

THE
CIRCLE



MAKERS

BY JULIE CAUSTON, PH.D.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
SHERRILL KNEZEL

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Illustrations by SHERRILL KNEZEL

[INCLUSIVE
schooling]

Visit www.inclusiveschooling.com to connect to Julie and her work.

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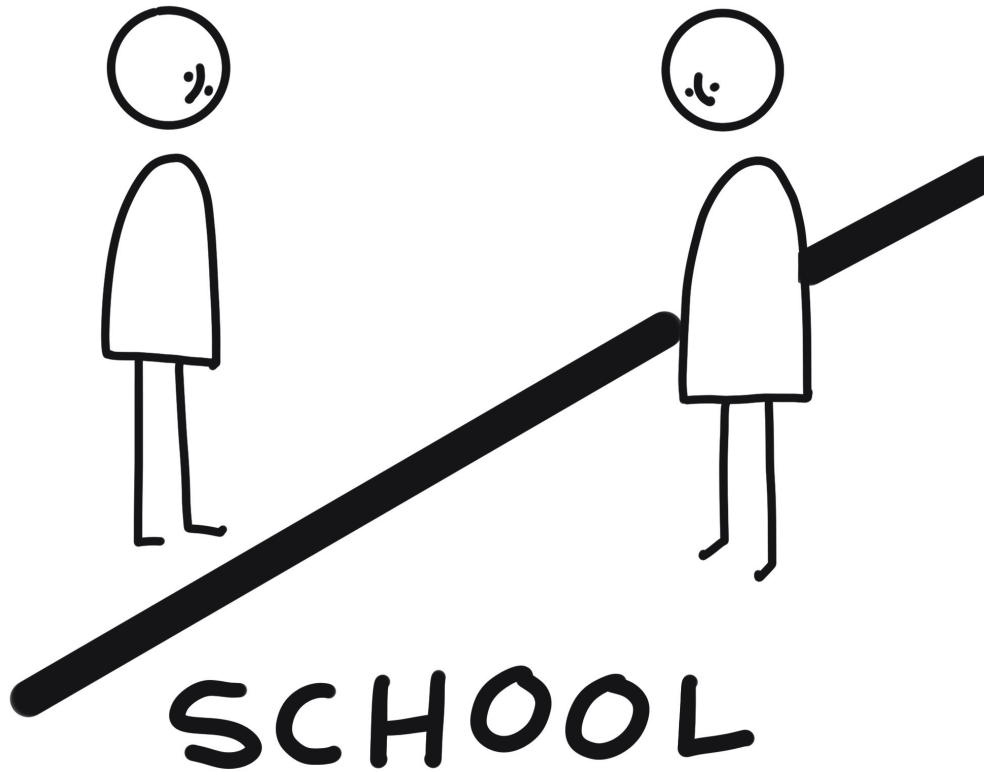
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Dedicated to
YOU.

Thank you for creating new circles
where everyone can belong!



Long ago in schools,
we tried to draw lines to make
distinctions between students. These lines
were drawn in thick dark ink between people.



These lines were drawn to mark the
differences between them.

These lines were supposed to be helpful—they were supposed to help teachers distinguish between those who could go fast, and those who needed to go slow.

