make this dissertation more accessible, I collaborated with a friend and colleague across disability and arts-based community spaces, Dr. Saya, to create a comic. I used the comic process as a method of solidifying the claims presented, using plain language, and creating an accessible format to distribute to youth, families, and educators. Moreover, it was a way for me to utilize Crippling CSP as a framework to inspire disabled joy and connection in the dissertation process. Our comics are featured throughout the dissertation. The comic pages featured in Figure 1 and Figure 2 on the next pages introduce you to the study.

Disability Identity, Community, and Culture in Education

Figure 1 *Comic Introduction to Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Celebrating Disability Identity, Community, and Culture in Schools.*



Note. Image description: A three-panel comic that introduces Sarah as a disabled educator passionate about celebrating disabled youth in schools in the first panel. In the second panel, Sarah is pointing to a sign that says, “Disability is not a bad word.” In the third panel, there is a caption that reads, “Right now, most conversations around disability include ableist language and center nondisabled experiences.” This panel shows three nondisabled people with shirt designs that say, “ally,” “special needs are cool,” and “disability so inspiring!” In the background of the third panel are four youth with varying disabilities with the thought “Uhhh...hello?” over their heads.

Figure 2 *Comic Introduction to Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Celebrating Disability Identity, Community, and Culture in Schools Continued.*



Note. Image description: A comic showing Sarah thinking of questions to research that could help research how to best celebrate disability identity, community, and culture in schools. Questions in thought bubbles include: How do we uplift disabled youth? How do we create a space for disabled youth by disabled youth? Disability identity? Community? Culture? What do we really know about disabled youth? What is disability pride in schools and how can we support it? What does it take for disabled youth to thrive?

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies

In order to uplift and sustain disability identity, community, and culture in schools, it is essential to take up an asset framework in curriculum design and instruction. In this dissertation, I chose to focus on Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) because it builds on a lineage of asset pedagogies that disrupt deficit perspectives by centering community and cultural knowledge as essential components of teaching and learning, not simply by making them relevant but sustaining them in educational practice (Paris, 2012). CSP honors asset pedagogies, such as funds of knowledge (González & Moll, 2002), culturally relevant pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 1995), culturally responsive pedagogies (Gay, 2000), and cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), that have informed the ways that educators are called to interrupt white, Eurocentric curriculum and shift to center the values, assets, and priorities of students' cultures and communities. Paris (2012) suggests, "the term culturally sustaining requires that our pedagogies be more than responsive of or relevant to the cultural experiences and practices of young people--it requires that they support young people in sustaining cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence" (p. 95). CSP builds on previous iterations of asset pedagogies through its attention to the cultural and linguistic practices of youth, youth's multidimensional identities and cultural fluidity, and critical reflexivity.

Educational outcomes in CSP are not a measurement of a contrived set of standards, but instead "reimagine schools as sites where diverse, heterogeneous practices are not only valued, but sustained. In fundamentally reimagining the purpose of education, CSP demands a critical, emancipatory vision of schooling that reframes the object of critique from our children to the oppressive systems" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 3). In this sense, the intended goals of CSP are not

focused on “access” or “equity” within existing assimilative schooling structures, but the transformation of school sites to affirm and sustain students’ identities, cultures, and linguistic practices. Furthermore, CSP recognizes that culture is fluid and dynamic and that youth have choice and agency in the ways that they apply traditional cultural practices to their everyday lives. CSP does not wish to valorize all cultural practices, but instead takes an “inward gaze” to interrupt the ways that some cultural practices reify other systems of oppression.

CSP is not confined to a set of best practices or quick fixes; it’s about genuine connection, communication, and care. Conceptual and empirical documentation of CSP curriculum suggests that there are a range of pedagogical practices that contribute to the design and implementation of CSP. Examples of CSP practices youth include linguistic expression that fluidly shifts between youths’ home languages and academic English vocabulary (i.e. Spanish and English, Bucholtz et al., 2017; Rosa & Flores, 2017), academic assignments as outlets for, as opposed to causes of, Black youths’ resistance (Kinloch, 2017), revitalization of Indigenous cultural and linguistic practices lost to genocide, colonization, and assimilation (Lee & McCarty, 2017), and curriculum developed for and by Latinx youth that cultivates and sustains positive identity development and community connections (Irizarry, 2017). The expansive and dynamic possibility of CSP opens space for the multiplicity of youths’ cultural experience and knowledge to be our classrooms’ most generative resources.

CSP as a theory and practice contributed to the importance of taking up connection to cultural ancestry as well as dynamic and evolving cultural practices, but that has yet to attend to the cultural practices of disabled communities (Alim et al., 2017; Waitoller & King Thorius, 2016). CSP has a clear commitment to disrupting “patriarchal, cis heteronormativity, English monolingualism, ableist, classist, xenophobic, Judeo-Christian gazes,” however disability has yet

to be the focus of empirical studies related to CSP. To extend CSP as a framework for uplifting and sustaining disability identity, community, and culture in schools, it is essential to also understand current academic and community scholarship and activism. In the following sections, I'll explore disability identity, community, and culture through academic models of disability in addition to community scholarship centering work for and by disabled people. While I consider disability identity, community, and culture as necessarily interrelated, they are rarely discussed as such, so I will attend to them individually and then bring them together through my conceptual framework, *Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies*.

Models and Theories of Disability in Education

In order to contextualize the experiences of disabled youth in school, it is vital to situate disability identity, community, and culture within broader histories of disability as a social, cultural, and political construct. The two most commonly discussed models of disability in academic scholarship are the medical and social models. Following the Disability Rights movement's focus on the need to remove ableist barriers as opposed to trying to “fix” disabled people, academic theories began to arise that highlighted the difference between disability as a medical versus social construct (Oliver, 1983). Specifically, Disability Studies scholars point to the medical model of disability as one that pathologized disability as an individual and primarily medicalized experiences. For instance, in *Disability Studies in Education*, the medical model focuses on disability as a problem and deficit in relation to grade level standards and requires disabled students to receive remedial (and often segregated) instruction (Baglieri et al., 2011, Connor & Valle, 2019). To combat the deficit perspective of the medical model, the social model was proposed to highlight the ways that disabilities are constructed through experiences of ableism and inaccessibility of the physical and social environment. For instance, in *Disability*

Studies in Education, the social model focuses on the ways that policies, physical structures, and instructional techniques are largely inaccessible to students with disabilities (Baglieri, 2022, Connor & Valle, 2019).

A critique of the medical and social models is that they do not adequately attend to a cultural, political, or relational construction of disability. Two lesser referenced models of disability are the cultural model of disability (Snyder & Mitchell, 2006) and political relational model of disability (Kafer, 2013). The cultural model provides an important extension of the social model of disability by recognizing the role of popular culture and everyday cultural practices. The cultural model of disability may be considered in educational contexts as the construction of the “normal” child through cultural representations and expectations of “good” and “smart” students in school (Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). In addition to the social and cultural contexts of disability, Kafer (2013) situates disability as a political identity that is relational based on the disablement occurs based on ideological systems that disenfranchise disabled people. Kafer (2013) notes, “disability is experienced in and through relationships; it does not occur in isolation” (p. 8). In response to oppressive ableist political and relational conditions, the political/relational model of disability “makes room for more activist responses, seeing ‘disability’ as a potential site for collective reimagining” (Kafer, 2013, p. 9).

I find the political/relational model most congruent with the perspectives presented in this research in that it recognizes disability as an identity, centralizes the role of relationships, and includes collective future dreaming. Furthermore, Kafer was part of a generation of scholars and activists that began to critique the lack of attention to intersectionality in Disability Rights and Disability Studies. An intersectional lens is critical to consider how disability identity,

community, and culture are informed by and in relation to disabled youths' multifaceted identities and range of communities and cultures.

Recent activism in Disability Justice and scholarship in Disability Studies Critical Race Theory (DisCrit) have specifically attended to the ways that the Disability Rights movement and Disability Studies were inattentive to intersectionality. They highlighted how models of disability are also deeply imbued with eugenic logics that further perpetuated the collusive nature of racism and ableism with a hyper focus on a person's value to colonialism and capitalism (Lewis, 2022). Ableist beliefs often position Black, Indigenous, and youth and communities of color as mentally, morally, and intellectually inferior to white youth and communities (Annamma et al, 2016, Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). These foundations, along with assimilationist education for immigrants, lack of educational opportunities in low socioeconomic communities, and gendered educational pathways are just some of the manifestations of hierarchies of intelligence promoted by white supremacy (Erevelles, 2014). Intersectional oppression in education continues to contribute to the ways that disability is defined in relation to educational practices prioritizing white, nondisabled, affluent norms of knowing and being (Annamma et al, 2016, Leonardo & Broderick, 2011).

DisCrit has emerged as a critical theory that poses particularly vital tenets pertinent to the construction of disability in schools, as well as implications for research and curriculum design affirming disabled students of color assets and contributions. DisCrit theorizers Annamma, Connor, and Ferri (2016) draw on legacies of scholars and activists that have attended to intersectionality and race and disability² in tandem, even before these concepts may have been

²DisCrit theorizers originally used the spelling "dis/ability" to indicate the social construction as well as the fluid nature of disability (Annamma et al., 2013). However, in recent literature Annamma & Handy (2021) indicated the importance of expressions and spelling of disability that come from and are used in the disability community, so as

named in the academy. They note, “we were following a path laid by scholars of color, those with disabilities, those with intersecting marginalized identities, and their allies who were teaching us to move past simplistic and unidimensional notions of identity” (Annamma et al., 2016, p. 1). In doing so, DisCrit provides a pathway looking past and looking forward to better understand the present system through the voices, experiences, and perspectives of those most impacted, as well as radically imagine a transformative “yet-to-be” (Sins Invalid, 2019) in our schools. Since its inception, DisCrit has been used as a framework to theorize solidarity in curriculum design (e.g., Annamma & Morrison, 2018), shift teacher learning (e.g., Beneke et al., 2022), and center the perspectives and contributions of disabled youth of color to academic research and school-wide theories of change (e.g., Annamma, 2019). However, DisCrit has yet to be considered in tandem with CSP as a tool for empirical research on uplifting and sustaining disabled ways of knowing and being in the K-12 classroom.

Bringing DisCrit and CSP together hopes great possibility to inform the design and implementation of school curriculum and educational research design. Both frameworks centralize community and activist frameworks, which is integral to disability identity, community, and culture. The emergence and evolution of academic scholarship in Disability Studies and Disability Studies in Education were catalyzed by the Disability Rights and Disability Justice movements, yet rarely cite disabled activists and community contributions. Furthermore, my personal learning and the ideas and concepts presented in this dissertation are deeply connected to my learning from experiences as a disabled student and scholar, the insights of my disabled communities, and the vibrance of disability culture.

not to impose overly academic rhetoric nor euphemisms that dismiss the many experiences and perspectives of disabled peoples. Therefore, I use their current use of spelling disability without a slash.

Specifically, Disability Justice has been central to a dramatic shift in the conversations and activism around disability identity, community, and culture. Disability Justice was first articulated by Sins Invalid, an artist-activist collective led by queer and gender nonconforming disabled people of color (Berne, 2015; Sins Invalid, 2019). Sins Invalid developed a working draft of 10 principles³ that move beyond single-issue politics and rights-based models that do not address intersectionality and anti-capitalism. The Disability Justice principles have been used by DisCrit scholars (e.g., Annamma & Handy, 2021) to create and enumerate justice-centered educational approaches for multiply marginalized youth. Disability Justice honors the big and small ways that disabled people forge community, resist dominant narratives, and dream together. Furthermore, as an artist collective, Sins Invalid serves as a model of the ways that creativity are tools of accessibility, resistance, and connection across the disability community.

Disability Justice aligns with and expands DisCrit and CSP due to its intersectional approach to interdependence and collective liberation that celebrates the multiplicities of identity and culture within and beyond the disability community (Berne, 2015, Sins Invalid, 2019). Generally, there is little academic or community scholarship about disability identity, community, and culture in school. While there has been a push for research on Disability Rights in school, particularly in relation to self-advocacy and inclusion, disability identity, community, and culture continue to be left out of both traditional models of segregated special education programming, as well as movements for equity and inclusion. On the one hand, funneling disabled students into segregated special education programs contributes to the stigma that disability is a deficiency outside of “typical” development and “normal” education. On the other,

³ The ten principles of Disability Justice include (1) Intersectionality, (2) Leadership of those most impacted, (3) Anti-capitalist politics, (4) Cross-movement solidarity, (5) Recognizing wholeness, (6) Sustainability, (7) Commitment to cross-disability solidarity, (8) Interdependence, (9) Collective access, (10) Collective liberation (Berne, 2015; Sins Invalid, 2019).

movements for equity and inclusion tend to rely on a rights-based model of advocacy and focus on opportunities for inclusion in general education settings “in a way that does not challenge biases or norms that may systematically disadvantage some [disabled] students over others” (Voulgarides, 2018, p. 29). Furthermore, neither of these approaches adequately prioritize the contributions that disabled youth can bring to educational research and instructional practice.

To address these gaps, this dissertation was designed to affirm and celebrate disability identity, community, and culture by bringing disabled youth perspectives and experiences front and center in educational theory and curricular practice. I used humanizing (Paris & Winn, 2013), emancipatory (Freire, 1970/1993), and community-centered research approaches (Bang et al. 2016) to disrupt oppressive research practices that pathologize, objectify, and exclude disabled youth (and disabled community members in general) from research that claims to be in their best interest.

This study is designed to disrupt research agendas done *on and about* disabled youth as opposed to *alongside, for, and by* disabled youth. As Skrtic (1986) notes, “most research has been done *for* special education (servicing the field as it conceived of itself), not *of* special education, that is looking at the field from an alternative vantage point” (p. 5, italics in original). I am taking an alternative vantage point that special education settings may be designed as powerful affinity spaces that honor, celebrate, and sustain disability identity, community, and culture in school. CSP, DisCrit, and Disability Justice provide new frameworks to analyze, address, and transform schooling spaces and educational research. In the following sections, I will review how this study is situating disability identity, community, and culture and then propose a conceptual framework that brings them together through features that can illuminate research and curriculum design, Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies.

Disability Identity

As movements in Disability Rights, Disability Studies, and Disability Justice continue to emerge and evolve, disability has been reclaimed as an essential part of disabled personal narratives and identities (Wong, 2020). Disability identity is deeply personal, and therefore may be defined differently depending on the disabled person's relationship with their disability.

Disabled writer, podcaster, and activist Wong (2020) provided a multifaceted approach to disability identity:

Disabled people have always existed, whether the word *disability* is used or not. To me, disability is not a monolith, nor is it a clear-cut binary of disabled and nondisabled. Disability is mutable and ever-evolving. Disability is both apparent and non-apparent. Disability is pain, struggle, brilliance, abundance, and joy. Disability is sociopolitical, cultural, and biological. Being visible and claiming a disability brings risks as much as it brings pride. (p. xxii, italics in original)

Wong brings attention to the dynamic nature of disability and range of authentic disabled experiences. Historically disability identity has primarily been confined to the narrative of disability as a tragedy and the assumption that disabled people would want to distance themselves from disability. However, in recent years, disability identity has been reclaimed as a source of personhood and pride, particularly through shifts in language associated with disability. Autistic scholar and activist Lydia X Z Brown (2013) explained the power of language in claiming disability identity,

When I say that I am "disabled," I am not putting myself down, insulting myself, suggesting that something is wrong with me, or making a negative statement about myself. I am staking a claim in an identity that is important to who I am as a person. I am recognizing that my mind/body function atypically, and that because of this, I am constantly forced by mainstream social/cultural attitudes and the laws and policies that enforce them to choose between being othered (and then discriminated against or outright harmed) or accepting the idea that I must hide who I am by passing as an abled person. By calling myself disabled, I am rejecting the idea that it is wrong to have a mind/body like mine.

As Brown shares, disability identity is the recognition and ownership of disability as part of one's personal experiences in relationship to their bodymind and society at large. It does not discount the material challenges that come with having a disability but puts them in a social and cultural context suggesting that it is not bad or wrong to have a disability and that disability identity is an important part of disabled people's lives. This has led to discussions of person-first (person/people with disabilities) versus identity-first language (disabled person/people), reclaiming historically offensive terms such as "crip" or "mad," and capitalization to indicate disability as an identity marker as opposed to medical diagnosis (e.g., d/Deaf, a/Autistic).

Disability identity has also been reclaimed through artistic expressions of disability as central to a person's sense of self and authentic representations of disability. For instance, Frida Khalo is cited as icon for prominently display her disabilities alongside her womanhood, Mexican heritage, and bisexuality, as opposed to hiding them (Rigby, 2021). Portraits featuring her disabilities juxtapose the authentic realities of the pain associated with her disabilities as well as maintained a sense of dignity and self.

While Frida's paintings are an older example of claiming disability identity through the arts, disability identity continues to be celebrated through artistic expression to this day. For instance, youth are now using social media platforms to express disability identity and provide disability representation. Model and activist Aaron Rose Philip shared the importance of disability identity and representation, "I'm at the intersection of being black, physically disabled and trans – all identities that have been ignored in fashion and throughout history as a whole" (Scott, 2019). In one interview she said that disability pride is "the personal acceptance that living and contributing to the world around you every day whilst being Disabled is in fact

triumphant, celebratory and joyful” (Fraser, 2023) Philip’s quotes indicate the importance of disability identity as a part of their wholeness that deserves to be celebrated.

However, the “triumphant, celebratory, and joyful” components of disability identity are nowhere to be found in educational spaces that continue to use disability as a marker of difference and deficit. While disability identity has clearly been an important part of conversations amongst disabled people and youth through activism, the arts, and social media, this has yet to trickle down into school settings where “understanding of disability [remain] warped by the shroud of shame, pity and tragedy in which the disabled students’ needs, deficits, and problems are wrapped-constructing the student’s institutional identity” (Ware, 2002, p. 152). As Ware (2002) suggested, schools continue to construct disability as an institutional identity, typically tied to a specific classification and individualized education plan (IEP), as opposed to an asset that brings brilliant ways of disabled knowing and being into the classroom.

To counter these deficit narratives that decenter disabled experiences and perspectives, recent literature has addressed the construction of disability identity in schools as a dynamic process, particularly as it intersects with other identity markers such as race, gender, language, immigration, and socioeconomic status. These studies document the institutional and cultural oppression associated with disability in schools that impact disabled youths’ identity development in material ways. For instance, Connor (2007) profiled students of color with disabilities and found that their school experiences were deeply impacted by stigma and deficit perspectives at the intersection of race, socioeconomic status, and disability. Additionally, Annamma (2019), considered the ways that incarcerated disabled girls of color disproportionately experienced hyper surveillance and discipline in ways that negatively affected their sense of self through a pedagogy of pathologization. Studies such as these point to the role

of school policies and practices as contributors to disabled students' sense of self and identity development and illustrate the ableism and intersecting systems of oppression deeply embedded in education. However, they do not attend to possible sites for positive disability identity development in schools.

There has been a parallel line of research that more explicitly attends to connection to disability identity and how positive disability identity may be developed over time. For instance, Forber-Pratt & Zape (2017) worked with disabled college students to construct a model for disability identity development consisting of four statuses: acceptance, relationship, adoption, and engagement. These statuses shed light on the ways that disabled college students *accepted* their disability(s), built *relationships* with other disabled people, *adopted* disability culture, and *engaged* in disability activism. Importantly, this model for disability identity development considers the multidimensional factors contributing to a person's identification with disability. Further addressing the evolution of disability identity development, Mueller (2019) considered the difference between adolescent disability identity development with high school students and that of adult disabled activists. Both disabled adults and youth shared the stigma associated with disability in school and the ways that negatively impacted their sense of self. However, disabled youth in her study added that they used online resources to learn about disability and connect to disability groups that affirmed their disability identity. These studies shed light on disability identity as constructed through personal, school, and community experiences, and suggest the need for additional research in educational practices that support and sustain positive disability identity development.

As such, there has been a turn towards asset pedagogies to support positive disability identity development, including representation in curriculum anti-ableist instructional practices,

and solidarity with disabled youth. For instance, Forber-Pratt & Minotti (2023) suggest asset pedagogies as an antidote to ableism in schools, specifically “representation matters—it is an important way of signaling the worthiness of disabled lives and helping promote the development of positive disability development” (Forber-Pratt & Minotti, 2023, p. 12). Bringing an intersectional lens to asset pedagogies, Skelton (2023) further attends to principles to cultivate ethnic-racial-identity formation for disabled youth by instilling disability and racial pride, opportunities to interrogate practices that reproduce marginalization, increasing the presence of disabled adults of color in disabled youths’ of color lives, and creating environments that support and sustain disabled youths’ of color cultural practices for how they use their bodies and minds. Although these frameworks and theories of change center disability identity in asset pedagogies have included implications for specific instructional activities (Forber-Pratt & Minotti, 2023, Mueller 2019), they have yet to design and implement more extensive shifts in curriculum that connects and sustains disability community and culture.

Disability Community

Prior research has illuminated that disability identity is important to address in tandem with opportunities to connect with the disability community (Forber-Pratt & Zape, 2017). Disabled people come together in community through political activism, common interests, and activities, such as artistic expression (e.g., *Sins Invalid*, *Kinetic Light*), mutual aid (Piepznasamarasinha, 2019), and online spaces (Miller, 2017). Some disability communities are specific to disability classifications and shared histories, such as d/Deaf communities, a/Autistic communities, and Mad communities. Others are designed to bring disabled people together across disability classifications, such as Disability Justice arts productions and activism.

As with disability identity, the arts have also played an integral role in disability community spaces. The arts open possibilities for disabled people to find, connect, and see themselves represented beyond mainstream depictions of disability as disturbing, broken, and tragic. They are an essential mode of creative storytelling, representation, and collective dreaming through which “we reroute our way back to our bodyminds in revolutionary love” (Kafai, 2021, p. 85). In fact, *Sins Invalid*’s theorizing of Disability Justice was originally an embodied theory through poetry and performance exploring, celebrating, and liberating queer BIPOC disabled bodies. Artistic expression captures and embodies disability aesthetic and brings disabled people together through shared felt experience.

While schools have classes and programs that consist solely of disabled students (e.g., special education), they are designed to segregate disabled students as opposed to building community and solidarity. Disability Justice activist and poet Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2022) writes, “Ableism isolates and keeps disabled, Deaf, and neurodivergent people from finding disabled, Deaf, and neurodivergent communities. It’s common for parents or teachers to tell some disabled children they’re ‘not like the other,’ for parents of autistic, Deaf, or disabled kids to deny our identities.” As Piepzna-Samarasinha suggests, even in school spaces where disabled, Deaf, and neurodivergent students may be in physical proximity, ableism (as perpetuated systematically and through interpersonal relations with teachers and parents) denies opportunities disabled identity, which then further denies authentic community building. Educational programs often create hierarchies based on ableist notions of intelligence and productivity, which further divides community connections amongst disabled, Deaf, and neurodivergent students. Special education classes and programs often have stigma associated

with them, which leads to disabled youths' internalized ableism and a desire to distance themselves from disability and disabled peers (Valle & Connor, 2019).

Disability is further distanced in schools through a lack of opportunities to connect with the disability community through curricular representation, disabled adult mentorship, and cross-disability collaborations. Overwhelmingly across special and general education settings, disability representation is neglected in curriculum, which leaves disabled youth without reflections of themselves and the broader disability community (Baglieri & Lalvani, 2019, Mueller, 2021). That is further accentuated by the lack of disabled adult that may serve as mentors in school (e.g., teachers, counselors, social workers, community members). As one student articulated in Mueller's (2021) study, "I didn't know people with disabilities could grow up to be adults" (p. 189). Without curricular representation and mentorship, disabled students are left without opportunities to develop relationships with their own disability identity and the disability community. Disability identity and community become integrally linked through the process of creating a collective identity, "when students with a collective disability identity look in the mirror, they see themselves as part of the disability community" (Mueller, 2019, p. 20). The experience of disability then moves from a solely individual experience to one that connects disabled students with one another through shared experiences and a sense of belonging.

However research has attended to community in general education settings as opposed to amongst disabled students and disability community. When community building for disabled students is included in research and school practices, it focuses on community and belonging within inclusion and/or general education settings (Lalvani, 2015). While important for disabled students to feel a sense of belonging across educational environments, the focus on inclusion in general education foregrounds assimilation to nondisabled ways of knowing and being.

Furthermore, it continues to centralize nondisabled spaces as preferable to disabled spaces.

Instead, this dissertation seeks to fill the “missing discourses of joy and happiness in relation to disability” (Sunderland, Catalano, & Kendall, 2009, p. 703), which I believe may come in disability affirming community spaces in school.

Despite negative associations with special education, there is emerging research that highlights the potential of special education settings (e.g. resource room) as a valuable space to connect with other disabled students (Mueller, 2019). In contrast to the ways that school systems approach disability as an individual experience, disabled community building is a connection amongst disabled people that fosters a sense of affirmation, belonging, and support. In this dissertation, I was interested in the strategies that transform special education settings from stigmatized placements and isolation to affinity spaces for disability youth full of beauty, connection, and community.

Disability Culture

Without attention to disability identity and community, schools also fail to recognize, much less celebrate and sustain, disability culture. As with the range of disability identities and communities, disability culture is vast and varied. Brown (1994) pointed out the challenges in identifying and defining disability culture as

The existence of disability culture is a relatively new and contested idea. Not surprising, perhaps, for a group that has long been described with terms like “in-valid,” “impaired,” “limited,” “crippled,” and so forth. Scholars would be hard-pressed to discover terms of hope, endearment or ability associated with people with disabilities. (p. 9)

The construction of disability as a tragic way to live and the negative associations of disability as an individual problem have been the primary narrative in Western cultures. However, as disabled people have reclaimed disability identities and found disability communities, the conception of

disability culture has taken hold. Brown (2002) conducted an international survey of perspectives on disability culture and found that some distinguishing features included the “celebration of the uniqueness of disability,” a “framework of possibility or choice,” “shared goals,” and pride in disability identity. Other studies have also indicated the importance of disability humor and problem solving (Gill, 1995), and “a collective need for an accepting, inclusive, flexible, and cohesive community” (Mueller, 2019, p. 12).

At its essence, “disability culture is a set of artifacts, beliefs, expressions created by disabled people ourselves to describe our own life experiences. It is not primarily how we are treated, but what we have created” (Brown, 2002, p. 14). Disability culture is also social, cultural, and contextual as it intersects with multiple other identity markers and lived experiences. As such, disability culture is far from monolithic and takes shape in multiple ways. Disability culture may be nourished through “crip-centric liberated zones,” which are “a place of our own creation where we, the disabled, queer of color many, can exist and thrive liberated from the oppressions that relegate our daily lives” (Kafai, 2021, p. 43). Crip-centric liberated zones are an example of the ways that disability culture is fostered for and by multiply marginalized disabled people. They are not tied to the confines of white, nondisabled, cis hetero, Eurocentric, English monolingual, and capitalist expectations and limitations.

Disability culture also includes artistic expression. Kafai (2021) writes, “Crip life invites us into fierce creativity... we dream new crip worlds together. We dream without shame. We dream out loud and in public” (p. 11). The arts open possibilities for disabled people to find, connect, and see themselves represented beyond mainstream depictions of disability as disturbing, broken, and tragic. They are an essential mode of creative storytelling, representation, and collective dreaming through which “we reroute our way back to our bodyminds in

revolutionary love” (Kafai, 2021, p. 85). Captured in poetry (e.g., Cyreé Jarelle Johnson, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha), song (e.g., Leroy Moore Jr., Krip Hop), podcasts (e.g., Alice Wong *Disability Visibility*), blogs (e.g., Mia Mingus *Leaving Evidence*), artistic expression plays an important role in the authentic representation of and an invitation into disability culture.

Kinetic Light, a dance group of wheelchair users and disabled people that attend to disability, race, gender, and sexuality through choreography, lighting, and audio descriptions exemplifies these sentiments. Alice Sheppard, artistic director, choreographer, and dancer, explains,

Disability is the aesthetic of the work...They can feel it in their wheels...We’re not looking to hide impairment. We’re not looking to even make the flat statement of impairment. We’re making work that arises from our perspective as disabled artists and from our investment in disability culture. (Kinetic Light, 2015)

And Laurel Lawson, choreographer, dancer, and engineer continues, “We have disabled children, we have queer children, children of all races, who can come, identify themselves, and have that spark of desire to participate in art, participate in cultural life” (Kinetic Light, 2015). Aesthetic works are a gift to disabled youth, especially those at multiple intersecting systems of oppression, who are so often told that they don’t belong (Moore, 2016).

Importantly, any work on disability culture centers disabled ways of knowing and being. Disability culture attends to individual and collective disability identity, as well as the ways that disability culture is fostered and thrives in community with other disabled people. Disability culture de-centers assimilation to nondisabled spaces;

It is absolutely not our job [to] fit into mainstream society. Rather it is our destiny to demonstrate to mainstream society that it is to their benefit to figure out that we come attached to our wheelchairs, our ventilators, our canes, our hearing aids, etc. and to receive the benefit of our knowledge and experience mainstream society needs to figure out how we fit in, but how we can be of benefit exactly the way we are. (Brown, 2002, p. 16)

In addition to the sentiment expressed above that disability culture is *not* about fitting into mainstream society, Sins Invalid (2019) further iterates that disability culture is not tied to notions of productivity and value based on capitalist exploitations of people's bodies and minds. Disability culture recognizes the value of disability and disabled people in and of themselves and in community with one another with collective values and practices fostered in and through disabled ways of knowing and being.

Disabled ways of knowing and being include creative, innovative, and practical moves to make environments and activities accessible. In schools, access is approached through individual attention to accommodations and modifications as outlined in an IEP. However, disability communities and culture take a very different perspective, access as a collective and relational process. Part of that process is "access intimacy;"

[R]elationships where I always feel like I can say what my access needs are, no matter what. Or I can say that I don't know them, and that's ok too...It has looked like able bodied people listening to me and believing me. It has looked like people investing in remembering my access needs and checking in with me if there are going to be situations that might be inaccessible or hard disability-body-wise. It has looked like crip-made access. It has looked like crip solidarity. (Mingus, 2011, para. 10)

Disability community and culture are not solely the ways that disabled people come together, but necessarily includes attention to access as a collaborative and liberatory project.

These disabled ways of knowing and being as expressed through linguistic and cultural practices are far from being seen and celebrated in schools. Instead, schools continue to assimilate disabled students into what has been deemed "normal," nondisabled, white, and English monolingual standards of knowing, learning, and behaving (Beneke & Love, 2022, Leonardo & Broderick, 2011). There is a long history of schooling practices that actively discounts disability culture through linguistic practices. For instance, d/Deaf students were put into segregated schools where they were punished for using American Sign Language (ASL), as

opposed to celebrated as part of d/Deaf culture. Oralism was prioritized in d/Deaf schools (Hott & Diane, 2007), Black ASL was entirely discounted as a dialect of ASL (McCaskill et al., 2020), and the contributions of Hand Talk (a collection of Indigenous sign languages) to modern ASL are rarely (if ever) discussed (Vox, 2022). Also, written and spoken English continue to be prioritized in academic instruction, which excludes the brilliant contributions of AAC users and students who use a range of alternative communication techniques (Padia, 2022). Disability culture continues to be excluded from instructional content and pedagogical practices, which disrupts disabled youths' personal and collective connections and enactments of disability culture.

Through my work, I am pushing schools to honor disability culture's collective declaration that "Yes, we have learned something important about life from being Disabled that makes us unique yet affirms our common humanity. We refuse any longer to hide our differences. Rather, we will explore, develop and celebrate our distinctness and offer its lessons to the world" (Gill, 1995, para. 12). This necessitates the design of curriculum and instruction designed for and by disabled people. It requires intergenerational learning, collaboration that centers disabled wisdom and access, and thriving disability identity, community, and culture in school. Therefore, I turned to CSP to conceptualize a framework that centers, celebrates, and sustains disability identity, community, and culture.

Conceptual Framework: Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies

In this study, I am developing a conceptual framework for Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies (Crippling CSP) that affirms, celebrates, and sustains disability identity, community, and culture through curriculum design that brings connectedness and kinship among the disability community in K-12 schools. As previously described, CSP attends to the fluidity of

youth identity in relation to their cultural heritage, provides opportunities for intergenerational connection and learning amongst cultural groups, and provides educational spaces that center and sustain cultural practices, values, and languages (Paris, 2012). To date, disability-centered CSP has only been considered in relation to teacher education (e.g., Kulkarni et al., 2023) and hypothetical K-12 practices (Waitoller & King-Thorius, 2016). There has yet to be empirical work bringing the features and design commitments of CSP to disability identity, community, and culture in K-12 settings, which I am proposing through this framework and in my work.

Specifically, I am considering how CSP can be interpreted and applied through a disability-centered lens. While keeping in mind that “CSPs of course take on necessarily different forms across cultural contexts with different communities in different places” (Paris, 2021, p. 367), I attend to one of the cross-cutting components of CSPs: “A critical centering of dynamic communities, their valued languages, practices, and knowledges across the learning setting.” Using this description of CSP as a guide for research and curriculum design, I focus on the dynamic nature of disability communities and culture through their “valued languages, practices, and knowledges.” I apply the term *Cripping* to CSP to emphasize the ways that disability identity, community, and culture can be explicitly enacted through a CSP framework.

I intentionally use the term “cripping” as it comes from the Disability Rights and Disability Justice movement to reclaim derogatory language as an activist stance towards positive disability identity and collective action. The term “crip” as a noun and “cripped” and “cripping” as verbs are ways that “disabled people are taking the thing in their identity that scares the outside world the most and making it a cause to revel in with militant self-pride” (Shapiro, 1993, p. 34). To disrupt deficit constructions of disability in higher education, Connor and Gabel (2013) have previously forwarded “cripping the curriculum through academic

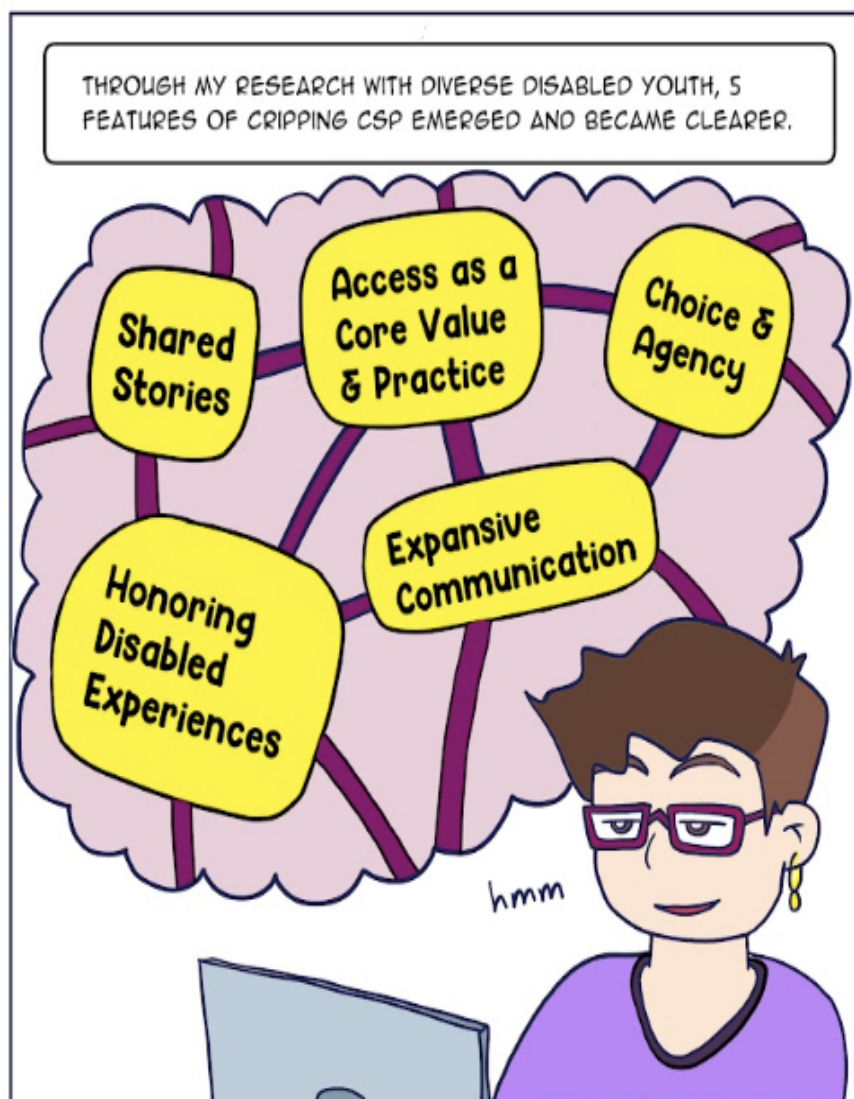
activism” (p. 100). I extend the call for crippling curriculum by utilizing a CSP framework to provide individual and collective opportunities to deepen and sustain disability identity, community, and culture in K-12 schools.

To do so, I considered the dynamic and varied values, languages, and practices within disability culture. Drawing on Disability Rights and Disability Justice activism, Disability Studies and DisCrit scholarship, and listening and learning from my disability communities, I am forwarding five features of Crippling CSP: 1) honoring disabled experiences, (2) shared stories, (3) access as a core value and practice, (4) expansive communication, and (5) choice and agency.

Figure 3 *Comic defining Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy.*



Figure 4 *Comic of features of Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy.*



Honoring Disabled Experiences

Honoring disabled experiences celebrates variability and differences in disability identity, community, and culture. Honoring disabled experiences means listening to, believing, validating, and learning from disabled people. Honoring disabled experiences is a way to recognize disabled wholeness without confining disability to a single story or limiting disabled people's multifaceted identities. Part of the dynamic nature of disability culture is the ways that disability

intersects with other identity markers and leads to unique experiences of disability (Erevelles & Minear, 2010). This leads to the importance of honoring individual connections and relationships to disability identity, community, and culture, as well as collective experiences across disability identities, communities, and cultures. Honoring disabled experiences uplifts disabled joy, while also attending to intersectional systems of oppression that continue to negate disabled brilliance (Kafai, 2021). Disability is considered an asset worth conserving, while also holding true that not all disabled experiences are positive (Garland-Tomson, 2012).

Honoring disabled experiences includes the vitality of cripistemologies, which focus on the epistemological contributions of disabled people as originally theorized at the intersection of disability studies and queer theory (Johnson & McRuer, 2014). Cripistemologies are not confined to the academy, but instead draw on the lived experiences of disabled people as a basis for new horizons of being and knowing. Patsava (2014) explains the role of felt experience as “the most accessible resource disabled people can leverage when it comes to knowledge production” (p. 206). The nature of disability as human variance provides a diversity of experience and therefore expands knowledge production far beyond the linear structures and objectives utilized in schools.

Shared Stories

Shared stories are the connections that disabled people have with one another based on shared experiences of disability and ableism, as well as shared histories of disabled activism, values, and cultural practices. Shared stories contribute to the relational component of disability identity, building disability community, and learning and sustaining disability culture. Shared stories incorporate the importance of finding crip kin that share experiences of disability and ableism (Linton, 1998, Wong, 2020). A common understanding and shared stories of lived

experiences of disability and ableism opens interpersonal connections that don't require disabled people to constantly explain themselves, their disabilities, or ableism.

Shared stories demonstrate the prevalence of disability solidarity and community over time in contrast to the medicalized and pathologizing narratives of medical diagnoses and tragedy. While the disabled community is diverse in every sense of the word, Linton (1998) explains, "we are all bound together, not by this list of our collective symptoms, but by the social and political circumstances that have forged us as a group" (p. 4). The construction of disability and ableism forged a group with shared experiences of marginalization based on pathologies of their bodies and minds. These shared histories of exclusion include schools (Goodheart, 2014, Nielsen, 2012), laws denying their existence (McLeod, 2020, Schweik, 2009), and intersections with colonization and white supremacy (Artiles, 2013, Burch, 2021).

Opposed to the ways that schools have been used to pathologize, isolate, and assimilate disabled youth (Annamma et al., 2016, Erevelles, 2005), Crippling CSP includes a commitment to students' shared stories in remembering disability history and ancestry and present day experiences. Shared stories promote crip kinship that "grounds itself in affirmation, crip love, and remembrance" (Kafai, 2022, p. 22). The design of Crippling CSP must continue to prioritize crip kinship through shared stories and the lineages and futurity of crip connections that have developed, sustained, and transformed crip culture. It serves as a way that "[disabled people] have found each other and offered healing and access to each other before and will again" (Piepzna-Samarasinha, p. 34). Crip kinship as a commitment to Crippling CSP through shared stories prioritizes relationships, personhood, and care over any research agenda, data collection, or "results." Shared stories are expressed through crip kinship "when praxis is paired with fundamental commitment to relationality, reciprocity, responsibility, and genuine care in work

with youth and their communities” (Ali & McCarty, 2020, p. 20). Shared stories then go beyond the ways that disabled people connect to one another, but also the ways that they are responsible to one another and disabled youth.

Access as a Core Value and Practice

Access as a core value and practice is in direct response to the ways that physical, social, and institutional spaces are designed for nondisabled people (Goodley, 2016, Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2022). Access as a value is an ethical foundation, whereas access as a practice are the actual behaviors that manifest that value. As a value, access is the goal of eliminating barriers to create an inclusive environment that accommodates the diverse needs and abilities of people with disabilities. Access as a practice is more complicated than access as a value because it requires collective action and navigating access needs that may change across time and context (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2022). Access not only aspires to remove barriers to nondisabled spaces, but also cultivates and shares the brilliance of disabled people amongst disabled communities as innovators of accessible “life hacks” (Bennet et al., 2018, Jackson, 2018). Access does not solely attend to the individual needs of disabled people, but also a relational practice in which disabled people are always learning and growing in relation to their access needs. This includes a collective responsibility to support and engage in that process alongside one another.

Access as a value and practice are part of a collective process. Therefore, it is essential that disabled people listen and learn from one another to provide meaningful cross-disability solidarity (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2022). At times this may mean contending with conflicting access needs and navigating how to provide access in a variety of ways. Furthermore, access as a core value and practice is intersectional as spaces may be experienced as inaccessible when cultural histories are being erased, linguistic practices are dismissed, or power dynamics are used

to confine and suppress. Sins Invalid (2019) states, “We value exploring and creating new ways of doing things that go beyond able-bodied/minded normativity. Access needs do not need to be held in shame -- we all have various capacities which function differently in various environments” (p. 26). As disabled activists Alice Wong, Mia Mingus, and Sandy Ho say, “Access is Love.” It is a relational act that demonstrates care and connection.

Care work is another way to think about access as a core value and practice (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018). Care work is “the ways sick and disabled people attempt to get the care and support we need, on our own terms, with autonomy and dignity” (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018, p. 33). Care work can be in moment-to-moment connections and access supports, friendship, and commitments to community accountability centering collective care. Piepzna-Samarasinha (2018) asks, “What does it mean to shift our ideas of access and care (whether it’s disability, childcare, economic access, or many more) from an individual chore, an unfortunate cost of having an unfortunate body, to a collective responsibility that maybe even deeply joyful?” (p. 33). As modeled by the disabled community, as well as other and multiply marginalized communities, care work is not constructed through obligation, but a commitment to access and solidarity. Cross-disability and cross-movement solidarity mean practicing care work to ensure that disabled bodies and minds are celebrated as essential, valuable, and whole (Sins Invalid, 2019).

Expansive Communication

Expansive communication is the process of sharing information, thoughts, and feelings through a variety of methods and mediums. There are infinite forms of communication, and in disability culture, communication is particularly expansive in that it encompasses language diversity, accessibility, and crip creativity. Expansive communication as a feature of criping

CSP is meant to sustain disability identity and personal communication styles, while also forging relationships by navigating differences in communication styles and linguistic practices.

Expansive communication includes linguistic practices, which are an essential component of culture. Language preservation is often discussed in terms of racial, ethnic, national, and tribal languages and cultures. However, it is important to further consider the ways that prioritizing written and spoken English also intersect with ableism. Sind Invalid (2021) writes that “Language Justice is Disability Justice” in that

Our languages carry our cultures. They tie us to each other, to our ancestors, and to the way we understand life through the practice of naming. There are languages created and used specifically by disabled and Deaf people, as our bodyminds inform our means of expression. We use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), American Sign Language (ASL), Lengua de Señas Mexicana (LSM), Black American Sign Language (BASL), ProTactile Communication, with and through our trachs and our staccato breathing, through our brain fog and aphasia, through pain and pain meds, through masks and voice amplifiers, through text and videos, through our grunts and moans and sounding our worlds, through blinks and blowing through straws and more ways than we can outline. (para. 18-19)

Expansive communication encompasses diverse communication methods and the embodied experience of language in the disability community. In CSP, language is considered a vital component of culture (Paris, 2012). Therefore, sustaining cultural practices necessarily includes revitalizing and sustaining language and communication practices, especially those that are targets of linguicide because of ableism, audism, colonization, and assimilationist schooling.

Diverse modes of language and communication, such as augmented and alternative communication (AAC), are often segregated to special education settings. Although AAC devices have been regarded as an inferior form of communication, they hold great potential to connect with one another and move towards interdependent communication styles (Bennet et al., 2018). As McLeod (2020), a DJ activist and AAC user, writes in “Ten AAC Commandments - Notorious B.I.G. Style,”

Pick your role models who use AAC carefully.
 Knowing that if you watch them daily
 you will eventually see
 you will be where they be.
 Then the other kids will look up to you,
 so you better be on your p's and q's. (p. 9)

McLeod recognizes AAC as an individual tool of voice and empowerment, while also leveraging it as a cultural practice that we can use to connect and encourage youth to take pride in their communication styles. Crippling CSP can sustain and expand the ways that linguistic practices are recognized as valued and shared in educational spaces.

Crip creativity also contributes to expansive communication. Crip creativity encompasses the ways that disabled people use self-knowledge and ingenuity to navigate the ableist systems and institutions that surround them (Kafai, 2021). One way to foster crip creativity in schools is through aesthetic and arts-based learning. Using the arts as a form of crip storytelling, and expressing disability identity through the arts have been vital components of disability culture (Moore, 2020). Fostering interdisciplinary skill sets celebrates the multiliteracies promoted in CSP as well as emancipatory pedagogies and research methods. Since disability is in part constructed through interactions with the environment, culture, and other people, arts may serve as an alternative mediating process that shifts how disability is constructed, defined, and expressed through alternative tools and formats.

Choice and Agency

Choice and agency as a feature of Crippling CSP is explicitly in response to the ways that ableism and intersecting systems of oppression attempt to limit disabled people's choices and disregard disabled people's inherent agency. Choice and agency are acts of resistance to ableist conditions and demands that disabled people have power over how they choose to live their

lives. Choice and agency are both expressed on personal and collective levels. Personal choice and agency mean validating and supporting the ways that each disabled person's desires and preferences manifest. Collective choice and agency are the ways that disabled people come together to create crip-centric liberated spaces and broader social change.

Individual and collective choice and agency are central to disability movements and disability culture. In "The Second Phase: From Disability Rights to Disability Culture," Longmore (1995) wrote, "The first phase [of the Disability Rights movement] argued for social inclusion. The second phase has asserted the necessity for self-definition" (para. 30). Following Longmore's description of these phases, choice and agency was first desired on an individual level to dismantle ableism to promote "social inclusion." As such, choice and agency focused on individual access and accommodations to mainstream society. "The second phase," on the other hand, moved beyond mainstream society to "the necessity for self-definition," the formation of collective disability identity and culture and creation of disabled spaces that are not dictated by ableist social norms.

Crippling CSP attends to this second phase by including choice and agency beyond what is typically considered "normal." Ableism limits who is deemed worthy by creating a "system of assigning value to people's bodies and minds based on socially constructed ideas of normalcy, productivity, desirability, intelligence, excellence and fitness. These ideas are deeply rooted in eugenics, anti-Blackness, misogyny, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism" (Lewis, 2022, para. 3). In an ableist system, disabled peoples', especially multiply marginalized disabled peoples', choice and agency are limited by social constructions of "normalcy, productivity, desirability, intelligence, excellence and fitness." Crippling CSP disregards, disrupts, and dismantles these social constructions. Instead, it looks to nurture and sustain the cultural

practices and values of disabled people within the disability community and across cultural communities.

In compulsory school settings, disabled youth are most often forced to assimilate to a prescriptive standard of “normal,” which strips them of choice and agency on individual and collective levels. Schooling policies and practices neglect wholeness, access, and disabled youths’ wisdom (Beneke & Love, 2022). On an individual level, disabled youth are routinely given instructional materials and curricular content based on lowered expectations of their intellectual ability (Connor, 2009). In both segregated special education settings and inclusive general education settings, instruction is designed to meet specific learning objectives, which leaves little room for choice and creativity.

To combat these conditions, Crippling CSP calls for disabled students to have choice and agency in where and how they want to participate in school spaces, including acts of resistance to ableist conditions (Annamma & Handy, 2019, Annamma & Morrison, 2018). Enacting individual choice and agency in this context allows disabled youth options and honors their decisions to participate in and/or resist ableist schooling practices. Choice and agency as a feature of Crippling CSP uses Annamma & Morrison’s (2018) articulation of DisCrit resistance, which “means (re)defining what is desired in the classroom and schools instead of forcing students into states of acquiescence, we must look for what unique practices and knowledges multiply marginalized [disabled] Students of Color already bring to classrooms. These are their gifts that we must welcome with gratitude” (p. 73). Crippling CSP means designing research and curriculum with multiple entry points to provide choice, while also inviting disabled students’ agency to bring their unique gifts to the work in ways that are authentic and meaningful to them.

Collective choice and agency then mean working across disability classifications to learn with and from one another to dismantle ableist ideals and expectations of normalcy. As has been discussed throughout this dissertation, disability community and culture have largely been excluded from school settings, which leaves no room for collective choice and agency for disabled youth. Coming from Longmore's (1995) perspective, collective choice and agency for disabled youth would require "self-definition" and space and time "to explore or to create disability culture" (para. 1). Collective choice and agency are moves that disabled youth are collaboratively designing, engaging, and transforming to create meaningful routes to learning and belonging in school. Crippling CSP must be an evolving framework that centers disabled youths' individual and collective choice and agency to inform curriculum and instructional design.

Design Commitments

Considering the history of educational and research practices that harm disabled youth, it felt integral to begin my dissertation process with clear design commitments that centered relationships and reciprocity. Bang and colleagues (2016) state that design commitments are fundamental in community-based work as they "afford the potential for continued axiological innovations in research and practice" and "can cultivate transformative agency in joint activity" (p. 30). My design commitments were grounded in Paris' descriptions of CSP, the features of Crippling CSP, and enhanced by a desire-based framework incorporating DisCrit classroom ecologies. In the following section I expand on the ways that I drew on these educational theories to inform my design and provide examples of specific instructional and research design methods I used to live into my design commitments.

First, I considered my research process a form of CSP. I am forwarding Crippling CSP as a collective framework. Paris (2021) writes that CSPs include “student and intergenerational community agency and input, what Lee and McCarty (2017) named ‘community accountability,’ where families, elders, and students are understood as central collaborators in learning settings, offering invitations, consultations, approvals, and input (Eagle Shield et al., 2020; Irizarry, 2017)” (citations in original, p. 367). To me, Crippling CSP is necessarily tied to community accountability. Although I am the first one to name “Crippling CSP,” I am far from the first person to theorize and enact intergenerational and cross-disability spaces centering disability culture, brilliance, and wisdom. Furthermore, throughout my seven years in graduate school, I have engaged in dialogue across my disabled friends, family, and colleagues about the ideas, theories, and features of Crippling CSP.

Crippling CSP is not an individual project, but the product of a collective effort to provide a sense of mattering, representation, and connection in school communities. This research is deeply informed by my prior curriculum design and community-based research centering disability affirming classroom practices. I’ve had the honor of working in community partnerships to develop the One Out of Five: Disability History and Pride Project (2018), developing teacher education to learn how teachers take up anti-ableism through curriculum and pedagogy (Tov, 2022), and interviewing disabled youth and Disability Justice activists for their perspectives on disability-affirming school and community practices. Specifically, I am in deep gratitude for the work of and connections to Carrie Basas at the Office of Education Ombuds and Clark Matthews with Rooted in Rights, the disabled youth who shared their stories in OO5, AJ, Warren, Kenassa, Anna, Julian, and Charlotte, my co-curriculum writer and collaborating teacher Adina Rosenberg, Disability Justice activists Anita Cameron, Lydia XZ Brown, Nomy Lamm,

and Cyreé Johnson who provided feedback on our project and research, Mai Li and Dr. Saya for support on this dissertation, my incredible advisor Katherine Lewis, Mad scholars and editors Shayda Kafai and Melanie Jones, and the many other incredible sources of crip love, care, and creativity. This list is by no means extensive, but it's important for me to name the disabled elders, intergenerational activists, scholars, and artists. I am accountable to them, disabled ancestors, and future generations. Their words and wisdom are embedded in conceptualizing Crippling CSP and this research as a "vision born out of collective struggle" and collective dreaming of the "yet-to-be" (Sins Invalid, 2019, p. 20).

My design commitments also include inward gazes to assess the ways that internalized oppressions and intersecting systems of oppression show up in educational spaces, as well as explicitly confront them. Paris (2021) explains inward gazes as essential to CSP because they mean "attending to possible internalized false beliefs that our practices and selves as communities of color are not valuable in education settings, contending with false choices between sustaining lifeways and critical uptake of dominant practices" (p. 367). Although Paris (2021) wrote this in relation to communities of color, I believe that it needs to be observed in the disability community as well, and through an intersectional lens. As a white disabled educator, it is essential to take an inward gaze on my own ableist beliefs, especially as those intersect with racism and other systems of oppression. Inward gazes throughout this study meant returning to critical reflections through memo-ing, as well as providing youth opportunities to consider if and how internalized ableism may impact their beliefs and treatment of others. As schools have created hierarchies of intelligence based on race and disability, it was important to return to ways that I may be reifying dominant systems based on false assumptions of competency and/or limiting disabled youths' access to sustaining lifeways. Furthermore, in the conceptualization of

Crippling CSP and design of classroom instruction for the DJS unit, it was integral to “critically assess what to center and sustain” so as not to reify interlocking systems of oppression.

Crippling CSP as a conceptual framework requires practical application and community accountability to come alive. I used Crippling CSP as a framework to design and implement a Disability Justice in Schools (DJS) Unit with two special education classes. While I will more thoroughly discuss the research and curriculum design in the Methods section of this dissertation, I feel that it is necessary to first explain how I used Crippling CSP to guide my design commitments along with a desire-based framework (Tuck, 2009) and the intersectional lens of DisCrit classroom ecologies (Annamma & Morrison, 2018). A desire-based approach that accounts for “the hope, the visions, the wisdom of lived lives and communities. Desire is involved with the *not yet* and, at times, the *not anymore*” (Tuck, 2009, p. 415). Additionally, DisCrit brings an intersectional lens to the multifaceted experiences of disabled youth and communities. I used these in the initial design of my research and curriculum and regularly returned to them to consistently assess alignment between my intent, implementation, and impact.

I used a desire-based approach to my research and curriculum design because it is “concerned with understanding the complexity, contradiction, and the self-determination of lived lives” (Tuck, 2009, p. 416). Desire-centered research is in stark contrast to damage-centered research, which “is a pathologizing approach in which oppression singularly defines a community” (Tuck, 2009, p. 413). While Tuck (2009) originally discussed damage-centered and desire-centered research in relation to Indigenous and communities of color, I believe there are intersections and important lessons to take into research and curriculum design for disabled youth. Schools position disabled youth as damaged and broken and often (re)produce narratives

of disability as a tragedy, which I believe contribute to damage-centered schooling practices.

Crippling CSP moves towards a desire-based framework that

more closely matches the experiences of people who, at different points in a single day, reproduce, resist, are complicit in, rage against, celebrate, throw up hands/ fists/towels, and withdraw and participate in uneven social structures—that is, everybody...[Desire] necessarily complicates our understanding of human agency, complicity, and resistance.

Centering desire in my research and curriculum helped me to consider the many truths that disabled youth (and adults) are living and take a critical lens to the varied relationships, explorations, and connections that disabled youth had to their disability identities, community, and culture. It allowed this work to celebrate disability alongside the nuances of disabled experiences and perspectives in school that “complicates our understanding of human agency, complicity, and resistance.”

I also referred to DisCrit classroom ecologies as a key element of my design commitments. As a theoretical framework, DisCrit centers the stories, experiences, and perspectives of multiply marginalized disabled youth and calls for educational research in solidarity with them to dismantle interlocking systems of oppression, specifically at the intersections of race and disability. In recent years, DisCrit theorists have identified the need to further animate DisCrit through applications to curriculum studies (Annamma & Morrison, 2018). In order to do so they, they propose a DisCrit classroom ecology that emphasizes the need to know students’ histories and their present, learn and teach to students’ gifts, and situate students’ actions in the classroom as forms of resistance and channel those towards solidarity in dismantling racism and ableism in schools (Annamma & Morrison, 2018). Furthermore, applying a DisCrit lens to curriculum exposes the hidden and interlocking oppressive curriculum in schools that harms educator-student and student-student relationships.

I explicitly used Crippling CSP alongside desire and DisCrit classroom ecologies as design commitments in the research and curricular application and implementation of DJS unit. To begin, *honoring disabled experiences* was critical to guide research design that centered disabled youth and curricular design including activities for disabled youth to express their multifaceted identities, perspectives, and experiences in ways that were most meaningful to them. In order to do so, I incorporated disabled youth storytelling into both the research and curriculum design. Youth created Educational Journey Maps (Annamma, 2018) to illustrate their experiences in and relationships to school, as well as Celebrating Me Collages to share and celebrate many parts of themselves. In design and implementation, I regularly invited students to not solely focus on disability, but also engage and express multiple components of their identities and their intersectional experiences.

Throughout these activities, students also *shared stories* with one another and made connections between one another's experiences. Students used shared stories to forge community through the activities mentioned above, as well as group work. Furthermore, Adina and I were open and shared our experiences of disability and ableism. Creating space for intergenerational connections was critical to the work. Adina and I were able to relate to the ableism that students felt, as well as share experiences of disabled joy, kinship, and creativity. Each day we also highlighted a disabled artist and the class got to discuss and connect with the broader disability community and culture through that. Shared stories of disability and ableism, both those of oppression and vitality, were an integral component of students connecting with one another, with us, and the disability community and culture beyond the school walls.

Access as a core value and practice was ingrained in everything that we did. Having this as a core commitment required initial plans that accounted for a range of accessibility needs, as

well as getting to know students and the access needs that may not be readily apparent. Access can be connected to a person's disability identity and sharing our access needs builds community amongst disabled people. We regularly encouraged access check to give students a moment to consider if and how we could better meet their access needs and approached access as deeply relational, requiring connection and getting to know youth as whole people. Access is also intersectional, so I worked not only to address ableist barriers, but also needs to create educational spaces that honor disabled youths' multifaceted identities and experiences.

I incorporated *expansive communication* as part of creating accessible materials and activities, as well as recognized the importance of expansive communication as a unique component of disability identity, community, and culture. Ensuring opportunities for expansive communication meant not only providing multiple means of accessible language (e.g., plain language, written, spoken, SymbolStix), but also inviting disabled youths' range of linguistic and creative expressions. For instance, I encouraged students to use home languages and offered a variety of artistic forms of processing. Using expansive communication as a design commitment required me to reflect on the ways I presented activities, what it meant to participate, and how to adequately interpret and include the range of data sources I collected.

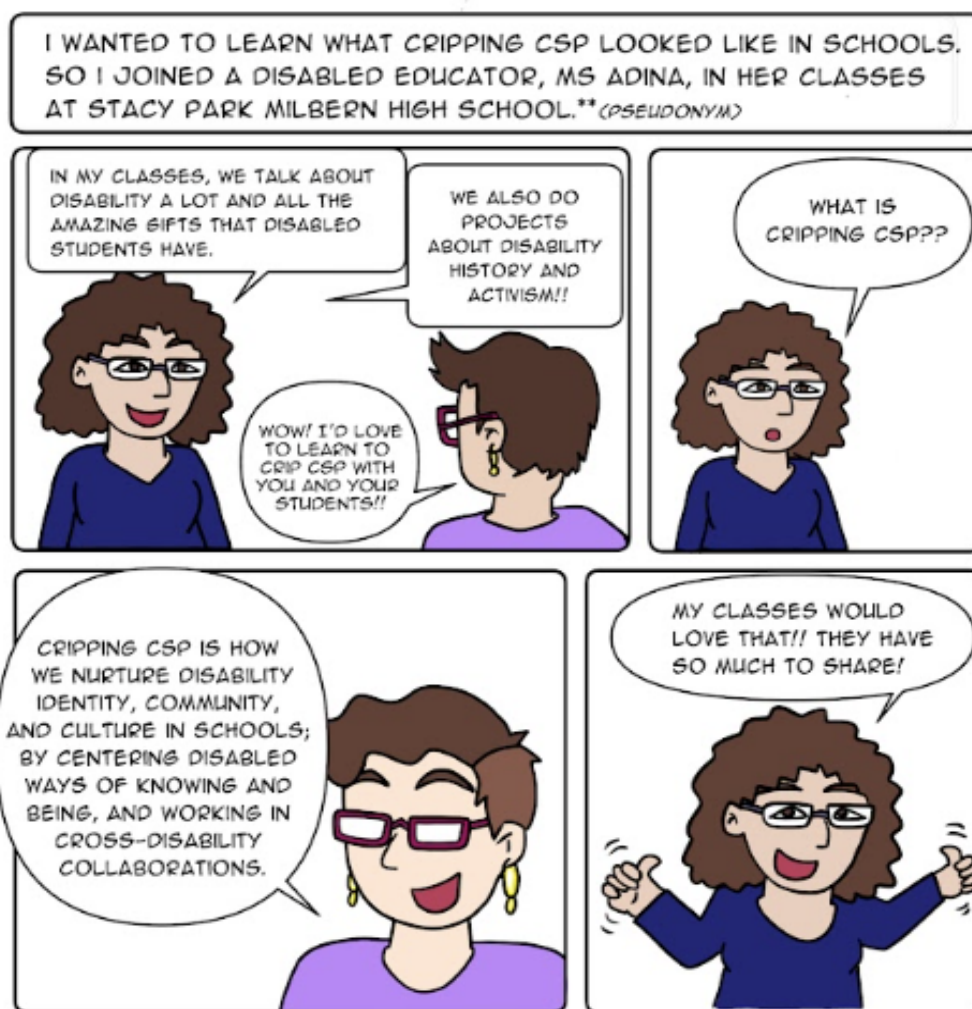
Finally, *choice and agency* were vital to provide opportunities for disabled youth to individually and collectively process and make meaning together. We used a range of techniques to present materials and each activity had multiple options for engagement. Students were provided choices based on their individual preferences, as well as group vision.

Taken together, academic and activist scholarship and artwork attending to disability identity, community, and culture, the Crippling CSP conceptual framework, and my design commitments led to the creation and implementation of the arts-based Disability Justice in

Schools (DJS) unit and this dissertation research. The goal of my dissertation was to gain a deeper understanding of the ways that disabled youth experienced and expressed disability identity, community, and culture in school contexts. Furthermore, I was interested in the ways that disabled youth connected to the conceptualization of Crippling CSP, which seeks to affirm, nurture, and sustain disabled ways of knowing and being in educational spaces.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Figure 5 *Comic illustrating Sarah and Adina plans to collaborate.*



The primary purpose of this research is to explore the ways that disabled youth make sense of disability identity, community, and culture through personal reflection, cross disability group work, and artistic expression. Specifically, this was done through a curriculum incorporating individual and collective storytelling, learning about disability activism and Disability Justice and creating collaborative art that imagines how Disability Justice may be realized in schools. I conducted a research project informed by participatory and arts-based pedagogies and methodologies to consider the following research questions. Throughout the

Disability Justice in Schools (DJS) unit, which focused on disability identity, community, and culture:

1. How did students make sense of their own disability identities and Disability Justice more broadly?
2. How did students engage in and navigate cross-disability collaborations?
3. How were the features of Crippling CSP embodied and enacted by students?

This study is an extension of my community-research partnerships with disabled youth, educators, artists, and activists creating disability history and pride curriculum since 2018. In previous work we designed the One Out of Five: Disability History and Pride Project (OO5), which included six student voices videos featuring disabled youth and five lessons discussing disability, intersectionality, disability history, and solidarity. Following our original design, we conducted research that collected feedback from classroom teachers and students using the curriculum, three of the disabled youth featured in the student voice videos, and four Disability Justice activists who reviewed the instructional materials. In the classroom settings, disabled youth shared the importance of lessons reflecting their personal experiences and nondisabled students' interests in creating more accessible and inclusive schools (Tov, 2023, Tov, 2022). From the disabled youth featured in the OO5 student voice videos we learned that disabled mentorship played a critical role in disabled youths' lives (Office of Education Ombuds, 2020). The youth shared they had never been surrounded by a team of all disabled adults and it made a difference in their self-perception, connection, and community across ages and disability classifications. Finally, the Disability Justice activists provided us insight on the ways that we could focus on curriculum that we design curriculum outside of general education inclusion spaces in order for disabled students to connect with one another and disabled educators (Tov,

2022). Based on these findings, we considered ways to expand OO5 to explicitly attend to disability identity, community, and culture in disabled affinity spaces in school.

These insights motivated this study. As I shared ideas and implications with the OO5 team, one of the disabled educators, Adina, offered to be a teacher partner for this dissertation (see Figure 5). Based on our extensive work together and desire to bring this work to her school, district, and broader educational spaces, she chose not to use a pseudonym. While she had worked extensively on disrupting deficit approaches to special education through expansions of our OO5 work, she had not yet introduced her students to reflections and connections to disability identity, community, and culture. At the time of the study, Adina was in her fifth year of teaching special education. I led the study design, design of the DJS Unit, data collection, and data analysis, and Adina was consulted and included in each step of the process. In the following sections, I discuss my research methods, including: (1) study context and participants, (2) curriculum and research design, (3) data sources, and (4) data analysis strategies.

Study Context

I conducted this study at Stacy Park Milbern⁴ High School where Adina taught a variety of classes for students across disability classifications and grade levels. Milbern High School was considered a culturally diverse school (53% Asian, 29% white, 8% Hispanic, 8% two or more races, 2% Black) in a suburban community. Specifically, I worked with Adina's two Communication, Collaboration, Connections (C3) classes.

⁴ Adina and I chose the pseudonym for the high school, Stacy Park Milbern High School, to honor a disabled ancestor, queer Korean-American Disability Justice activist Stacy Park Milbern, who was featured in a variety of our work and passed away in 2020.

Participants

I joined Adina in the two C3 classes she taught 5th and 7th period. The 5th period C3 class had 17 students and the 7th period C3 class had 12 students (one of the students was in both 5th and 7th period and one student chose not to participate, so there was a total of 27 student participants) (see Figure 6 and **Error! Reference source not found.** for comic pages of student pseudonyms and self-written profiles, see Table 1 and Table 2 for demographics of student participants). As part of the consent and assent forms, students were asked to self-identify their demographic information. These were key to contextualizing the student participants' experiences. The most salient self-identifications for this study were race/ethnicity and disability. At times students did not disclose their disability and/or did not identify as having a disability but did talk about having an IEP or 504. In those instances, I noted whether they had an IEP or 504, which indicates that despite personal identifications, they were labeled as having a disability in school. At times, students shifted in the ways that they identified through the unit and shared additional information. To capture the dynamic and multifaceted nature of student identity development, the demographic data included in these participant charts are reflective of the identities that they held and shared at multiple points of the unit, not solely what they included on their consent/assent forms. Students wrote personal profiles as part of their artist statements and chose their pseudonyms.

As students had varying access needs and many required additional support from instructional assistants and service providers, there were a rotating number of adults. Although this research project did not focus on the adults, all of the adults who entered the classroom were given the option to participate in the study. In total seven adults consented to participate and be in video observations. Three of those adults were in C3 for both 5th and 7th period and had the

most influence on group dynamics in video observations (the special education teacher, speech and language pathologist, and one instructional assistant are included in Table 3). Their roles in group discussions and activities were significant to the findings of this study, so they have been included as adult participants.

Figure 6 *Comic of student participants.*

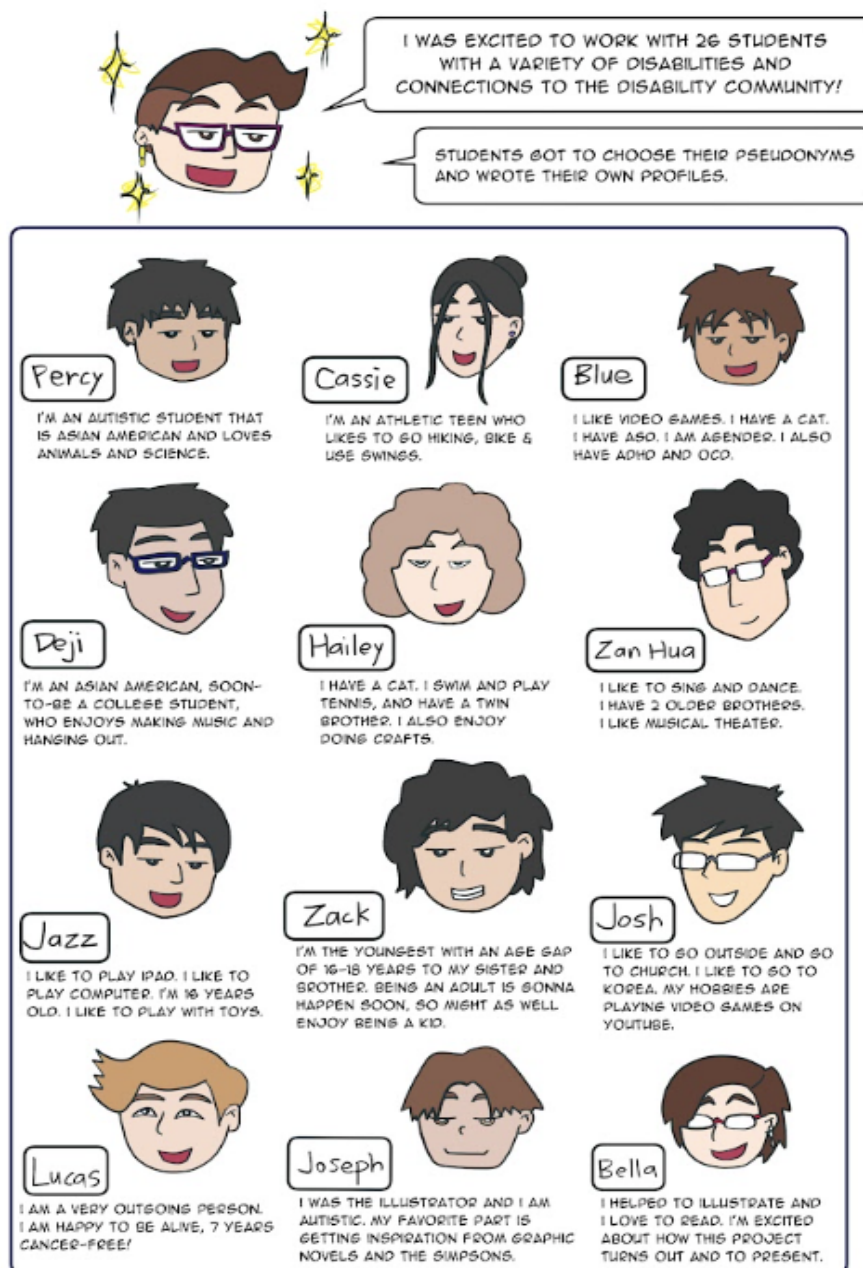


Figure 7 Comic of student participants continued.

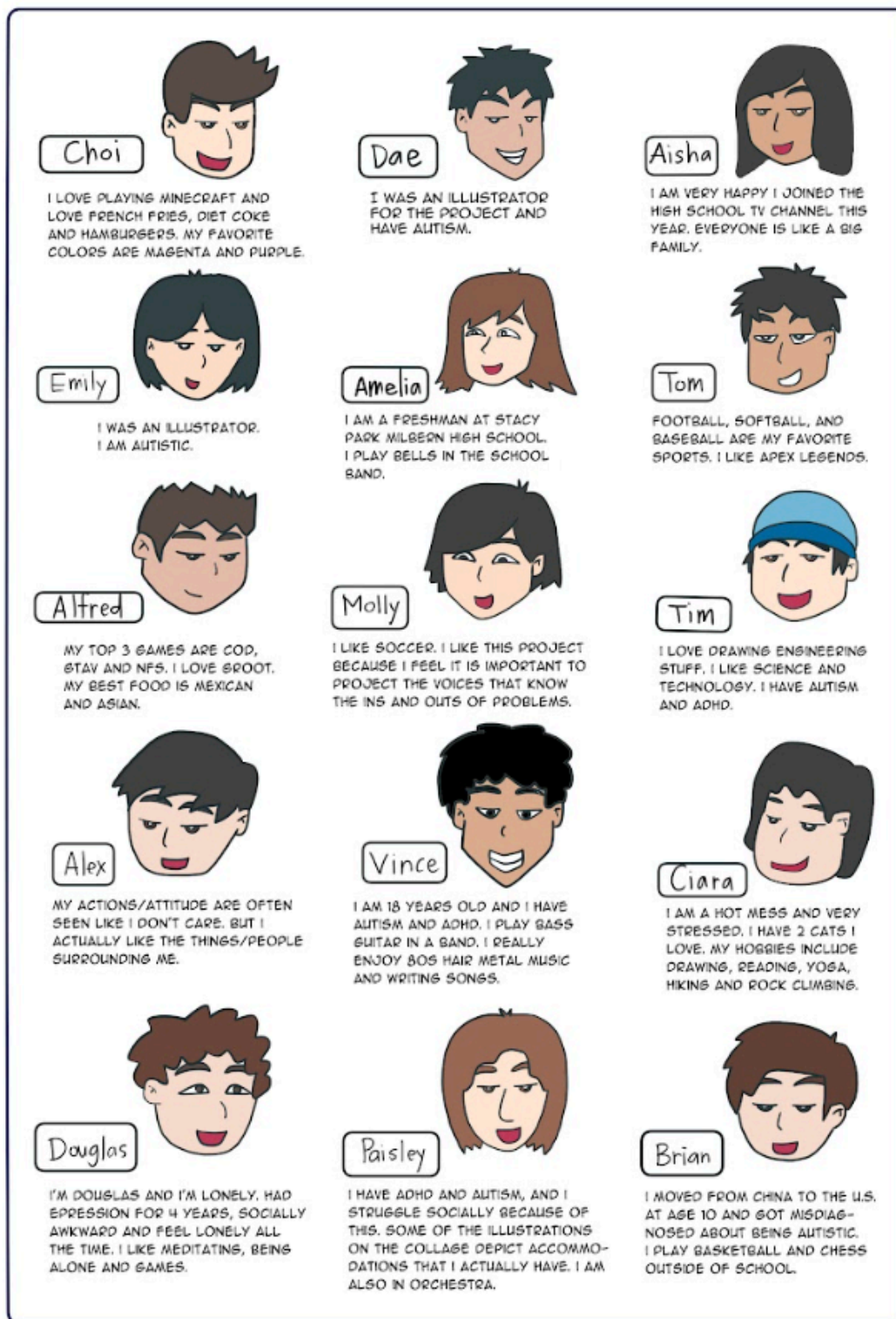


Table 1 *Student participants in period 5.*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronouns</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Race/ Ethnicity</i>	<i>Disability</i>	<i>IEP/ 504</i>
Aisha	she/her	19	12	Black	Learning disability	IEP
Bella	she/her	17	12	Hispanic, White	N/A	
Blue*	they/them	15	9	Asian, Indian	Autism, obsessive compulsive disorder, depression	IEP
Cassie	she/her	15	10	White	Autism, seizures	IEP
Dae*	he/him	18	12	Asian American, Korean	Autism	IEP
Deji	she/her	17	12	Asian, Korean	N/A	
Emily	she/her		11	White	<i>Not shared</i>	IEP
Hailey	she/her	16	11	White	Cancer survivor	504
Jazz	he/him	16	10	Asian-American, Chinese	Autism	IEP
Joseph	he/him			Asian-American	Autism	IEP
Josh	male	14	9	Asian	Cerebral palsy	IEP
Lucas	he, him	15	9	White	Cancer survivor	504
Percy	he/him			Asian-American	Autism	IEP
Vince*	he/him	18	12	White	Autism, Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder	IEP
Zack	he/him	15	10	Asian-American	Autism, Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder	IEP
贊花, Zàn Huā		17	12	Asian-American	Autism	IEP

*Student participated in an optional interview

Table 2 *Student participants in period 7.*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronouns</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Race/ Ethnicity</i>	<i>Disability</i>	<i>IEP/ 504</i>
Alex	No pronouns	18	12	Taiwanese	<i>Not shared</i>	IEP
Alfred	he/him	17	11	White	Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder	IEP
Amelia	she/her	15	9	White	Autism	IEP

Brian*	he/him	15	9	Chinese	Autism	IEP
Choi	he/him	16	10	Korean	<i>Not shared</i>	IEP
Ciara	any work	16	11	Irish-American	Autism, Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder	IEP
Douglas	he/him	17	11	Chinese-American	Learning disability	IEP
Molly	he/him	17		Asian American, Filipino	N/A	
Paisley	she/her	17	11	Asian	Autism	IEP
Tim*	he/him	18	12	Asian, Chinese	Autism, Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder	IEP
Tom	he/him	17	11	Multiracial	<i>Not shared</i>	IEP
Princess	she/her	18	12	Asian	Autism	IEP

*Student participated in an optional interview

Table 3 *Adult participants.*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronouns</i>	<i>Role</i>	<i>Race/ Ethnicity</i>	<i>Disability</i>
Adina	she/her	Special education teacher	White	Evolving
Gloria	she/her	Speech and language pathologist	White	Cancer patient
Amy	she/her	Instructional assistant	Asian/Pacific Islander	Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder

Communication, Collaboration, Connections Class Context

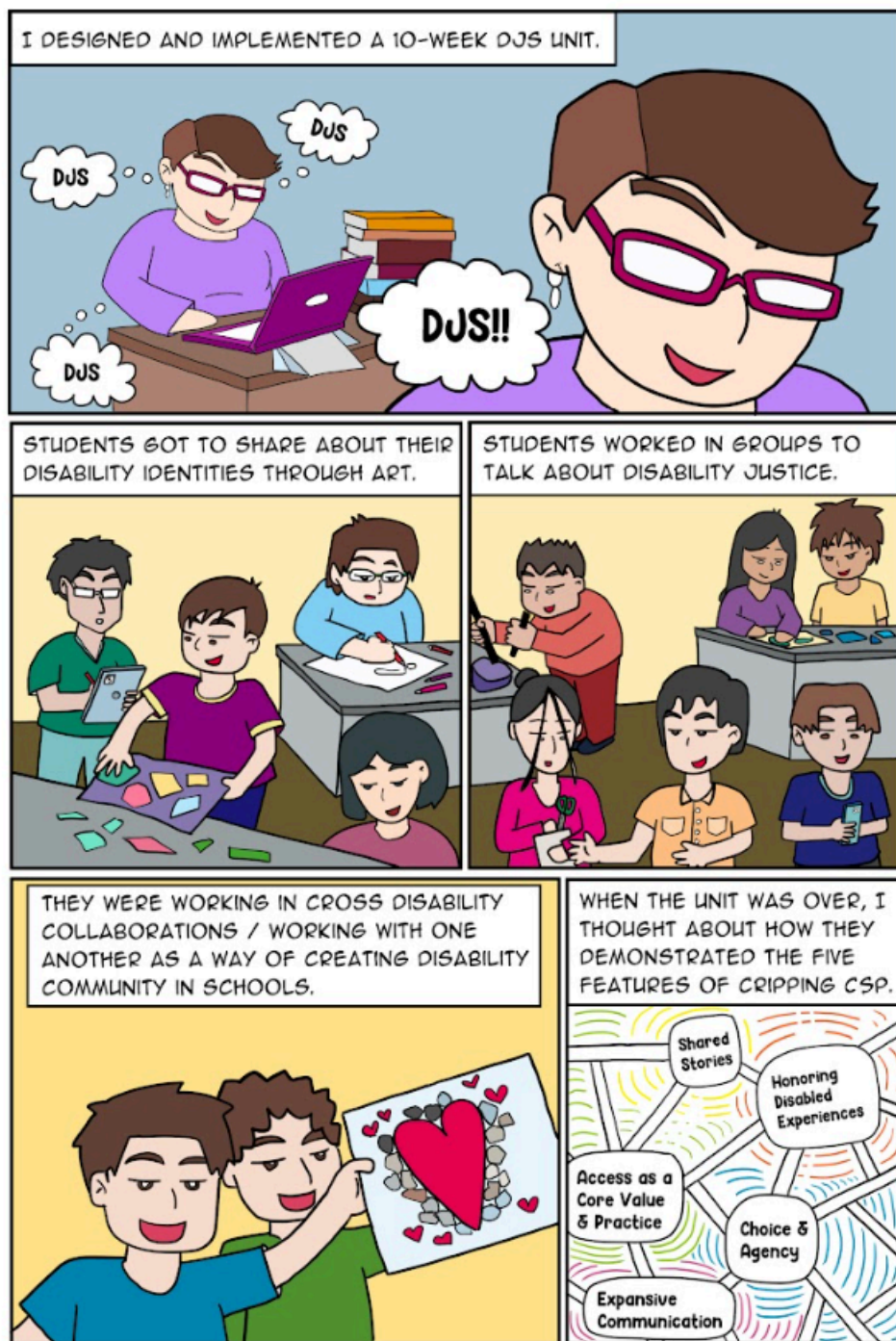
C3 was considered a “social skills” class, so the majority of students in that class had disabilities and IEP goals in the area of social skills. Unlike social skills instruction that typically takes on behaviorist approaches to education and focuses on assimilating disabled students into white, nondisabled behaviors and social interactions, Adina designed C3 to center disabled experiences, discuss disability identity and history, and build a cross-disability community.

Through informal conversations, ongoing curricular projects, and interviews and debriefing sessions conducted as part of this study, I got to learn about Adina's approach to teaching C3 and specific instructional practices that she used. In the year preceding this study, Adina regularly used disability representation, projects on disability, and connections to disability culture to empower disabled youth. She took an asset-focused and student-centered approach to all of her work. She presented opportunities for students to self-advocate and make decisions about their IEPs, provided multiple forms of representation and choice in class assignments, and embedded opportunities for students to collaborate on instructional design. Her classroom was a particularly apt setting for this study as Adina was already committed to Disability Justice as a framework for classroom design and her students were well acquainted with discussions about disability, disability rights, and disability history.

While Adina did extensive work presenting disability as an asset and representing disability history in her classroom, she had not yet explicitly attended to disability identity, community, and culture. Furthermore, although she was committed to Disability Justice as a framework in her own work, she did not present Disability Justice to the students and therefore felt that she was missing part of the Disability Justice principal "leadership of those most impacted," who, in a classroom context, would mean disabled youth. I similarly found that Disability Justice was being used in educational academic scholarship without the perspectives of those most impacted, disabled youth. Therefore, I proposed the Disability Justice in Schools unit as an opportunity to expand educational research and curriculum that brought disability identity, community, and culture front and center through explorations of Disability Justice.

Disability Justice in Schools Unit

Figure 8 Comic illustrating the development and implementation of the Disability Justice in Schools unit.



For this dissertation, I designed and implemented the Disability Justice in Schools (DJS) unit, a 10-week long inquiry into personal reflections on disability and ableism in school, the tenets of Disability Justice, and imagining the future of Disability Justice in school (see Figure 8). The DJS unit was designed to celebrate disability identity, community, and culture in alignment with my conceptual framework for Crippling CSP, while taking into account calls from Disability Studies and DisCrit scholars to more authentically represent disabled people in school curriculum and enact resistance to normalized teaching and learning practices through educational research (Annamma & Morrison, 2018; Baglieri & Lalvani, 2020; Erevelles, 2011). While designing the DJS unit, I combined pedagogical and research practices that centered the experiences and perspectives of disabled youth. The DJS lessons were aligned with emancipatory research pedagogy and research designed with opportunities for youth to be knowledge and theory generators themselves through interactive activities that promoted collective meaning-making (Friere, 1970/1993).

Adina and I co-taught the unit twice a week for 10 weeks for a total of 20 class periods (60-minute periods on Tuesdays and 90-minute periods on Thursdays) for her two C3 classes, 5th period and 7th period. As designed for C3, this unit approached social skills amongst disabled youth as transformative affinity spaces as opposed to the perpetuation of normative academic and social behaviors. The DJS unit took students on a journey from individual storytelling to collective action (see Table 4). First, disabled youth were invited to create Educational Journey Maps to reflect on their personal experiences of disability as an identity and the ways that that disability and other identity markers impacted their school experiences (Annamma, 2016). I followed that with an activity, Celebrating Me Collages, that asked students to artistically express how they wanted to be known and celebrated in schools. Next, youth were

introduced to the 10 principles of Disability Justice in a two-day Gallery Walk. Finally, youth were put into groups based on a Disability Justice principle of their choice and engaged in defining and artistically imagine how they would apply that principle in schools.

The arts were used throughout the unit for several reasons. First, the arts provided intentional ways of disrupting standardized schooling and research practices. The arts were also used throughout the unit prioritize crip creativity over schools' over-emphasis of reading and writing. Furthermore, arts-based pedagogies opened elements of exploration and surprise of creators and viewers as opposed to a single discrete objective (hooks, 1995; Dewey, 1934).