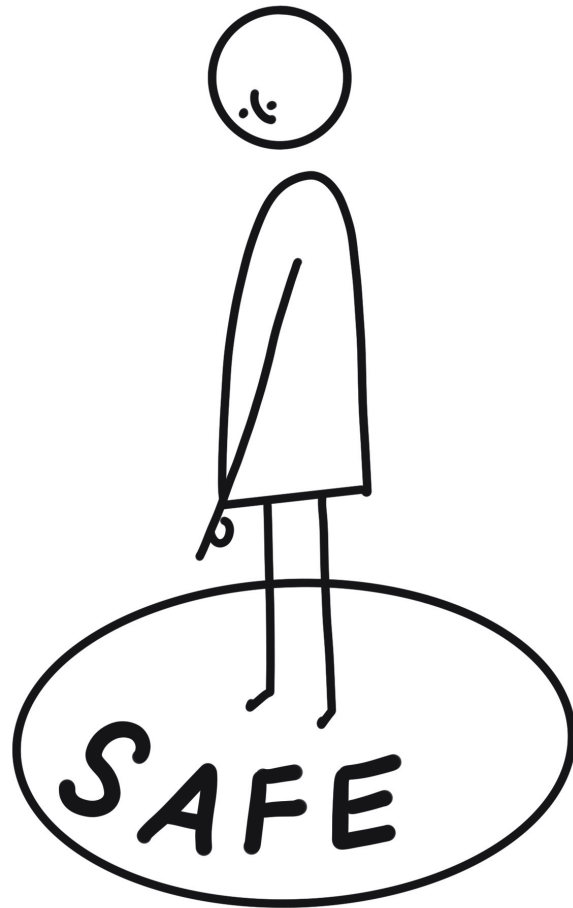


RIGHT
STUFF

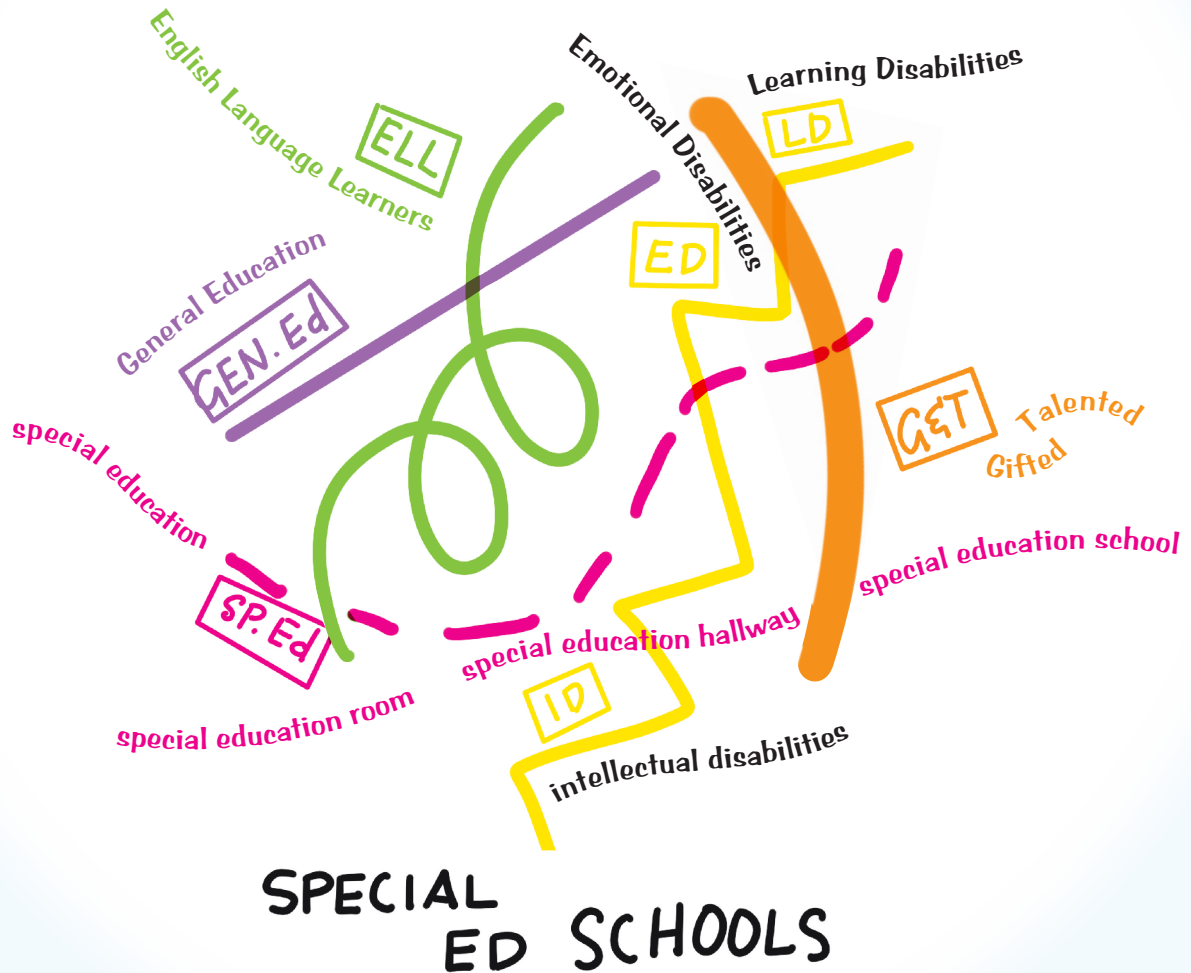
RIGHT
WAY

These lines were meant to help teachers