While the DJS unit was designed in advance of implementation, as part of the iterative design process, adjustments were made throughout the unit. For instance, when we noticed that students' access needs were not being met, we adjusted and/or modified materials and activities to accommodate them. Also, through design and analysis memos, there were moments that the content needed to be adjusted. For instance, after the Educational Journey Maps activity, I noted that most students focused on negative experiences associated with ableism and other traumas at school. Therefore, I changed the following day's activity to Celebrating Me Collages so that students had time to reflect on and share what made them feel seen and celebrated in school. This was an intentional move to ensure that we were always returning to a desire-based framework (Tuck, 2009) in pedagogy and research methodology that holistically honored the realities of marginalization and oppression in school while also uplifting the beauty and joy of our diverse identities.

I attended to my guiding frameworks of CSP informed by DisCrit in the initial unit design and any shifts in content or instruction. For instance, my ongoing design analysis memos often referenced if and how DisCrit and CSP were being used in the design process, as well as if

and how they were showing up in students' discussions and classwork. While the unit focuses on disability identity, community, and culture, I continuously examined and incorporated elements of students' many identity markers. The most common identities discussed beyond disability were race, ethnicity, immigration, home language, gender, and sexuality. Therefore, we attuned the DJS unit to the students by incorporating additional resources, materials, and artwork that were representative of their identities and experiences.

Table 4 *Daily lesson topics and activities for the Disability Justice in Schools unit.*

Day	Lesson topic and activities
1	Topic: Introduction of the DJS unit and our personal experiences in school Activity: Students created Educational Journey Maps
2	Topic: Disability and our personal experiences in school Activity: Students shared Educational Journey Maps
3	Topic: How schools can celebrate our full selves Activity: Students created Celebrating Me Collages
4	Topic: Introductions to Sins Invalid and the tenets of Disability Justice Activity: Students did a DJ Gallery Walk of DJ principles 1-5
5	Topic: Exploring the tenets of Disability Justice Activity: Students continued the DJ Gallery Walk with principles 6-10, students chose which principle they wanted to explore for the rest of the unit
6	Topic: Break into DJ principle groups and share initial thoughts Activity: Students got into table groups based on their DJ principle of choice and shared the ways that they were thinking about that DJ principle
7	Topic: Exploring "What does your DJ principle mean?" Activity: Groups created a poster brainstorming the meaning of their DJ principle with examples and non-examples of that DJ principle
8	Topic: DJ and disability culture in art Activity: Groups looked through a variety of artwork by disabled artists and considered which type of artwork they might want to use for their project
9	Topic: Sharing personal connections to DJ and future dreaming Activity: Students shared personal connections to their DJ principle and how they believed that DJ principle could be realized in schools

10	Topic: Creative planning Activity: Students collaboratively brainstormed ideas for the group artwork
11	Topic: Creating the DJ artwork Activity: Groups worked together to begin their artwork
12	Topic: Creating the DJ artwork Activity: Groups worked together to complete their artwork
13	Topic: Writing an artist statement Activity: Groups wrote an artist statement about their DJ artwork including individual bios for each student artist
14	Topic: Final touches Activity: Groups made any final touches their artwork and artist statements
15	Topic: DJS gallery showcase Activity: Students presented their DJ artwork to teachers, administrators, and other classes (see Appendix A)
16	Topic: DJS debrief and celebration Activity: Students celebrated one another and shared their perspectives on the DJS project

Mapping Curriculum and Research Design

Throughout the study I was a full participant in the design and implementation of the DJS unit, meaning that I created and co-facilitated the entire unit. While I was very open with students and adults about my role as a researcher, I always prioritized my role as a classroom community member. This stance was intentionally in opposition to the ways that research has been used as an extractive measure. I took a humanizing research approach (Paris & Winn, 20XX) informed by multiple qualitative methodologies, primarily design-based methods, arts-based methods, and community-based design.

Design-based research methods were used to engage in research that was enhanced by reciprocal learning, iterative design guided by ongoing relationships, and understanding learning in natural contexts (Brown, 1992; Cobb et al., 2003; Barab & Squire, 2004). While positivist

approaches to research may suggest that full participation invalidated “accurate” or “objective” analysis and findings, design-based research suggests that research is necessarily informed by power differentials, positionality, and social and political contexts and therefore prone to bias in its use and interpretation (Philip et al., 2018). Cobb and colleagues (2003) maintain that through participation “the research team deepens its understanding while the experiment is in process” (p. 12). Therefore, it was appropriate to my study to be a full participant as it helped contextualize data sources, informed the design and use of data sources, and supported rigorous analysis of data sources.

I used arts-based methods as a systematic instructional and methodological movement away from normative measures of intellect and expression (Barone & Eisner, 2012). Arts-based methods allow participants to make sense of their thoughts and ideas and express themselves through a more expansive array of medium. In this study, arts-based methods were considered as particularly appropriate given the ways that they disrupt hegemonic pedagogy and research at intersections of race and disability. As articulated throughout this proposal, storytelling and the arts have played key roles in authentic disability representation and collective dreaming. While social skills classes typically have a narrow scope of communication (i.e., facing a person when talking to them), we provided a variety of art materials (and students had opportunities to request specific arts materials) to broaden possibilities for personal and collective expression and communication.

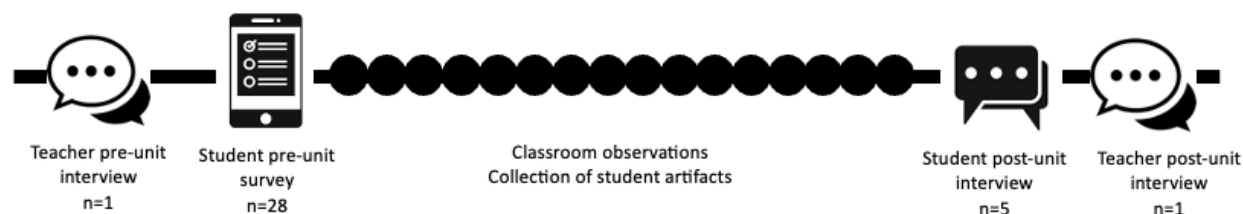
Ultimately, this research project is grounded in community and meant to highlight and celebrate disabled youth, as well as inform and support future iterations of youth, educators, and community organizing for transformative change in schools. As Bang & Vossoughi (2016) put it, “In community-based design research, the desired goals are not complete resolution in a single

project; rather the expectation is focused on receiving, cultivating and building increased capacity to continue the ongoing work of social change” (p. 177). The DJS unit and research design were intended to reveal the challenges, successes, and surprises that may contribute to new horizons for Crippling CSP in educational spaces. Not only was the project designed for immediate use and educational research, but also for Adina to continue in future years (which she has done for 2 years now) and continue DJ student organizing at Milbern High School (which they have done through a disabled student club after school).

Data Sources

Data sources included teacher interviews, student survey, classroom observations, student artifacts, daily debriefs and memos, and optional student interviews (see Figure 9).

Figure 9 *Study design.*



Note. Image description: From left to right are icons for each step of of data collection; talking bubbles for “Teacher pre-unit interview, n=1,” a bulleted list for “Student pre-unit survey, n=28,” a row of 16 little circles for “Classroom observations, Collection of student artifacts,” talking bubbles for “Student post-unit interview, n=5,” and talking bubbles for “Teacher post-unit interview, n=1.”

Teacher Interviews

Although Adina and I had worked together for four years and informally discussed her C3 classes and the DJS unit, I began and ended the research study with formal teacher interviews (one pre-unit and one post-unit). Teacher interviews were semi-structured with guiding questions and additional probing questions to gain clarification (Brinkmann, 2014, Leavy, 2017). The pre-

unit interview included questions about Adina's personal experiences thinking and talking about disability, perspectives on special education and teaching, current curriculum for C3, interest in Disability Justice, and why she chose to participate in this DJS research. The post-unit interview included questions about Adina's perspective of the DJS unit and the impact it had on the C3 students, her experience in the design process, and themes that she saw come up throughout the unit. Although these interviews provided important context and insight, they were not used as primary sources of data in the analysis for this dissertation.

Survey

Before beginning the DJS unit and research, I visited the C3 classes a few times to get to know the students. A common game that students liked to design for one another in class was Kahoot, which was a website where you could create and participate in online surveys. Therefore, the week before the unit, I designed a Kahoot survey to identify some of the ways that students were already thinking about disability identity, community, and culture. To understand a little more about students' prior knowledge and interest, some of the questions included were: Did you learn about disability and/or disability history before Ms. Adina's class? Do you think it's important to talk about disability? What do you think is interesting about disability history? To get an idea of students' perspectives on disability in school, some questions on the survey included: Do you think having a disability changes the way that a person is treated? Do you think having a disability changes the way that someone feels at school? Finally, there were questions about students' personal connections to disability, such as: Do you identify as disabled and/or a person with a disability? Do you feel connected to disability community? Do you know anything about disability culture? There were no wrong answers to the questions, and it was a format that the students already knew and enjoyed. In addition to the Kahoot, which only provided multiple

choice options, students received a printed copy of the questions so that they could follow along on paper if that was more accessible for them, and so they could write extended responses if desired.

Classroom Observations

When it came time to implement the DJS unit, I collected audio and video recordings of class observations and kept field notes. Depending on the activities of the day, I focused cameras on large group discussions and/or small group interactions. For the small group component of the project, students were broken into groups of 3-4 students, and each group was video and audio recorded. Each day we ensured ongoing consent by reiterating how the recordings were going to be used for this research project. After each class, I used an online transcription service to transcribe all videos and create content logs for all video observations. I also kept detailed field notes of student interactions and engagement, as well as memos to both inform the design process and retrospective data analysis. Based on conceptual themes from my memos and input from Adina and students, I later choose to focus on a subset of group interactions to review more closely for retrospective analysis.

Student Artifacts

Student artifacts completed and used for analysis as part of the DJS unit included Educational Journey Maps, Celebrating Me Collages, individual and group graphic organizers, group posters, and groups' final arts-based projects. Reviewing student work helped inform the ways that Adina and I adapted the design, structure and format of lessons and activities. They also served as focal data for retrospective analysis upon completion of the unit. While a range of student work were used in the analysis and findings of this study, the most commonly referenced

student artifacts were Educational Journey Maps, Celebrating Me Collages, and the groups' DJS artwork. Each of these artifacts were designed and collected with specific instructional and methodological intent.

Educational Journey Maps.

Educational Journey Maps was an activity for students to reflect on their educational history and experiences in school (Annamma, 2018). Originally designed to “use (counter-narratives) as a form of academic activism to explicitly ‘talk back’ to master narratives” (Annamma et al., 2013, p. 14), Educational Journey Maps center disabled students as the narrators of their own experiences. I used Educational Journey Maps as an instructional activity at the beginning of the DJS unit to get to know the students and support their critical analysis of their school experiences. As a research methodology, I used Educational Journey Maps to contextualize the students' experiences in school and consider how their educational histories may continue to impact their perspectives on schooling. I wrote the Educational Journey Map prompt to allow for students to process their experiences in ways that felt most authentic to them:

Share your education journey from when you started school to now. You can draw or write about...

- People, places, challenges, and opportunities on the way.
- Your feelings in school.
- How your disability, race, gender, language or other identities impact your school experience.

Be as creative as you like.

Knowing that some students had access needs requiring graphic organizers and alternative communication techniques, I also designed three graphic organizers that invited a variety of ways that students could express their experiences. The Educational Journey Maps and the students reflections on their maps helped as a reference throughout the unit. They also exposed a range of shared stories across disabled students' experiences in school. In retrospective analysis,

I used them to highlight salient school experiences and explore similarities and differences across students' school experiences.

Celebrating Me Collages.

The Celebrating Me Collages activity was designed as a way for students to share how they wanted their peers, teachers, and other school members to see, honor, and celebrate them. As opposed to a written activity, collages “counteract the hegemony and linearity in written text, increase voice and reflexivity in the research process, and expand possibilities of multiple and diverse realities and understandings” (Butler-Kisber, 2018, p. 5). I wrote the Celebrating Me Collage prompt to invite the many ways that students may want to express themselves:

Choose pictures and symbols that represent and celebrate you. You can think about:

- What brings me joy?
- What are important parts of me?
- What are important parts of my identity and culture?
- What do I wish people knew about me?
- What do I want my school to celebrate about me?

I brought in a variety of magazines, stickers, and colored and textured papers that were representative of the interests and identities that students had already shared with me. This felt like a particularly important activity to do after the Educational Journey Maps because of the many negative experiences that students discussed throughout their schooling. As an instructional technique the Celebrating Me Collages was a way to deepen my relationships with students and provide me insight as to how I and the DJS unit may better celebrate them. As a methodological approach, it allowed me to see juxtapositions between the ways that students experienced their schooling and how they wished to be seen and treated in educational spaces.

Disability Justice Gallery Walk.

For students to learn about the 10 principles of Disability Justice, I designed a gallery walk that spanned two days. Each day there were five posters hung around the room, each with a Disability Justice principle (Day 1 we did Disability Justice principles 1-5 and Day 2 we did Disability Justice principles 6-10). The posters included a title and visual representation of each principle (e.g., Figure 10), the original description of each principle as articulated by Sins Invalid (2019) (e.g., Figure 11), and a plain language description as written by Arc Minnesota alongside picture symbols that I included to visually communicate the themes of principle (e.g., Figure 11).

Figure 10 *Disability Justice principle Interdependence title and visual representation.*



Figure 11 *Sins Invalid definition of Disability Justice principle Interdependence.*

Sins Invalid Definition

Before the massive colonial project of Western European expansion, we understood the nature of interdependence within our communities.

We see the liberation of all living systems and the land as integral to the liberation of our own communities, as we all share one planet.

We work to meet each other's needs as we build toward liberation, without always reaching for state solutions which inevitably extend state control further into our lives.

Figure 12 *Plain language definition of Disability Justice principle Interdependence with SymbolStix.*

Plain Language Definition

- Everyone needs support sometimes.
- We must work together to meet each other's needs. We must create a community that helps one another. This is called "interdependence".
- People who have disabilities must be able to choose the types of support they need and want.
- People should have lots of options for how they get support – not just what is offered by the government.



Students were prompted to write their thoughts on reflections on each of the Disability Justice principles posters. The students were used to gallery walks as part of their regular classroom instruction in C3, so they were used to this strategy and form of engagement. At times students worked with one another or with an instructional assistant.

As an instructional tool, the DJ Gallery Walk was used to learn about each of the Disability Justice principles at their own pace (they could stop at each poster for as long as desired) and provide a way to walk and process their ideas as opposed to simply sitting at their desks. As a methodological tool, the Disability Justice Gallery Walk allowed me to see how students were making sense of the Disability Justice principles before small group and class discussions. After the students completed the two days of the Disability Justice Gallery Walk, they indicated their top three choices for the Disability Justice principle that they'd like to learn more about and use in their DJS group artwork. Based on their top choices, we divided students into groups.

Disability Justice in Schools Group Work and Artwork.

After students indicated which Disability Justice principle they wanted to focus on, they were put into groups based on those principles (e.g., Interdependence group, Recognizing Wholeness group). In their groups they completed a series of activities making sense of their principle together, including brainstorming what it meant to them, examples and non-examples, personal connections, and future dreaming of what that Disability Justice principle could look like in school.

The culminating project for the DJS unit was a collaborative DJS art piece. Based on their brainstorming processes and exploration of disabled artists' work, they planned, designed, and completed their creative projects. While we provided some examples (e.g., painting, comic,

collage, photography), they were given the freedom to design their artwork with a range of artistic materials. I modeled the DJS artwork process as a socially engaged arts practice, which opened new possibilities for connection as well as contributed to sustaining the creativity fostered within and across disability culture. Socially engaged arts was particularly fitting because “at the roots of its meaning, engagement means connection, so we can first understand this kind of art as one that is about connecting the pieces, connecting people with their feelings, their pasts, their dreams, each other” (Naidus, 2009, p. 4).

As an instructional technique the DJS group work and artwork was designed for students to continue to process their own experiences, connect with one another, and imagine new possibilities for Disability Justice in school. As a methodological practice, the DJS group work and artwork aligned with the values of my conceptual framework and contributed to expressions and expansions of Crippling CSP.

Student Interviews

Upon completion of the DJS unit, students were given the opportunity to participate in an optional interview. Five students chose to participate in interviews. The post-unit student interviews were semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions about the student’s experience throughout the unit, feedback on the design of the unit, and perspectives of DJ in school. At times I asked students questions specific to their individual or group work and/or group dynamics to gain insight to information and ideas that may not have been readily apparent in the data alone. Keeping the interview conversational and personalized was also important to allow the students to more fully explain their thoughts and ideas and allow them to surface themes and connections.

Data Analysis Strategies

Drawing on CSP and DisCrit, I was interested in the ways that curriculum design can provide a plurality of activity structures seeking to sustain disabled youth in their wholeness in the current study context. One of the challenges was to “characterize the complexity, fragility, messiness, and eventual solidity of the design and doing so in a way that will be valuable to others” (Barab & Squire, 2016, p. 4). In order to meet this challenge, I used ongoing formative analysis methods throughout the unit and retrospective analysis techniques upon completion of the unit to synthesize salient themes. In the following sections, I review how I conducted formative analysis, retrospective analysis, and finally the role of arts-based analysis in those processes.

Formative Analysis

Throughout the Disability Justice in Schools unit, I used daily debriefs with Adina and personal memo-ing as tools for formative analysis. Formative analysis was used to surface gaps in understanding, intention, and/or impact of the instructional and/or research design and address them through ongoing analysis and problem solving (Edelson, 2002). I regularly reflected on the successes and challenges in our design process, how students were connecting to disability identity, community, and culture, and how students were making sense of Disability Justice. Through daily debriefs, Adina and I discussed how students engaged with the tools and activities provided, and we noted student questions and comments that informed our design process and decisions. We used these debriefs to make any necessary immediate design changes in the lessons, assess salient themes that were coming up, and consider future shifts in the unit.

I also audio recorded and/or wrote daily memos throughout the DJS unit, as well as during retrospective analysis, to reflect on the curriculum design, my research design, and the

ways that the unit was complicating and enhancing my conceptualization of Crippling CSP. These memos were used as analytic tools to personally reflect on connections to the participants, content, and phenomenon (Saldaña, 2016). They often referenced my design commitments and how the unit was and was not in alignment with those. They included an inward gaze on the design process and questioning what we were centering and sustaining as essential components of disability cultural values and practices.

Details from daily debriefs and memos were not referenced as data sources and were not used to explicitly address the research questions of this dissertation, but a running record of salient themes and key moments was kept illuminating retrospective analysis, which is the focus of the dissertation findings. Debriefs and memos also contributed to implications for this study and future research.

Retrospective Analysis

After completion of the DJS unit, a retrospective analysis was used to capture themes across the full longitudinal data set. Throughout retrospective analysis I organized and made sense of the full dataset to more holistically answer the research questions in relation to the local context as well as generalizable theory. I conducted my analysis in two cycles. First, I chose two focal students from the optional interviews and did a cycle of inductive analysis based on their interviews and group work. The second cycle of analysis was deductive, using the features of CSP to identify examples and expansions of the framework as illustrated through the focal groups' dynamics throughout the unit and their final artwork. Below I outline in more detail how I chose focal students and conducted inductive analysis through open coding of their interviews and group work, as well as the process of deductive coding using the features of CSP.

First Cycle Retrospective Analysis: Grounded Theory from Focal Students and Groups.

With a commitment to learning from disabled youths' vibrant cripistemologies (Johnson & McRuer, 2014), it felt critical to begin analysis with data analysis techniques that flowed into grounded theories. That is to say, I wanted to develop theory directly rooted in the youths' participation, words, and artistic expressions (Saldaña, 2016). In order to do so, I used inductive analysis to answer my first two research questions: (1) How did students make sense of their own disability identities and Disability Justice more broadly?, and (2) How did students engage in and navigate cross-disability collaborations?

For this round of analysis, I chose to focus on two students that participated in the optional interviews and then use their groups as focal groups. Blue's and Brian's interviews were particularly interesting to inform this study because, although they both had IEPs, they experienced and discussed disability identity and community very differently. Blue strongly identified as disabled and Brian repeatedly distanced himself from disability identity. This contrast felt important to highlight because of the range of relationships that students with IEPs have to the label of disability. Furthermore, despite their differences in disability identities, Blue and Brian both felt that they were part of disability communities. This provided a lens into the many ways that disabled students may find disability community in and out of school settings. Finally, Blue and Brian represented a variety of intersecting racial, cultural, linguistic, and gendered experiences. Blue was an agender first generation Indian student who spoke Telugu at home and Brian was a male Chinese immigrant student who spoke Mandarin at home. The diversity of their experiences presented the opportunity to consider the many ways that disabled youth relate to disability identity and work in cross-disability communities and collaborations.

Blue and Brian were also in different periods and focused on different DJ principles, which allowed for analysis to span both C3 classes and multiple DJ principles. Blue was in the

5th period Recognizing Wholeness group and Brian was in the 7th period Interdependence group. For both groups I created student profiles, conducted a round of open coding and arts-based analysis to identify emerging themes, and then organized those into themes that came up in both groups. Student profiles (for Blue, Brian, and each of their group members) were primarily based on their Educational Journey Maps and Celebrating Me Collages and informed by comments made throughout the unit. Blue's and Brian's profiles also included data from their interviews. For group video observation transcripts, I used open codes to identify units of data that seem pertinent to the research questions and later organize those codes into more cohesive themes (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2016). Specifically, I focused on In Vivo Codes, which were taken directly from the participants' transcripts in order to "keep the data rooted in the participant's own language" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 7). Keeping my findings rooted in the participant's own language was important not only because it centered their voices, but it also captured disabled students' expansive communication techniques.

Open coding and organizing cross-cutting themes were initially done independently and then conducted collaboratively. In addition to increasing data trustworthiness, collaborative analysis was particularly fitting for this study in the ways that it disrupted the institutional narrative of individualism (Steeves et al., 2009) and hierarchical ways of knowing (Smith & Helfenbein, 2009), as well as offered new opportunities to enhance personal connections to disability community and culture in the research process. All of my collaborators identified as disabled, had a background in disability studies, and were professionally connected to schools. My first round of collaborative analysis was with Adina, who was able to provide profound insight as the classroom teacher and fellow participant observer. Adina read through and open coded all of the video observations with me.

Second Cycle Retrospective Analysis: Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies.

In addition to grounded theory, I wished to better understand and expand the conceptual framework of Crippling CSP. In the second cycle of retrospective analysis, I returned the features of Crippling CSP to specifically attend to my third research question: How can disabled youth contribute to and expand the conceptualization of Crippling CSP? For my second cycle of retrospective analysis I used deductive analysis to identify how cross-disability group dynamics and co-generated knowledge from the unit may provide examples and expansions of Crippling CSP. I created a codebook with descriptions of each of the features of Crippling CSP and what we would look for in the video observations, student artifacts, and artwork.

Table 5 *Coding for the features of Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy.*

Crippling CSP Feature Descriptions	Excerpts were coded if they involved...
Honoring Disabled Experiences <i>Honoring disabled experiences celebrates variability and differences in disability identity, community, and culture. Honoring disabled experiences means listening to, believing, validating, and learning from disabled people. Honoring disabled experiences is a way to recognize disabled wholeness without confining disability to a single story or limiting disabled people's multifaceted identities.</i>	• Listening to and validating one another's experiences of disability and ableism • Positioning disability as an asset • Inviting difference • Working together across differences
Shared Stories <i>Shared stories of disability and ableism are a form of connection amongst disabled people. Shared stories contribute to the relational component of disability identity, building disability community, and learning and sustaining disability culture. Shared stories incorporate the importance of finding crip kin that share experiences of disability and ableism, while also being informed by identities more broadly.</i>	• Storytelling (with attention to what they told stories about and how students related to one another through storytelling) • Storytelling about disability identity, racial and/or ethnic identity, and other salient identities • Connecting with one another through shared interests and experiences
Access as a Core Value and Practice <i>Access as a core value and practice is unique to the disability community because it is in direct response to</i>	• Making meaning of access

<i>the ways that physical, social, and institutional spaces are designed for nondisabled people. Access as a value is an ethical foundation, whereas access as a practice are the actual behaviors that manifest that value. Access as a practice must be flexible and meaningful in order to meet a diversity of individual and collective needs that may change across time and context.</i>	● Working towards access as a collective process (with attention to student and teacher roles) ● Navigating access with each other ● Identifying and sharing personal access needs
Expansive Communication <i>Expansive communication is the process of sharing information, thoughts, and feelings through a variety of methods and mediums. Expansive communication as a feature of crippling CSP is meant to sustain disability identity and personal communication styles, while also forging relationships across communication styles and linguistic practices.</i>	● Using a variety of communication techniques and practices in the classroom ● Navigating varying communication practices and their effect on collaboration and group dynamics ● Honoring and/or disregarding specific communication practices
Choice and Agency <i>Choice and agency include when, where, and how disabled youth choose to participate in school spaces, including acts of resistance to ableist conditions. While disabled youth have inherent agency, they are often restricted by educational environments that perpetually limit their choice in school. Choice and agency can be expressed on individual and collective levels. Individually, disabled youth push back on ableist assumptions about their preferences and capacity to participate. On a collective level, disabled youth can work together to create anti-ableist spaces where they use choice and agency as a form of connection and community.</i>	● Making group decisions (with attention to who and how each group member was included) ● Sharing preferences for roles/participation ● Resisting ableist expectations and assumptions ● Making personal choices in when and how to receive support

In addition to individually going through the focal groups' video recorded sessions and coding for the five features of CSP, I used collaborative data analysis techniques to add a level of reliability and community accountability (e.g., considering the ways that other disabled community members may interpret the data). The second round of collaborative analysis was with an undergraduate student with dyslexia, Mai Li, who reached out to me after seeing me present about the DJS unit. She gave an invaluable perspective as an outsider to the study and as a disabled Asian-American student with an Autistic sibling. Mai Li shared that she was able to

relate to the students in the DJS study and provided additional analytical considerations. Mai Li participated in discussions around themes that emerged in the focal groups and identified moments of the features of Crippling CSP throughout the transcripts.

The Role of the Arts in Analysis

As with my data collection methods, I also utilized arts-based research techniques in my analysis. I drew on arts-based research traditions both in the analysis of students' artistic works, as well as in the organization and representation of themes across data sets. Furthermore, specific ABR techniques (e.g., found poetry and collage) support my personal access needs. Due to my disabilities, I often have trouble absorbing and organizing written texts, and arts-based research analysis methods provide an alternative means to visualize and express themes, thoughts, and ideas. In the collaborative portions of analysis, using the arts was also a way to incorporate access across disability classifications. Discussions of how and why to use specific qualitative and arts-based analysis techniques were common throughout the process.

In the findings portion of this dissertation, I specifically draw on two forms of arts-based analysis and representation: found poetry and comics. While I used a range of visual arts and collage to organize my own thinking and interpretations of the data, they were used for personal meaning making and are not included as fully representative of the findings presented here.

Found Poetry.

Found poems were created in the first and second rounds of retrospective analysis both individually and in collaboration with Adina and Mai Li in order to draw out the essence of what we were seeing in the data and how we were interpreting it (Wiggins, 2011). Patrick (2016) defines found poetry through the construction of a found poem of her full article on the topic:

Definition of terms: A Found Poem

Research poets
 refashion and reorder data,
 presenting it as a poem...
 crafting original poetry
 in the voice of the researcher,

crafting found poetry
 in the voice of the participant.
 (p. 65, italics in the original)

In this definition, Patrick (2016) includes two types of found poems, one in the voice of the researcher and one in the voice of the participant. In the first cycle of retrospective, Adina and I constructed participant-voiced found poetry meaning they are written directly from quotes by participants (Prendergast, 2009) and "'untreated' (conserving virtually the same order, syntax and meaning as in the original)" (Butler-Kisber, 2018, p. 3). I used these found poems to bring together quotes that articulated a common theme coming up across multiple data sets. At times, found poetry provided a succinct and more accessible method of understanding and displaying findings.

In the second cycle of retrospective analysis, Mai Li and I constructed found poems "in the voice of the researcher" by isolating the key themes (including narrative text I wrote and participants I quoted) of each feature of Crippling CSP. We used found poetry as a method of synthesizing ideas and expressing the ways that we were understanding how disabled youth were embodying and expanding Crippling CSP.

Comics.

Finally, I collaborated with a disabled Japanese teaching artist, Dr. Saya, to create visual representations of the second phase of retrospective analysis, specifically addressing my third research question about the ways disabled youth exemplified and expanded the conceptualization of Crippling CSP. Dr. Saya and I have been colleagues and friends for over five years and worked

together across disability community and arts-based research and instruction spaces. Her work with Japanese immigrant mothers and their disabled children (Omori, 2020) illuminated the importance of manga and comics as a way for participants to see themselves as central to the process and product of research. Drawing on the importance of expansive communication and accessible plain language dissemination of research, Dr. Saya and I created a comic to provide a meaningful representation of the findings of this research to the youth.

Furthermore, using comics to represent the findings for research provides a more holistic approach to literally illustrate research. The visual components of brainstorming and illustrating supported my analysis process, as well as the construction of my findings. Scholar and comic Nick Sousanis (2015) explained, “While comics are read sequentially like texts, the entire composition is also taken in - viewed - all at once... This spatial interplay of sequential and simultaneous - imbues comics with a dual nature” (p. 62). The importance of providing “sequential and simultaneous” methods of understanding the findings of this work is both pertinent to disabled ways of knowing and being, which are not confined to linear prose, as well as the interconnectedness I propose is central to disability identity, community, and culture. Although academic scholarship provides clarity through a specific type of structure, Dr. Saya and I worked together to provide an alternative form of clarity, presented in a combination of visual and written text, in line with the purpose and objectives of this work.

The methods described in this chapter were chosen to ensure that disabled youth were positioned as experts in disability identity, community, and culture in schools. The goal of the retrospective inductive analysis was to generate grounded theory about how disabled youth made sense of their disability identities alongside the principles of Disability Justice. It also attended to disability community in the classroom by identifying the ways that youth navigate cross-

disability collaborations. Following the inductive analysis, I utilized deductive analysis methods to consider how disabled youth contributed to the Crippling CSP framework. All of my qualitative methods included components of arts-based research and collaborative techniques. These analytic methods allowed for a more nuanced understanding and broader expression of my findings.

Orientation to Findings

To share my findings, I present three chapters: Interdependence Focal Group, Recognizing Wholeness Focal Group, and Crippling CSP Findings. The first two findings chapters, Interdependence Focal Group and Recognizing Wholeness Focal Group, use claims from my first cycle of retrospective analysis to attend to the focal groups including the focal students (Interdependence with Brian and Recognizing Wholeness with Blue). Those chapters discuss my first two research questions. The final findings chapter, Crippling CSP Findings, looks across the two focal groups and students to consider implications for my third research question about how the features of Crippling CSP were embodied and enacted by students.

These findings chapters include a variety of art-based representations. The first two chapters use students' original artwork and found poetry created during analysis to substantiate grounded theory in the localized context. The Crippling CSP Findings chapter includes comics and found poetry used to illustrate the deductive analysis and generalizable theory to the conceptual framework of Crippling CSP.

CHAPTER 3: INTERDEPENDENCE FOCAL GROUP

In the following two chapters I introduce the students in each focal group and then review themes in their group dynamics and how they made sense of the DJ principles. In order to center the individuals' own voice in the description of their identities, each student profile begins with their artist statements followed by a general introduction and narration of their Educational Journey Maps and Celebrating Me Collages. Students who had post-unit interviews have extended profiles based on interview data triangulated with their classwork and group participation. After each groups' student profiles, I present themes connected to research question 1 (How did students make sense of their own disability identities and Disability Justice more broadly?) by discussing how each group made meaning of their disability justice principle and how group members embraced and/or distanced disability, as well as themes connected to research question 2 (How did students engage in and navigate cross-disability collaborations?) by discussing the nature of each groups' cross-disability collaboration and the role of the arts throughout that process.

Brian was in the Interdependence group with team members Paisley and Amelia. When discussing Interdependence, they most referred to the plain language definition by the Arc Minnesota:

- Everyone needs support sometimes.
- We must work together to meet each other ' s needs. We must create a community that helps one another. This is called “interdependence ”.
- People who have disabilities must be able to choose the types of support they need and want.
- People should have lots of options for how they get support – not just what is offered by the government.

In this section I present profiles of the Interdependence group members followed by an analysis of how the group collectively made sense of Interdependence, how they embraced and distanced

disability throughout the unit, how they navigated inclusive collaboration, and how the arts played a key role in the ways that they processed and expressed their ideas.

Interdependence Group Student Profiles

Paisley

I have ADHD and Autism and I struggle socially because of these. Some of the illustrations in the collage depict accommodations that I actually have. I am in orchestra.
- Paisley (age 17), Disability Justice in Schools Showcase artist statement

Paisley identified as an Autistic Asian student with ADHD. She was in 11th grade and proud of her musical skills as a cellist. She had been in a C3 class for all three years of her high school experience (two with Adina). As indicated in her Educational Journey Map and Celebrating Me Collage, as well as conversations throughout the unit, her disability was an important part of her identity and deeply informed her school experience. She felt positively connected to her disability identity and the disability community, but also reflected on the challenges that she faced in school due to her disability.

In her Educational Journey Map, Paisley focused on the ways that her educational contexts shifted over time (see Figure 13). When she finished, she shared that she chose to represent her journey a-linearly because “it’s how my brain works.” Paisley shared that she was diagnosed with Autism and ADHD in 2nd grade, which deeply informed her school experience. A key feature of her educational journey was moving to Seattle and the different ways that schools organized the school day and special education programming (both from district to district, as well as moving up in grade levels). She said that “moving across the country [was important] because my learning environment drastically changed.” In her Educational Journey Map she included being held back, switching schools on multiple occasions, getting an IEP, and

being introduced to new school schedules and programs. She said that the most important part of her map was “Autism because learning social skills is slightly more difficult as a result.”

Figure 13 Paisley's Educational Journey Map.



Notes. Image description: Intersecting red, yellow, green, and blue lines create a variety of shapes across the page that are filled with words describing events that were part of Paisley's educational journey. The events were not written in chronological order. From left to right, top to bottom, Paisley included the events: diagnosis with autism, went to kindergarten in upper Arlington, OH, switched elementary schools (again!) in 3rd grade), placed in special needs classes, switched elementary schools in first grade, held back from kindergarten until age 6, started taking orchestra in 4th grade, introduced to electives in middle school, my IEP was written sometime during elementary school, joined concert orchestra, moved to Beachwood, OH, started middle school, Started high school, rejoined orchestra at [high school] as a member of sinfonia [sic], introduced to a 7-period schedule in middle school, had block periods in grades 3-5, had to take “Strategies for School Success” class, moved across the country to Bellevue, WA, joined orchestra, stopped taking Strategies for School Success, took a hiatus from orchestra during virtual learning.

When reflecting on her school experiences and thinking about how schools could better celebrate her, Paisley included parts of personal and social identities. As she showed me her Celebrating Me Collage (Figure 14), she explained, “I’m Asian American. I, I, I, my pronouns are she slash her. I’m Autistic. I love dogs, I’m creative and I’m a little bit of a goofball. Also a little bit of a goofball and I like dogs.” When asked about whether she felt that all of these parts of her were celebrated in school, she said, “some aspects of identity are celebrated, others not so much...people with Autism, I do [wish we were more celebrated]... It’s not [celebrated] because they’re not, because they’re often underrepresented in the media and even, even, even when they are presented, they’re often, it’s often, the can be, could be inaccurate.” When followed by a question about what schools could do about that, she answered, “Autism awareness.” It appeared that authentic Autism representation was important to her in feeling celebrated in and out of school because it could shift people’s perceptions and misunderstandings of what it means to be Autistic.

Figure 14 *Paisley's Celebrating Me Collage.*



Note. Image description: At the top of the page in a variety of colors are the words “ASIAN AMERICAN, AUTISTIC, DOG LOVER, CREATIVE, ADHD, WOMAN, GOOFBALL, CURIOUS, MUSICAL.” Below are words are a row of drawings of musical notes interspersed with dog paws. In the bottom two thirds of the page are two cut out magazine images of dogs and puppies, a cut out of the words “What Is Autism?,” another drawing of a musical note and two dog paws, and a drawing of a flag of the United States of America.

Throughout the unit, Paisley was excited about the project, eager to talk about disabilities, and interested in learning more about disability justice. In our initial Kahoot survey, she indicated that she thought it was important to talk about disability and learn disability history and wrote, “It’s interesting to learn how laws and attitudes change over time.” She believed that disability could change the way a person may feel at school, but could also be positive. She wrote, “Yes [disability can be positive] because they are different ways that we could use that to our advantage.” She defined disability as “Someone who has a physical or mental impairment.” She believed that Disability Justice was “the equal treatment of disabled people” and wanted to

learn “how disability laws have changed throughout American history.” Her interest continued throughout the unit and provided moments of connection with her group mates as they learned together.

Amelia

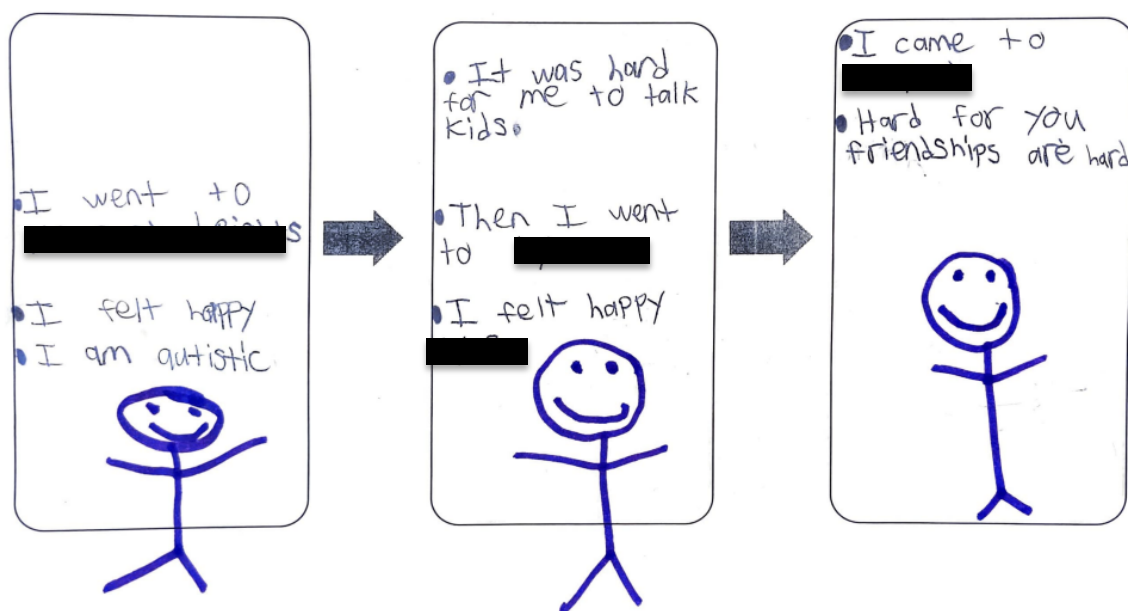
I am a freshman at [Milbern] Senior High School. I play bells in the school band. -
Amelia (age 15), Disability Justice in Schools Showcase artist statement

Amelia identified as an Autistic white student. She was in her first year at Milbern High School and loved math and music. Amelia typically communicated with SymbolStix, prompts with multiple choice answers, vocalizations, short verbal responses, writing, and drawing. In her Educational Journey Map and Celebrating Me Collage, and throughout the unit, Amelia focused on the aspects of school that she enjoyed despite some social challenges.

For her Educational Journey Map (Figure 15), Amelia used a graphic organizer with three panels to write and draw about her elementary, middle, and high school experience. On all three panels she drew herself with a smiling face and on two of the panels she wrote “I felt happy.” Although she included parts of school that were hard, “It was hard for me to talk kids” and “friendships are hard,”⁵ this did not appear to deter her from personal feelings of joy at school. When asked about her Educational Journey map she said “Algebra is important,” “I am autistic,” and “I like school.”

⁵ On the third panel it says “Hard for you friendships are hard,” which makes it sound like a teacher potentially prompted her to write this. Stating it in the second person, “you,” instead of first person, “I,” makes it read like echolalia, which may or may not reflect her personal reflections.

Figure 15 *Amelia's Educational Journey Map.*



Note. Image description: A three panel graphic organizer with arrows leading from one panel to the next. In the first panel Amelia wrote three bullet points: "I went to [elementary school]," "I felt happy," and "I am autistic." In the second panel Amelia wrote three bullet points: "It was hard for me to talk kids," "Then I went to [middle school]," "I felt happy [in middle school]." In the third panel Amelia wrote two bullet points: "I came to [high school]" and "Hard for you friendships are hard." All three of the panels have drawings of a stick figure with a smile.

Amelia's Celebrating Me Collage elaborated on her personal interests (Figure 16). She included a smiley face, sea creatures, a map pointing to her hometown, and the word "puzzles" (at times in class she took sensory breaks at the puzzle station). When asked, "Is there anything else you want us to know?," Amelia wrote "Quiet break. I'm feel happy." By including "puzzles" and "quiet break," it appeared important for Amelia to express her access needs to have space and time for sensory breaks.

Figure 16 *Amelia's Celebrating Me Collage.*



Note. Image description: Four images on Amelia’s Celebrating Me Collage include two magazine cut outs, one of a dolphin and another of a sea turtle, and two stickers, one in the shape of the United States and the other of a tie dye smiley face. Next to the top left corner of the United States sticker, Amelia drew an arrow and wrote “Seattle Bellevue.” At the bottom left corner Amelia wrote the word “puzzles.”

Throughout the unit, Amelia often shared her interests by requesting to do alternative activities, such as math and Blooket. Blooket was an online game used to review academic material. On multiple occasions throughout the unit she asked for “Blooket” and “laptop,” two tools that she uses regularly for math. On other occasions, Amelia started listing ways to make parallel and perpendicular lines and reciting states and their capitals. Amelia also loved music and played piano at home. In her artist statement she included, “I play bells in the school band.” It appeared that she appreciated the aspects of school that allowed her to express and expand her interests in math and music.

Brian

I moved from China to United States at age 10 (3 months away from being 11) and got misdiagnosed about being autistic. I play basketball and chess outside of school. - *Brian (age 15), Disability Justice in Schools Showcase artist statement*

Brian identified as a nondisabled Chinese immigrant student and believed he was misdiagnosed as autistic when he arrived in the United States.⁶ He was in his first year at Milbern High School and enthusiastic about learning multiple languages (he spoke Mandarin and English at home, took French at school, and learned some Arabic with his dad), creating and playing Kahoot games with classmates, and listening to Backstreet Boys. Although Brian didn't identify as disabled, he shared that he found community in spaces with other autistic youth, such as classes with other students with IEPs and his out of school Applied Behavior Analysis⁷ program.

Brian's Educational Journey Map presented a linear depiction of each of the schools that he attended (see Figure 17 and Figure 18). After talking through each of the schools he attended in China, Brian moved to the portion of his Educational Journey Map when "I migrated here at the last day of 2017. I land at the airport at exactly seven. I land exactly seven o'clock in the morning." In describing the move to the United States and how that shifted his school experience, Brian focused on being diagnosed with autism and starting special education services:

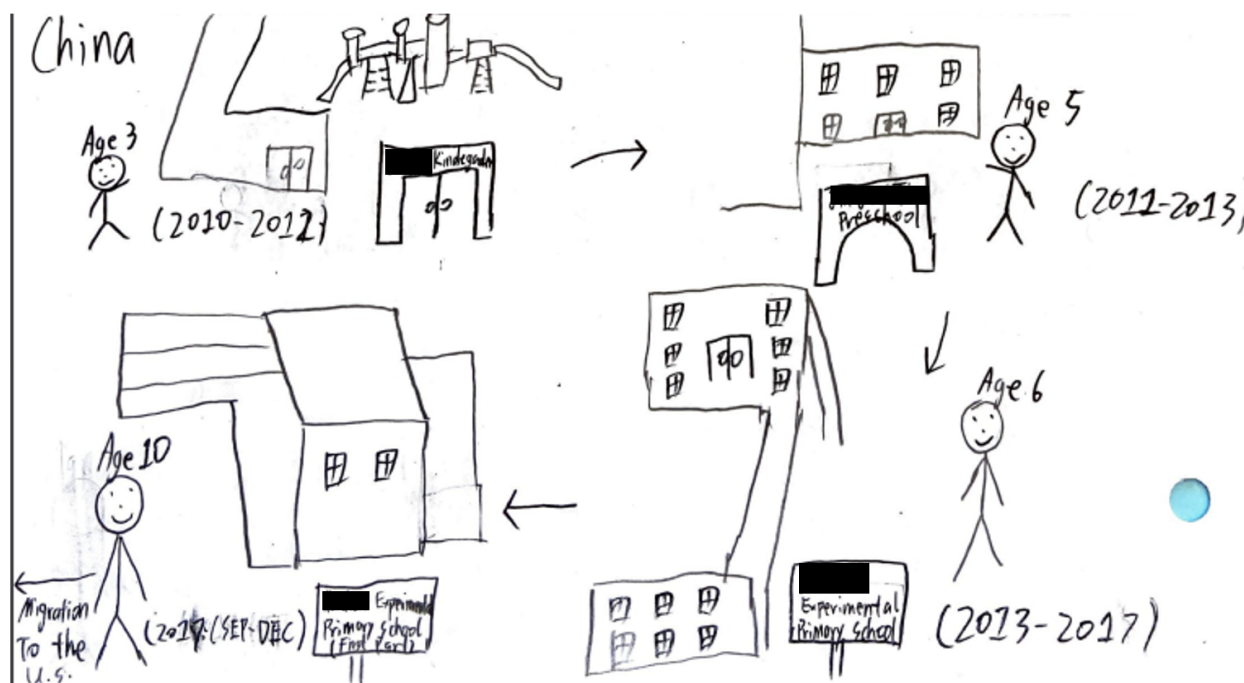
⁶ In a follow up interview a year after the study, Brian positively identified with disability stating, "I no longer feel any shame...I'm very open about it no matter what." However, for the context of this study, it is important to understand his experiences and participation from his perspective in that moment. Therefore, I included his identifications at the time of the study, while recognizing that identity and social interaction shift over space and time.

⁷ Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) programs have been critiqued as a source of trauma for many Autistic youth and adults due to the level of intensity and focus on eradicating and/or masking traits associated with autism (Graber & Graber, 2023). While I am personally skeptical of and opposed to many ABA practices, I am curious about and interested in the ways that Brian experienced his ABA program as a form of disability community.

From there, I started getting help with social skills. And that's where I'm diagnosed with autism. But surprisingly, my parents who know me the best don't agree with that di-, with that diagnosis because now I was developing very fast. And that's where they found the diagnosis. The diagnostic was a mistake. I was actually not autistic, but I just need helps that a autistic people needs and now I'm a lot better.

Although Brian strongly believed that he was misdiagnosed with autism, he appeared to appreciate the support that he gained from special education services. That continued into his first year at Milbern High School He said, “I'm not exaggerating, when I come to this school every day, I feel like I'm back at my home and I was having a lot of fun here. Especially for the persons like...Miss Gloria and most importantly, the person here, Ms. Adina, who give me the most help in my life.”

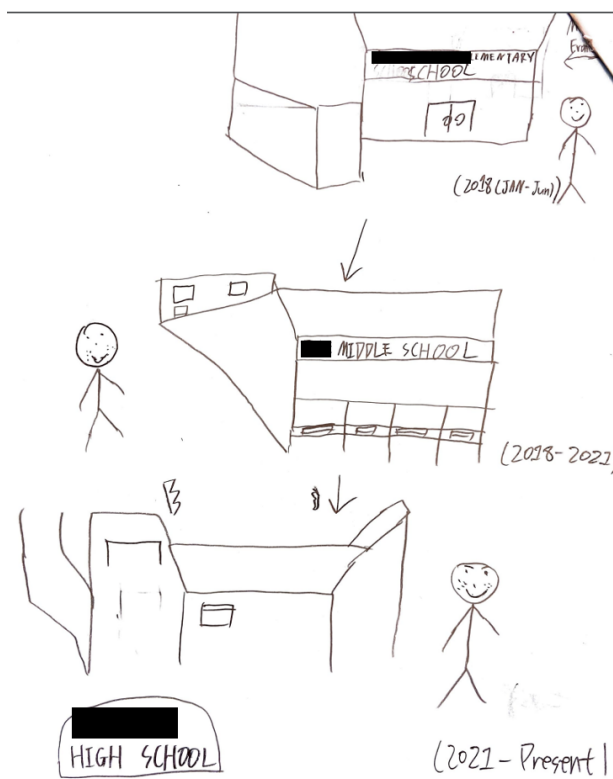
Figure 17 *Brian's Educational Journey Map Part I.*



Note. Image description: Four drawings of events in Brian’s educational journey with arrows leading from one event to the next moving clockwise starting in the top left corner. The first drawing says “China” and “Age 3” above a stick figure next to “(2010-2012)” and a building labeled “Kindergarten.” The next drawing has a stick figure labeled “Age 5 (2011-2013)” next to a building labeled “Preschool.” The third drawing has a stick figure labeled “Age 6 (2013-2017)” next to a building labeled “Experimental Primary School.” The fourth drawing has a stick figure labeled “Age 10 (2017 (SEP-DEC))” next to a building labeled “Experimental Primary School (Fall Year).” An arrow labeled “Migration To the U.S.” points from the fourth drawing back to the first.

figure labeled “Age 10 (2017 (SEPT-DEC))” next to a building labeled “Experimental Primary School (first part).” An arrow points left off the page with the words “Migration to the U.S.”

Figure 18 *Brian's Educational Journey Map Part II.*



Note. Image description: Three drawings of events in Brian’s educational journey with arrows leading from one event to the next moving from the top of the page to the bottom. The top drawing has a stick figure next to “(2018 (JAN-Jun))” and a building labeled “Elementary School.” The middle drawing has a stick figure next to a building labeled “MIDDLE SCHOOL” and the years “(2018-2021).” The bottom drawing has a stick figure labeled “(2021-Present)” next to a building labeled “High School.”

For Brian’s Celebrating Me Collage he used a full-page image of one of his favorite basketball players, Stephen Curry, above the words from his favorite songs, “WANT IT THAT WAY!” (see Figure 19). In his Celebrating Me Collage exit ticket Brian explained that he included those words “because that’s my personal slogan.” When asked how he’d like school to celebrate him, he said, “Play ‘I Want It That Way’ in the background and gather students that love basketball to play with me and also, offer some Gatorade.” He liked bright colors and included two stickers that represented the LGBTQ+ community because of their positive and

coloring messaging even though he did not personally identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

Figure 19 *Brian's Celebrating Me Collage.*



WANT IT THAT WAY!

Note. Image description: A black and white picture of Stephen Curry walking on the basketball court with his hands on his head. There are two stickers added, one on either side of Curry. On the right is a multicolored sticker of the word “PRIDE” and on the left is a sticker of a multicolored heart above the words “FREE HUGS.” At the bottom of the page are the words “WANT IT THAT WAY!”

Throughout the unit and in his post-unit interview, Brian tended to distance himself from disability and use deficit language associated with disability stigma. In his response to the introduction survey question “Do you identify as having a disability?” Brian wrote, “I don’t have any disabilities phew...” He reiterated that in his Educational Journey Map (focusing on what he believed was a misdiagnosis) and multiple times in discussion with classmates throughout the unit.

Interdependence Group Findings

After engaging in the Educational Journey Map and Celebrating Me Collage activities, and participating in the Disability Justice Principles Gallery Walk, Brian, Paisley, and Amelia chose to explore the DJ principle of Interdependence. In the gallery walk, each of the group members had written a comment on the Interdependence poster. Brian wrote a post-it that Interdependence had “very good empathy and supportive language.” Paisley wrote, “I agree that interdependence is important, because it is important to help each other.” Finally, Amelia had added a cut out that said, “I have a question about this principle.” After choosing the DJ principle of Interdependence, the students moved to a table group together and worked together on the DJS art project.

In this analysis, I focus on the ways that the Interdependence group: (1) made sense of Interdependence through their lived experiences at home and at school, (2) embraced and/or distanced themselves from disability based on their personal identifications as (non)disabled as well as stigma associated with disability, (3) navigated inclusive collaboration through a series of challenges in negotiating access between group members, and (4) represented Interdependence in and through the artistic process. For each of the themes, I provide an overview of the theme across the unit and then use specific episodes to develop a more nuanced understanding.

Making Sense of Interdependence

Brian, Paisley, and Amelia made sense of Interdependence through personal experiences across school and home contexts, as well as connections to the disability rights movement and disability rights in school. However, Brian and Paisley often excluded Amelia from their conversations. Amelia’s contributions often went unrecognized until an adult came to point them out. During an activity asking for students to identify examples and non-examples of their DJ

principle, this group began by sharing their personal experiences of Interdependence. Paisley shared a connection at school referencing IEP accommodations, while Brian shared a connection outside of school about family pitching in when a new baby was born. Together they discussed how the example from Brian's family, which involved nondisabled people, was analogous to interdependence with disabled folks.

Paisley: My connections to interdependence were- are when- an example I had is IEP accommodations...

Brian: Okay, so my example of interdependence was when my mom was at her month of rest after giving birth to my baby sister. My dad have a role of cooking, I have the role, have often, I set the table and clear the table and unload the dishwasher. And my baby sister's role was to was to simply be quiet and does not disrupt. Both of us are basically covering anything.

Paisley: Family.

Brian: Yeah, that was called family assistance.

Paisley: Family assistance. Even though this is a nondisabled example. You could see the same thing with disabled people. Yes. Even though, even though your mom's not disabled, you can see the same thing with disabled people. Yes.

In this dialogue, Paisley provided an example of how she felt supported in school while Brian provided an example of people in his family supporting one another. Paisley's example of IEPs did not include a reciprocal relationship, and was therefore could be considered more individualistic based on ways that she felt supported through IEP accommodations. Brian's family assistance example, on the other hand, appeared more reciprocal, including how each family member played a role in taking care of one another when a new baby was born. At the end of their conversation, Paisley noted that although Brian's mom was not disabled, Brian's example of family assistance could apply to disabled people as well. Together, Paisley and Brian were making sense of interdependence as a process of helping one another, either individually (via IEPs) or collectively (in family roles).

As the unit progressed, Brian and Paisley continued to discuss IEPs as an important part of interdependence in school. Given IEPs are designed as documents for an individual student

and interdependence implies multiple people working together and meeting one another's needs, the teaching team was unclear about why Brian and Paisley continued to return to IEPs as an example of interdependence. One day Adina asked questions to unpack Brian's and Paisley's ideas about interdependence and IEPs to better understand their thinking.

Adina: I have a question, how is an IEP interdependence?

Paisley: Because both students and teachers have feedback

Adina: But are you helping me when I write your IEP? How does it help me as a person?

Brian: You literally just asked me to sharpen the pencil and fix the sharpener for you.

Adina: Yeah, that is a great example of interdependence

Brian: If there is no interdependence, why would we have classroom support? Isn't that us supporting you?

Brian and Paisley pointed out features that they believed contributed to interdependence in school: feedback and classroom support. Paisley may have been thinking of interdependence as the teacher and student working together to write the IEP. While Adina did not interpret that collaboration as a reciprocal relationship, another interpretation may be that the student is helping the teacher do their job better by helping them write a meaningful student-centered IEP. Brian then moved to an example of a discrete task that he could do for a teacher that would help them (even though it was not directly connected to an IEP). In the Communication, Collaboration, and Connections class, classroom support was a list of tasks that students helped with around the classroom. Brian may have interpreted classroom support as interdependence because teachers and students worked together to support each other in maintaining a clean and organized classroom, which Adina agreed with. Adina then brought the conversation back to her original question.

Adina: What does that mean about the IEP?

Paisley: No, they have to listen to the student feedback of whether of which accommodations are working, which ones they need and no longer need or which ones are not working.

Brian: Yeah, that's so obvious.

Adina: That's collaborative, but is it interdependent?

Brian: Yes, it is, of course it is, as long as everyone is depending on one another on any how.

Brian and Paisley continued to view the IEP as Interdependent because of the ways that it could incorporate student perspectives and feedback. Brian reiterated that he considered something interdependent “as long as everyone is depending on one another.” In the IEP process, it appeared that he and Paisley believed that teachers needed to depend on students to write good IEPs. However, since that is not a common interpretation, Adina was interested to dig deeper.

Adina: I guess my question about that- it's like ultimately, unfortunately, certain teachers can write an IEP without talking to you about it...Because it is not legally necessary.

Brian: Oh, what- what are you speaking- but I think it's really really important. Why do you say legally?

Adina: Because an IEP is a legal document

Brian: Why is that necessary? What is it?

Paisley: The IEP law

Adina: Student input is not required in the way that I have done it with you all on your IEP.

Paisley: But I, I would like to campaign to get it required.

Adina: Okay, how is that interdependence? Interdependence is I need something in return and we're kind of on the same team on each other.

Paisley: We need to, how about the student has to agree.

Bringing up the legality of the document seemed to surprise Brian and Paisley. They believed that student feedback could provide meaningful opportunities for student choice and agency in the development of IEPs. They were able to imagine beyond what currently exists as the legal requirements of the IEP. In that way, they extended IEPs from an issue of disability rights (an IEP as a document to uphold a disabled student's educational rights) to an application of disability justice (disabled students working with their teachers to write IEPs that create meaningful, accessible, and interdependent classrooms). Specifically they considered the role that interdependence may play in the process of writing and implementing IEPs so that students received adequate support in school. The discussion about IEPs became particularly important to

Paisley because it was part of her rights as a disabled student and so she suggested a campaign, which could be used to make IEPs more student-centered and grounded in disability justice.

In his interview after the unit was over, Brian returned to the idea that IEPs could be used as important tools for interdependence among students. He said, “That is interdependence because each person can use their own because everyone can use their IEP to support each other.” Brian went beyond thinking about IEPs as addressing a single student’s educational needs by considering how IEPs could be used to promote interdependence. This conceptualization of IEPs took IEPs beyond the realm of legal compliance to facilitate students’ understanding and expression of their access needs. Brian further articulated the ways that IEPs could be used as was to foster interdependence between disabled students because they could be used to support one another.

The analysis thus far has primarily focused on Brian and Paisley given the ways in which Amelia was excluded from the conversation - and analysis of the group’s communication and functioning will be explored in the subsequent sections. In general, Brian and Paisley made sense of interdependence separate from Amelia. Brian and Paisley made sense of interdependence through their personal experiences of giving and receiving help, as well as IEPs as the documents designed to support students with disabilities in school. Amelia was excluded from their conversations, despite multiple adult prompts to include her. When adults were present, they typically engaged Amelia in parallel learning. When the SLP worked with Amelia, she reviewed SymbolStix images and asked Amelia to choose one as an example. Amelia cut out “Community leaders” to add as an example of Interdependence. She also cut out and added “Accessibility” and “Community.” While Amelia did not have an opportunity to expand on her contributions, her perspective provided additional ideas of what interdependence means in schools.

Furthermore, there are ways that Amelia's contributions provided additional insight to Brian and Paisley's discussions. For instance, together they may have illuminated the ways that schools could use the principle of interdependence by honoring disabled students as community leaders in creating accessible and inclusive classrooms through reciprocal support in IEP feedback and implementation.

Overall, the Interdependence group generally made sense of Interdependence individually and collectively through connections to their lived experiences and a more holistic approach to disability rights in school. Brian and Paisley discussed their personal experiences with Interdependence and found that there were parallels between the ways that disabled and nondisabled people may show interdependence in and outside of school. In school settings, they tended to think about IEPs and supporting one another's access needs as critical to interdependence. Although Paisley and Brian typically excluded Amelia's contributions, Amelia appeared to offer parallel contributions that centered accessibility and community as key features of Interdependence.

Embracing and Distancing Disability

Throughout the DJS unit, students expressed ways that they embraced and/or distanced themselves from disability identity based on their personal perspectives of disability, what it meant to have a disability in school, and stigmas associated with disability. Brian and Paisley talked about their disability identities and were curious to ask one another about their experiences, again, typically leaving Amelia out of the conversation. For instance, Brian was curious about Paisley's diagnoses and asked her about them on multiple days. One day amidst conversations about disabled artists, Brian asked Paisley, "Wait, you actually have autism and ADHD?" to which Paisley responded, "Yes, I have both." They then went back to discussing the

disabled artists' work. While this was a short interaction, it is an example of the ways that disability identity came up casually in conversation throughout the unit typically in relation to sharing about the experiences of the broader disabled community.

During a conversation about choosing meaningful tools and resources for disabled students in school, Brian and Paisley again discussed their connections to disability. In the following excerpt Paisley argued that choices are limited for people with disabilities and while Brian agreed, he did not personally connect to the conversation because he did not identify as disabled.

Paisley: If we don't have support then we are lim— then our choices are limited. If we don't have support, then our choices are limited right?

Brian: Especially for disabled people.

Paisley: This is, this is, this is, like this, this was kind of like people with autism because Autistic people are only supported if they earn it.

In this excerpt, Paisley used the terms “we” and “our” to indicate her identification and connection with the broader disability community. Brian, on the other hand, distanced himself by using the third person, “for disabled people.” This dialogue was also an example of the ways that disability identity, community, and access were discussed in tandem. By including herself as part of the disability community, Paisley was personally identifying as disabled and the common experiences of disabled people having to fight for support and choices in how to get that support. In the groups' final artwork, Paisley included panels of disabled people protesting for their rights alongside individualized access and support needs, indicating a connection between disability identity, community advocacy, and interdependence.

As the project progressed, Brian and Paisley deepened their conversations. In one exchange, they opened up about their experiences being diagnosed with autism. After Brian asked about when Paisley was diagnosed with disabilities, he pivoted to his own diagnosis and

commentary about why he believed it was a misdiagnosis. Paisley responded with questions about the ways that he distanced disability and he justified his thoughts by calling on the authority of his mother's medical profession.

Brian: Paisley, do you remember when you are diagnosed with, with autism?

Paisley: I think second grade.

Brian: And when were you diagnosed with ADHD? Because I know you have both of them, right?

Paisley: I think, my guess, I'm not exactly sure, but around the same time, my guess, but I think it might, I guess, but if I remember correctly, I believe it was around the same time. Although I'm not 100% sure.

Brian: About me, I was diagnosed as autistic but I'm actually not.

Paisley: How?

Brian: I don't know. But I'm actually not autistic. My, my mom was one of the, my mom was one of the top doctors in my home country.

Paisley: How do you know you're not?

Brian: My mom, my mom think I'm not because my brain starts developed very fast. It's really when I started middle school. And autistic people won't be able to do that.

In this interaction, Brian was curious about Paisley's autism while remaining absolute in his assertion that he was not autistic. While Paisley embraced the diagnostic process as part of her disability experience, Brian distanced himself by framing an autism diagnosis as negative. Believing he was misdiagnosed would not necessarily insinuate autism was bad. In part, he attributed the misdiagnosis to a cultural difference between his mom's training as a doctor in China and the way he was diagnosed as autistic in the United States. However, he then juxtaposed autism with brain development that was "very fast" and saying "autistic people won't be able to do that." In doing so, he positioned autism as inferior and appeared to want to distance himself from that association. As with other components of the project, Brian and Paisley primarily excluded Amelia from these conversations.

Embracing and distancing disability appeared throughout the group's explicit conversations and implicit messages and behaviors. Embracing disability included both connecting to the disability community, as well as identifying with a disability classification

and/or diagnosis. Distancing disability was a move to dissociate from the disability community and refute classification and/or diagnosis. In this analysis, Amelia's exclusion also contributed to distancing disability. On two separate occasions, Brian referred to working with Amelia as an "ordeal." In the next section, navigating inclusive collaboration, I expand on the ways that the group continued to negotiate access and inclusion based on their perceptions of disability and collective learning about one another's access needs.

Navigating Inclusive Collaboration

While the DJS unit was designed to create spaces of inclusive collaboration, the Interdependence group demonstrated the many ways that navigating inclusive collaboration also meant the need to regularly negotiate access. Although the group made sense of Interdependence as the many ways that disabled people support one another, they had difficulty practicing that in their group work. The Interdependence group dynamics provided important insights into the challenges of negotiating access across varying student communication styles and access needs. In this analysis, I present three episodes that demonstrated a simultaneous opportunity to open access alongside exclusion and dismissal of access. First, I discuss how Brian's curiosity in learning about different access needs came into conflict with his desire to distance from having access needs, which may have contributed to his difficulty in working across his groups' varying access needs. Then, I explore how group materials and discussion styles resulted in parallel learning, which created learning that was both more accessible and more exclusionary. Finally, I present an episode in which the group used a variety of communication techniques to dialogue about their ideas, but challenges arose when they made assumptions about the meaning of that communication as opposed to asking one another to expand on their ideas. It is important to note that adults played a key role in each of the episodes. Although the adults present were often

attempting to interrupt problematic patterns, they at times participated in exclusionary learning and challenges continued to emerge amongst the group. Each episode demonstrates the critical ways that access and inclusion are an ongoing process that require collective action by students and educators alike.

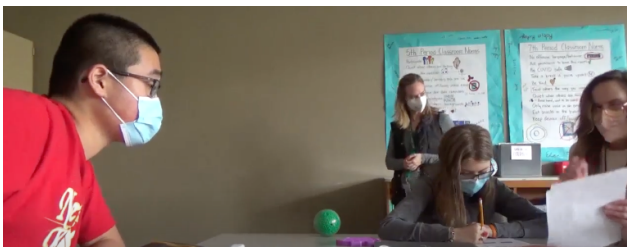
Curiosity about access needs

To begin, Brian appeared to be curious about access as an important component of Interdependence and asked about the different ways that disabled students had their access needs met at school. During the first day of brainstorming the meaning of Interdependence in school, Brian talked to an instructional assistant about how to meet the needs of students with disabilities in school. Brian noticed that the plain language definition of Interdependence included multiple forms of support to ensure that disabled people have choice and agency. He questioned, “Was this IEP and social skills class the only supports in this school or are there others of them as well?” He therefore only wanted to use IEPs as an example of Interdependence in school if they included multiple ways to get support in school. Although he inquired about whether there were multiple forms of support, he was quick to explain that he himself was not disabled, but he did want to use those forms of support. “Persons who have disability must be able to choose the types of support they need and want. Though I am not a person with a disability, but I just want to use this [part of the definition].” Brian’s curiosity appeared to demonstrate that he valued access and agency. However, his actions and interactions in group work continued to perpetuate ableist conceptions of having additional access needs.

While Brian was curious about access needs, he also distanced himself from the idea of having or engaging with additional access needs. This specifically came up when working with

Amelia, who used more access tools than Brian and Paisley. After asking the instructional assistant about various supports in school, Brian noticed that the SLP using a SymbolStix worksheet with Amelia. He became interested in the tool and asked the SLP about it (see Figure 20). However, when he was offered the opportunity to look at and use the picture symbols, he turned them away, which dismissed an opportunity to engage with Amelia and use tools that could have made group work more collaborative instead of teacher directed (see Figure 21).

Figure 20 *Brian leans over to look at SymbolStix worksheet.*



Brian: Can I have [the SymbolStix worksheet] or is it specifically designed for her?
SLP (she slides it to him on the table): It's designed for anyone who needs it
Brian (pushing the paper away): No, I don't need to.

Figure 21 *Brian pushes away the SymbolStix worksheet.*



SLP: You can look anything up. I use it.
Brian: No, I don't need it.

Initially Brian expressed interest in the tools that Amelia was using, but then dismissed the tool when the SLP said that “It’s designed for anyone who needs it.” It may be that Brian associated the term *needs* with disabilities, which could have contributed to his desire to distance himself

from needing the additional tools. However, by negatively associating the SymbolStix with need, Brian also restricted his own ability to collaborate with Amelia.

Accessing group materials and discussion

As the unit progressed, Brian, Paisley, and Amelia demonstrated the ways that negotiating access was influenced by individual choice and agency as well as group connection and collaboration. This was particularly relevant in the ways that Brian and Paisley excluded and engaged Amelia at different moments in time while explicitly talking about meeting access needs. In the following episode, the Interdependence group navigated access while brainstorming which forms of artwork they wanted to use for their final project. They had four pieces of artwork by disabled artworks spread out on their table; a comic about Japanese immigrant families with students in special education (Figure 22), digital visual artwork of two disabled people supporting one another (Figure 23), a photograph of five disabled friends hanging (Figure 24), and a social media post of an exhibit about ableism in museums (Figure 25). Using the images as inspiration, students were asked to discuss the artwork and if/how they'd want to complete similar artwork for their DJS projects (see Figure 26).

Figure 22 Manga about Japanese immigrant families with disabled children by disabled artist Saya Omori.



Note. Image description: A page from a manga about Japanese immigrant families with disabled children by disabled artist Saya Omori. Four Japanese immigrant moms are illustrated with short profiles in Japanese.

Figure 23 Disabled artwork illustrated by Dana Chan for *Disabled And Here*.



Figure 24 Disabled artwork from *Disabled And Here*, photo by Tojo Andrianarivo.

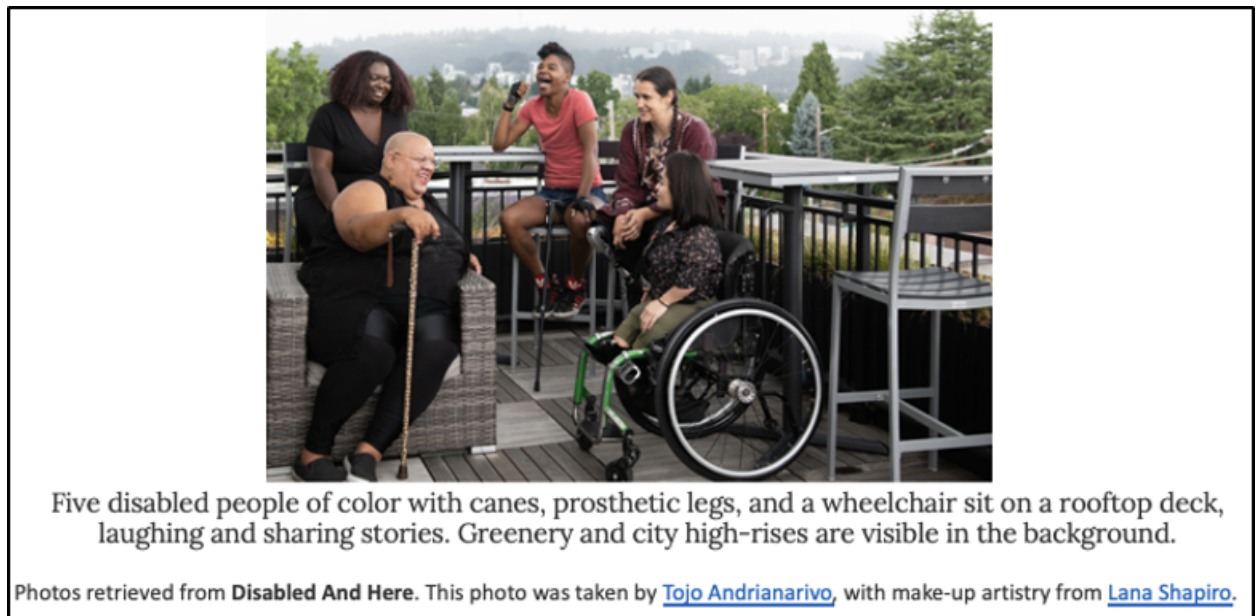


Figure 25 Disabled artwork from #CripRituals.



Figure 26 Group worksheet used while looking through disabled artwork.

PHOTOGRAPHY I liked... This made me think about... I would like to use this type of artwork in my project. 👍 YES! 👉 MAYBE 👎 NO	COMICS I liked... This made me think about... I would like to use this type of artwork in my project. 👍 YES! 👉 MAYBE 👎 NO
VISUAL ARTS I liked... This made me think about... I would like to use this type of artwork in my project. 👍 YES! 👉 MAYBE 👎 NO	SOCIAL MEDIA* I liked... This made me think about... I would like to use this type of artwork in my project. 👍 YES! 👉 MAYBE 👎 NO

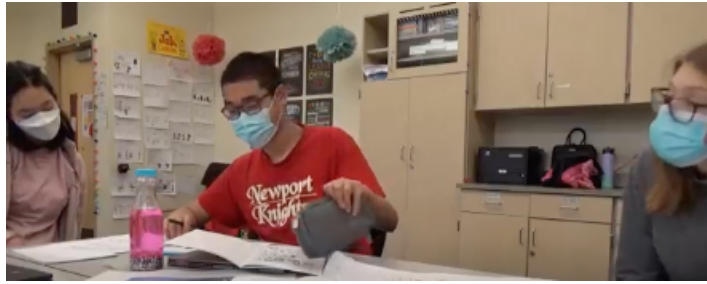
Navigating access in this activity was influenced by how the group decided to complete the worksheet. At the beginning of the activity Brian took a “divide and conquer” approach to the activity, which did not necessarily take the groups’ individual or collective access needs into account. Brian held the activity worksheet and opened the conversation by saying, “Alright, so ladies, first I’ll do two of these and one of you, each one of you do one,” In this opening Brian included both Amelia and Paisley (“ladies”), however, his approach to breaking the worksheet into individual roles perhaps overly focused on efficiency and work completion and deterred the group from working together. I intervened to reorient the students to the collaborative nature of the task and to address the issue that Amelia was physically excluded at the opposite end of the table. I suggested, “Well, we can do them all together. So maybe invite Amelia over too?” Brian and Paisley took up this recommendation for inclusiveness and collaboration in different ways. Brian took my prompt and extended an invitation directly to Amelia, “Amelia, can you move here so we can see them more easily?” Paisley responded to this teacher reorientation by repositioning herself next to Brian instead of across from him. She narrated her action as she moved, “Yeah, I’m [moving] over because, yeah, because the other, I was facing the other way.” Paisley’s move served to create a shared working space and more collaborative process with Brian. This move also modeled how sitting together and facing the same direction could help facilitate group dialogue.

Amelia did not respond to Brian nor Paisley and didn’t move. While it was unclear why she did not move, in this analysis I frame her decision as an agentic act. It may be possible that she was demonstrating agency in response to the exclusion that she experienced in her group on previous days. I invited her over again in an attempt to facilitate inclusion in the group process

focused on everyone's ability to view and discuss the disabled artwork together. I said, "Amelia, do you want to go on the other side of Brian and that way you can see the pictures? Here Paisley, we can move your chair around if that's helpful." After this explicit prompt from a teacher, Amelia moved to the other side of the table and sat next to Brian.

Although the group now had a shared work space, they continued to have difficulty navigating accessible and inclusive group dialogue. While working Brian's initial plan of working independently on distinct portions of the worksheet shifted with teacher prompting, he then worked closely with Paisley while still excluding Amelia. When Amelia sat next to Brian he continued to lean towards Paisley (see Figure 27), which appeared to exclude Amelia. At one point, Amelia indicated a desire to see the pictures that Paisley and Brian were looking at by saying, "Pictures of." However, Brian was faced away from Amelia in such a way that his body and materials served as a barrier to Amelia's group participation and he did not hear and/or respond to her request. In this context, Brian began to brainstorm project ideas with Paisley, "Photography maybe?" Paisley pointed to the photograph of five disabled friends and said, "Something like this, yeah?" Amelia tried to add, "Do Blooket." It was unclear whether she wanted to create a Blooket about Interdependence or play Blooket instead of participating in the current activity. Her contribution "Do Blooket," could be interpreted as a move towards agency in the activity, either by participating with a suggestion for the project, or the decision to request an alternate activity. Regardless, Brian and Paisley did not look up or respond. In ignoring Amelia's verbal participation, Brian and Paisley continued to engage in exclusionary behaviors.

Figure 27 *Brian leans towards Paisley physically excluding Amelia.*



When adults noticed exclusionary behaviors in the class, they attempted to interrupt them and redirect the group towards access and inclusion. As the SLP circled the room, she noticed that it appeared Amelia was being excluded from the activity. As she walked past the group, Brian was asking for Paisley's feedback on the worksheet questions, but did not ask for Amelia's. The SLP attempted to facilitate accessible and inclusive collaboration by prompting the group to make sure that all group members could see the materials and all group members were engaged in the discussion. The SLP suggested, "Can you show the picture to Amelia too? It might be hard for her to see when it's all the way over there." Brian picked up the picture and passed it behind him to Amelia without looking her way. Passing the picture to her without turning to engage her continued to act as a method of exclusion as it discussed her participation in collective viewing and discussion. Brian appeared to divide the task in such a way that he worked with Paisley and Amelia worked with an adult. The SLP turned to Amelia and said, "Take a look at this picture. Do you like this page, yes or no?" Amelia answered, "No." Brian glanced over his shoulder and rolled his eyes and turned back to the worksheet. Brian turned to Paisley and waved his pen between the two of them, "Oh no, this project will be an ordeal for us if it's really only us two." His comment dismissed the ways that Amelia engaged in conversation and discounted her participation. Brian picked up the picture of the museum exhibit and passed it behind him to the SLP so she could work parallel with Amelia. It appeared that he considered it

an adult's job to meet Amelia's access needs, as opposed to students having roles in meeting one another's access needs.

Ironically, as they looked through the artwork, Brian and Paisley discussed the importance of disabled people supporting one another. They appeared to recognize the importance of interdependence in the disability community in general, while actively distancing and excluding Amelia from participation in their group work. Turning away from Amelia and holding the digital artwork, Brian asked Paisley "What do you think this means?" Paisley responded, "I think, you know, that even, that even disabled people can help each other." Brian nodded and began to write, "Yes, this makes me think about how even disabled people can use their strengths to make up for each other's weaknesses." By changing Paisley's use of "help each other" to "use their strengths to make up for each other's weaknesses," Brian may have been making an implicit judgment on how disabled people's behaviors and worth existed in comparison to one another and nondisabled norms. Although Paisley and Brian were engaged in a conversation about the importance of interdependence and supporting one another in the disabled community, their actions excluding Amelia were incongruent with their discussion.

However, later in the period, when the SLP was no longer present, Brian's actions shifted and he appeared to attempt to meet Amelia's access needs and communication techniques. When the SLP walked away to help another group, Brian passed the digital artwork to Amelia and faced her asking, "This one? Do you want to see this?" In eight days, this was the first time that Brian engaged Amelia without being prompted by an adult. Amelia read the visual description to Brian, "An Asian person carefully applies soothing ointment onto the naked back of a Black person, whose eyes are closed serenely. The Asian person has their tongue out in concentration and sports a blonde undercut and hearing aid. The Black person has a fluffy afro and dark blue

glasses. A counter with an open jar of ointment is in the foreground while an open medicine cabinet with prescriptions, tinctures, and ointments can be seen in the background.” Brian looked down at the page with Amelia and listened as she read. When she finished reading, he responded with “Let’s go!,” which was something that he did regularly to celebrate a classmate’s contribution. He began to ask her another question when the teacher announced there were only 10 minutes of class left. With so little time in the period, he turned away from Amelia again. He turned back to Paisley and they did not include Amelia in any viewing or discussion after that. Amelia asked to do an alternate activity three more times over the course of the last 10 minutes of class. Although Brian had begun making moves to include Amelia, when it came down to a time constraint, he reverted back to a work production process he may have believed was more efficient than navigating the group's various access needs.

Access and communication

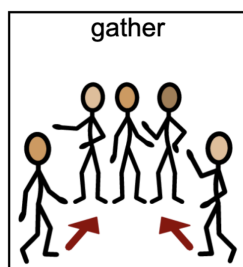
Another part of navigating inclusive collaborations was the ways that group work required multiple points of access and a range of communication methods. Analysis of the Interdependence group revealed the ways that activities required accessible materials as well as methods to share students’ meaning making across communication techniques. Even when all group members were provided physical access to the materials and discussion, at times there were still communication breakdowns in the ways that they interpreted one another’s contributions. As the group began designing their artwork, Brian and Paisley continued to work separately from Amelia. Adina noticed and reminded them to include Amelia. In the following excerpt, Adina pointed out that Amelia used picture symbols to make a suggestion for their poster and Paisley wanted to understand the example. However, instead of asking Amelia what

she meant, Paisley interpreted Amelia's contribution based on what it meant to her. While this was a way for Paisley to build on Amelia's ideas, it denied Amelia's access to the conversation and agency to define her own contributions.

Adina: Let's hear from Amelia. Hey, Amelia, what do you want people to learn about interdependence?...

Amelia (to Adina): Gather (Amelia points to the picture symbol for gather, see Figure 28)

Figure 28 *SymbolStix image for "gather."*



Adina: Amelia had a really great contribution... Amelia picked "gather."

Paisley: Gather together to advocate for more, for a bill for, advocates for a bill, to advocate for, for a, for government support to be passed, eh?

Adina: That's one way. Ask Amelia. Gather where?

Paisley: Gather in public

Adina: Ask Amelia

Paisley: Maybe gathering public to raise awareness I guess. Amelia, gathering, is the gathering to push for the bill, or for government, for government support of disabled people, for example they could protest about what what isn't, how it's lacking? For example people could protest about what's lacking...I think that this protest protest. That is something that people protest for sure because that is basically all that they want.

While Paisley was thoughtful in the ways that she engaged with Amelia's ideas, she did not allow Amelia fully explain her thinking. Even when Adina prompted her twice to ask Amelia, Paisley did not ask directly nor provided wait time to hear what Amelia thought about "gather" in relation to Interdependence. In this instance, negotiating access went beyond simply allowing Amelia to participate in the activity, but really creating group dynamics that invited and honored each participant's contributions. Paisley did later incorporate Amelia's idea by drawing "gather" as one of the comic panels, but it was as she interpreted it as a protest for disability rights,

whereas Amelia may have been referring to “gather” as a “support group,” which was another picture symbol that she chose as an example for interdependence.

Altogether, the Interdependence group demonstrated how navigating inclusive collaboration required getting to know each other and one another’s access needs, as well as learning and negotiating a range of practices to meet their own and each other’s access needs. While curiosity appeared to open opportunities to talk about access needs, it was not enough to implement group practices that honored everyone’s access needs. Furthermore, it was necessary to negotiate a variety of ways for students to access materials and discussions. In part, the materials and discussion methods could be revised as part of an interactive design process by the facilitators of the unit. However, through their interactions and group work style, the Interdependence group demonstrated that regardless of design (which was created specifically for these students and intended to be accessible), group members still required practice and skill building around ways to engage one another in meaningful ways that met their access needs and allowed for personal choice and agency. Finally, it was important to question what made an assignment or discussion accessible. Even in instances where a group member’s material access needs were being met, if they were not given space and time to explain their ideas, it felt like a surface level of accessibility that did not actually allow access to collective ideation and meaning-making.

Interdependence In and Through the Arts

While the Interdependence group encountered a variety of challenges while navigating inclusive collaboration, the artistic process appeared to support them in opening opportunities to negotiate access in new ways. Furthermore, their final artwork included ideas and artwork from

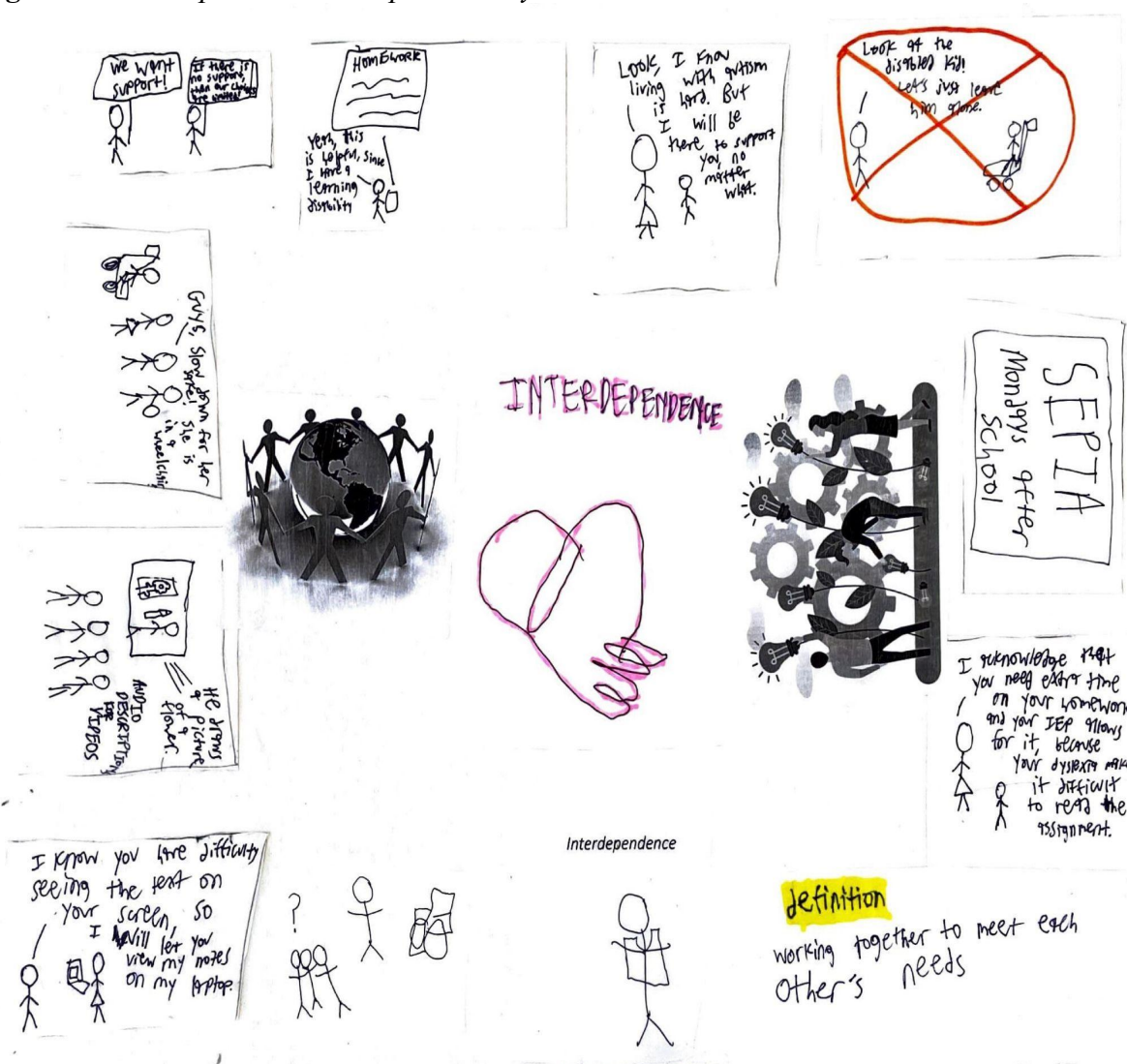
each of the group members that addressed a range of concepts from their individual and collective meaning-making of interdependence in education (see Figure 29).