teach the “right” stuff in the “right” way.

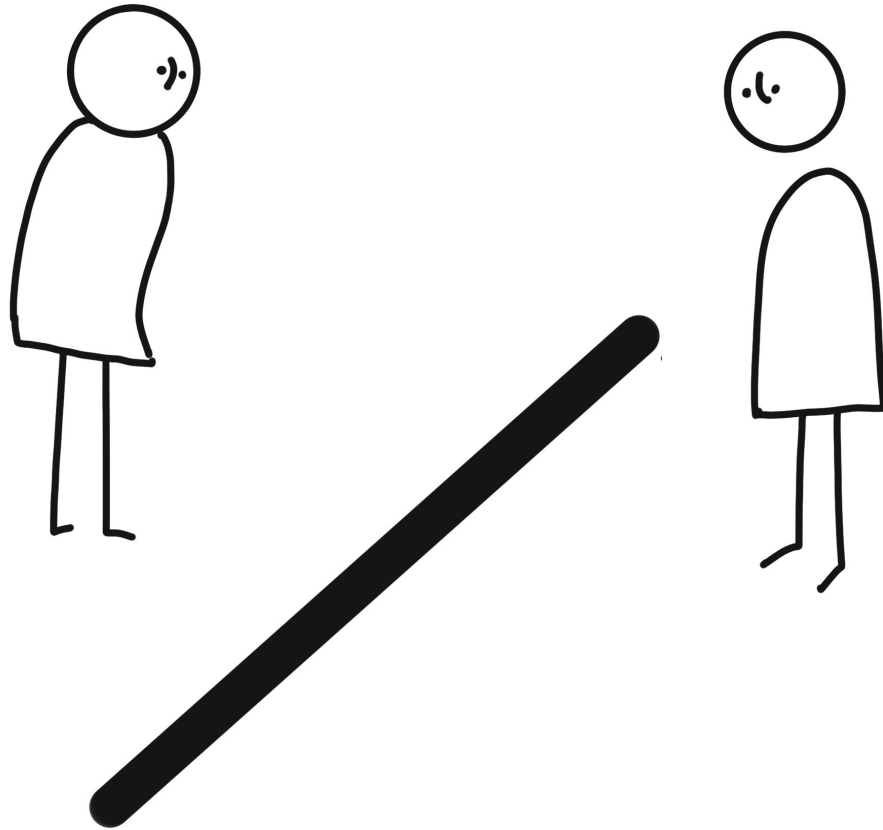
These lines made some
people feel comfortable and safe.