Throughout the unit, the Interdependence group worked to negotiate access by considering both how each group member would contribute to the poster, as well as how they talked about their project together. It appeared that making art was an important component of negotiating access because it opened more possibilities for access and meaning making. For instance, each group member chose to contribute to the poster in ways that felt most interesting and accessible to them: Paisley drew comic panels, Amelia used an iPad to illustrate her ideas, and Brian chose digital images. As they compiled their contributions, they worked together more closely than they had throughout the rest of the unit. In the first six days of working together (primarily discussion-based with group worksheets and posters), Brian and Paisley only engaged with Amelia three times without being prompted by an adult. All other group conversations were prompted and/or facilitated by an adult. However, on the two days that the group was actively completing the arts-based portion of the project, Paisley and Brian more regularly invited Amelia into the creative process and recognized her contributions to the group. For instance, while placing her comic panels on the poster, Paisley intentionally left space for Amelia's illustrations to be centered on the poster. Brian worked with Amelia to ask what size she wanted her illustrations to be and then helped her print them on the classroom computer. Also, all three of the group members modge podged the comic panels, illustrations, and digital images onto the poster. None of them had used modge podge before so they worked together to learn the techniques that worked best and then shared them with each other. After the unit, Brian reflected, "We realized [Amelia's] strong points...like she she can read very well, and she can understand and she got a very good drawing... So later, we realized we probably couldn't have done it so

well without her. Didn't realize that until the final two weeks of the project, that is that is a little too late.” Brian was able to look back on the project and see that he and Paisley had not been inclusive throughout the project, and recognized the important role that Amelia played in the project. His statement “that is a little too late” could be interpreted as an understanding that the group could have benefitted from inclusive collaboration throughout the unit, not only in the arts portion. However, it also indicates the role that the arts process played in an explicit understanding and practice of honoring access and valuing disabled perspectives.

Based on their individual and collective meaning-making and artistic contributions, the group created a poster that embodied their sense of interdependence as a concept and practice. They titled their piece “How to Meet Needs and Disabilities.” In their artist statement, they explained, “To us, interdependence means people being supportive of each other, accessibility, community, everyone working together on pursuing one goal.” Through navigating and negotiating accessible and inclusive practices, they ultimately achieved their collective goal by supporting one another on the days that they were completing their art project. The group specifically highlighted, “Examples of this principle in school would be help from paraeducators and parents, IEP advocating for yourself and the needs of others. This shows interdependence because the needs of the students were met so they can help each other out on various things. These show students needs being met by the people in their lives...When people look at our artwork, we want them to think about the different ways needs for people with disabilities could be met and the importance of community leaders for interdependence.” Their artist statement encompassed components of each of the group member’s sense-making of interdependence (e.g., family assistance from Brian, IEPs from Paisley, and community leaders from Amelia) and compiled them into a synthesis of the group’s collective concept of Interdependence.

Figure 29 Interdependence Group Disability Justice in Schools artwork.



Note. Image description: The word “Interdependence” in the middle of a poster surrounded by two clipart images, a drawing of a heart with a hand, and 11 comic panels and the definition “Working together to meet each other’s needs.” The clipart image are stick figures holding hands around a globe and stick figures working together. The 11 comic panels, from top left moving around the poster clockwise, illustrate: disability rights protests, homework accommodations, family support, an end to making fun of disabled students, a school club for disabled students, a teacher recognizing IEP accommodations, a disabled student, a group of disabled students helping each other, friends sharing a laptop to access school work, audio descriptions, and friends including a wheelchair user in sports.

CHAPTER 4: RECOGNIZING WHOLENESS FOCAL GROUP

The Recognizing Wholeness group included Jazz, Hailey, Zàn Huā, and Blue. Sins Invalid (2019) explains the DJ principle of Recognizing Wholeness as, “Each person is full of history and life experience. Each person has an internal experience composed of our own thoughts, sensations, emotions, sexual fantasies, perceptions, and quirks. Disabled people are whole people” (p. 27). In this section I present profiles of the Recognizing Wholeness group members followed by an analysis of how the group collectively made sense of Recognizing Wholeness, how they embraced and distanced disability throughout the unit, how they navigated inclusive collaboration, and how the arts played a key role in the ways that they processed and expressed their ideas.

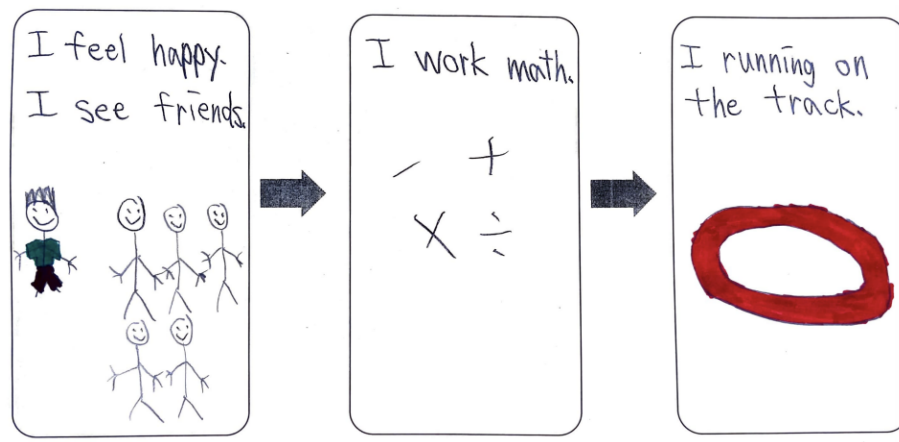
Recognizing Wholeness Student Profiles

Jazz

I like to play iPad. I like to play computer. I’m 16 years old. I like to play toys. - *Jazz (age 16), Disability Justice in Schools Showcase artist statement*

Jazz identified as an Autistic Chinese American student and spoke Mandarin at home. He used picture symbols, writing, multiple choice, and verbal language to communicate. He communicated these ways in both English and Mandarin. When asked if he identified as disabled, he wrote, “yes, happy.” When thinking about his school experiences, he focused on what he enjoyed at school. On his Educational Journey Map he wrote, “I feel happy. I see friends. I work math. I running on track” (see Figure 30).

Figure 30 *Jazz's Educational Journey Map.*



Note. Image description: Jazz's Educational Journey map in a graphic organizer with three squares. In the first Jazz drew a group of stick figure friends and wrote, "I feel happy. I see friends." In the second square Jazz wrote "I work math" and mathematical symbols. In the third square Jazz wrote "I running on the track" and drew a circle track.

In his Celebrating Me Collage, Jazz included a range of color textured papers and stickers (see Figure 31). In his Celebrating Me Collage exit ticket, he used multiple choice answers and circled that he would feel celebrated in school if there was more representation of people like him.

Figure 31 *Jazz's Celebrating Me Collage.*



Note. Image description: A collage of different colored and textured papers. Four stickers are layered on top; one of a rainbow mustache, one of the words “Come Together” in rainbow letters, a yellow smiley face, and a rainbow butterfly.

Throughout the unit Jazz engaged with his group using echolalia, picture symbols, and verbal speech. He would often get up in the middle of class to move around the room and make vocalizations. He read aloud image descriptions for the group and used the picture symbol for “I love you” as an example of Recognizing Wholeness.

贊花 (Zàn Huā)

I like to sing and dance. I have two older brothers. I like musical theater. - 贊花 Zàn Huā (age 17), *Disability Justice in Schools Showcase artist statement*

贊花 (hereafter referred to by the English spelling of his name, Zàn Huā) identified as an Autistic Asian American student and said he felt connected to the disability community because “I have a disability but it’s not shown.” He was close with his family and connected to his Chinese heritage. When suggesting pseudonyms, he wanted to represent his family by listing “1. 贊花: My Grandfather’s Name, Zàn Huā, 2. 歡美: My Grandmother’s Name, Huān Měi, 3. 王迺慧: My Aunt’s Name, Wáng Nǎi Huì.” Zàn Huā was appreciative of gender fluidity and he and I shared a love for Ru Paul’s Drag Race. Zàn Huā could name the queens’ looks from every season and often quizzed me on them. He particularly loved the reading challenges and Snatch Game in Drag Race. Like the queens, he proudly declared, “I’ve been roasting people since sixth grade.” He also often referenced vintage popular culture, like VHSs at Blockbuster, Steve Martin, and *Pink Panther*.

Zàn Huā’s Educational Journey Map focused on the ways that teachers’ and peers’

perceptions of his disability changed over time and how that impacted his school experience (see Figure 32). He began with feeling “nervous and sad” in early childhood “because I was Autistic, some of my teachers didn’t know that, and I get sent to the principal a lot.” He “got in trouble a lot” because of his disability. Zàn Huā then discussed how his behaviors changed over time with more control and maturity, but continued to identify with disability even though “some people assumed that I don’t have a disability because I don’t look or act ‘disabled’.”

Figure 32 *Zàn Huā 's Education Journey Map.*

I started school In Kalamazoo Michigan when I was 3 years old. I felt nervous and sad, I got in trouble a lot in Pre – School and Elementary School because I was Autistic, some of my teachers didn’t know that, and I get sent to the principal a lot.

During middle school and high school, I matured a lot and can control my Autism. While in high school, from 9 – 12, people assumed that I was a senior for every grade because they said that I was, “Mature for my grade”. Also, some people assumed that I don’t have a disability because I don’t look or act “disabled”.

Note. Image description: Zàn Huā’s typed Educational Journey Map reads, “I started school in Kalamazoo Michigan when I was 3 years old. I felt nervous and sad, I got in trouble a lot in pre-school and elementary school because I was Autistic, some of my teachers didn’t know that, and I get sent to the principle a lot. During middle school and high school, I matured a lot and can control my Autism. While in high school, from 9-12, people assumed that I was a senior for

every grade because they said that I was, ‘Mature for my grade’. Also, some people assumed that I don’t have a disability because I don’t look or act ‘disabled’.”

Although he was absent on the days that we collaged Celebrating Me Collages, he completed an exit ticket about his interests and what would make him feel most celebrated at school. He wrote that an important part of himself was that “I like to go to places with Disney, mostly Cali and Florida.” When asked how schools could celebrate him, he answered, “By not stereotyping disabilities. They’re not the same.” He was acutely aware of the stigma associated with disabilities and how those impacted his personal experiences and those of other disabled students.

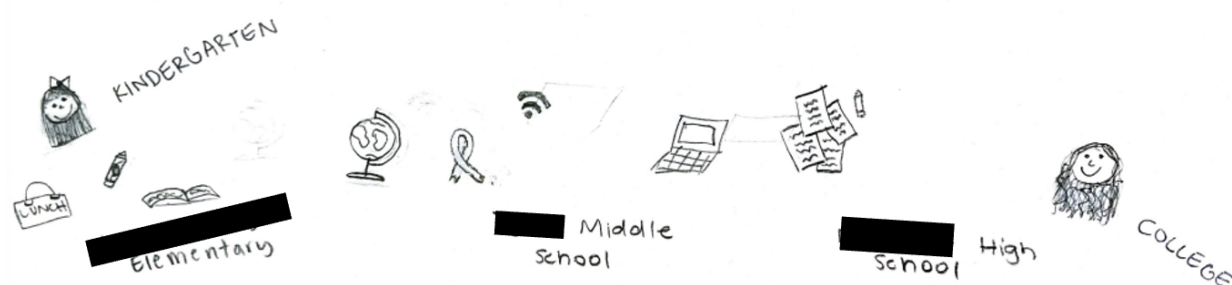
Throughout the unit, Zàn Huā was interested in getting to know his group mates beyond the project. He often asked questions about their lives outside of school and shared his specific interests as well. He was also quick with words and said that he liked to “roast” other students.

Hailey

I have a cat, I swim, and play tennis, and have a twin brother. I also enjoy doing crafts and art projects like this. - *Hailey (age 15), Disability Justice in Schools Showcase artist statement*

Hailey identified as a white, nondisabled cancer survivor. Although she identified as nondisabled, she had a 504 and said she felt “connected [to the disability community] through being a social/peer coach in this class and also interacting with people, anywhere, who may have a disability.” In her Educational Journey Map, she highlighted parts of her school experience that were particularly important to her (see Figure 33). In her middle school years she included a cancer awareness ribbon to illustrate her experience having cancer, as well as a laptop and internet signal icon to symbolize the move to online learning during the COVID-19 quarantine period. She also included her future educational dreams of going to college.

Figure 33 Hailey's Educational Journey Map.



Note. Image description: From left to right are the words Elementary, Middle School, High School, College below images illustrating what happened in each of those time periods. Above “Elementary” are drawings of a smiley face with long hair and a bow, a lunchbox, a crayon, a book, and the word “Kindergarten.” Above “Middle School” are drawings of a globe, a cancer awareness ribbon, an internet signal icon, and laptop. Above “High School” are drawings of a pile of papers and a pencil. Next to “College” is a drawing of a smiley face with long hair.

In her Celebrating Me Collage, Hailey included pictures of places, animals, and plants that were important to her (see Figure 34). She said, “I would like schools to celebrate me for who I am, so I don't feel like I have to change anything about me.” She added, “One part is the picture of a cat. This is important to me because I have a pet cat and I spend lots of time with her.” She also talked about her cat during class and used that you connect to other students who had pets they were close to.

Figure 34 *Hailey's Celebrating Me Collage.*



Note. Image description: Seven images cut out of magazines and one cut out of the word “Hawai’i” are collaged on a green piece of paper. The seven images include a flower, a sunset scene, a cat, houseplants, a hand reaching out to an envelope with hearts, a beach scene, and a desert mountain scene.

Hailey saw disability as an asset and said, “I think [having a disability] can be a positive thing because it can make people unique. It can set you apart from people, make them unique, empathetic, and give you a different outlook on things.” Throughout the unit, Hailey continuously engaged and asked for feedback from her disabled peers. Hailey was often finding connections between herself and her classmates as a way to get to know each other and work together. She used these connections as a way to build community in her group.

Blue

I like video games. I have a cat. I have ASD. I am agender. I am very emotional and take things personally. I have ADHD and OCD. - *Blue (age 15), Disability Justice in Schools Showcase artist statement*

Blue identified as a first-generation Autistic agender Asian student with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), verbal tics, and depression. Their parents were Indian immigrants and their family spoke Telugu at home. Blue was proud of their disability and racial-ethnic identities and linguistic practices. They also talked openly about exploring their gender expression and shared that they could relate to Lydia XZ Brown as an agender Asian Autistic person. They said, “It’s all part of me...they’re part of my experiences and it’s been a part of my life. I’ve had to experience it, so I don’t think I’ll be who I am today without them.”

Blue’s Educational Journey Map primarily reflected the ableism that they experienced at school. During the activity access check, they requested to verbally process their Educational Journey Map with me. Therefore, I sat with Blue and took notes while they spoke. Blue shared that it was not typical to have their access needs met at school because “I feel like school has never really accommodated me.” They experienced school as distressing and scary. They began special education services upon being diagnosed with OCD in 2nd grade, and had intensive therapy and switched schools 4 times. Later in their schooling they described themselves as a “procrastinator” and “perfectionist.” They said that middle school was especially “terrible” because they developed verbal tics. They said that their disabilities made it socially and academically difficult at school, “Sometimes I feel like a spectator....I get scared of school work. I feel like school is hard and scary and I don’t know why...it’s hard to make friends... In high school I developed depression. It’s not really diagnosed, but I know that I have it [because I have suicidal ideation].” Blue was particularly frustrated when they tried to talk about depression at

school because “I thought [going to the counselor] would help, but they just said ‘Go home.’” All of Blue’s experiences appeared to be indicative of the entrenched ableism in schools, and a lack of attention to their personal access needs.

In contrast to their Educational Journey Map, the Celebrating Me Collage was Blue’s favorite activity because “I got to choose what I wanted to represent me.” They covered their Celebrating Me Collage with Pride stickers and a picture of a cat (see Figure 35). They said that they wanted to be celebrated by having access to things that brought them joy like cats and stickers.

Figure 35 *Blue's Celebrating Me Collage.*



Note. Image description: Blue’s Celebrating Me Collage include a collection of rainbow stickers, a picture of cats, and two stickers with the acronym “LGBT” for their Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender community.

While Blue talked about the importance of learning about disabilities to shift people’s ableist behaviors, they weren’t entirely optimistic. They said, “Because like, if we only learn about it, and we don't know how to help, it's just like, we're also still bystanders. But instead of

ignorant bystanders. We're just educated bystanders...We know if we have the knowledge where we don't know how to use it. Knowledge isn't as useful sometimes.” They believed that we needed to not only talk about disability identity and history, but also model and teach how disabled and nondisabled people could use that knowledge to make change.

They were particularly interested in intergenerational learning within the disability community. As the opening quote of this dissertation stated, Blue was focused on disability community and making the world a better place. Disabled teachers and students working together was an important component of the unit to Blue. They said that it made a big difference because “if someone without disabilities teaches this unit, it actually feels different. I don't know how to describe it, but it feels kind of wrong. I don't know. I just feel like it feels better for disabled students and other people, like if a disabled person is teaching it...It's easier for them to connect with others about it.” They added that if they were to change the unit at all they would invite disabled activists to serve as mentors in modeling “how to help support the movement and how to become a part of it.” Having experienced ableism across school settings, Blue seemed to find joy and excitement in connecting with and uplifting disability community to support one another through and ultimately change the current conditions.

Recognizing Wholeness Group Findings

After engaging in the Educational Journey Map and Celebrating Me Collage activities, and participating in the Disability Justice Principles Gallery Walk, Hailey, Jazz, Zàn Huā, and Blue chose to explore the Disability Justice principle of Recognizing Wholeness. In the gallery walk, Hailey and Zàn Huā had written a comment on the Recognizing Wholeness poster. Hailey wrote on a post-it that “an example of recognizing wholeness could be including those who are

disabled in activities that people not disabled participate in. Inclusion is very important!” Zàn Huā wrote, “It is important to embrace our disabilities, even if we don’t have one.” Although Blue and Jazz did not write comments on Recognizing Wholeness during the gallery walk, it was one of their top choices to learn more about through the unit. After choosing the DJ principle of Recognizing Wholeness, the students moved to a table group together and worked together on the DJS art project.

In this analysis, I focus on the ways that the Recognizing Wholeness group: (1) made sense of Recognizing Wholeness, (2) embraced disability and/or distanced themselves from disability, (3) navigated inclusive collaboration, and (4) represented Recognizing Wholeness in and through the artistic process. For each of the themes, I provide an overview of the theme across the unit and then hone in on specific episodes to develop a more nuanced understanding.

Making Sense of Recognizing Wholeness

This group made sense of Recognizing Wholeness in school through a shared desire to create a non-judgmental school environment. As the group came up with examples and nonexamples of Recognizing Wholeness, they used various modes of access including writing and speaking, talking in partners, and talking as a group. Their examples of Recognizing Wholeness tended to be more general, while their non-examples were more personalized. In school they named Students Educating Peers in Autism Acceptance (SEPIA) and student interviews in the school newspaper as ways to recognize wholeness in school. During the conversation, the group asked Jazz if there were SymbolStix examples to share, and Jazz shared his examples by pointing to the SymbolStix images for “online community” and “include.” While the group named a variety of examples that existed hypothetically, no one in the group shared examples of personally experiencing them.

For personalized examples, for the most part they shared when they did not experience a sense of wholeness. Blue and Zàn Huā shared non-examples related to specific aspects of their identity, specifically race and disability. Zàn Huā discussed his experience of being targeted based on his Asian identity and Blue shared experiences of feeling unsupported in school based on his disability.

Zàn Huā's non-example of Recognizing Wholeness was contextualized by the social, cultural, historical and political conditions of COVID-19. He shared that he and his mom had been targeted based on racist and ableist reactions to COVID-19. He talked to Hailey about his experience:

You ever remember two years ago when the pandemic started and they starting blaming on a lot of Asian people... That actually happened to me once. I was in the park with my mother at the time. Someone said some very extremely racial slur to my mom and I was going to call the cops, but then that wasn't the right thing to do. So all we do was just walk away and we never saw them again.

Zàn Huā's non-example of Recognizing Wholeness demonstrated the intersectional injustice that he and his mom experienced in relation to race and disability. While he was comfortable sharing this non-example verbally, he was unsure of how to write it on the poster. He asked his group mate, Hailey, how she thought he could write it. She said, "You can sum up your experience, or you don't even have to make it personalized, or just say not mocking people or being rude or something along those lines." Her suggestions offered him the option to keep it specific to his experience or generalize it if he didn't want it to be so personalized. By offering those suggestions, Hailey honored Zàn Huā's experience without requiring that he share something so personal and painful beyond their small group. Together, they were making sense of Recognizing Wholeness through the non-example itself, as well as possible generalizations that could be made from Zàn Huā's individual experience.

In another instance, Blue shared a non-example of Recognizing Wholeness focused on ableism and their feelings in school. Blue began brainstorming by writing “How I feel at school” as a non-example of Recognizing Wholeness on their worksheet. When sharing with their group, Blue said, “I don’t feel like I matter, like I’m being judged.” Although Blue did not explicitly say that they were being judged based on their disability, their comment may be contextualized by their educational journey map, which indicated extensive ableist experiences of school and feeling judged by peers and adults because of their disability.

While making sense of Recognizing Wholeness, the group was intentional about coming up with both examples and non-examples. The non-examples were more personalized and related to specific events, interactions, and identity markers. It may be that students found it easier to identify moments of feeling that they were not being fully recognized as whole because they were concrete examples. Also, these feelings were in relation to other people who engaged in harmful assumptions and behaviors. Zàn Huā spoke to the racism that he and his mom experienced with a stranger, and Blue discussed the ableism that they experienced in school in general and specifically amongst their peers. In contrast to such non-examples, throughout the unit, it appeared that the group sought to approach one another in ways that would affirm each other’s wholeness through meaningful engagement and inclusive collaboration.

Embracing and Distancing Disability

The Recognizing Wholeness group primarily demonstrated the ways that they embraced and/or distanced themselves from disability based on their interactions with one another. In order to frame those interactions, it was important to consider the group member’s personal identifications with and perspectives on disability. Jazz, Zàn Huā, and Blue identified as disabled and, although Zàn Huā and Blue wrote about experiences of ableism in school in their

Educational Journey Maps, all three of the students believed that disability could be a positive trait. While Hailey identified as nondisabled, she was a cancer survivor and considered herself part of the disability community. She believed that disability could be positive because “It can set you apart from people, make them unique, empathetic, and give you a different outlook on things.” As a group, their individual experiences in relation to disability appeared to contribute to a sense of belonging, which they further extended to their group members. Furthermore, it appeared that having a foundation for valuing disabled experiences opened more opportunities to get to know each other based on other aspects of their interests and personalities, such as social media, loving cats, and joking around.

While there appeared to be a general acceptance of disability, a specific set of interactions that demonstrated embracing disability was engagement with multiple tools that enhanced the group’s ability to work together and meet one another’s access needs. For instance, Jazz often used SymbolStix to identify and share his ideas. On various occasions, Zàn Huā, Hailey, and Blue, all referenced the SymbolStix pages that Jazz was using. For instance, in a conversation about recognizing wholeness in school, Hailey gave the example of “instead of having the same standard classwork for everybody, maybe having different levels or tuning it to the student to fit their needs and abilities.” Jazz then participated in the conversation by pointing to his SymbolStix page and reading “I love you” (see Figure 36), “care” (see Figure 37), and “community leaders” (see Figure 38). After watching and listening to Jazz use the SymbolStix page, later in the period, when Hailey asked Jazz for his input, “Do you have anything on your sheet that relates to recognizing wholeness [in school]?” Recognizing and using Jazz’s access tools was a way to embrace disability and disabled ways of knowing. This extended to all of the group members who not only used multiple tools to engage Jazz in group work, but also one

another. They often checked in with each other to ask how the group wanted to complete a given task and gave one another options. Throughout the unit they used a variety of sensory tools, multiple methods to take photos for their project, Microsoft Teams Chat to communicate and gather the photos in one location, and different techniques to complete their artwork.

Figure 36 *SymbolStix image for "I love you."*

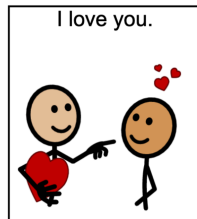


Figure 37 *SymbolStix image for "care."*

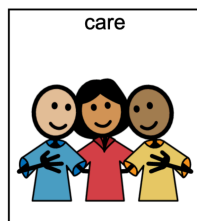


Figure 38 *SymbolStix image for "community leaders."*



While there was an overall sense of embracing disability in the Recognizing Wholeness group, there were also instances of group members distancing themselves from disability. Primarily, this came in the form of infantilizing Jazz, who was the group member with the most access needs. For instance, there was an occasion when Blue was using a f voice when talking to Jazz and another time that Zàn Huā explicitly said, “I’m just trying to baby him,” while showing Jazz how to modge podge images on their group poster. While Blue and Zàn Huā both

personally identified with disability, their treatment of Jazz in those moments demonstrated a level of distancing and othering disabilities with different and/or extensive access needs.

Infantilizing Jazz could have created a sort of “hierarchy” of participation and/or worth in the group. However, as these were relatively isolated instances, they did not appear to deteriorate the group process or lead to further exclusionary behaviors.

Overall, the Recognizing Wholeness group demonstrated the ways that they embraced and distanced themselves from disability not through explicit conversations about disability, but their treatment of one another. Generally, the group embraced the many ways that each person processed and expressed their ideas. They did so by eliciting one another’s preferences and engaging with one another using a variety of access tools as needed. While the group primarily demonstrated the ways that they embraced disability in and with one another, their group work was not without moments of distancing from disability. Instances that group members infantilized Jazz demonstrated a potential stratification of disabilities based on the levels of access needs that a person may have.

Navigating Inclusive Collaboration

One of the most notable features of the Recognizing Wholeness group was their moves towards accessible and inclusive collaboration. Specifically in this analysis, I identified differences in the ways that adults and students engaged each other in participation, and then focused on the inclusive practices that the students demonstrated through inviting participation, asking for group feedback, offering support, and sharing affirmations. I was particularly interested in the “what” and “how” of inclusive collaboration and the ways that the Recognizing Wholeness group used these inclusive practices facilitated access and a collective group process. In the first section on inviting participation, I provide contrasts between the ways that adults and

students engaged with one another. Moving away from an analysis on adult participation, in the subsequent sections on asking for group feedback and offering support, as well as sharing affirmation, I hone in on the ways that students modeled these behaviors and what we can learn from cross-disability solidarity in group work through their words and actions.

Inviting participation

While there were differences in adult and student engagement across the classes, the Recognizing Wholeness group had particularly interesting dynamics for analysis because one of their group members, Jazz, was assigned an individual instructional assistant, Amy. Therefore, Amy worked with the group almost daily and primarily supported Jazz. In open and in vivo coding, contrasts in student and adult group engagement came up often in this group. Amy often engaged Jazz through directives (e.g., “Read that,” “Come help the group”), which at times actually inhibited Jazz’s group participation. On the other hand, Jazz’s group members tended to engage him through invitations (e.g., “What do you think?” “Which should we use?”), which increased group participation, as well as student choice and agency. In analyzing the ways in which the group functioned, there were dramatic differences in the ways that adults and students managed access and inclusion.

Some of the clearest contrasts in adult and student engagement came up on the day that the group was exploring pieces of artwork from disability culture and began drafting which type of artwork each group may like to use for their final DJS artwork. The period began with each group looking through four pieces of artwork by disabled artists and discussing what the artwork made them think about, what they liked about the artwork, and if their group would be interested in using a similar artistic expression (e.g., photography, painting, comics) for their project. Throughout the period, Amy gave 26 directives to students, ranging in specificity, such as, “Zàn

Huā, can you write our names on the page for us?” and “Jazz, time to come help the group.”

Some directives occurred multiple times in a turn, like when Amy was prompting Jazz to read, “Read that please. Read it out loud, nice and loud and clear. Okay. Help. Read.” Directives to Jazz often blocked his access to group participation, specifically it took him away from working with his group and redirected him towards independent or adult-led activities.

At times adult directives and student invitations occurred simultaneously, providing a clear contrast in forms of group engagement. For instance, while the group was reviewing the various pieces of artwork, Hailey attempted to include Jazz in group discussions about the artwork while Amy suggested that he look at them separately. In the following excerpt, Amy’s directives appear to distance Jazz from meaningful participation while Hailey’s invitations appear to create opportunities for meaningful participation.

Amy: Help your group. Do you want to read? You read.

Hailey: Jazz, would you like to? Here—

Amy: Yeah, let him read something. Is there two of those the same?... Let's just let him read to keep him busy.

In this exchange, Amy began by asking Jazz if he wants to read, but then turned that into a directive to read. When Hailey restates it as a question again, Amy answers as opposed to letting Jazz answer for himself. She then asked if there were two images of the same artwork so that Jazz could look at the artwork separate from his group. She said, “Let’s just let him read to keep him busy.” In many cases, the role of an individualized instructional assistant is to support the student’s engagement with class materials and activities. Amy’s role as an instructional assistant may have required simplified directives and staying “busy” as a way to stay engaged, in this context it appeared to limit Jazz’s options for group participation. Since Jazz was not given time to respond to Hailey’s invitation, it’s unclear how he might have chosen to engage and participate without adult directives. Furthermore, by saying “Let’s just let him read to keep him

busy” to Hailey and Zàn Huā, Amy appears to divide the group and seems to imply that Jazz would read separately from his group. However, Hailey and Zàn Huā chose to listen to Jazz reading, which maintained meaningful group participation and collaboration.

As with the previous example, student engagement throughout this class session was marked by student invitations to participate. The members of Recognizing Wholeness demonstrated the importance of student choice and agency to open opportunities for meaningful group participation. Student invitations did not only appear to provide more choice and agency, but also increase access and group participation. For instance, Hailey asked her group members if they liked a piece of artwork (e.g., “Do you like the comic?”), what they liked about it (e.g., “What do you like about it?”), and if they were interested in doing that form of artwork (e.g., “Was that something that interests you?”). Also, each group member affirmed one another’s participation by stating when they agreed with one another and using terms like “great” and “cool.” Affirmations appeared to further encourage and facilitate collaboration.

As a way of analyzing and illustrating this distinction between adult and student engagement, Adina and I created found poems directly from the transcripts of this episode. The poems demonstrated how adult directives guided student work, but also limited student choice and participation, while student invitations provided student and group agency and affirmations.

Found Poem of Adult Directives.

Computer away.
 Do you like this picture? Do you like that? Do you like it?
 What does that mean? What does that mean? What is it?
 Let's just let him read to keep it busy.
 Time to come help the group.
 It is important. Important.
 Accept.
 Everyone. Everyone.
 For who? For who they are. Period.

Puzzle is closed.

Found Poem of Student Invitations.

Yeah, do you like
 comics would be fun to draw for our project?
 that's a maybe
 visual arts?
 definitely not
 photography?
 take photos
 so yes for photography
 So, what do you think
 about the idea?
 what we're going to need for our project?
 which should use?
 And, should we
 maybe get something sturdy?
 modge podge or just glue it on?
 You like it?
 Yeah, okay.
 Yeah, perfect.
 Yeah, no, I agree.
 This is great.
 This is a great idea.
 No limitation.
 Cool.

Group feedback and supports

Asking for group feedback and supports were also an important part of students' collaborative process. Asking for group feedback included presenting ideas to one another, sharing design options, and working towards consensus before moving forward. Offering support looked like taking on specific roles to complete the project, asking if a groupmate needed help, or exploring tools and learning how to use them together. The group primarily asked for feedback and suggestions about roles, the poster design, and how to use materials. For instance Zàn Huā asked for feedback and suggestions about his role, "I don't know how or what I should, what should I do with the group?" Zàn Huā, like each of his group members, was navigating his

role and participation. Instead of asking an adult, Zàn Huā addressed this question to his group, demonstrating how they worked together to establish roles in the collaborative process. Together the group also navigated how to design the poster. Before beginning to place photos, Hailey asked, “What do you think, Zàn Huā, Do you want them to be clustered around the heart or like everywhere around the heart?” Zàn Huā responded, “It can be like a combination. For example it can be around the heart, away from the heart” while pointing to the various locations they could place the photos. Hailey later extended the conversation to include Jazz in decisions about placement, “Where do you want to put it?” Jazz then pointed to where he believed the pictures should go. This process illustrated how the group valued each member’s perspectives. Along with feedback about roles and design, Recognizing Wholeness also gathered feedback about materials. Zàn Huā offered, “Which paint brush do you want to use? Use like big brushes or little brushes?” Gathering feedback on the materials to use was an important way to recognize that there were many ways to complete the task. This collection of Recognizing Wholeness’ interactions asking for feedback demonstrated a collective process in which members were receptive to one another’s preferences and recognized each other’s individual agency.

Affirmations

Another critical component of Recognizing Wholeness’ collaborative process was sharing words of affirmation. Sometimes words of affirmation were more general, like when Jazz said “Good” and “Yay” about the group’s work. Other times it was more specific, like when Zàn Huā complimented Hailey’s photos or when Hailey said to Jazz, “Perfect, just [paint modge podge] around the edge like that.” These affirmations demonstrated pride in their work and recognized the ways that each group member participated. Students also affirmed one another’s participation by expressing trust for each other’s decisions. Hailey did this by saying, “Choose

whatever you feel is best” and “[Put it] anywhere you’d like.” Jazz shared affirmations through phrases, such as “Yay,” “Helping,” “Sharing,” and “Good.” Trusting one another was an affirmation of each group member’s ideas and showed the importance of their individual contributions, choice, and voice.

Overall, the Recognizing Wholeness group illustrated a variety of ways youth created disability community through inclusive collaboration. They opened access and invited one another into the collective process. This was in stark contrast to the ways that adult directives closed access to group participation at times. Additionally, the group demonstrated how inclusive collaboration required group feedback, support, and affirmations. Through each of these interactions, the group was modeling how to honor and value one another’s perspectives and participation. Although inclusive collaboration was not without challenges, it required the group to regularly assess and shift the ways that they engaged one another to promote collective access.

Recognizing Wholeness In and Through the Arts

While the Recognizing Wholeness group was attentive to varying access needs throughout the unit, the arts process appeared to afford especially critical methods of access. Throughout the project the group shared a common vision while also allowing each group member to work towards that artistic vision in whatever ways were most meaningful and accessible to them. For instance, the members of the Recognizing Wholeness group took pictures for their poster collage in different ways, which involved each team using accessible tools to take and the pictures (e.g., cell phones, iPads, Teams chat) and choosing what to include in their pictures (e.g., student portraits, class posters, access tools).⁸ Although they were each taking

⁸ The video recording was not able to catch much of the student dialogue because they were moving around the classroom and hallway, but I was able to catch some of their interactions and moves in my memos.

pictures individually, they also took time to check in with one another and work together. They were attentive to the ideas that one another had shared on previous days. For instance, Blue said, “Jazz is taking the rocking chair” because Jazz gave the rocking chair as an example of Recognizing Wholeness because it met his access needs. Also, Zàn Huā was initially hesitant to have his portrait included in the artwork, but asked Hailey to take his picture at the end of the period, which may have indicated increased trust and inclusion in the process.

Creating a visual art piece also seemed to lend itself particularly well to the collaborative process as students took on roles and worked together. The arts process appeared to open up expansive ways of engaging in collaborative work. For example, in conversation-centered days, students asked one another’s opinions about questions on the worksheet, but in the arts process, students gathered feedback more regularly and fluidly about the tasks, design, and materials needed to complete their artwork. During the artistic design process, no one student took the lead. Instead, they invited one another to participate in a variety of ways. On one occasion Hailey and Zàn Huā were placing and modge podging pictures on the poster and Jazz was sitting on the other side of the table. Hailey asked Jazz if he wanted to join, “Jazz, do you want to [modge podge] one?” When Jazz got up to join, she also offered a choice of which picture he may want to add, “Here” Hailey said, handing him a paintbrush, “Do you want to put yourself [on the poster]?” Jazz looked at the pictures and added himself to the poster. By inviting one another into the process and allowing each other choice and agency, the group appeared to use the arts as a mode of collective access and way to recognize one another’s wholeness.

In the end, the artistic process and product was reflective of the group’s collective commitment to recognizing wholeness. They titled their piece, “One of a Kind Community” (see Figure 39).

Figure 39 *Recognizing Wholeness group's Disability Justice in Schools artwork.*



Note. Image description: A collage with images of 18 members of the 5th period C3 class, a variety of access tools, and pictures of the class's Disability Spotlight Projects around a big red heart.

As they put it in their artist statement, “To us, recognizing wholeness means recognizing and valuing everyone’s differences with an open perspective and inclusiveness.” Throughout the unit, and particularly through the arts, the group took time to learn with and from one another in ways that were accessible and meaningful to all group members. By focusing on their community and including their classmate’s photos, they demonstrated the importance of recognizing individual and collective wholeness. Also, their inclusion of access tools in the photo collage demonstrated how creating access was a method of supporting and celebrating disabled students’ wholeness. Furthermore, they included posters from their Disability Spotlight Posters, which highlighted a variety of disability history (e.g., 504 sit-ins), activists (e.g., Alice Wong, Judy Heumann), and concepts (e.g., ableism, universal design). Incorporating the Disability Spotlight amidst the class photos and access tools provided a collection of disability identity, community, and culture that foster disabled students’ wholeness. In the final line of their artist statement they wrote, “When people look at our artwork, we want them to think about accepting everyone for who they are without judgment.” The Recognizing Wholeness group’s holistic approach to working with one another and designing their artwork spoke to the critical ways that disabled youth can feel seen and celebrated.

CHAPTER 5: CRIPPING CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGIES FINDINGS

Following my inductive analysis of classroom observations, group artwork, and student interviews, I did a round of deductive analysis using the Crippling CSP features identified in my conceptual framework: (1) honoring disabled experiences, (2) shared stories, (3) access as a core value and practice, (4) expansive communication, and (5) choice and agency. This round of analysis was designed to answer my third research question: Throughout the DJS unit, how were the features of Crippling CSP embodied and enacted by students? I used interviews, classroom observation, and student generated work to discuss nuanced considerations to this question. The interview data provided a glimpse into how Crippling CSP was connected to the personal experiences and perspectives of the focal participants, classroom observations demonstrated how each feature of Crippling CSP showed up in social contexts, and the DJS artwork enabled crippling CSP to be evident across classes through the aesthetic expressions of disabled youth.

I chose to include examples and non-examples to capture the youth's sustaining practices and missed opportunities to manifest Crippling CSP in the classroom. This is not imply that the youth did anything wrong in non-examples, but instead I want to learn how schooling as an ableist context interferes with Crippling CSP in the classroom. Furthermore, examples and non-examples can provide insight into the successes and gaps of the DJS curriculum design and help locate areas of growth for future iterations of this work.

The Crippling CSP findings are organized with a section addressing each feature of Crippling CSP and how it was embodied and expanded by the disabled youth participants of this research. Each section begins with a comic synthesis of the findings related to that feature of Crippling CSP. The quotes included in the comic are both direct quotes taken directly from interviews and classroom observations, as well as quotes that are indicative of composite narratives that were reiterated across participant experiences (Johnston et al., 2023). The comic

pages are followed by a found poem synthesis drawn from the narrative and then the full narrative. The narrative sections begin with an italicized definition of each feature of Crippling CSP referencing the chart I used for my deductive analysis. This structure intentionally provides an overview of the findings related to each feature of Crippling CSP in two artistic expressions (comic and found poetry) before the more detailed prose. This foregrounds creative and accessible communication, which is aligned with the goals of this dissertation work and the Crippling CSP framework.

Honoring Disabled Experiences

Honoring Disabled Experiences Comic

Figure 42 and Figure 43 provide an illustrated synthesis of the findings for how disabled students embodied and expanded the Crippling CSP feature of Honoring Disabled Experiences.

Figure 40 *Comic spread for Honoring Disabled Experiences part I.*

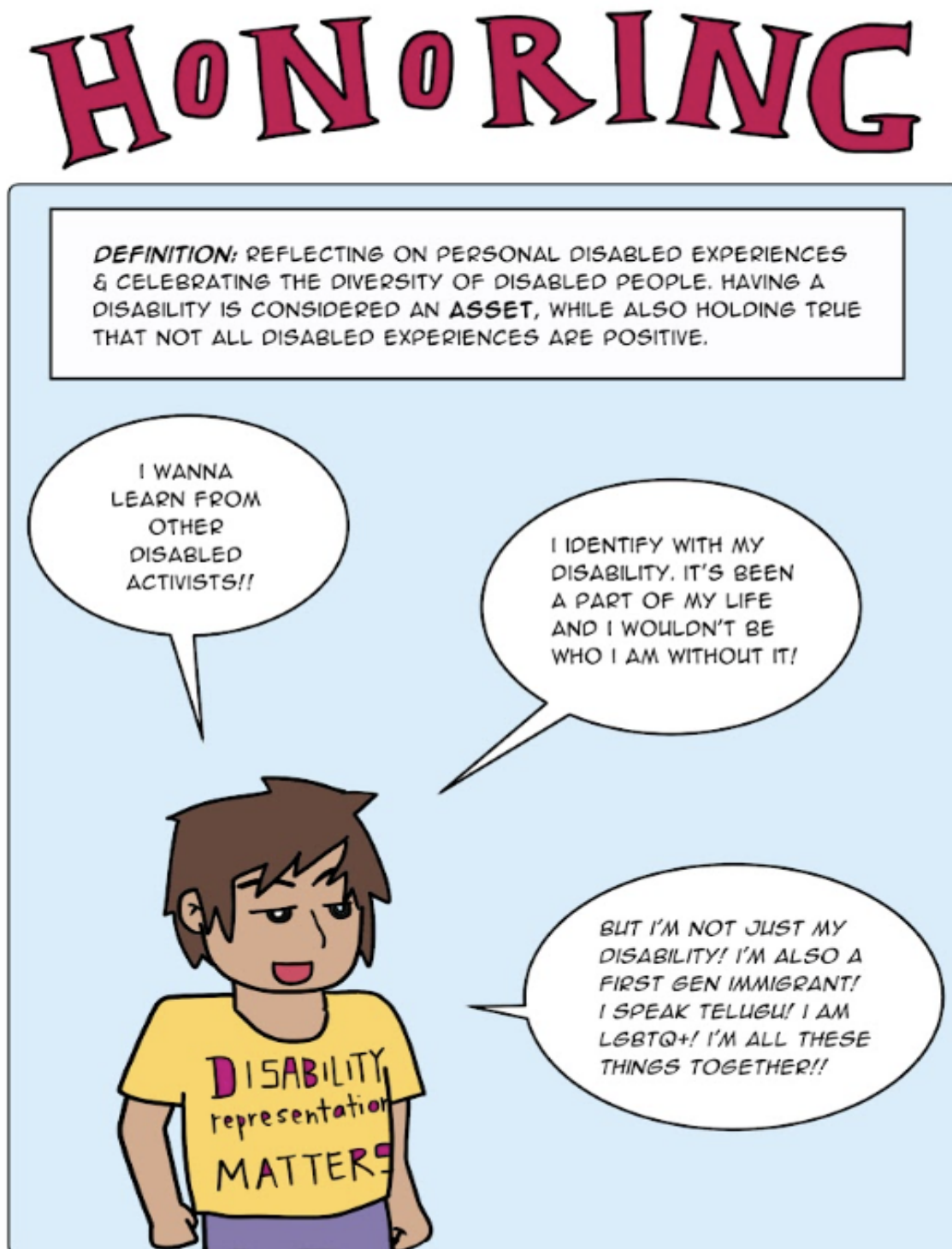
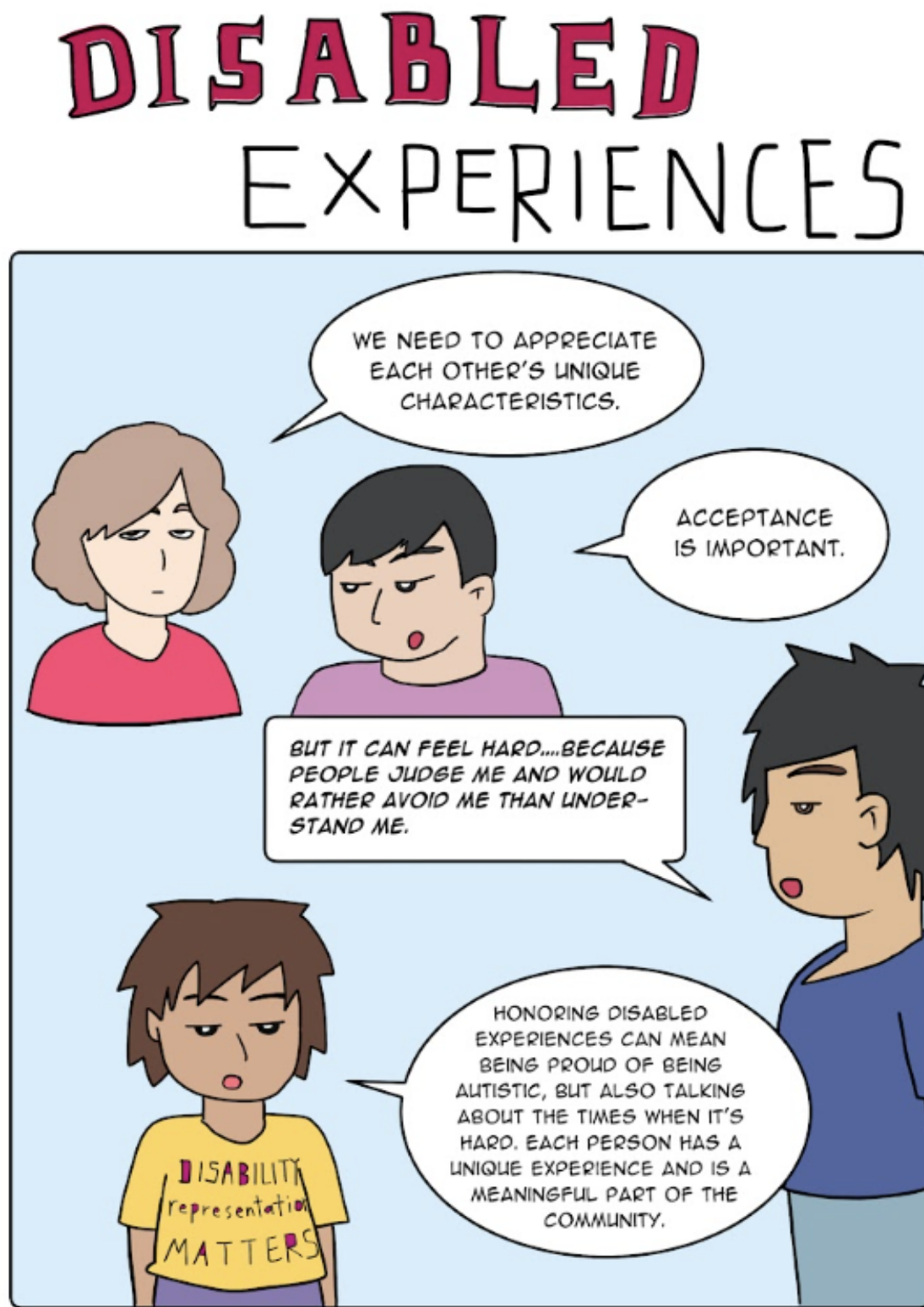


Figure 41 Comic spread for Honoring Disabled Experiences part II.



Honoring Disabled Experiences Found Poem

Honors disability,
 Celebrates variability,
 Difference.
 Reflect and validate
 personal disability identity
 and the broader disability community
 Inward gaze
 recognize strengths and skills
 without judgment
 “One of a Kind”

Honoring Disabled Experiences Narrative

Honoring disabled experiences celebrates variability and differences in disability identity, community, and culture. Honoring disabled experiences means listening to, believing, validating, and learning from disabled people. Honoring disabled experiences is a way to recognize disabled wholeness without confining disability to a single story or limiting disabled people’s multifaceted identities.

Honoring disabled experiences in disabled student interviews, classroom observations, and artwork, included reflections on their personal experiences of disability and ableism, as well as recognizing and honoring differences across disabled experiences. Honoring disabled experiences came up in interviews with Brian and Blue based on their own experiences of disability (regardless of whether they personally identified as disabled or not) and quotes that affirmed disabled experiences (either their own or others). In social contexts (group work and class work), honoring disabled experiences included curiosity about disabled experiences and positioning disability as an asset amongst group members. Finally, this feature was evident across the DJS artwork in the range of disability experiences depicted in each art piece, including personal experiences of disability and in the broader disability community.

To begin, Blue honored disabled experiences through their personal reflection of their own disability identity as well as acknowledging, appreciating, and wanting to learn from the variability of disabled experiences throughout the disability community. Blue honored his

personal experiences as disabled by sharing, “I identify [disability] with it as part of my identity...It's a part of my experiences and it's been a part of my life and I've had to experience it and I don't think I would be who I am today without them.” They did not see their identity as disabled as separate from other experiences and identities in their life, including being Indian, first generation, speaking Telugu, and being part of the LGBTQ+ community. They holistically approached their experiences as a disabled person, recognizing the ways that those experiences were also necessarily informed by their many other identities.

They also saw the importance of intergenerational learning from disability activists. One suggestion that they made for the unit would be to “also do a section where we learn how we could also become activists and help change disability justice on how we can help after school when we graduate and stuff.” Learning from disabled activists was one way that they could connect and honor disability across difference and over time. They continued to explain that learning from disabled activists “could either inspire or teach others how to become activists and if we practice it, it will definitely teach others how to become disability justice activists if they want.” Activism appeared to be an important part of disability visibility and honoring disabled experiences for Blue. In addition to their own learning, Blue wanted to pass on that knowledge. For example, Blue talked about how to teach about disability history, identity, and activism to different grade levels. He referred to different vocabulary and activities that would engage other students and highlight the disability justice movement. In this way, Blue wanted to expand the ways that students at all levels could learn about and honor disabled experiences. Importantly, he used the term “we,” indicating that he considered himself part of the movement. He said,

For example, in elementary school, maybe we could simplify it in elementary and middle school, simplify it a bit. So we're doing it in elementary and preschool. We would simplify it to their level and to make it more fun and interactive and help them learn in a way that's interesting to them. And we would add more and more for higher grade levels

and we would make it easier for the grade level that it's being taught at. So for example, if we were teaching in college, we could use more complicated terms of vocabulary and teach them everything and go straight to the very part of disability justice and talk about all the things that are happening.

In thinking about the ways that disabled youth of different ages may respond to the curriculum, Blue honored their experiences as well as incorporating the lessons they learned from the broader disability community. They appeared to be identifying and honoring their own disabled experiences and the broader disability community as important knowledge sources.

Brian, on the other hand, did not identify as disabled and made multiple comments in class that positioned disability as a negative trait. However, in his interview, he was reflective and took an inward gaze at his own ableist statements and actions. He honored disabled experiences retroactively after having time to consider the impact of his words and actions. For instance, Brian made an ableist statement during his presentation at the Disability Justice in Schools Showcase that upset one of his classmates, Ciara. Brian referenced that “luckily” he wasn’t autistic, which upset Ciara, who strongly and positively identified as Autistic. Upon reflection, he realized why she was upset and how he could have handled the situation differently. He said,

I actually agree with [Ciara] afterwards. However, at the beginning, when she come to me and telling me that I actually have no idea how she got narrowed down to that one [comment]. After that, when I think about it, I think just the way I say it that upset her. I still remember exactly what I said. I’m still remembering exactly what I said. So I said, “One of the fun facts about me is that I was diagnosed as autistic though I’m actually not that that, though, I’m actually not.” So that’s, that’s basically all I said, but however, the way I said it is, the way the way said this “I was diagnosed as autism, but luckily, I will, but I’m actually not.” I looked, it seems like, I like let out the sigh, a sigh of relief. I might make her think I was really autism and I was trying to throw it out. While she’s one other person that have that disability, and she probably feels a little bit put down. I got, I said, I got it.

Brian was able to reflect on why Ciara was offended by his statement and the use of “luckily” before saying “I’m actually not” and letting out a sign of relief. He was able to identify his

intention and impact and how his words and actions could be interpreted as putting down Autistic people. While his words initially demonstrated an ableist perspective, he thereafter demonstrated the importance of honoring disabled experiences as an act of listening and validating disabled peoples' perspectives and lived experiences.

Brian's inward gaze at his ableist statements and behaviors was also evident when he talked about working with Amelia throughout the project. During our interview, I shared the observation that Amelia appeared to be more included as the project progressed and asked what may have changed for Brian. Brian responded that he realized the strengths and skills she brought to the group in the final weeks of the project, but was worried that it was too late. His concern and reiteration of her strengths demonstrated his awareness that his previous actions did not honor her experience as a disabled person. Our conversation went,

Sarah: What do you think changed over time that helped you include [Amelia] more?

Brian: We realized her strong points.

Sarah: What were some of her strong points?

Brian: Like she she can read very well, and she can understand and she got a very good drawing. And also I know she usually practice playing puzzles in this class. So her brain probably thinks a little faster than we do. So later, we realized we probably couldn't have done it so well without her. Didn't realize that until the final two weeks of the project, that is that is a little too late.

Sarah: Well, it's never too late.. she felt a lot more included in those last two weeks, which is really awesome.

Brian: I'm glad she was. I'm glad she was... It is we all have different strong points.

Although parts of Brian's reflection were still based on ableist conceptions of smartness in school (comparing brains as "faster"), he was grappling with the ways that he can change his actions to better position Amelia's disability as an asset and honor Amelia's strengths and experiences.

Later in the interview he expressed gratitude for working with disabled classmates to learn more about disabled experiences. This illustrated the importance of honoring disabled ways of knowing and being and the assets they bring to educational spaces. He said,

I think they two are the good persons to work with because they two are actually going through the same thing. Like they were like, I know they were both disabled persons. They both have autism and ADHD. I don't I'm not really sure about [Amelia], but I'm sure about Paisley. So they too have all, have one of the two. They all have one of or both of the major disability. So I think I've got a lot of new information from them.

Brian acknowledged that it was important to learn from his disabled peers and that their experiences enhanced the group project. He also honored disabled experiences by not assuming that Amelia had multiple disabilities. He revised his assumption because Amelia had shared her identification as Autistic, but did not share whether she identified with ADHD. Brian took these lessons and reflections about disability seriously and wanted to use them to inform his future actions. He later said that “when I come back at school, September I will be more, I will be more warned and I'm going to be more careful.” He appeared to recognize the important lessons that disabled peers had to offer and wanted to honor them and their experiences moving forward.

While Blue's and Brian's reflections on the DJS unit demonstrated a range of ways to honor disabled experiences in themselves and in the future, their discussions and participation in social contexts demonstrated how disabled experiences were negated, not honored in school. I include these non-examples of honoring disabled experiences to consider the complexity of Crippling CSP in a fundamentally ableist context, schooling.

Brian was curious about different students' experiences of disability in school, but also continued to negate disabled experiences based on ableist conceptions of smartness. Blue on the other hand shared that their experiences as a disabled student were not honored and they weren't sure if honoring disabled experiences was even possible at school.

Throughout the unit, Brian curious about disabled students' experiences, but negated any connection to them. This specifically came up on the first day that Brian and Amelia were working together. While brainstorming what Interdependence meant to them, Brian noticed the SLP working with Amelia and using a picture symbol worksheet (Appendix XX), which he had not been provided. He became interested in the tool and how to use it. However, he asked the SLP about the tools instead of Amelia. In doing so, he made it seem like the SLP was the expert in Amelia's experience and communication, as opposed to Amelia herself. As discussed in the Interdependence Group Findings chapter, Brian expressed interest in the access tools that Amelia was using, but then dismissed the tools when the SLP implied that it was designed for students who could not rely on speech alone to be heard and understood. In this social context, Brian did not honor Amelia as the expert of her own experiences, nor did he validate the tools and resources that supported her in expressing disabled ways of knowing and being. He did not honor her experience, communication styles, nor access needs in that moment. His personal distancing from disability appeared to interrupt his engagement with Amelia and use of tools that would have made group work more collaborative instead of teacher-directed.

While Brian did not honor the disabled experiences of his group mates in social context, Blue connected with their group based on moments they felt invalidated at school. Blue shared that they wished peers and teachers understood them better, but did not believe their experiences as a disabled student would be honored in school. In their group work, Blue consistently used their feelings at school as a non-example of Recognizing Wholeness. In response, their group mate Hailey suggested acceptance as a way to recognize wholeness in school. When Blue did not respond, I entered the conversation. The following dialogue showed how Blue was uncertain that other students would ever honor their experience.

Hailey: We could include accepting unique characteristics of each other... So like accepting each other for who we are.

Zàn Huā: Maybe just say that.

Hailey: Jazz, do you think acceptance is important? Do you think acceptance is important, Jazz?

Jazz: Acceptance is important.

...

Sarah: Is there one of these things you think you could change to make you feel better in school?

Blue: Students not judging me.

Sarah: Students not judging you?

Blue: Yeah, if they know about my problem.

Sarah: Yeah, you said if they knew about your problem?

Blue: Yeah, like if they knew about vocal tics or something.

Sarah: If they knew about vocal tics, then they could be more supportive?

Blue: So there's just a lot of students who won't talk to me because of my vocal tics. I don't know if they would change. I don't know.

Sarah: You think maybe if they knew more they might not judge or they might—

Blue: I don't think so

Sarah: You think they wouldn't judge?

Blue: I think they would because a lot of them probably still would.

Initially Blue expressed that students may suspend judgment once they knew about a person's disability, but was then doubtful that simply understanding the disability would change other students' behaviors. They referred to vocal tics as a "problem" that caused other students not to talk to them. This was the only time that Blue referred to their disability as a "problem," which appeared to indicate that their disability was only positioned as a problem in reference to social interactions at school. They wanted students not to judge them, but were hesitant to believe that would ever happen based on their previous experiences of ableist interactions in school. They did not know if acceptance was possible at school because they had not experienced it as such.

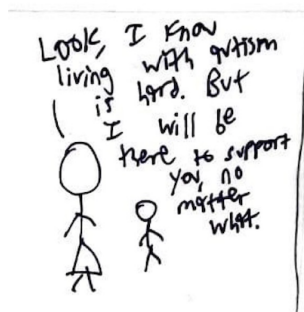
Although Blue felt generally judged in school, they appeared to feel accepted in their group. They actively participated on the days they were present, including taking pictures of items and posters around the classroom that were important parts of their everyday experiences as a disabled student navigating school. While coming up with a name for their artwork Blue

suggested “One of a Kind” in reference to honoring the individual experiences of disabled youth. After discussion, the group ultimately decided to go with “One of a Kind Community” to highlight the ways that we can honor one another’s experiences across differences in their community. As they put it in their artist statement, “we can recognize everyone in our community as an equal part of it.” Honoring disabled experiences meant that each person had a unique experience that was a meaningful part of the community.

Both the Interdependence group and Recognizing Wholeness groups honored disabled experiences in their artwork. The Interdependence group did so by depicting a range of disabilities and experiences that disabled students went through in and out of school. Honoring those disabled experiences included the ways that disabled youth navigated positive and negative interactions in relation to their disability. Specifically, they illustrated a positive experience of adult support that honors disabled youth experience (see Figure 42). In the panel the adult was saying, “Look, I know living with autism is hard. But I will be there to support you no matter what.” This panel was inspired by examples of support that Brian and Paisley got from their mothers, which honored their personal experiences as students diagnosed with autism. Although the phrasing of “living with autism is hard” may be perceived as a deficit narrative, it could also connect to the ways that Brian and Paisley experienced navigating school. Brian talked about being misdiagnosed, which made his school experience hard, and Paisley talked about having difficulty in social contexts at school, which was hard. Therefore, in this context, “living with autism is hard” may not be implying that living with autism is bad, but attending to the reality that it can be hard to have a disability in a system that is not designed for disabled people. The Interdependence group also included a drawing of a disabled student being excluded, which is a negative encounter that many disabled youth experience in school (see Figure 43). Although that

image depicted a non-example of Interdependence in school, it was a way to honor the full range of disabled experiences. They drew a large red circle and X over the picture to indicate it was a non-example. While honoring disabled experiences positions disability as an asset, it also validates the real, material challenges that come with ableist environments and attitudes.

Figure 42 A panel from the *Interdependence DJS* artwork about adult support.



Note. Image description: The panel shows an adult stick figure next to a student stick figure saying “Look, I know living with autism is hard. But I will be there to support you no matter what.”

Figure 43 A panel from the *Interdependence DJS* artwork about ending stigma against disabled students.



Note. The panel shows a nondisabled student stick figure excluding a student stick figure in a wheelchair. The nondisabled student is saying “Look at the disabled kid! Let’s just leave him alone.” There’s a red circle and X through the drawing indicating that is not an example of Interdependence.

While the Interdependence group drew on general experiences, the Recognizing Wholeness group specifically honored the disabled experiences of their classmates. Their

artwork included photos of all of their classmates (see Figure 44). Each classmate got to choose whether they wanted their photo included and how they wanted to pose. In their artist statement they wrote, “To us, recognizing wholeness means recognizing and valuing everyone’s differences with an open perspective and inclusiveness.” They used their artwork as a medium to honor their classmate’s disabled experiences and the importance of each member of the classroom community.

Figure 44 *A zoomed in portion of the Recognizing Wholeness poster focused on the images of the students.*



Note: Image description: Pictures of 14 students arranged around a red heart. Amidst the students are also pictures of access tools and disability spotlight project posters.

Throughout the DJS unit, disabled youth provided important insights into the ways that honoring disabled experiences as a feature of Crippling CSP are connected to youths' personal relationships to their own disability identity, constructed in relation to ableist conceptions of disability, and further complicated in school settings. Blue demonstrated the ways that honoring disabled experiences can be embodied through an acceptance and celebration of their dynamic and multifaceted disability identity. Brian, on the other hand, initially talked about disability as a negative trait, but later learned new ways to honor disabled experiences by working with and learning from his disabled peers. Both Blue and Brian and their groups demonstrated how school settings were not designed to honor disabled experiences. Blue often felt invalidated at school and Brian admitted to invalidating disabled peers in school. However, both Blue and Brian and their groups aspired to a school environment that used their DJ principles as a way to honor disabled experiences. Overall, honoring disabled experiences was embodied by disabled youth as they reflected on their own identities and connections to one another, and could be further expanded through explicit attention to opportunities for disabled youth to validate, celebrate, and learn from one another.

Shared Stories

Shared Stories Comic

Figure 47 and Figure 48 provide an illustrated synthesis of the findings for how disabled students embodied and expanded the Crippling CSP feature of Shared Stories.

Figure 45 Comic spread for Shared Stories findings part I.

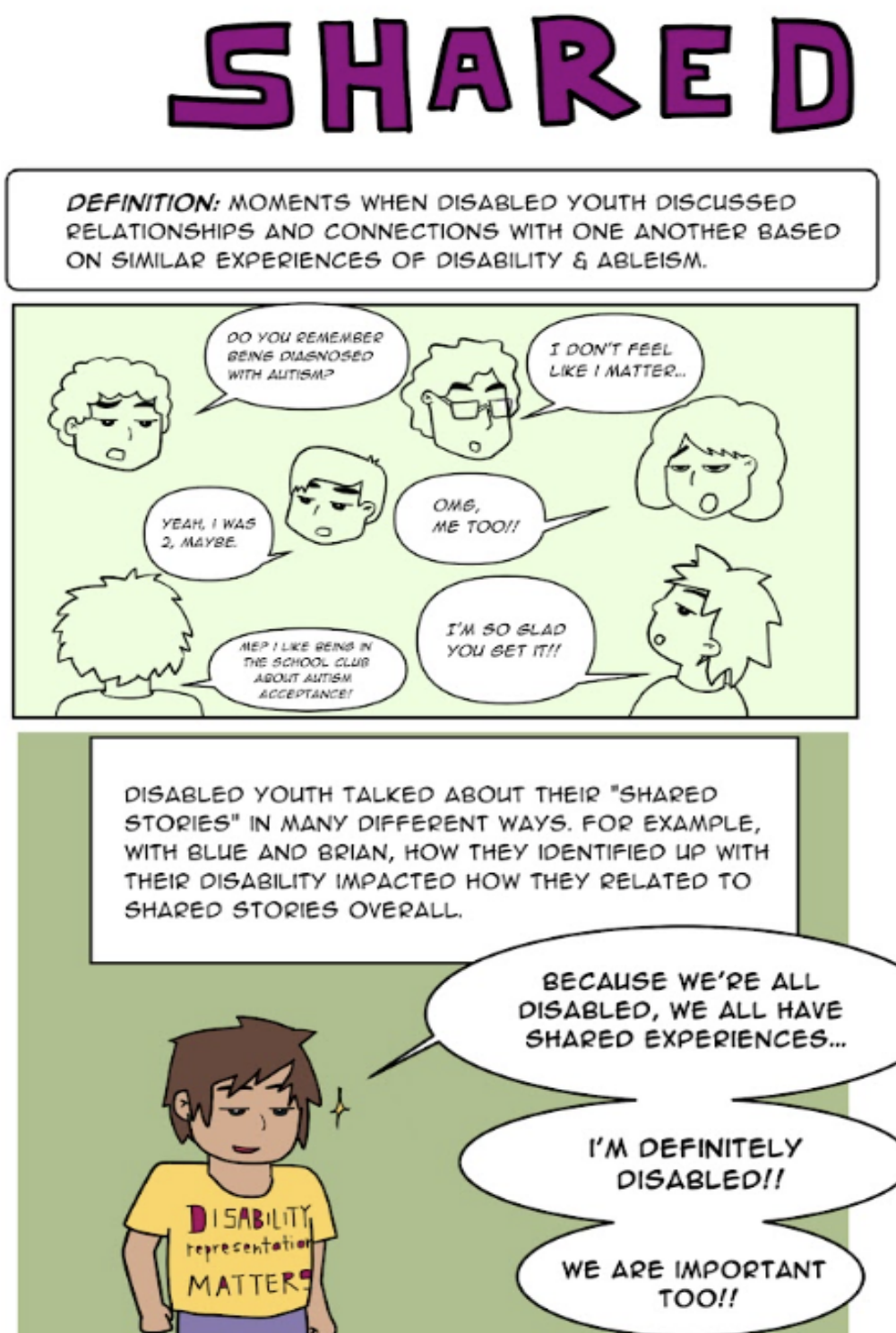
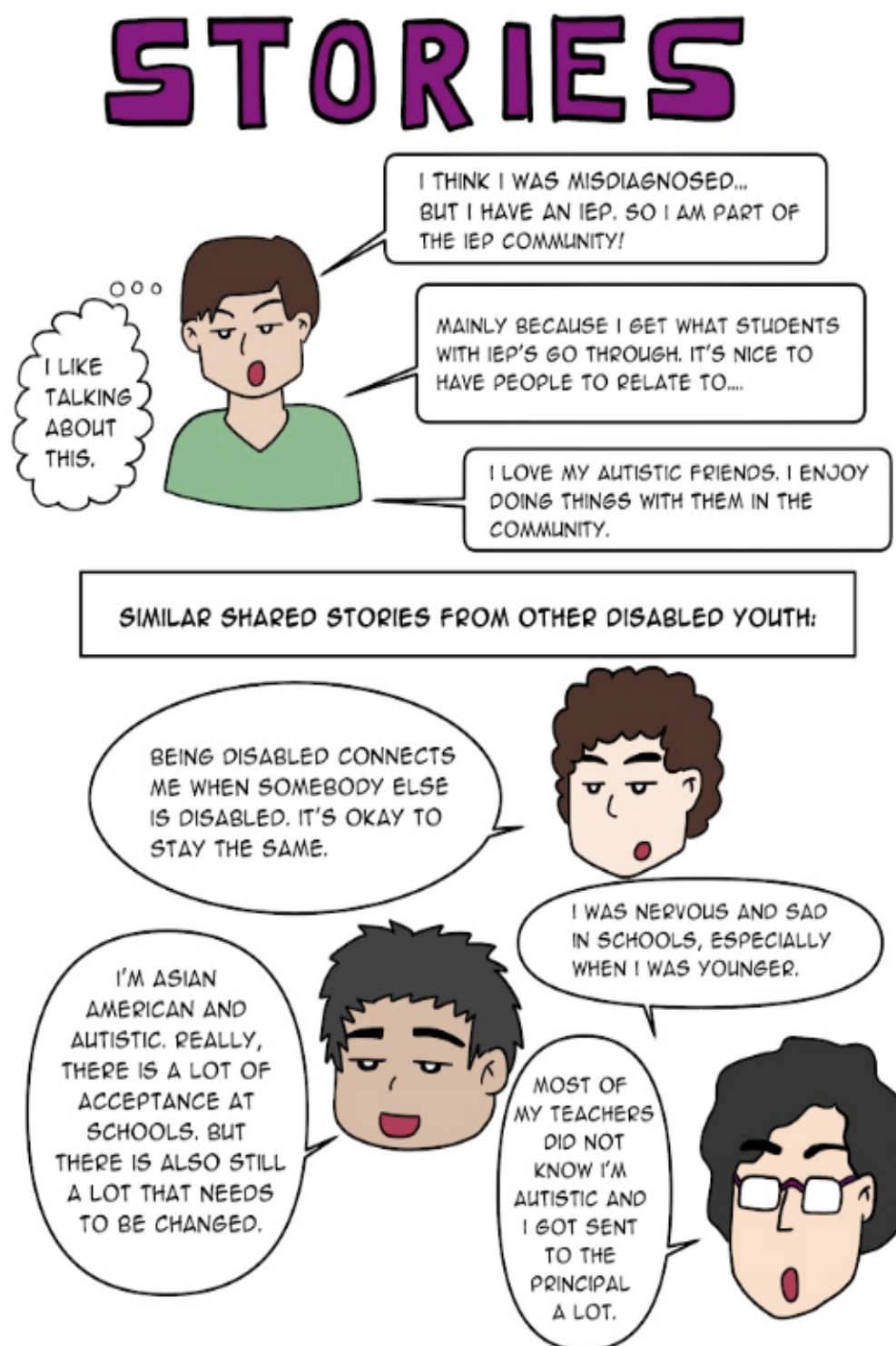


Figure 46 *Comic spread for Shared Stories findings part II.*



Shared Stories Found Poem

Shared stories of disability and ableism.
 Connect
 Disability community, representation, mentorship
 “We have different disabilities,
 we have shared experiences.”

Shared stories
 Connect
 Across experiences
 “Nice to relate to people”
 Comforted by knowing
 Other people felt that way too

Shared Stories
 Connect
 Disabled people to one another
 Disability history, ableism, and activism.

Shared Stories Narrative

Shared stories of disability and ableism are a form of connection amongst disabled people. Shared stories contribute to the relational component of disability identity, building disability community, and learning and sustaining disability culture. Shared stories incorporate the importance of finding crip kin that share experiences of disability and ableism, while also being informed by identities more broadly.

In deductive analysis, I identified shared stories as moments that students talked about and/or demonstrated relationships with one another based on similar experiences of disability and ableism and/or connections with one another and the broader disability community. Shared stories came up differently for Blue and Brian across their interviews and group work. In interviews, Brian and Blue’s identification with disability appeared to impact the ways that they related to shared stories. In social contexts (class and group work), Brian tended to distance himself from shared stories, whereas Blue sought to engage with shared stories. Finally, both of them, as well as their group mates, used shared stories to inspire their artwork.

Blue and Brian's identification with disability impacted the ways that they related to shared stories. Blue and Brian related to disability identity and community differently. Blue strongly identified as disabled and appreciated their connection with the disability community in general. Blue related to shared stories through connections to the broad disability community, disability representation in school, and disabled mentorship. For instance, in their interview Blue said, "I think of it as a whole. The entire disability community...Because we all have disabilities even if we all have different disabilities, we all have shared experiences." While Blue did not describe a specific disability community, they indicated that they related to other disabled people in general based on shared experiences in relation to disability and ableism. They later explained that talking about shared experiences of disability in school was helpful "So people feel important and we recognize the disability community." Shared stories served as a way to feel honored and connected. Blue also explained that disabled mentors were significant to them because "[disabled teachers] really know what to talk about and they've just been through it. It's easier for them to connect with others about it, who've been through it." At other times Blue talked about feeling judged and dismissed at school, but it appeared connecting with disabled educators and mentors was easier because of shared stories.

Brian on the other hand, distanced himself from disability identity, regularly reminding people that he believed he was misdiagnosed with autism and therefore did not relate to shared stories of the disability community in general. However, he considered himself part of specific disability communities that he identified as the "IEP community" and the ABA program that he attended outside of school. These disability communities were important to him because of their shared stories, such as similar behaviors and participating in the same programs. For instance, he said that although he didn't believe he had a disability, he could relate to other students with

IEPs because he had similar behaviors. When talking about the IEP community, he explained how he felt he shared stories with one of his peers,

Brian: [Paisley] have a similar problem as me...Do you realize she's talking all of the time?...We have pretty much the same issue.

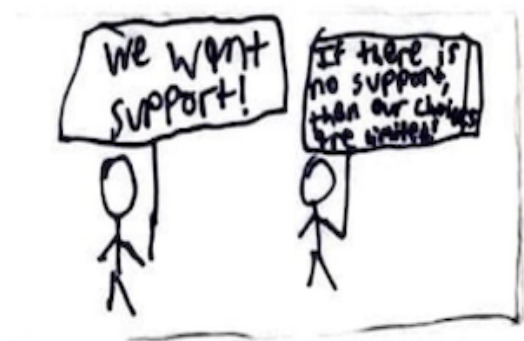
Sarah: Yeah, so is it nice to relate to people in that way?

Brian: Yes it is, it definitely is.

Brian connected with his classmate and her experience based on their shared stories of behaviors that are positioned as issues at school (he later told me that he is “always the most problematic class person in my class”). Relating to classmates’ with similar experiences in and out of school appeared important to Brian. He also wanted to maintain connections with disabled students that were part of his ABA program for Autistic youth. He said, “[I] already graduated from that [ABA program] and I was currently volunteering at the camp as a junior counselor. That's another, that's another, that's another piece of community.” Even though Brian didn't identify as autistic, he considered himself part of the community. He appreciated the shared experiences he had in disabled spaces and wanted to participate in them. Shared stories appeared to be a comfort to Brian and a vital component of his disability communities.

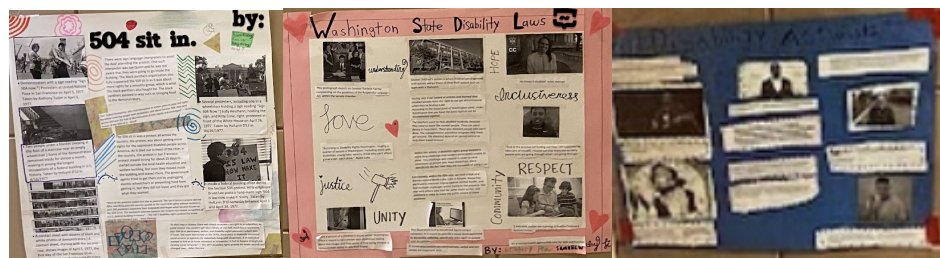
In addition to shared stories on an interpersonal level, both the Interdependence and Recognizing Wholeness groups connected shared stories to disability history, ableism, and activism in their artwork. After the Interdependence group's conversation about gathering community leaders, Paisley designed one of the panels of their artwork to show two disabled people protesting for support (see Figure 47). The Recognizing Wholeness also included the shared history of disability community activism on their artwork through pictures of their disability spotlight project, which included the 504 sit-ins, disability activists, and Washington State disability laws (see Figure 48). Shared stories were an opportunity to connect with one another alongside the broader intergenerational disability community and disabled ancestors.

Figure 47 Panel from *Interdependence* depicting protests for supports for disabled people.



Note. Image description: Two stick figures are holding protest signs. One reads “We want support!” and the other reads “If there is no support, then our choices are limited.”

Figure 48 Three images used in the *Recognizing Wholeness* artwork that show posters about the 504 sit-in, disability activists, and Washington State disability law.



Note. Image description from left to right: A picture of a white poster titled “504 sit in” with images and text that are unreadable in this format. A picture of an orange poster titled “Washington State Disability Laws” with images and text that are unreadable in this format. A picture of a blue poster titled “Intersectional Activists” with images and text that are unreadable in this format.

Throughout the DJS unit, disabled youth demonstrated the importance of shared stories as a way to connect with one another, connect with the broader disability community, and connect with disability history. Blue embodied shared stories recognizing the ways that their experiences were part of a broader disability community experience and history. They appeared to feel comforted by having those shared stories and wanted to share them with other disabled people as well. Brian also appreciated shared stories even though he didn’t identify as disabled.

He considered himself part of multiple disability communities and felt connected to those communities based on shared experiences. Both the Interdependence and Recognizing Wholeness groups referenced disability history and activism in their artwork, which indicated the importance of intergenerational shared stories.

Access as a Core Value and Practice

Access as a Core Value and Practice Comic

Figure 51 and Figure 52 provide an illustrated synthesis of the findings for how disabled students embodied and expanded the Crippling CSP feature of Access as a Core Value and Practice.

Figure 49 Comic spread for *Access as a Core Value and Practice findings part I.*

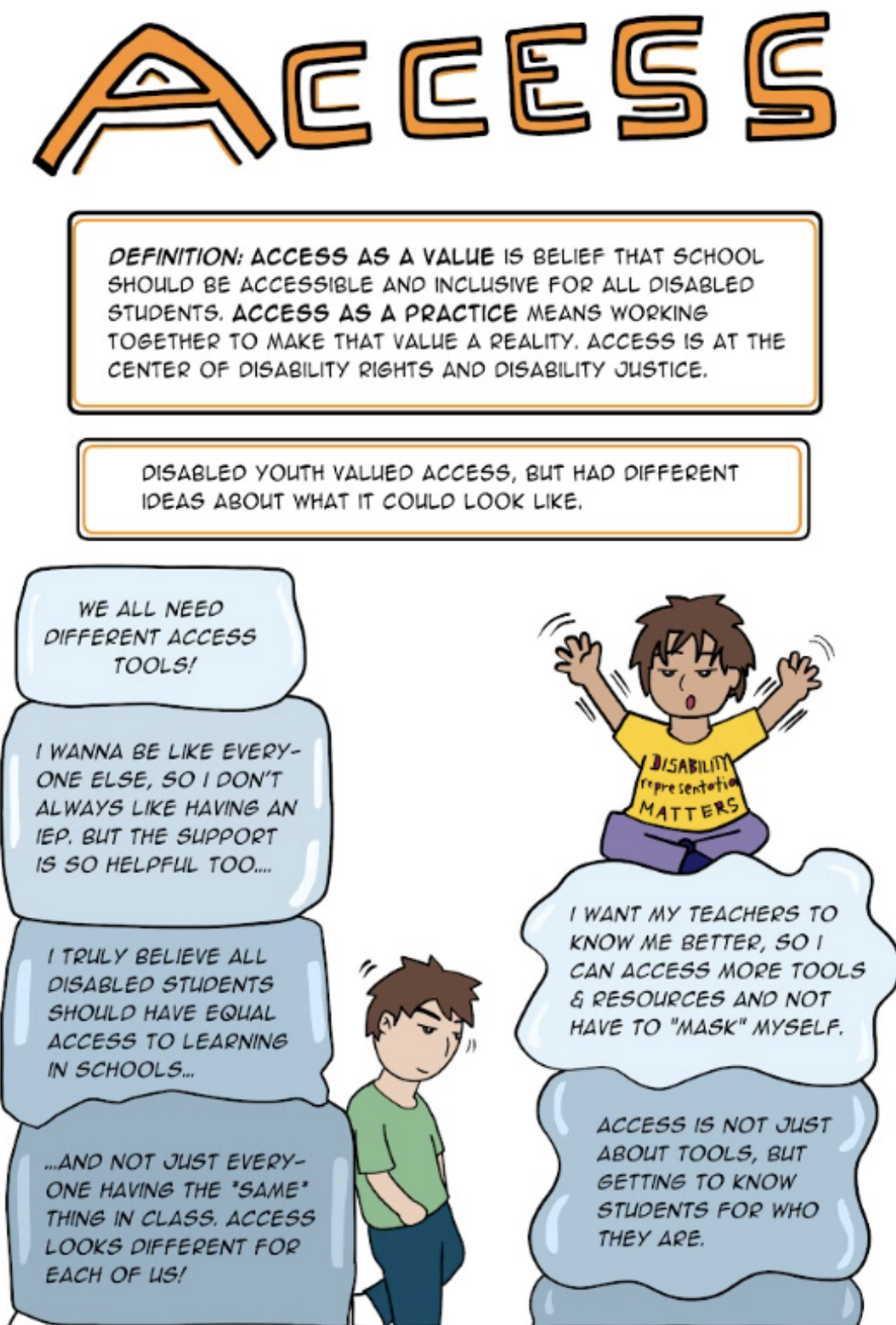


Figure 50 Comic spread for *Access as a Core Value and Practice* findings part II.

a CORE VALUE & PRACTICE

ACCORDING TO DISABLED YOUTH...

DISABLED PEOPLE
NEED TO BE AT THE
CENTER OF CONVER-
SATIONS ABOUT
ACCESS & INCLUSION.

NAVIGATING ACCESS CAN
BE DIFFICULT AND ALWAYS
A WORK-IN-PROGRESS.



ACCESS IS A
COLLECTIVE
PROCESS.



ACCESS AS A PRACTICE IS
PROACTIVE. IT REQUIRES ELIMINATING
BARRIERS AT INDIVIDUAL, SOCIAL AND
INSTITUTIONAL LEVELS.



Access as a Core Value and Practice Found Poem

Access
 An ethical foundation,
 and the actual behaviors that manifest value.
 eliminating barriers
 accommodating diverse needs
 requiring collective action

Access can be
 Individualistic
 and more collective
 Part of who you are
 Resources to meaningfully participate
 And not mask

Who is responsible for access?
 What “makes it accessible”?
 Community-oriented
 Access tools and resources
 Inclusive classrooms

Access as a Core Value and Practice Narrative

Access as a core value and practice is unique to the disability community because it is in direct response to the ways that physical, social, and institutional spaces are designed for nondisabled people. Access as a value is an ethical foundation, whereas access as a practice are the actual behaviors that manifest that value. Access as a practice must be flexible and meaningful in order to meet a diversity of individual and collective needs that may change across time and context.

Access as a core value and practice came up often in Brian’s and Blue’s interviews, as well as in their group work. Brian and Blue both valued access, but had different ideas about the goal of access. Brian focused more on support and access as a means to “overcome” his disability and act “normal,” whereas Blue saw support and access as a way to honor his disability and meaningfully engage in the classroom community. In their groups, access was discussed as personal values and an integral component of disability justice. However, the groups experienced challenges in navigating access as a practice. The Interdependence group experienced conflicting access needs and communication styles, which at times disrupted their collaborative process.

Over time, adults prompted the group to consider one another's access needs in new ways and the group began to improve their access practices with one another. The Recognizing Wholeness group, on the other hand, noticed varying access needs across their group mates when there were challenges in communication or they noticed a group member was being left out. In response, they used multiple access tools to engage with one another. Access as a core value and practice was central in both the Interdependence and Recognizing Wholeness artwork. Access appeared to be more of an individualistic practice for the Interdependence group and more of a collective process for the Recognizing Wholeness group.

In Brian's and Blue's interviews, they both mentioned ways that they valued access, but felt differently about the goals of access in schools. Brian primarily framed access as a value and practice through the lens of having an IEP. Brian had mixed feelings about the services he received based on his IEP. He felt he was misdiagnosed with autism and then treated differently by teachers. He didn't like the extra attention he got based on his IEP because he wanted "to be as much like others as possible," but also found the support helpful because it allowed him to participate in the general education setting. These sentiments appeared to be based in his belief that the ultimate goal was to blend in and mask any access needs or disability. In our interview he said,

I think they already get another teacher to come to class specifically for me and I don't want, and I actually don't want that to happen because I want to be as much like others as possible...I think because their whole purpose was to try to help me improve and and if they don't give me social help they're not doing their job correctly. and they're, and they won't like the results...I think they are pretty much helpful from the, from the beginning but as I got better they are not as helpful anymore.

In this dialogue, Brian expressed that he wanted to "be as much like others as possible" and that he received individual support to help him "improve." His wording suggested that being "normal" like other students was better than being "abnormal" like disabled students. He also

appeared to suggest that the teacher was ultimately responsible for his behaviors, so if “they’re not doing their job correctly,” he may act out and “they won’t like the results.” Although the extra attention he received singled him out, he also believed that it was initially helpful. He no longer found them helpful because he “got better,” which again implied disability as something to overcome, as opposed to part of who you are. For him, access meant being able to participate in classroom settings in the same ways that nondisabled students could participate.

Although Brian appeared to have mixed feelings about when, where, and how to access general education for himself, he regularly discussed the ways he valued access for other disabled students. He believed that it was a right to have equal access to learning in school. In our interview, he said,

So their disability, which they’re born with, or, or developed after they’re born, or which they had no control, they still should be able to learn as well as we do. So it will be a good idea for us to all have the equal possibility to hopefully get what [a teacher is] teaching us... For students, we’re inter-, we in, we’re interacting with everyone else and it’s actually important to make sure everyone feels fairly treated and everyone thinks they got equal chances of learning something.