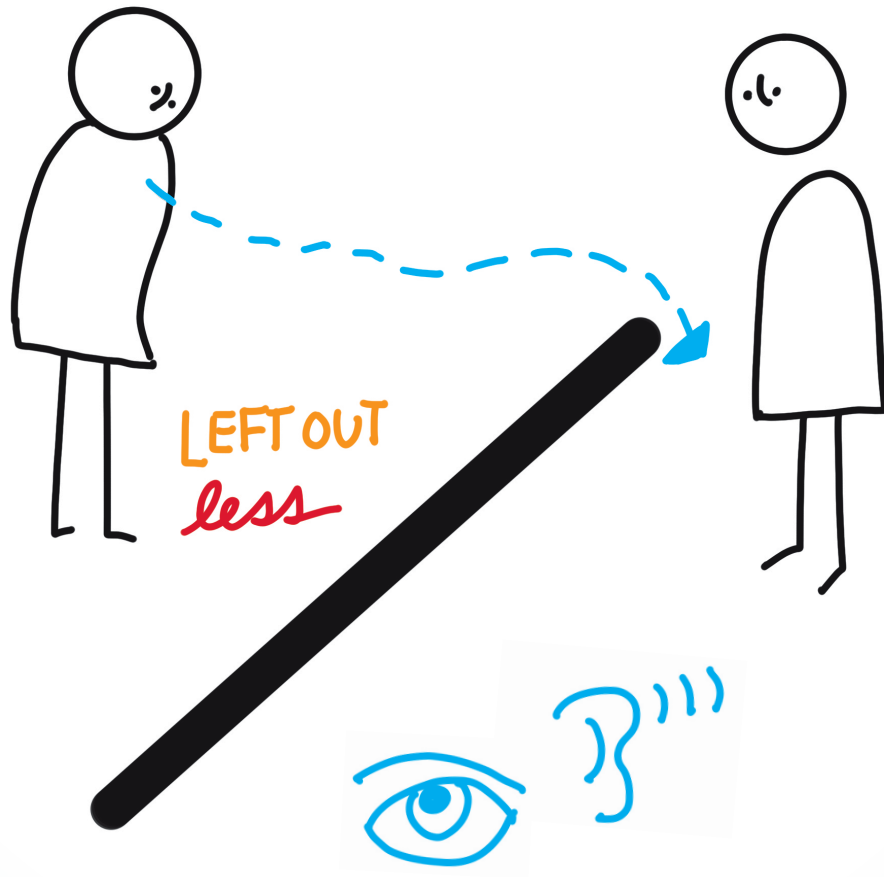
One problem was there were so many lines, that we had to put labels on our lines to keep them straight.



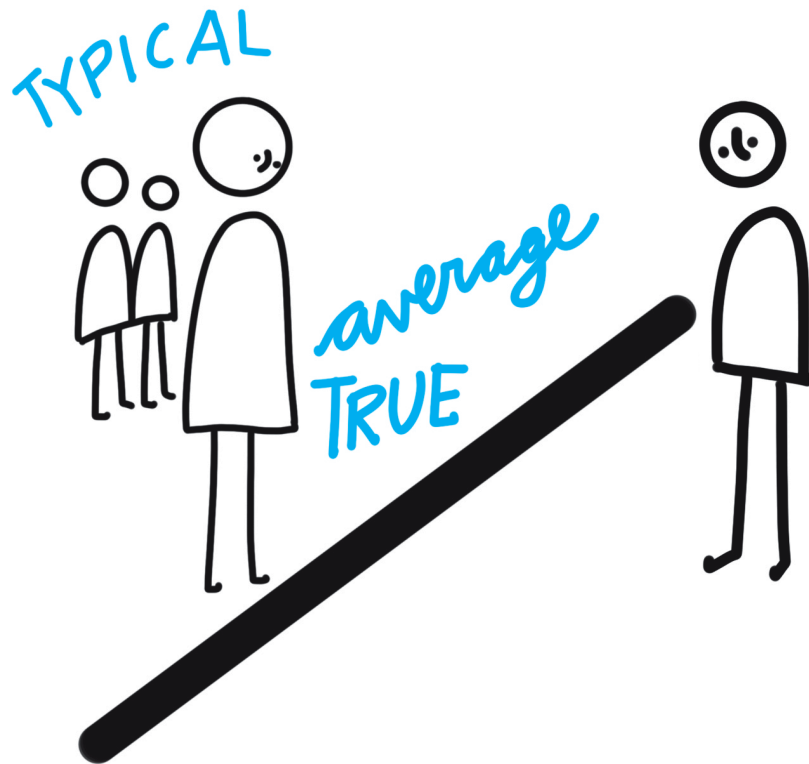
Another problem was, when we drew these lines...someone was always on one side and someone was always on the other.