Brian framed access as “equal possibility” and “equal chances.” He recognized that people may be born with access needs or acquire them later in life. He included the role of teachers and peers, but set himself apart from disabled peers through a comparative statement that “they” should have access to what “we” have. Brian understood and valued multiple means of access, and believed that teachers needed to practice access as a way to support inclusion in school. For example, later in the interview, he identified OneNote as a helpful tool because of its accessibility features “so for a person with understanding disabilities they can go home and ask their parents” and for “a person with a vision disability they should be able to enlarge it.” While these are meaningful means of access, it is interesting to note that Brian shared means of access that were tool oriented and disability specific.

Blue, on the other hand, appeared to approach access as more relational than tool specific. They identified their access needs as part of their disability identity and wanted teachers to get to know them better so they could access tools and resources to meaningfully participate in school and not mask their disability. On multiple occasions throughout the unit Blue referenced that access was really important to them and they did not feel supported in school. In our interview, I asked them specifically about a line from their Educational Journey Map, “school has never accommodated me.” I was interested in their perspective on how schools could better meet their access needs. Initially they weren’t sure what teachers could do. They said, “I know they weren’t supporting me, but I don’t really have suggestions for what they could do better cause I just really don’t know.” I validated the difficulty of coming up with suggestions if you’ve never experienced access in school. I moved on to ask about their favorite part of our DJS unit, wondering if there may be an example about how to make other classwork more accessible as well. In the following dialogue Blue explained why their favorite activity was the Celebrating Me collages and how teachers could use information from that process to design more accessible instruction in school.

Blue: [My favorite part was] Celebrating Me Collage because I use stickers and other things and I got to choose what I wanted to represent me.

Sarah: I wonder, is that something that feels good and that teachers can do is get to know you better?

Blue: Yeah.

Sarah: Because that could be a good suggestion. You think it's nice when a teacher knows you better. How does that help do you think?

Blue: They know how to help make the classroom more inclusive and how to make everything easier and help me learn.

As Blue explained it, access was more than simply having the right tools available, but really getting to know students for who they are. Getting to know them included getting to know about their disability identity and access needs, which then made a difference in a teacher’s ability to

create an accessible and inclusive classroom environment. Furthermore, access was not simply accommodations that the teacher made, but also about how they felt in class. They said that the DJS unit was different from other classes because it was “collaborative and fun and there wasn’t that much pressure like it wouldn’t tank your grade... I felt better.” Blue found that access to being and learning together was more helpful than the pressure to access materials to get a higher grade. Access as a value and practice for Blue was about creating inclusion through building community and having a diversity of ways for students to represent themselves and their ideas.

Access as a value and practice also played out differently for Brian’s and Blue’s groups. While access was discussed as an integral component of disability justice in both groups, navigating access as a practice in their group work was challenging. The Interdependence group discussed teachers as the people who were ultimately responsible for creating access in school. The Recognizing Wholeness group, on the other hand, took on more group responsibility to meet one another’s access needs. They used multiple access tools to engage with one another and offered each other multiple ways of participating to support access throughout the project.

The Interdependence group discussed access as support given from teachers to students, not necessarily students to students. This played out in their conversations, as well as in their group dynamics. Their group often talked about access in terms of a person’s “needs.” While giving examples and non-examples of Interdependence, they talked a lot about meeting disabled students’ needs. They differentiated peers and adults roles in providing access and meeting one another’s needs. In the following dialogue, Paisley said that a non-example is students not respecting one another’s needs, while teachers were legally obligated to meet students’ needs. Brian then suggested that it wasn’t students’ roles to meet each other’s needs anyway.

Paisley: [A non-example is] student not, not respecting your needs.

Sarah: Yeah, people not respecting your needs?

Paisley: No, no, but I think this is more the case for students because the teachers, the teachers, they're legally required, teachers are legally required to follow IEPs and work with, work with issues with all their students. Right?

Sarah: Oh, that's a really interesting point. I wonder—

Paisley: No, because teachers, the teachers are legally, are legally required.

...

Brain: Wait, students not respecting needs? They are not the ones providing the help. It's—

Paisley: Not acknowledging even though they, yes, they, they should at least acknowledge it and students not, not, not respecting someone's needs because they have an IEP.

Paisley and Brian brought up two particularly interesting components of access in this dialogue;

1) whether students and/or teachers are responsible for providing access, and 2) access as an act of respect and/or legal compliance. They appeared to differentiate the roles of students and teachers in respecting and meeting disabled students' needs. Paisley implied that one form of students respecting each other's needs would be helping one another to meet those access needs.

She further differentiated access by respect (by students) and legal obligation (by teachers).

When Brian entered the conversation he added that it wasn't students' role to respect each other's needs because "they are not the ones providing the help." He considered it the role of the teacher to provide help, in other words, it was the teacher who provided access. While he did not expand on the legal requirement, Paisley brought it back to that through her referencing "someone's needs because they have an IEP." Interestingly, Brian and Paisley referred to students' needs and IEPs, but did not use the word disability in this dialogue.

This further played out in their group dynamics. Brian and Paisley typically relied on adults to meet Amelia's access needs. Without adults present, they tended to exclude Amelia, often physically distant from her, facing away from her, and not asking for her feedback. Paisley and Brian were prompted multiple times daily to include Amelia, and needed additional skills to learn how to collectively meet the access needs of their group. Some of the adult prompts included general statements like, "Make sure you're including Amelia" and "Ask Amelia." Other

prompts were more specific, such as, “it's ok if Amelia looks on for help, right?” and “Paisley and Brian, you can be asking Amelia too about what her pictures meant.” When given more specific prompts, Amelia and Brian were able to follow up and include Amelia, especially when an adult helped facilitate or model methods of inclusion.

Two of the primary barriers to Amelia accessing the group work was proximity and communication techniques. During the arts process, Paisley and Brian were able to better meet Amelia's access needs because the arts naturally lent itself to working closely together and using tools and materials that were collectively accessible. For instance, while Paisley was modge-podging comic panels and Brian printed drawings onto the canvas, the SLP asked Paisley if Amelia could modge-podge her drawing on. In the following excerpt, Paisley invited Amelia over and offered a series of instructions and encouragement to help Amelia access the activity through tools and materials, proximity, and process.

Paisley (to Amelia): Here you go, here you go. Here, here, so here's a paint brush and this is how you modge, modge podge something you paint it on quite thickly as these are already glued...I'm going layers over the modge podge. I was worried it was gonna smudge my artwork right but, I was worried, but it turns out my artwork is still intact even though it was actually my biggest, one of my biggest concerns was smudging the artwork.

Figure 51 *Brian, Paisley, and Amelia stand behind the canvas gluing comic panels and printed drawings onto the canvas.*



Note. Image description: From left to right Brian, Paisley, and Amelia are standing behind the canvas. Brian is standing looking down at the poster. Paisley is leaning over the poster painting on modge podge. Amelia is standing up as she paints modge podge onto the canvas. On the right, the SLP's plaid shirt is visible.

This is one of the few moments in the unit when Brian, Paisley, and Amelia worked together on the project. While these interactions were influenced by the power dynamics of having a teacher provide a level of explicit instruction, Paisley took additional initiative in the ways that shred materials and showed Amelia how the modge podge could be used to secure the comic panels and printed drawings onto the canvas. Furthermore, Paisley shared some of her own concerns, which may have made the activity feel more relatable and collaborative.

While the Interdependence group often approached access as one person supporting another, the Recognizing Wholeness group discussed specific tools that were important to ensuring access. For instance, in a conversation about what to put on their poster, Hailey and Zàn Huā talked about access tools and multiple forms of accessibility as a way to illustrate Recognizing Wholeness. Zàn Huā said, “We can take pictures of the things around the classroom.” Hailey followed up his idea by saying, “Maybe the fidget toys or something like that. Things around us... [that] makes it accessible.” Hailey and Zàn Huā were including accessibility features in the Recognizing Wholeness artwork in order to demonstrate how access contributed to creating environments where students felt like they could be their whole selves. Access, in that sense, was not only the tools themselves, but the community-oriented environment that they created.

The Recognizing Wholeness group also used multiple access tools to engage with one another. They listened to one another and gave each other the opportunity to take pictures of what was most important to them and their access in the class. For instance, when they decided that they would take pictures as a group, they gave multiple ways that a person could take pictures. Zàn Huā said, “You can use phone, iPad, tablet and technology. Unless, if you have a digital camera, you can use that.” Zàn Huā provided options to access photography as an activity.

In his group, Hailey, Blue, and he had iPhones, and Jazz had an iPad. He not only listed the tools that they had, but additional ways that someone could access the activity. This left it open for his group mates to choose how they participated and completed their part of the photography portion of the project.

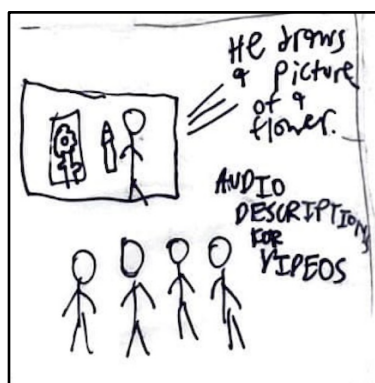
Both the Interdependence group and Recognizing Wholeness group showed access as a value and practice in their artwork. The Interdependence group included multiple comic panels that illustrated the many ways that people can help one another access learning in school. Three specific depictions of access that they included were a way to create more accessible homework assignments with clear directions (see Figure 52), a way to make video more accessible with audio descriptions (see Figure 53), and a way that students can share notes to make learning more accessible (see Figure 54). All of these examples came from discussions that the group had about examples of Interdependence about students' access needs, which they referred to simply as “needs.” In their artist statement they wrote, “This shows interdependence because the needs of the students were met so they can help each other out on various things. These show students needs being met by the people in their lives.” The group indicated that access as a value and practice were central to Interdependence. Although it was not explicitly illustrated on their poster, their artist statement extends the idea of access by considering the ways that people can help one another when their personal access needs are being met.

Figure 52 A panel from the Interdependence DJS artwork that illustrates a student getting special directions on their homework.



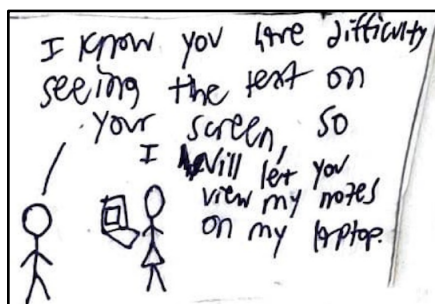
Note. Image description: A stick figure student is holding a piece of paper. There is an enlarged image of the paper with the heading “HOMEWORK” and squiggly lines that symbolize special instructions. The stick figure student is saying, “Yeah, this is helpful since I have a learning disability.”

Figure 53 A panel from the Interdependence DJS artwork that illustrates using audio descriptions for videos shown in class.



Note. Image description: Four stick figure students watching a movie scene of a person drawing a flower. A talking bubble come from the movie scene that says “He draws a picture of a flower.” Under that text it says “AUDIO DESCRIPTION VIDEOS.”

Figure 54 A panel from the Interdependence DJS artwork that illustrates a student helping another student by sharing their notes.



Note. Image description: Two stick figures stand together, one holding a computer and one saying, “I know you have difficulty seeing the text on your screen, so I will let you view my notes on my laptop.”

The Recognizing Wholeness group focused on the access tools that were available in the classroom, which made an accessible inclusive environment (see Figure 55). The group included tools that they and their classmates used throughout the day. These tools appeared to be particularly important to them because, as they wrote in their artist statement, “This artwork shows our community.” By including pictures of access tools alongside thoughtful pictures of their classmates, they demonstrated the critical role that access tools play in creating accessible and inclusive classrooms. While the images were of discrete objects, they were placed into a collective community context and more broadly symbolized the importance of accessibility.

Figure 55 *Four images of access tools from the Recognizing Wholeness DJS artwork.*



Note. Image description: From left to right: a picture of a clear plastic bin filled with a variety of colorful sensory tools, a picture of a red bin labeled “FIDGET BOX,” a picture of a wood rocking chair, a picture of a clear bin filled with blue and white calculators.

Throughout this study, Blue and Brian and their group mates embodied a range of ways that access may be enlivened as a value and practice. Furthermore, they expanded how access as a core value and practice may be expanded through considerations of conflicting access needs in the classroom and the communal nature of access tools. While Brian and Blue had differing opinions on why and how they wanted to access school environments, they both identified the importance of individual support and sense of belonging to a larger community. In that way,

access was not simply the tools and instructional techniques, but also getting to know youth and honoring the ways that they wanted to be treated and provided access. Importantly, in the Interdependence group there were also conversations about who was responsible for access in school. While Brian and Paisley appeared to believe that teachers were primarily responsible, the adults in the classroom often prompted them to take more initiative to create access and include Amelia. The Recognizing Wholeness group, on the other hand, appeared to have more of a collective stance on access, which resulted in students creating access for one another and drawing from a variety of access tools available. Overall, as evident in both groups' artwork, access as a value and practice manifested through individual methods of support, specific access tools, and the process of ensuring collective access through community-oriented and access-centered environments.

Expansive Communication

Expansive Communication Comic

Figure 58 and Figure 59 provide an illustrated synthesis of the findings for how disabled students embodied and expanded the Crippling CSP feature of Expansive Communication.

Figure 56 Comic spread for *Expansive Communication findings part I*.

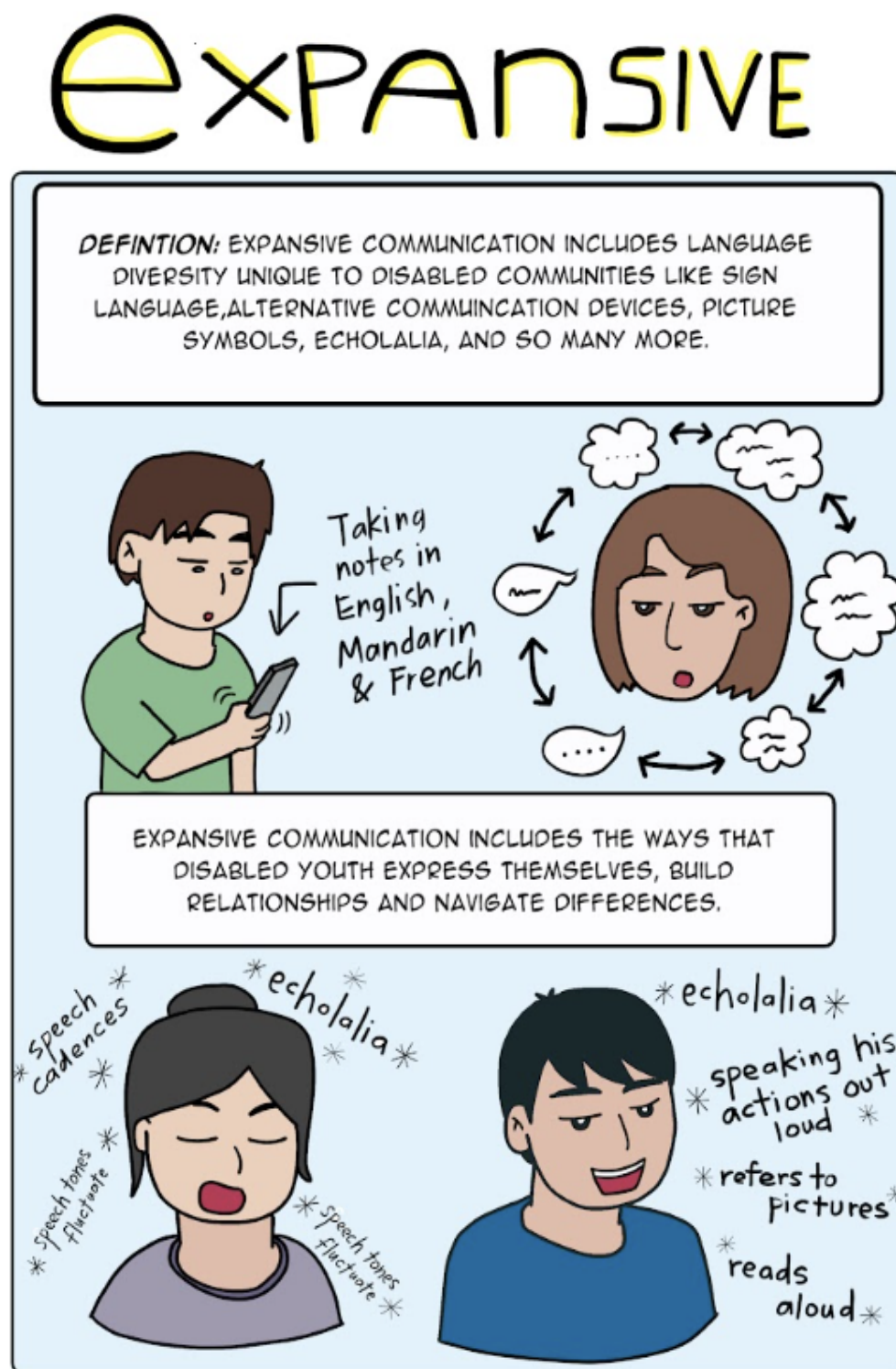
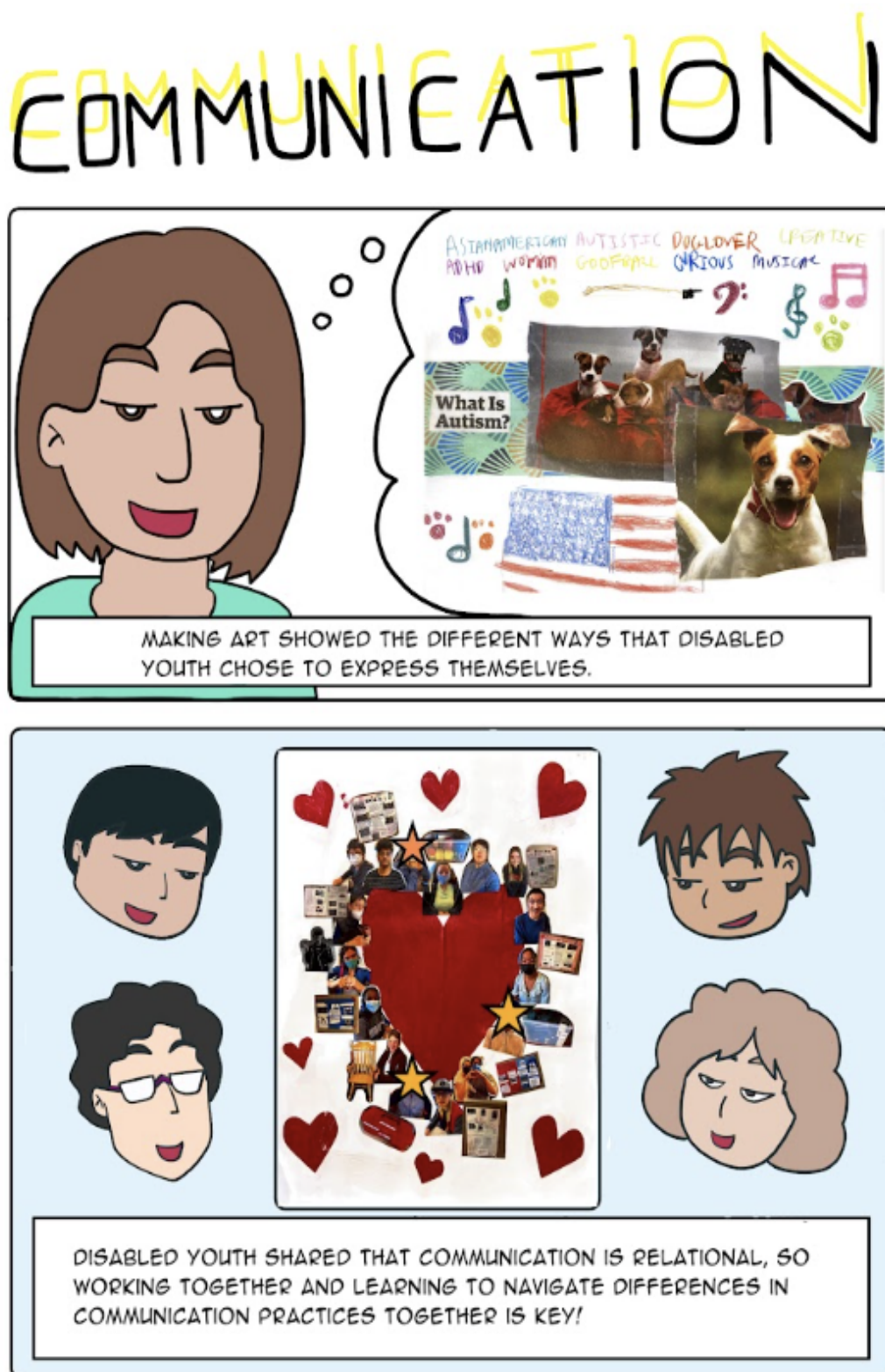


Figure 57 Comic spread for *Expansive Communication findings part II*.



Expansive Communication Found Poem

Communication,
sharing information, thoughts, and feelings.
sustaining a pride in disability identity and personal communication styles
importance of self expression

Brian took notes
Paisley jumped between topics
Amelia spoke,
varied cadences and
used echolalia,

Challenges a singular way to be
“articulate”
All communication is valid
with levels of learning, adaptability, and collaboration.

Expansive Communication Narrative

Expansive communication is the process of sharing information, thoughts, and feelings through a variety of methods and mediums. Expansive communication as a feature of crippling CSP is meant to sustain disability identity and personal communication styles, while also forging relationships across communication styles and linguistic practices.

As I considered how students embodied expansive communication as a feature of CSP, I found myself particularly interested in individual communication practices, navigating differences across communication practices, and the role that the arts play in facilitating communication. These themes came up most in social contexts, therefore this section focuses most on group dynamics and the ways that expansive communication techniques were and were not recognized and valued in the class setting.

To begin, individual communication practices and patterns included the diversity of ways that students expressed their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. These ranged from movement and gesture, to verbal speech, writing, vocal tics, echolalia, communication boards, drawing, typing, and so many more. For individual communication practices and patterns, I was not as interested

in why a student used specific communication practices, but how they used that communication practice to express themselves. I wanted to take this into consideration first without attaching it to the goal of interpreting and understanding each other's communication practices in order to honor the importance of self expression regardless of whether that form of expression was accessible to another person. For instance, in the Interdependence group, Brian often took notes to process his thoughts and primarily used English, but also incorporated other languages that were important to him (e.g. Mandarin, French). Paisley quickly jumped between topics and often repeating herself. Finally, Amelia spoke with cadences that appeared to fluctuate with her level of interest in the topic and at times used echolalia, echoing another person's words and phrases to process ideas. These forms of communication were not always accessible to one another, but challenged the idea that there is a singular way to be "articulate" and defied the expectations to assimilate into linear nondisabled English-speaking communication methods.

Similarly, the Recognizing Wholeness group members each had distinct communication practices and patterns. Blue often externally processed their ideas through speech in a low volume. Zàn Huā also externally processed using speech, but he used a louder volume and often incorporated jokes and "roasts" (as he called them). Hailey fluctuated between answering the classwork questions directly and asking group members about themselves and similarities she may have with each of them. Finally, Jazz used a variety of echolalia, vocalizations, speaking his actions aloud, and referring to pictures and reading aloud. Each of these communication practices and patterns were individual and important to honor as they were methods of processing and expressing the student's ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Each method of communication was valid and valuable to learn about and from the students.

At times the value of exploring and supporting expansive methods of communication came with barriers that required learning and engaging with one another across communication practices. Navigating differences across communication practices specifically came up in group dynamics in which multiple group members did not have shared communication practices. While every group of people requires a level of navigating differences in communication styles, there are particular considerations that must be made in disabled spaces. Specifically, barriers in communication can be integrally connected to a disabled person's access needs. Schools ascribe to the expectation that all students need to communicate in oral and written English, therefore often special education programs are designed to help disabled students navigate barriers to that singular notion of language and communication. In crippling CSP, expansive communication brings an abundance of beauty and knowledge, but also expands the potential access barriers that disabled people may experience in communicating with one another.

Acknowledging and addressing these access barriers while honoring the ways that communication may be tied to disability identity, community, and culture was complex in the classroom. Throughout the DJS unit, communication was not only contingent on knowing multiple communication techniques, but deeply relational, requiring a level of learning, adaptability, and collaboration. At times this was facilitated by the adults in the class. For instance, Paisley wanted to know more about Amelia's drawings and what they meant. However, her communication patterns and practices were not fully accessible to Amelia's communication process. Simultaneously, Amelia's communication techniques were not always fully accessible and comprehensive to Paisley. Therefore, the SLP helped navigate the communication barriers that existed between the two. In the following episode, navigating expansive communication

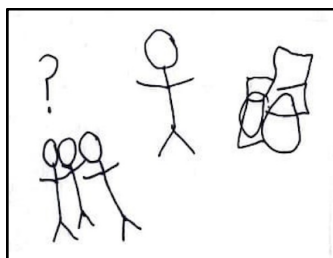
techniques included speaking, drawing, and reading in order for Paisley to better understand the meaning of Amelia's drawings.

Paisley: Amelia, What are your pictures mean? I'm confused. Amelia the images you contributed, I'm confused by the meaning. Amelia I'm confused by the meaning of a couple images. Amelia I want to know because I'm confused by this picture here.

SLP (to Paisley): She might need think time, Paisley.

SLP (to Amelia): You did this picture here? (SLP points to one of the pictures that Amelia drew, see Figure 58).

Figure 58 A panel that Amelia drew for the Interdependence DJS artwork showing a group of stick figures with a question mark over their head and another stick figure next to a wheelchair.



Note. Image description: In the bottom left corner of the picture are three stick figures close to one another so that their hands and heads are touching. Above their heads is a question mark. In the middle top of the picture is a drawn stick figure standing alone. In the top right corner is a drawing of a wheelchair.

Paisley (to the SLP): I thought it was. I think this is when, I'm not sure.

SLP (to Paisley): ...Amelia is far away from [the poster] (Paisley passes the poster across the table to Amelia).

SLP (to Amelia): I want to make sure that you can see. So Amelia, do you remember which picture you did? Did you do these two?

Paisley (to the SLP talking with hand gestures): I remember that she did do those two and I know that, and I know that she printed at least two because they were on [the poster]. I know. I know. I think I knew she made two.

Thus far in the conversation, Paisley initially spoke directly to Amelia at a fast pace with multiple repetitions. Without negating the validity of Paisley's speech patterns, the SLP reminded Paisley of an access barrier that may be occurring for Amelia, the need for more think-time. The SLP then began to model another way of engaging Amelia. However, Paisley then switched to communicate with the SLP instead of waiting for or listening to Amelia. As the

conversation continued, Amelia shared her ideas aloud, but Paisley had difficulty sustaining attention and listening to the lower volume of Amelia's voice. I also entered the conversation to redirect Paisley's attention.

SLP (to Amelia): What does this picture show?

Amelia: Interdependence

(Paisley turns away)

SLP: So how are these pictures showing interdependence? Interdependence means that people are supportive?

Amelia: Supporting each other, the disability community, everyone working together on pursuing one goal.

SLP: So where do you see someone working together?

(Amelia points to the image she drew, see Figure 58)

SLP: There's a group there's a group working together, exactly.

Sarah Tov: Paisley, Amelia is answering your question.

Paisley: Wait, I can't hear. (Paisley leans forward over the poster facing Amelia.)

It appeared that something caught Paisley's attention behind her in the classroom as Amelia began to speak, which made it difficult for Paisley to attend to what Amelia was saying. When I redirected Paisley back to the conversation, she also indicated that she could not hear Amelia. It did not appear that Paisley was being disrespectful to Amelia or purposely ignoring her, but instead needed to address her own access barriers to the conversation. In a final excerpt from this exchange, the SLP continued to facilitate and Paisley and Amelia began to engage with one another more.

SLP: Where are people working together to be supportive in your picture?

Amelia: This (pointing to the drawing, see Figure 58)

Paisley: I'm confused. I didn't quite get that, Amelia.

SLP: The definition of people being supportive. Where do you see that in your picture?

Paisley: But what's the life vest in one of the pictures (referring to another picture that Amelia drew, see Figure 59)? I'm confused by that too.

Amelia: Supportive. Yes.

SLP: They're being supported, right? This group of people and they look like they might be helping somebody with mobility. Do you, what is this, Amelia? What is that?

Amelia: Supportive. Wheel.

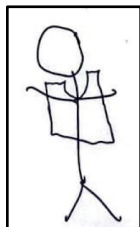
SLP: Wheel?

Amelia: Wheelchair

SLP: It's a wheelchair so they, the group of people, may be wondering. What is the question mark? Is it somebody needs help with mobility?

Paisley: The other one is, what's the other picture mean (referring to Figure 59)?

Figure 59 *A panel that Amelia drew for the Interdependence DJS artwork with a stick figure wearing a shirt.*



Note. Image description: A stick figure with a shirt that is drawn as a square shape over the top half of the stick figures body and a scoop neck.

SLP: What's this (referring to Figure 59)? What's this person doing and what are they showing?

Paisley: And why is the person wearing a life vest?

Amelia: Shirt

SLP: It's a shirt, just a shirt.

Paisley: ...Sorry. Sorry. I thought it was a life vest. The way, the way it was drawn. I mistakenly thought it was a life vest.

In the final segment of this dialogue Paisley and Amelia are ultimately able to navigate their communication differences, as well as resolve a misunderstanding that Paisley had of Amelia's artwork. Paisley spoke more directly to Amelia and Amelia was able to share the content of her drawing. While it's unclear whether Paisley was fully attentive and understood the meaning of the initial drawing under discussion (Figure 58), she was able to glean a better understanding of the second drawing (Figure 59) through navigating differences in access and communication. This is just one example of how groups demonstrated expansive communication techniques and the importance of collaboration across language patterns and practices.

The arts also played an essential role in facilitating communication amongst group members. In the final days of the DJS unit, groups focused on completing their artwork. Based on observations, those days appeared to be the ones that all group members were the most included and engaged across communication differences. There was increased participation (as measured

by the amount of time spent in proximity of the group), increased engagement (as measured by the time that all group members were working together), and increased communication (as measured by the number of unprompted interactions between group members). For instance, in the Interdependence group, on days that were based in discussion and writing, Amelia was often excluded based on proximity (she sat at the opposite end of the table) and Brian and Paisley had to be prompted by adults to include Amelia in conversations. On the other hand, on arts production days, Amelia sat next to Brian and Paisley for the majority of the class time. Also, Brian and Paisley both interacted with Amelia unprompted by adults while working together to print digital images that Amelia drew and modge podging images onto the group poster together. Unlike other days, while completing the arts together, Amelia did not request or engage in alternative activities. The arts days were the only days that Paisley, Brian, and Amelia worked on the project simultaneously as opposed to Amelia working with an adult in parallel to Paisley and Brian. Taken together, this demonstrates the ways that art is not solely an expansive form of communication in itself but opens up communication techniques between disabled youth who have distinct language practices and patterns.

Furthermore, although the Recognizing Wholeness group was generally more inclusive than the Interdependence group, they similarly saw increased participation, communication, and engagement on arts days. On days that were more discussion and writing heavy, Blue and Jazz physically distanced themselves from the group more (based on proximity at the table and the number of sensory breaks they needed). They also often worked in parallel with adults. However, on the days that their group was taking pictures, they were both involved in choosing what and where to take pictures of and worked together to make it happen. The day that the group cut out and modge podged the pictures onto their poster was the only day out of the unit

that Jazz participated and stayed engaged with his group for the entire class period. Jazz also communicated with his group more by standing between Hailey and Zàn Huā as they all placed and painted modge podge on images, speaking aloud each of the roles that he was completing, and using phrases like “Good job” and “Yay.” On this day the group used the most varied approaches to communication, including picture symbols, gestures, spoken language, and arts processes.

In order to more deeply reflect on this exchange and the role of the arts in expansive communication, it is vital to deprioritize writing as an optimal communication technique. The Interdependence and Recognizing Wholeness groups used artwork as a way to express the groups’ across ideas about the DJ principles in ways that were not fully possible through speaking or written text. The arts were critical in expanding individual and collective communication techniques. Students were invited to discover their personal artistic styles, as well as put those in conversation with their group. The DJS unit and student artwork showed that expansive communication dismantled a hierarchy of communication techniques in lieu of honoring the ways that disabled youth personally express themselves, as well as the ways that disabled youth utilize creativity and aesthetics to collaborate.

Choice and Agency

Choice and Agency Comic

Figure 62 and Figure 63 provide an illustrated synthesis of the findings for how disabled students embodied and expanded the Crippling CSP feature of Shared Stories.

Figure 60 Comic spread for Choice and Agency findings part I.

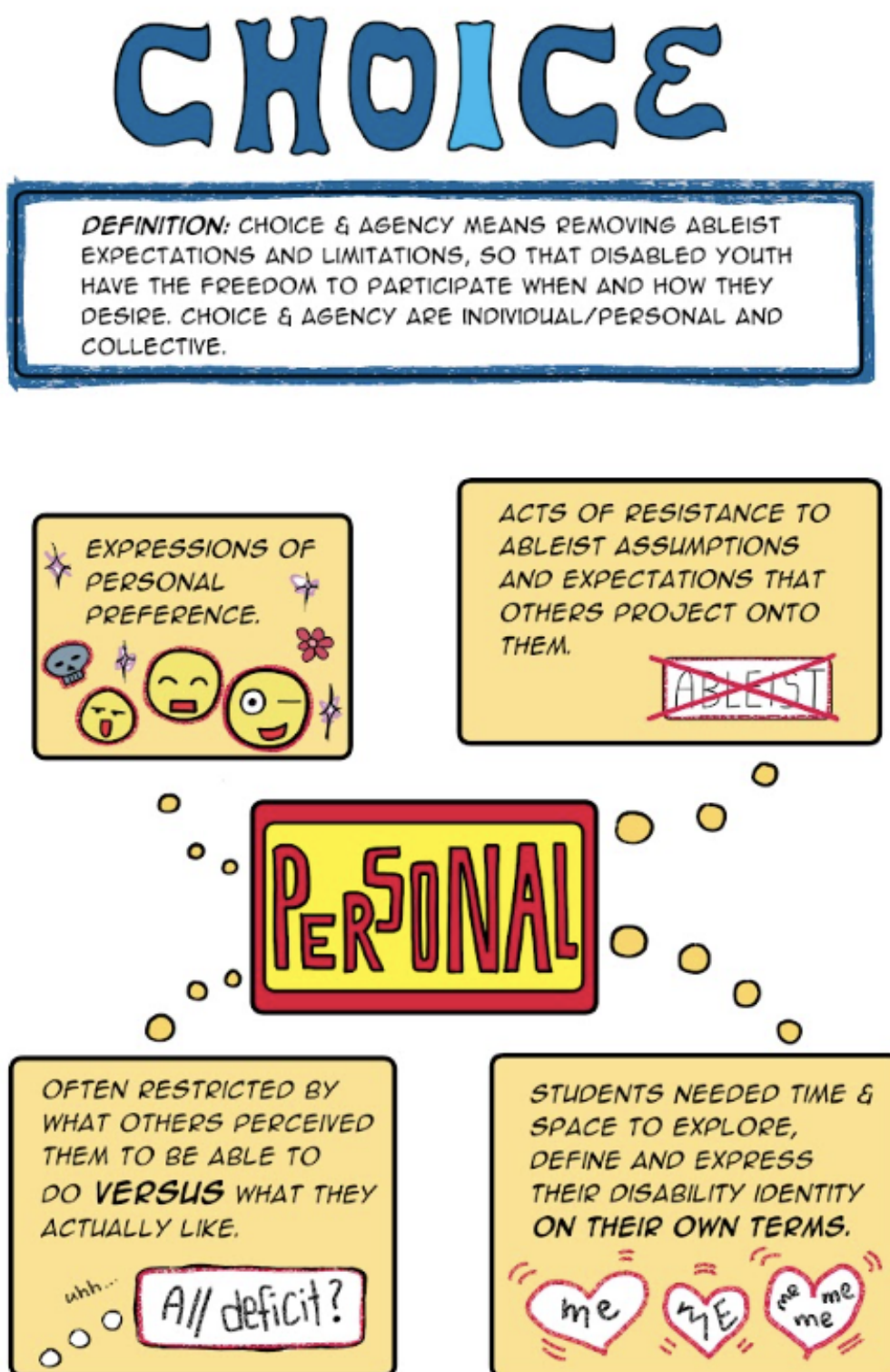
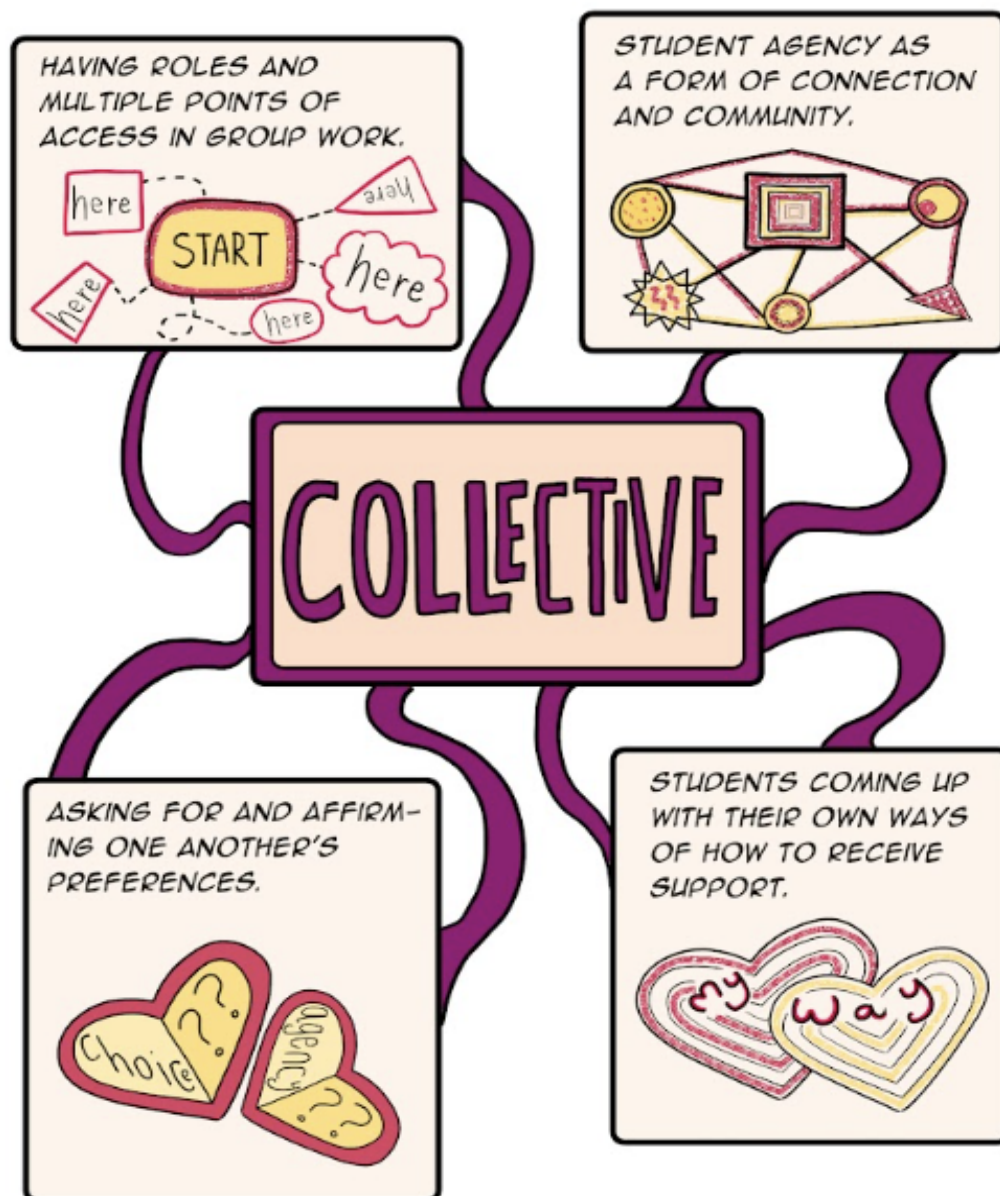


Figure 61 Comic spread for Choice and Agency findings part II.

& AGENCY



Choice and Agency Found Poem

Choice and agency
 Movement against
 social and cultural assumptions
 that disabled youth aren't capable
 Disabled students
 restricted based on ableist beliefs about their ability

Asserting choice and agency
 Individually and collectively
 Preference
 Participation
 Decision making

Choice and agency
 As resistance to exclusion
 refusal of limitations

Choice and Agency Narrative

Choice and agency include when, where, and how disabled youth choose to participate in school spaces, including acts of resistance to ableist conditions. While disabled youth have inherent agency, they are often restricted by educational environments that perpetually limit their choice in school. Choice and agency can be expressed on individual and collective levels. Individually, disabled youth push back on ableist assumptions about their preferences and capacity to participate. On a collective level, disabled youth can work together to create anti-ableist spaces where they use choice and agency as a form of connection and community.

The final feature of crippling CSP is choice and agency. In my coding, I was interested in the ways that disabled youth took up choice and agency as a result of the DJS unit design, as well as the ways that they demonstrated choice and agency beyond the confines of the DJS unit design. Throughout the DJS unit, students illustrated important moments of personal and collective choice and agency. As we expected in the design of the project, providing options for process and product made a difference for students in the ways that they chose to express their ideas, got group feedback, and worked with one another. Unexpectedly, there were important

moments of choice and agency from specific group members as acts of resistance to ableist assumptions and expectations that their other group members or adults projected onto them.

In group work, asserting choice and agency took place on individual levels through expressions of personal preference and participation, as well as collective levels through group decision making. For instance, the Recognizing Wholeness group chose to do a photo collage after an extensive conversation about each person's personal arts preferences. Zàn Huā had been adamant, "Don't ask me to paint...I won't" and when Hailey asked, "Do you think comics would be fun to draw for our projects?," Jazz responded with, "No." Although this level of consideration in group work may be expected amidst nondisabled teams as well, it's important to note that disabled students are not often given choice in the same ways. They are often restricted based on what educators and/or their peers believe they can do. In the Recognizing Wholeness group, it was important to them that each group member had a say in their collective project. They worked together and finally landed on photography as a form of expression that they all wanted to do because it allowed them to individual choose how to take the photos and what they each wanted to include. Collectively the group wanted their poster to display their classroom community, and they also had individual choice about what that meant to them, and which pictures could represent that. This gave each team member choice and agency in their individual participation while contributing to the collective goal.

While choice and agency showed up in big and small ways throughout all the decisions and actions of the groups, they seemed to become particularly salient when a disabled student's choice and agency was used in resistance to exclusionary group practices. This became most apparent for Amelia in the Interdependence group and Jazz in the Recognizing Wholeness group. Paisley and Brian excluded Amelia for the majority of the project, primarily interacting with her

only when prompted by an adult. This led to Amelia often working individually or parallel to the group with an adult. Over the course of the unit, Amelia regularly requested to play Blooket instead of working on the project and began doing math activities on multiple occasions. While some may perceive these requests and activities as evasive, I wondered how they may be demonstrating Amelia's agency to push back on her group's exclusionary practices.