Someone was always left out,
someone was always given less, someone
was always wanting to be seen, or heard or part of.

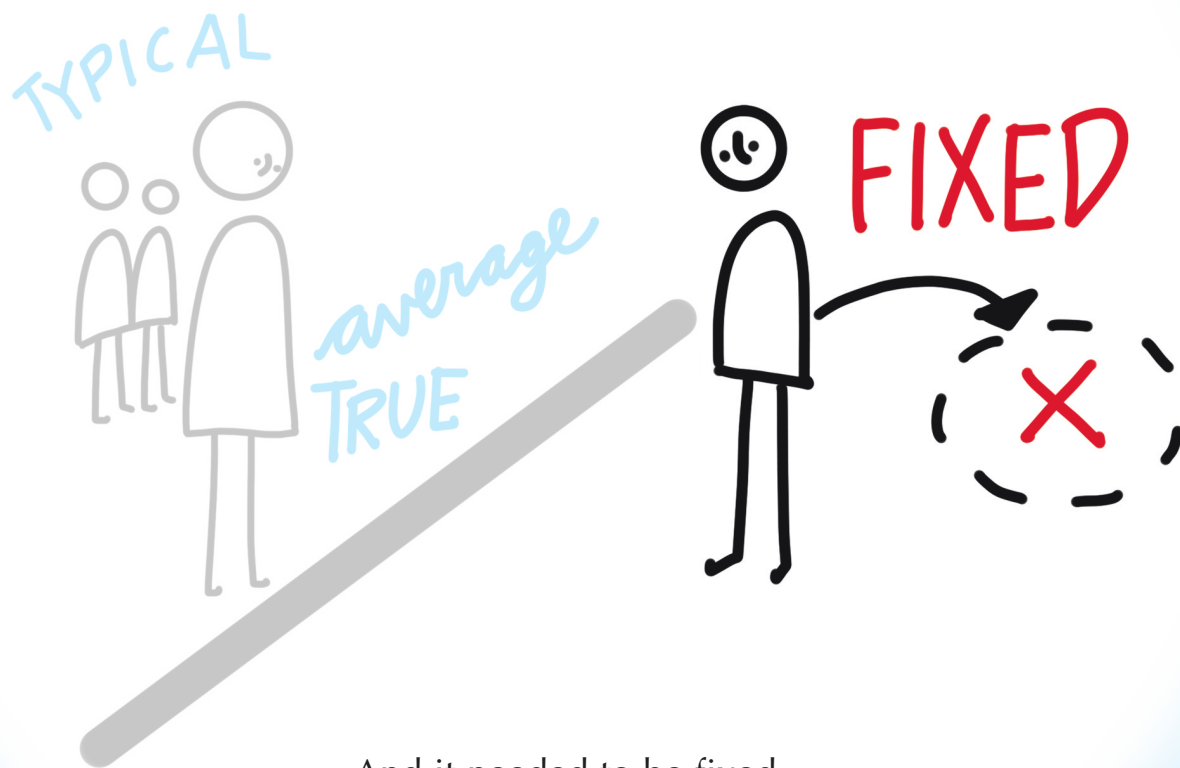


Another problem was
that people assumed that students on
one side of the line were typical learners.