It is also possible that Amelia was originally attempting to use Blooket as a way to engage with her group and the DJS project. She mentioned Blooket while the group was brainstorming their arts design. It was unclear whether this mention was in reference to preferring to do Blooket over the current activity or if Amelia was presenting the idea to design a Blooket about Interdependence for their project. Either way, the idea was initially ignored and then met with a level of mocking by Brian. The exchange began when Brian and Paisley were brainstorming arts idea options without Amelia. I reminded Paisley and Brian, "Be sure to ask Amelia too." Paisley quickly asked, "Amelia, what do you think?," but did not wait for an answer. She looked down at the photo in front of her and missed Amelia's response, "Blooket." Brian didn't respond to Amelia either and moved the conversation along by pointing at another photo and asking Paisley, "What do we like about this?" Amelia again tried to offer, "Blooket." Brian ignored Amelia as he wrote on the group worksheet. During this exchange, we can see how Amelia repeatedly tried to share the idea of Blooket with her group. However, Paisley and Brian did not acknowledge or engage with her responses.

As opposed to considering the ways that Blooket may be used in the DJS project, Brian then made remarks that dismissed Amelia's valuable contributions. Paisley had to leave class early and Brian remarked, "It will be a big ordeal for me without Paisley." Amelia had opened her computer and said, "Blooket." Hearing Amelia for the first time, Brian raised his voice in

what sounded like a level of surprise and outrage, “Blooket?!” I was standing next to the group and asked that we not raise our voice. Brian explained his reaction, “I don’t think there’s any Blooket related to [accessibility]. Wait, there might actually be some of them.” By calling the collaboration with Amelia an “ordeal,” Brian was making ableist assumptions about the process together. Brian’s initial reaction to “Blooket” suggested that he was opposed to what Amelia was saying, however, while talking to me he paused to consider that Blooket could have a connection to their project. His immediate dismissal of “Blooket” appeared to be connected to an ableist assumption of Amelia’s participation. On the other hand, in talking to me, he gave the idea a deeper level of thought.

Although Jazz appeared to be included in his group more than Amelia, there were also moments that his participation was mediated by ableist assumptions and expectations. His actions therefore appeared to be “non-compliant,” but may also be read as important acts of choice and agency through resistance to exclusionary practices. For Jazz, this became particularly observable on the day that the group was completing the art project. There were multiple steps to completing the Recognizing Wholeness project: cutting, placing, gluing. Instead of allowing Jazz choice in the arts process, the IA, Amy, often stepped in to tell Jazz what to do. She asked Jazz to sit with her, which removed him from parts of the group process. At times she also redirected or interfered when he was making his own design choices, which she didn’t try to control with any other group members. Amy dictated where she wanted Jazz to put the photos, at times literally moving a picture after he placed it.

However, this did not deter Jazz from demonstrating agency to participate in ways that felt meaningful to him. At one point, after placing and modge podging his own picture on the poster, Amy told Jazz to sit back down with her to cut out more photos, but Jazz remained

standing with Hailey and Zàn Huā. This “noncompliance” could be seen as an act of individual agency that prioritized inclusion with his peers and participation in the group process.

Moreover, although Jazz did not comply with Amy’s direction, he appeared to be supported by his groupmates, which could be seen as a move towards collective agency. Throughout the class period each group member had options to participate in ways that felt meaningful to them. They often affirmed one another’s participation and checked in to make sure they were all on the same page. Group members repeatedly let one another know that they trusted each others’ ideas and actions. In contrast to Amy’s directives, Hailey often posed questions to Jazz asking when he wanted to participate, how he wanted to participate, and where he wanted to place photos, which made him part of the arts and design process. As such, the group was creating an anti-ableist space based on individual and collective agency.

Throughout the DJS unit, disabled youth both took advantage of the choices available in the curriculum design, as well as expanded the conceptualization of Crippling CSP by demonstrating ways that they could use choice and agency to resist ableist assumptions and limitations in the process of completing the project. The design of the DJS unit included multiple ways that disabled youth and their groups had choice in their personal expressions and project styles. When provided agency, they not only took advantage of the available options, but also they came up with new and innovative ideas. Amelia and Jazz also provided insights into the ways that choice and agency need to be recognized in individual student’s reactions to ableist conditions. When ableist assumptions and expectations were projected onto them by educators or classmates, they demonstrated techniques to remove themselves from ableist conditions and/or assert their right to inclusion and participation in group activities. Overall, while choice and agency were considered in the design of the DJS unit, disabled youth expanded the

conceptualization of choice and agency as a feature of Crippling CSP through their acts of resistance.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this dissertation was to listen to and learn from disabled youths' experience and expressions of disability identity, community, and culture in school. Moreover, in the school context, I was particularly interested in the ways that disabled youth contributed to Crippling CSP as a conceptual framework in research and pedagogy. In the preceding findings chapters, I presented inductive analysis to consider how disabled youth made sense of disability identity alongside the principles of DJ and worked in cross-disability collaborations using the arts, as well as deductive analysis highlighting the ways that disabled youth embodied and expanded the conceptual framework, Crippling CSP. In this chapter, I put the goals of the study and its findings into conversation with disabled scholarship and activism. I then provide explicit implications of this research, including future iterations of the DJS unit, applications of Crippling CSP to instructional practice more broadly, and innovations in educational research inspired by disabled youth. Finally, I present limitations of the study and how future work may further contribute to centering the beauty and brilliance of disabled youth.

Disability Identity, Community, and Culture in School Contexts

In this research project, disabled youth presented a range of relationships with and expressions of disability identity, community, and culture. In general, disabled youth shared negative experiences at school based on ableist interactions with peers and teachers. However, the desire to distance or embrace disability identity appeared more personal with some disabled youth proudly identifying as disabled regardless of ableist experiences in education and others continuing to perpetuate internalized ableism. Moreover, regardless of whether the youths'

relationship to disability identity, having a disability community came up as an important source of connection.

Although youth in this study all shared the values of access and inclusion, cross-disability collaborations proved challenging at times based on ableist assumptions, conflicting access needs, and lack of opportunities to practice what it means to listen to and support one another's access needs. Using the arts as a mediational tool for personal expression and group work appeared to make a difference in the ways that disabled youth engaged with one another. The arts provided additional opportunities to communicate and participate that were not achievable simply through spoken or written language. Through analysis of group interactions and artistic expressions, this study also demonstrated how disabled youth carry on legacies of disability culture and contribute to evolving iterations of disability culture.

These findings highlight, first the importance of centering disabled youths' narratives in ways that allows for the complexity, and at times contradictions, in youths' shifting and evolving sense of disability identity and community. Second, these findings illustrate that attending to the nature of intergenerational and peer cross-disability collaborations in the classroom can create opportunities for building disability communities and sustaining disability culture. Third, I propose the arts as a critical pedagogical resource for disabled ways of knowing and being. And finally, I will discuss the many teachings that disabled youth offered for the expansion and applications of Crippling CSP.

Evolving Senses of Disability Identity and Community

In this work, it was vital to center the disabled youths' narratives to better understand the complexities of an evolving sense of disability identity and community. To date, the majority of

research and community scholarship has focused on adult disability identity and community, which has most often been done with disabled adult activists (Forber-Pratt, 2019, Mueller, 2019, Wong, 2020). Adult narratives are important to understand transformations and connections to disability identity and community over time but do not specifically attend to the dynamic and evolving nature of adolescent disability identity and community in schools. Learning from disabled youth provided a more nuanced picture of what it means to honor students' personal and fluid identifications, as well as positively develop and sustain disability identity and community in schools.

Importantly, it was a reminder that there is no one “right” way to identify as disabled, and disability identity and community mean different things for different people (Wong, XXXX). For instance, students like Blue were proud of their disability identity, so it was important to provide opportunities to talk about disability and celebrate it in class. On the other hand, Brian regularly referred to being misdiagnosed and did not identify as disabled. However, he identified with what he called the “IEP community” and his out of school ABA program. Although there appeared to be the potential contradictions in Brian’s case (identifying with the disability community without identifying as disabled), it was critical to remain open to and consider how, when, and why disabled youth embrace and/or distance disability as part of their personal experiences. This positions disability identity as a fluid identity that requires care and connection through a variety of sources, particularly as these youth navigate potential internalized stigmas around disability identity.

Classroom instruction like the DJS unit and other disability affirming work in social skills classes may be one such resource for providing space and time for youth to develop disability identity and/or connect with disability community. In my prior work with the disabled

youth featured in the OO5 student voice videos, disabled youth similarly spoke to the ways that the project contributed to an asset perspective of disability, positive disability identity, and connection to disability community (Tov, 2022). This type of instruction must unapologetically center disabled radiance as a contribution to youths' fluid and evolving identities and community. Centering disabled youth narrative in this way both guides a deeper and more relational understanding of disability identity and community and encourages disabled youth to dream of an otherwise to the ableist schooling practices that they have some to expect.

Embracing the complexity of evolving connections to disability identity and community is significant because it allows for youth to explore and express themselves in ways that are not controlled or confined by adult definitions of what disability identity and community “should” be. As disabled youth in this study drew on experiences with peers, families, and educators to understand themselves as individuals and in relation to DJ, it is important to be cognitive of the impact of the explicit and implicit messages disabled youth are receiving in schools. Within educational contexts, there needs to be resources (e.g., counselors, after school clubs, disability community events and programs) that support a range of disability identifications and the ways that those identifications may shift and evolve over time. Classroom and school environments must be designed with messaging about disabled wisdom, joy, and creativity so that disabled youth are provided ample opportunity to identify with those parts of themselves.

Cross-Disability Community Within and Across Generations

Another important component of this study was that it highlighted the importance of cross-disability community and solidarity amongst peers as supported by intergenerational connections and relationships with disabled adults. While other studies have attended to inclusive techniques in a general education setting, those have primarily focused on teacher

practices as opposed to student-centered models (Jenkins & Murawski, 2023). This dissertation, on the other hand, provides new insights on the ways that adults (particularly disabled adults) both disrupt and perpetuate ableism in schools and how that may impact cross-disability collaboration. However, more importantly, it focuses on the value of cross-disability solidarity and community in schools amongst youth. It positions disabled youth as system changers on a classroom level, which can be used as a model for broader shifts in educational spaces.

Navigating cross-disability collaborations included a variety of challenges, but also broadened their perspectives and skill sets. It gave students time to unlearn collaborative styles, especially those that caused them to inadvertently exclude peers with different access needs. In group settings and follow up interviews, disabled youth had opportunities to take an inward gaze and consider how ableism impacted their perspectives and behaviors. Specifically, Brian's reflections on the ways that he perceived and talked about disability appeared to shift through open and authentic conversations and collaborations with disabled peers and adults. As the DJS unit was grounded in community and collaboration, it offered new perspectives on when and how disabled youth grew in connection to one another.

The DJS unit also provided intergenerational community and solidarity. Students shared the importance of having disabled educators lead the DJS unit. This was driven by the ways that disabled youth and adults could connect by sharing stories of disability and ableism, as well as learn about disability history and current disability culture and activism. Furthermore, multiple students, and particularly Blue, suggested that disabled students connect across grade levels. This expands on the importance of disability representation in curriculum (Baglieri & Lalvani, 2018, Tov, 2023, Waitoller & King-Thorius, 2016) by demonstrating the value of disabled adults and mentors in schools. It builds on the importance of disabled mentorship that that the disabled

youth in the OO5 project talked about OO5 as the first place that they experienced intergenerational learning and collaboration (Office of Education Ombuds, 2020, Tov, 2022).

Arts as a Pedagogical Resource for Disabled Ways of Knowing and Being

As discussed throughout my findings, artistic expression served as an essential pedagogical resource for disabled ways of knowing and being. Current literature on the use of the arts for disabled artists tends to focus on the arts as a therapeutic outlet (Yi & Wood, 2020), arts as a tool for differentiation (Koch & Thompson, 2017), and art as ideal for inclusion in general education settings because “the arts are accessible to all” (Henderson & Lasley, 2014, p. 12). However, this dissertation shifts the role of the arts to an essential component of disabled culture that centers on crip creativity and disabled ways of knowing and being. Furthermore, the DJS unit called on the arts as a form of social engagement and liberatory practice. It incorporated models of disabled artists and activists and included opportunities for individual and collective creative works. Using the arts, youth were able to dream, visualize, and illustrate the ways that they hoped DJ could be realized in school settings.

As a mediational tool, artistic representation and expression offered increased access, collaboration, and community building across students’ varied communication techniques. For individual projects, such as the Educational Journey Maps and Celebrating Me Collages, creative options provided choice and agency in how disabled youth chose to express themselves. Choice and agency in these projects meant attending to access beyond a mediational tool that allows a student to access a standardized assignment. Instead, it called on the ways that access is connected to individual and collective identity and therefore can be used as a mediational tool for expanding expressions of disabled ways of knowing and being.

This was further proven by the ways that the arts were used in cross-disability collaborations. This dissertation was designed to build on the ways that cross-disability collaborations in the arts have been celebrated as crip-centric liberated zones amongst queer disabled artists of color (Kafai, 2021). Throughout the DJS unit, youth provided glimpses into what “crip liberated zones” could look like in schools. These glimpses were evident in moments of cross-disability solidarity throughout the arts process, as well as their final DJS artwork which visualized the dream of Disability Justice as a practice of yet-to-be in our schools.

Embodiments and Expansions of Crippling CSP

A final consideration for this discussion (although there could be many more) is explicit attention to the ways that disabled youth embodied and expanded the conceptual framework of Crippling CSP. The DJS unit was designed with instruction that attended to the features of Crippling CSP, but I knew that as a framework it was incomplete without the perspectives and experiences of disabled youth. The findings of this research were able to demonstrate examples of the features of Crippling CSP as originally theorized, as well as gaps. Drawing on student expressions of disability identity, relationship to disability community, and connections to disability culture, it became clear that this conceptual framework required additional attention to the fluid and continual construction of disability identity, community, and culture as distinct features and in relation to one another.

Youth expanded each feature of crippling CSP by providing clear examples of how the features may be used to uplift and sustain disability culture in school, as well as in the broader disability community. Disability culture in adult spaces tend to focus on disabled adults who are “descriptively disabled *and* [have] a political understanding about that lived experience” including “an analysis of ableism, power, and privilege” (Mingus, 2010). This research may

offer new perspectives on how disability culture engages disabled youth (and disabled people in general) in deconstructing ableist ideologies and allowing for growth and understanding through listening and learning from one another. This may be a way that intergenerational and peer-to-peer networks of disabled people include “crip doulaing” as a “birthing into disability culture/community... [that names] disability as a space to be born into, not alone but supported and welcomed by other disabled people” (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018, p. 147). Although crip doulaing was not explicitly part of the DJS unit, the ways that honoring disabled experiences and shared stories came up in the unit may be indicative of the many ways that disabled youth can support one another through experiences of disability labels and classifications, special education, and ableist stigma in school.

Additionally, disabled youth expanded ideas about access as a core value and practice and expansive communication. In this discussion, I consider the ways that access as a core value and practice and expansive communication may be approached as two components of interdependence amongst youth. Mingus (2010) points out that:

In an ableist context, interdependence will always get framed as a “burden,” and disability will always get framed as “inferior.” To actively work to build something that is thought of as an undeniably undesirable and to try to reframe it to others as liberatory, is no small task.

Especially as disabled people, we know what it means to live interdependent lives and it does not always feel revolutionary or enjoyable. (para. 26, italics in original)

Throughout the DJS unit, youth navigated cross-disabilities that some framed as a burden and/or positioned disability as inferior. This contrasted with the ways that the youth spoke about the desire to create accessible and inclusive school settings. These apparent contradictions may connect to Mingus’ point that in ableist contexts (in this case schools) it is “no small task” to

reframe interdependence. However, utilizing the ways that disabled youth reframed IEPs through the lens of interdependence and began learning and using multiple access tools and communication techniques, this may be a generative space to develop conceptions of disability culture in schools. That is, move from an individualistic and limiting notion of access and communication to ones that are expansive, relational, and culturally sustaining.

Finally, findings from this study contribute to a reframing of disabled youths' individual and collective choice and agency as part of disability culture. There is a range of research on student choice and agency based on input on IEPs and self-advocacy (e.g., Smith & Mueller, 2022), however that maintains a focus on choice and agency in relation to participation and inclusion in general education settings. Instead, this dissertation builds on DisCrit resistance and the use of choice as agency as acts of resistance to ableist schooling conditions (Annamma & Handy, 2019, Annamma & Morrison, 2018). The DJS unit was designed to surface these ableist conditions and validate disabled youths' experiences while centering their perspectives on the ways that ableist contexts could shift to celebrate and sustain them. As a feature of Crippling CSP, my findings suggest that choice & agency positions disabled youth and crip culture as the catalysts and leaders in transformative anti-ableist schools.

Implications

As discussed, the themes of this dissertation provide new ways of considering disability identity, community, and culture in schools through the convergence of educational research and instructional design. Although the findings of this research are based on retrospective analysis, formative and retrospective analysis contributed to implications for the DJS unit. As such, the unit has been able to transform through two additional iterations of Adina's instruction. The goal of this dissertation was to forward practical applications and theoretical innovations of Crippling

CSP to celebrate disability identity, community, and culture in schools. Therefore, the implications of this work include (1) context specific implications for the DJS unit, (2) applications of Crippling CSP as a transformative framework in the creation of affinity spaces for disabled youth in school more generally, and (3) implications for generalizable educational theory that foregrounds disabled ways of being and knowing.

Implications for the Disability Justice in Schools Unit Design

There are several implications for the DJS unit design, primarily considering the ways that educators can (re)design the unit and disabled youth perspective can be incorporated more fully into the design. One step in the process would be the importance of getting the teaching team all on the same page before the unit. While Adina and I had done extensive work together and specifically used DJ as a framework in multiple projects, the rest of the adults in the classroom were learning about DJ and disability identity, community, and culture for the first time alongside the youth. For future iterations of the DJS unit, it will be vital to work for the classroom teaching team (e.g., instructional assistant, service providers, other adults who regular support instruction) to be included in this learning before the unit begins (and preferably from the beginning of the school year). As presented in the findings of this research, the educators and service providers tended to support individual groups or group members, however that limited the impact we could have on the class all together.

Throughout any future iteration of the DJS unit it is important to continue to ask, reflect, and shift practice based on questions of access like: How are we designing for access? How are we judging when something is accessible? How can we adjust instruction when disabled youth are provided the access tools, but are still being excluded from group collaborations? Additionally, these questions necessarily need to connect access to disability identity,

community, and culture. These are questions that I regularly memo-ed about in my formative analysis and came up in retrospective analysis. As the DJS unit shifts with each new set of students, it is integral to continue to approach access as relational. Access needs to be considered based on getting to know the students before the initial design of resources and tools. Access also needs to be evaluated based on student experience, not adult assumption. Educators, including disabled educators, need to take an inward gaze on how, even with the best intentions (access as a value), we may be implicated in ableist instruction (access as a practice), including how we are approaching access through an intersectional lens (or not). Youth engagement in these discussions is also vital.

Another implication, and one that Adina has taken up, is the incorporation of teaching and practicing a range of access and communication methods and how to use them in cross-disability collaborations. My design did not provide explicit attention to and problem solving for cross-disability collaborations. As I taught the unit two years ago, I regularly used the phrase “access is a collective process,” but did not necessarily engage youth in discussing what that means for them and how they can enact that value. In subsequent iterations of the DJS unit, Adina has led explicit discussions amongst youth about what it means to work in collaboration and meet one another’s access needs.

Finally, as Blue suggested in their interview and other disabled youth suggested anecdotally, an implication and extension of the DJS unit may be having disabled youth become facilitators of the unit for peers and/or younger students. This would carry on the importance of disabled mentorship and disabled youth as the leaders of DJ in schools.

Implications for Classroom and School Contexts

The most central implication of this research is the possibility of creating transformative affinity spaces for disabled youth. Special education was created as a parallel structure meant to segregate and “other” disabled youth. Recent literature dismisses the parallel programming of special education in lieu of inclusion in general education spaces (e.g., Baglieri, 2022, Valle & Connor, 2019). This research does not dispute the importance of inclusion in general education but suggests that special education programs and classes may have untapped potential as sites of transformation. As this research illuminated, disability identity, community, and culture can be, and needs to be, fostered in school settings. This goes beyond access to general education curriculum that teaches to nondisabled norms of thinking, knowing, and behaving. Instead, it centers crip culture as a new lens through which to create crip liberated zones for disabled youth in school.

As suggested throughout the findings and discussion, a key implication of Crippling CSP in schools is the importance of disability community and mentorship. In their final DJS artwork, groups illustrated disabled teachers and disabled activists as part of the school community. To materialize this future dreaming, it would be necessary to recruit disabled educators in a variety of roles in school, as well as develop meaningful and ongoing partnerships with community organizations led for and by disabled people. Furthermore, recruitment and community partnerships would need to be representative of the diversity of the disabled community and center a commitment to cross-movement organizing to ensure that it didn’t reify other systems of oppression in school.

In addition to transformation affinity spaces for youth and intergenerational mentorship amongst crip kin, another implication of this work is the importance of the arts as a mediational

tool for teaching and learning and a sustaining force for disability identity, community, and culture. As schools begin to see value in disability identity, community, and culture, it will be vital for them to incorporate crip creativity and leverage the arts as an instructional format that nurtures and sustains disability culture.

Crippling Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy as an Educational Theory

Finally, I return to Crippling CSP as an implication for innovations in educational research. Crippling CSP is not a quick fix or set of specific instructional strategies. Instead, it requires an entirely new framework for the purpose, methods, and analysis of educational research and pedagogical practice with disabled youth. This includes, but is not limited to, the importance of disabled scholars, artists, and activists as leaders and consultants in educational research. Furthermore, it requires intergenerational spaces for educational research that is driven by crip creativity and kinship.

As demonstrated throughout this dissertation, Crippling CSP calls on educational researchers to think broadly about the ways that our research engages disability community and culture through collaborations in research design and analysis, as well as representation and dissemination of findings. In addition to the arts as a tool that centers disabled ways of knowing and being in K-12 classrooms, I have worked to incorporate that into the research process as well. My own use of a range of arts processes, which go beyond those presented in this dissertation, are tied to my disability identity and disabled ways of processing and expressing my ideas. Furthermore, as discussed throughout this work, I utilize the arts in community and collaboration with disabled friends, artists, and activists. In those spaces we often draw from insights and creativity in crip culture. Crippling CSP holds promise for K-12 classrooms and disabled wisdom in community-centered research methodologies.

Limitations and Future Research

This study had a few limitations that are important to highlight, including: participant recruitment and demographics, scope of the study, and data analysis techniques. First, participant recruitment was based on students in Adina's class. This form of recruitment meant that I was restricted to the student demographics and grades represented in her class. Future research could examine Crippling CSP at different grade levels (e.g., early childhood, elementary, middle school, post-secondary). On another level, broadening representation could mean considering the identities and cultures of the students included in the research. While student participants were representative of a range of identities in some ways, future research could attend to gaps in this student population. For instance, most of the student participants in this study identified with Asian heritage. Future research using Crippling CSP may attend to different intersectional experiences.

Another limitation within the research design was varying attention to race and ethnicity in data collection and analysis. Although my design commitments included attention to intersectionality, I fell short at times and believe that future research could continue to use intersectionality to deepen learning about disability identity, community, and culture in schools. In this work, youth discussed a range of experiences related to their race, ethnicity, home languages, and family immigration stories, however those were not always put into conversation with their experiences of disability. Research activities, questions, and analysis techniques may be shifted in future research of Crippling CSP to address intersectionality more directly.

Another limitation of the data sources and analysis was the type of art in data sources and the number of groups represented in analysis. Educational Journey Maps and Celebrating Me Collages used visual arts, which may have contributed to primarily visual arts being used in the

final DJS group artwork. Future work may offer additional options, such as improv or poetry. This was further limited by my choice to do a deeper analysis of two groups, as opposed to analysis across all the groups (there were eight total). There were affordances to focusing on two groups, however it meant missing other formats of group artwork (e.g., video, song playlists) and differences across a greater number of group dynamics. The data collected in this research could be used for future analysis and/or future research may use alternative data sources and analysis methods.

Finally, the scope of the research could be seen as a limitation. Data collection only took place during the 8-week DJS unit. As findings from this research suggests, disability identity, community, and culture in schools is fluid and evolving, therefore future research may benefit from longer scopes of research. Although I only used data collected during the DJS unit in this dissertation, I was able to visit Adina's classes since then and I had a follow up interview with Brian. In the year after the DJS unit it was incredible to learn how youth were shifting their perspectives of and connections to disability identity, community, and culture. For instance, in our interview a year after the study, Brian shared that he proudly identified as disabled and explained how important it was to be in community with other disabled youth. Future research could increase the length of the study to gain a fuller picture of youth experience and perspective.

Conclusion

This study expands educational theories, research, and praxis by bringing disability identity, community, and culture together in several new ways. First, it proposes Crippling CSP, a new conceptual framework for celebrating, nurturing, and sustaining disability identity, community, and culture in schools. Additionally, Crippling CSP guides praxis. This dissertation

included Crippling CSP as a method for developing curriculum and instruction (e.g., the DJS unit), an analytic tool (e.g., coding techniques using the features of Crippling CSP), and crip-centric community-research collaborations. As such, my hope is that Crippling CSP remains as dynamic, fluid, and expansive as crip culture itself.

This study centered disabled youths' individual and collective experiences to make sense of how they develop and experience disability identity, community, and culture in schools. As presented throughout this dissertation, disabled youths' stories provide profound opportunities for them to reclaim their personal narratives of disability, practice cross-disability collaborations, and bring crip cultural ways of knowing and being to the classroom. The use of the arts proved particularly vital to rethinking how pedagogical tools can be used to create access and engagement that are grounded in disability culture.

In closing, I want to express deep gratitude for the wisdom and insights that disabled youth have gifted me throughout the years, and especially in this dissertation. As a disabled special education teacher for eight years, I was discouraged from sharing my disability identity with my students. At the time I experienced it as a missed opportunity for intergenerational cross-disability solidarity and felt limited by social and administrative expectations. It wasn't until working on the OO5 project that I learned the incredible joy found in open and authentic crip community and culture in education. I am in awe of the brilliance that disabled youth offer everyday if we're willing to listen. In this dissertation alone, they directed incredible learning about the meaning and expression of disability identity, community, and culture, as well as expansions of Crippling CSP, and future dreaming for Disability Justice in schools. As Sins Invalid (2019) wrote, "By centering the leadership of those most impacted, we keep ourselves grounded in real-world problems and find creative strategies for resistance" (p. 23). Disabled

youth, especially those at the intersections of multiple systems of oppression, are the leaders that we need to imagine, transform, and (re)design schooling spaces.

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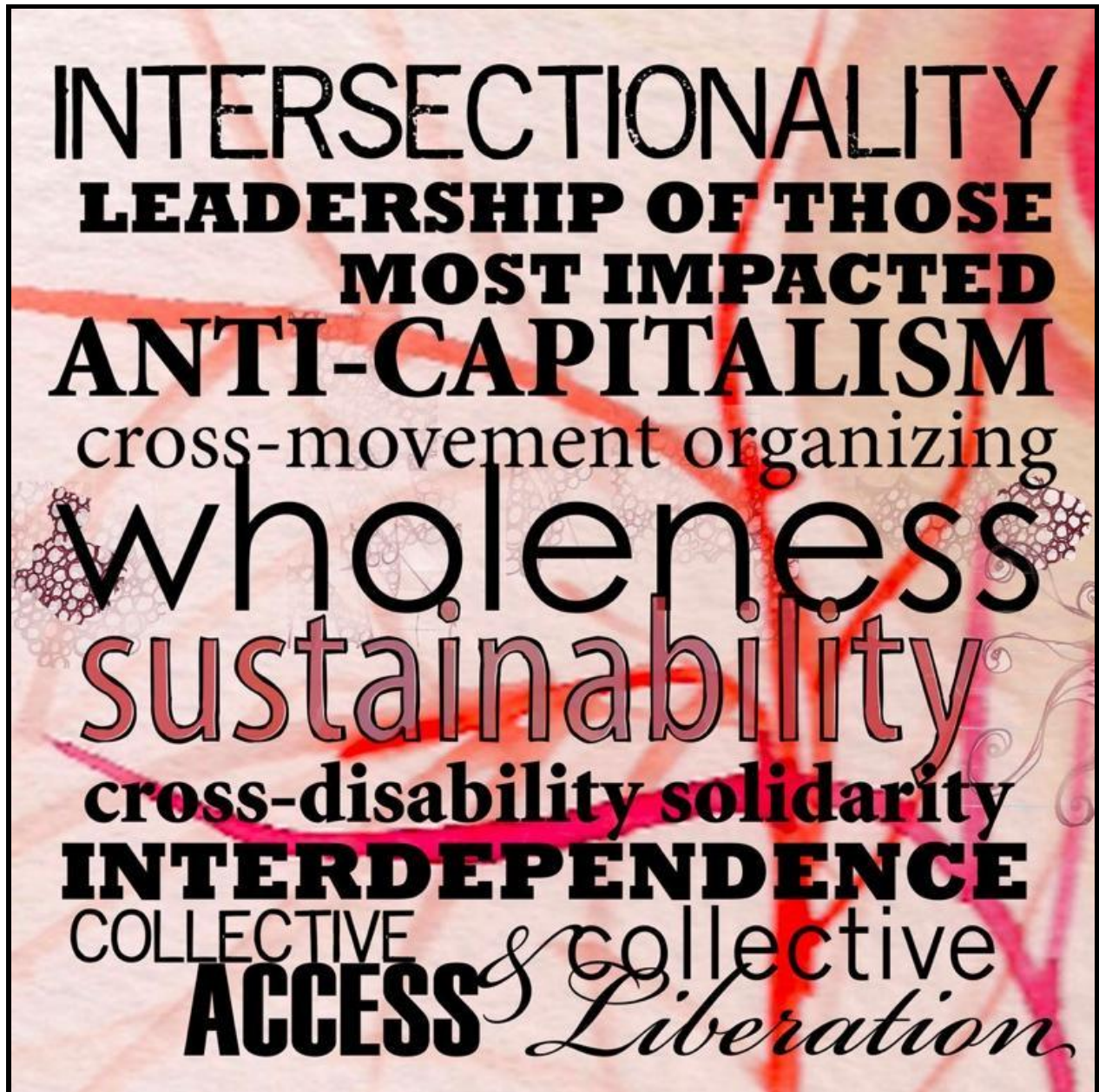
Appendices

Appendix A: Disability Justice in Schools Showcase Booklet

Disability Justice in Schools Gallery Showcase



Disability Justice is a framework by Sins Invalid, a collective of disabled queer people of color. Disability Justice includes 10 guiding principles that we explored together in class.



The following pages include all of the artwork created by students as part of the Disability Justice in Schools unit.

INTERSECTING US



Our principle of Disability Justice is Intersectionality.

To us, intersectionality means different parts of someone's identity overlapping and coming together to make someone who they are.

An example of intersectionality in schools would be SEPIA club, which is Students Educating Peers in Autism Acceptance. This is an example because high school students can find a disabled community at school. Another example of intersectionality would be the experiences of disabled queer people of color because they form a community of minorities to fight against relevant social justice issues.

Our artwork shows how we differ and relate as humans while sharing parts of our lives.

To create our artwork, we used cameras, microphones and computers.

When people look at our artwork, we want them to think about identity importance and self-knowledge.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Percy (he/him): Percy is an autistic student that is Asian American that loves animals and science.

Cassie (she/her): Cassie is an athletic teen who likes to go hiking, bike, and use swings. She also likes singing and dolls.

Deji (she/her): Deji is an Asian American soon to be college student who enjoys making music and hanging out.

ONE OF A KIND COMMUNITY



Our principle of Disability Justice is Recognizing Wholeness.

To us, recognizing wholeness means recognizing and valuing everyone's differences with an open perspective and inclusiveness.

An example of recognizing wholeness in schools would be school newspaper interviews of different diverse groups at [our high school] because we can recognize everyone in our community as an equal part of it. Another example is SEPIA club, which is Students Educating Peers in Autism Acceptance. This is an example because many students without IEPs have joined, bringing awareness to the broader school community.

Our artwork shows our community.

To create our artwork, we used modge podge, paper, and pictures.

When people look at our artwork, we want them to think about accepting everyone for who they are without judgment.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Blue (they/them): I like video games. I have a cat. I have ASD. I am agender. I am very emotional and take things personally. I have ADHD and OCD.

Hailey (she/her): I have a cat, I swim, and play tennis, and have a twin brother. I also enjoy doing crafts and art projects like this.

Zan Hua (he/him): I like to sing and dance. I have two older brothers. I like musical theater.

Jazz: I like to play iPad. I like to play computer. I'm 16 years old. I like to play toys.

HELPING HAND



Our principle of Disability Justice is Leadership of Those Most Impacted.

To us, leadership of those most impacted means disabled people helping other disabled people and taking care of people with disabilities. This shows leadership because stepping up to lead is important.

Examples of this principle in school would be hiring disabled teachers and tutors with disabilities because everyone should be able to have the opportunity to lead.

Our artwork shows that there is a hand helping another person by lifting them up symbolizing disability community leading.

To create our artwork we used paint, vibrant colors, brushes, water, and canvas.

When people look at our artwork, we want them to think about anyone can lead themselves and we also want them to think about the fact that they're not alone and that others can help them.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Aisha (she/her): I am very happy I joined NTV this year. Everyone is like a big family. Because of NTV I got my best friend since 4th grade back.

Zack (he/him): I am the youngest with an age gap of 16-18 years to my sister and brother. Being an adult is gonna happen soon, so might as well enjoy being a kid.

Josh (he/him): I like to go outside and go to church. I like to go to Korea. My hobbies are playing video games on YouTube.

Lucas (he/him): I am a very outgoing person. I am happy to be alive, 7 years cancer free!

SHOWING LEADERSHIP OF THOSE MOST IMPACTED



Our principle of Disability Justice is Leadership of Those Most Impacted.

To us, leadership of those most impacted means disabled people teaching about disability, learning from those who understand and experience the issue. It's important to learn from people with different perspectives because it gives a fuller understanding of different hardships people overcome.

Examples of this principle in school would be teachers that have disabilities, student leaders with disabilities, and recruiting disabled staff. Giving disabled people these positions of power is important because they understand the fundamental issues with the system and how to best address them.

Our artwork shows what leadership of the most impacted looks like if it was implemented and practiced. Ian's piece shows text messages in different colors and shapes symbolizing how leaders can speak from various perspectives. Jorge's piece shows a disabled teacher teaching nondisabled students about disability culture. Thomas's piece shows a disabled college professor sharing their passion for teaching with their students.

To create our artwork we used paints (acrylic) and modge podge, paper, and marker.

When people look at our artwork, we want them to learn from it and see our principle represented.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

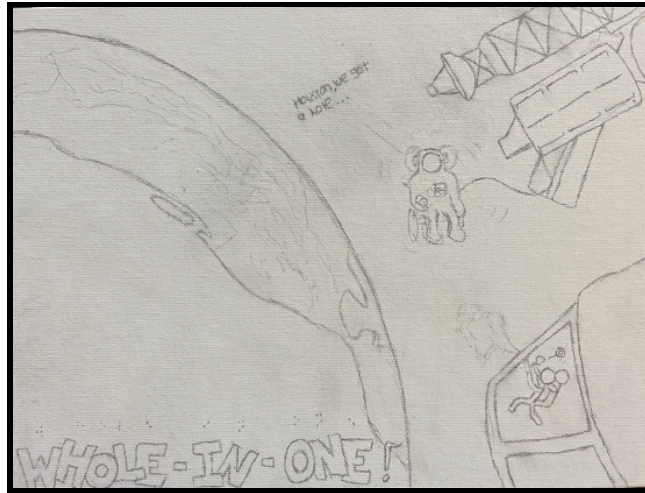
Choi (he/him), 16, sophomore: He loves playing minecraft and loves french fries, diet coke, and hamburger. His favorite colors are magenta and purple. He loves Venom.

Tom (he/him), 17, junior: Football, softball, and baseball are my favorite sports. I like Apex Legends. My favorite shoes are my Travis Scott's and my Nasty Boys.

Alfred (he/him), 16, junior: His top 3 games are Cod, GTAV, and NFS (need for speed). He loves Groot. His favorite shoes are my Dangeruss's and his Ken Griffey's. His best food is Mexican and Asian.

Molly (he/him), 17, junior: He likes soccer, Among Us, FIFA, spending time with friends and Star Wars. I like this project because I feel it's important to project the voices that know the ins and outs of problems.

WHOLE-IN-ONE



Our principle of Disability Justice is Recognizing Wholeness.

To us, recognizing wholeness means body and mind could not be separate, we are all whole people with full history and experience.

Examples of this principle in school would be every student's ideas/thoughts get accepted and heard. Another example is celebrating disabilities.

Our artwork shows disability not defined with weaknesses.

To create our artwork we used canvas, pencil, paper, and song.

When people look at our artwork, we want them to think about disability does not define your weaknesses. This could be something someone could draw strength from.

PLAYLIST

Each of the songs has a meaning related to recognizing wholeness:

- Jolin Tsai - "Womxnly" - Yie Yung Zhi was a junior high student that was bullied by classmates because his gender nonconformity. He has an "accidental death." This artist wrote this song based on his story and struggles.
- Billie Elish & Khalid - "Lovely" - Artists have been outspoken and have worked their way through struggles with depression and anxiety. This is about getting out everything horrible after feeling miserable.
- Lady Gaga - "Born This Way" - This song is inspired by 90s music which empowered women minorities and LGBTQ community. This was her freedom song.
- Lorelai Mosnegutu - "A Million Dreams" - A girl born without femurs plays the piano and wrote the lyrics. She plays the piano with her feet.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Tim (he/him): I love drawing engineering stuff. I like science and technology. I have autism and ADHD.

Alex (she/her): My actions/attitude are often seen like I don't care, but I am actually like the things/people surrounding me.

MANY MINDS



Our principle of Disability Justice is Intersectionality.

To us, intersectionality means there are multiple identities in society like races and cultures and not everyone is the same. Intersectionality is when people with different oppressed identities interact. People with different oppressed identity factors interact with one another.

Examples of this principle in school would be inclusive environments and making sure classmates are there to emotionally support you who have identities similar to you to ask how you feel. This relates to intersectionality because they express different ways of how they feel. Also, this is related to intersectionality because you can talk about oppressions together.

Our artwork shows many people with various amounts of identity pieces. This shows intersectionality because it shows the many things a person can be. Our artwork also shows a mentally disabled person feels lonely, depressed, and he can't find happiness in life. The disabled people want to be included. There are multiple characters with disabilities and some people have different views and cultures. Intersectionality is part of this person's story because they are grouping together because of shared oppressions. They have different races and different disabilities.

To create our artwork we used poster, markers, paper, and pencil.

When people look at our artwork, we want them to stop having ableist views on people and mental disabilities. We also want people to think about how intersectionality can be observed in groups of people.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Vince (he/him): My name is Vince. I am 18 years old and have Autism and ADHD. I play bass guitar in a band. I really enjoy 80s hair metal music and writing songs.

Ciara (she/her): I am a hot mess and very stressed. I have two cats I love. My hobbies include drawing, reading, yoga, hiking, and rock climbing.

Douglas (he/him): I'm Douglas, and I'm lonely, had depression for 4 years, socially awkward, and I feel lonely all the time. I like meditating, being alone, and games.

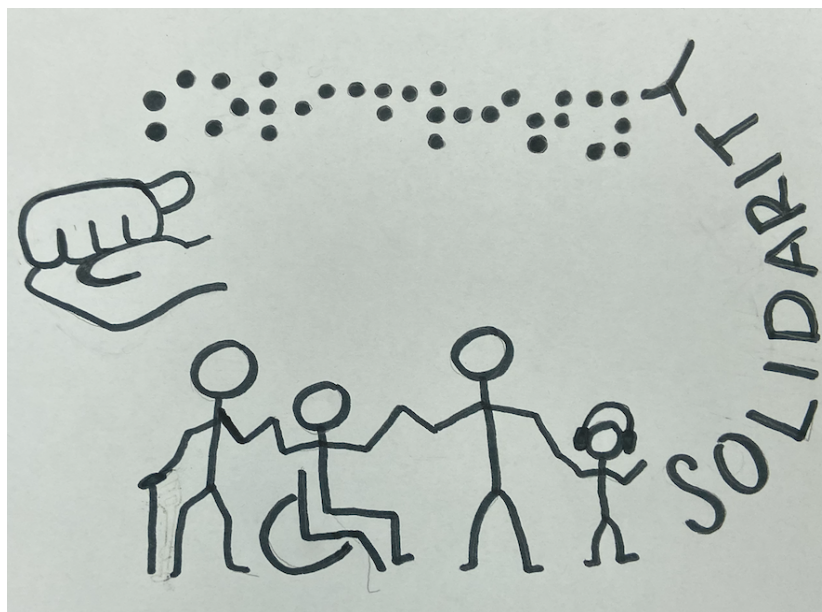
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Paisley (she/her, age 17): I have ADHD and Autism and I struggle socially because of these. Some of the illustrations in the collage depict accommodations that I actually have. I am in orchestra.

Brian (he/him, age 15): I moved from China to United States at age 10 (3 months away from being 11) and got misdiagnosed about being autistic. I play basketball and chess outside of school.

Amelia (she/her, age 15): I am a freshman at [] High School. I play bells in the school band.

CREATING THE YET-TO-BE



Our disability justice principle is Cross Disability Solidarity

To us, this principle means people with different disabilities coming together to make change.

Examples of this principle in schools would be spaces for educators with disabilities to work together and share their experiences. It also means teaching educators and students multiple ways to communicate. In our classrooms it means celebrating disability identity and culture and creating inclusion models that go beyond the physical placement of disabled students in general education settings. At recess or in sports it means having students share accessible equipment so they can participate in sports teams.

Our artwork shows the many ways people with disabilities communicate, such as through Braille and sign language, and SymbolStix showing many different disabilities (physical, sensory, non-apparent). Our design is in a circle representing the interdependent and cyclical nature of solidarity, and how we need one another.

To create our artwork we used screen printing materials to make t-shirts.

When people look at our artwork, we want them to think about different ways to show up in solidarity for different people with disabilities. We want to challenge people to look beyond what they already do, and consider additional ways of being. Solidarity is an action and this artwork is a call to action.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Sarah Arvey Tov (she/her) is a disabled graduate student at the University of Washington focused on research, scholarship, and curriculum exploring intersectionality and disability identity, community, and culture. She was a special education teacher for 8 years and is so excited to be working with students on this project!

Adina Rosenberg (she/her) is a disabled teacher. This is her 6th year working in Bellevue School District. She enjoys reading, dancing, and teaching about disability justice!