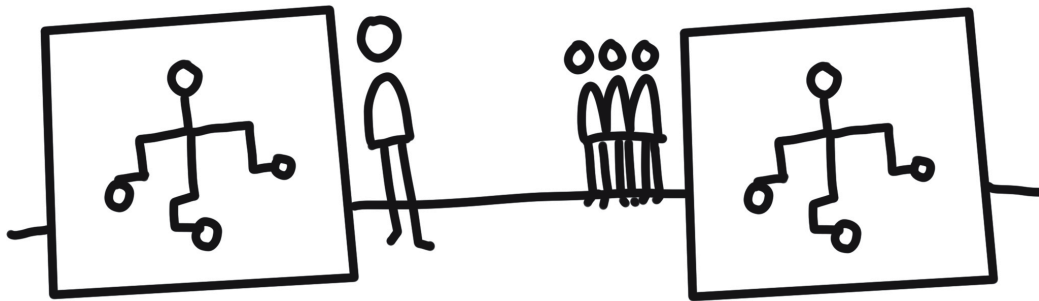
And that typical was real and that
average was true.

And anyone who wasn't average had to go somewhere else to learn something else. The problem was people saw disability as something that needed to be fixed.



And it needed to be fixed over there, in a different room. In a separate space.

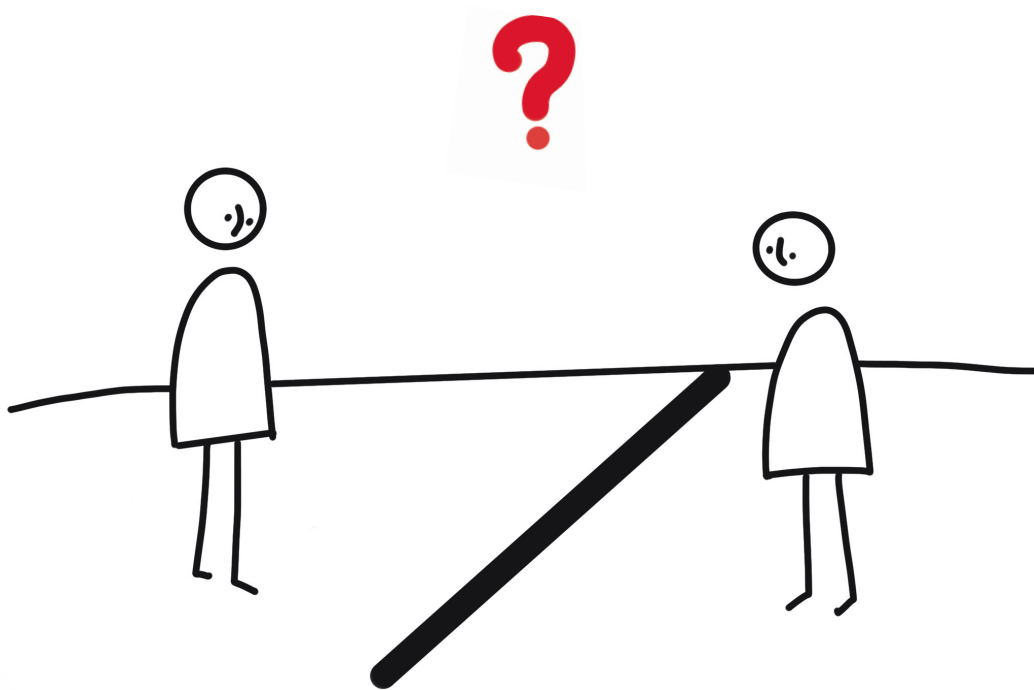
Eventually these lines created separate boxes, or classrooms, a separate system, with separate teachers, classes for students who were thought to need separate things.



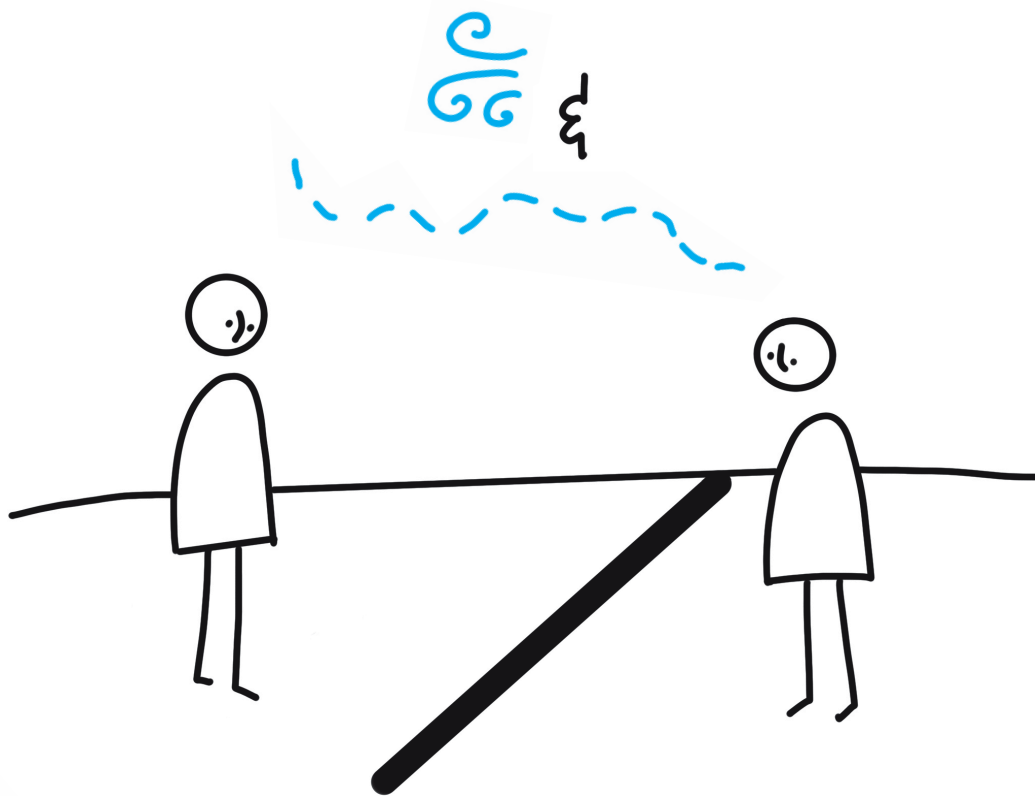
SEPARATE = GOOD

People even started to think that separate lines and boxes were good.

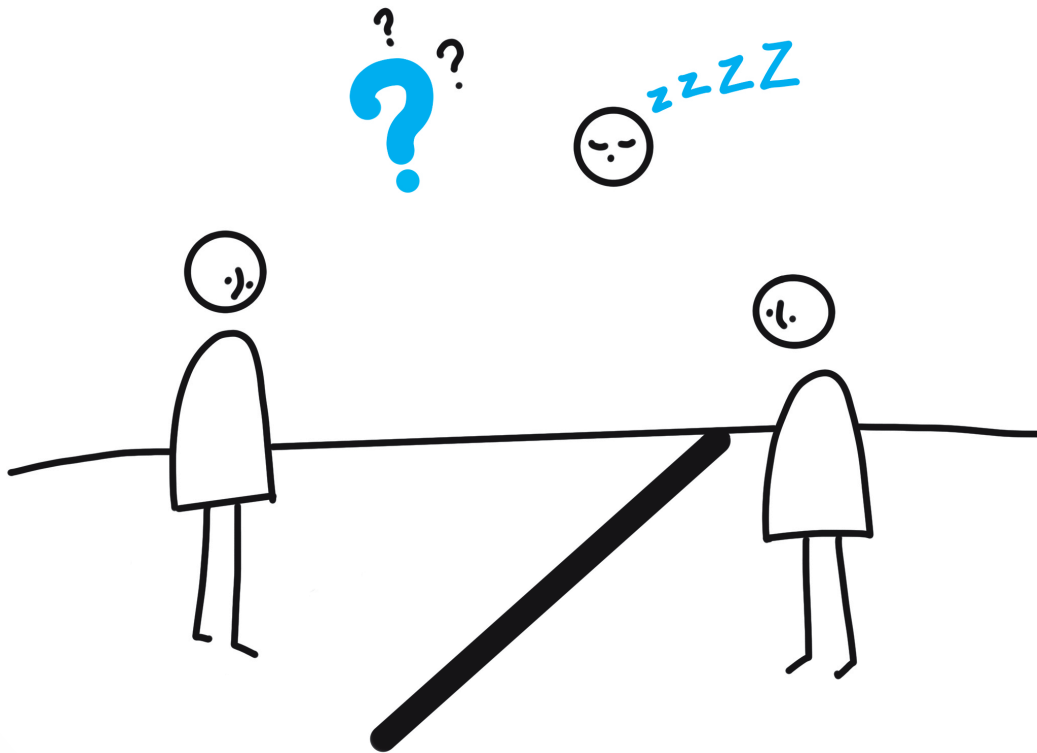
Another problem was,
every person on both sides of any
line had different needs. Sometimes even the
line makers argued about where to put the lines.



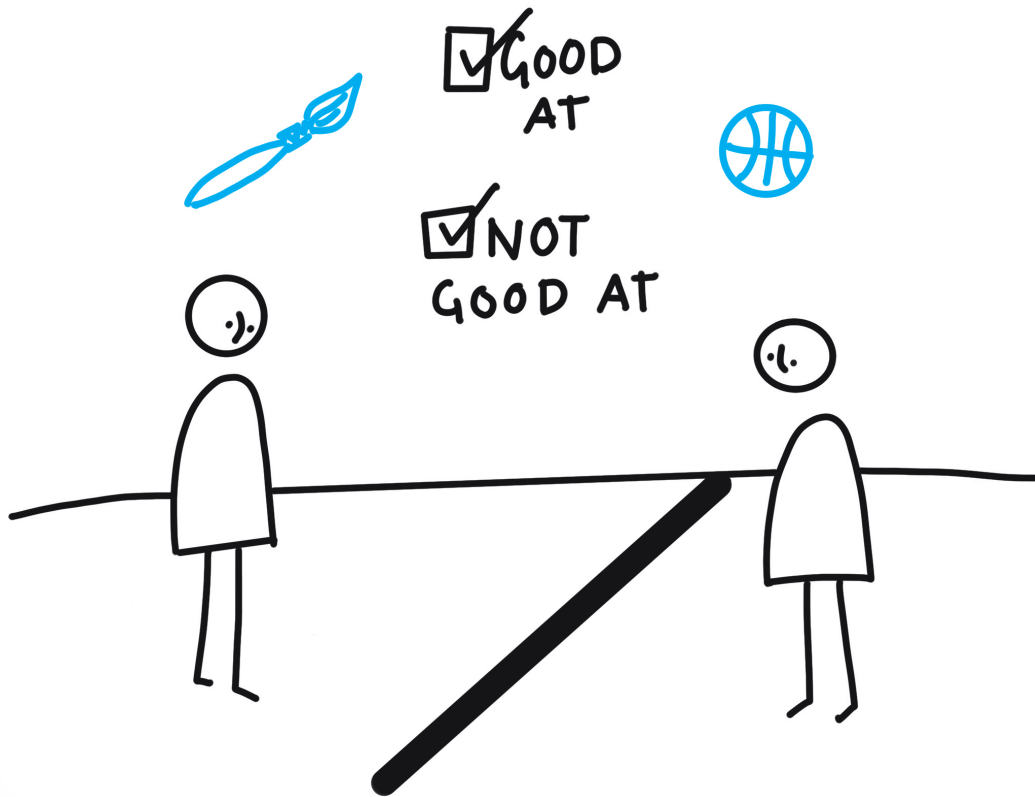
Every person
needed to go fast sometimes and
slow at other times.



Every person was
more curious about certain things
and bored by other things.



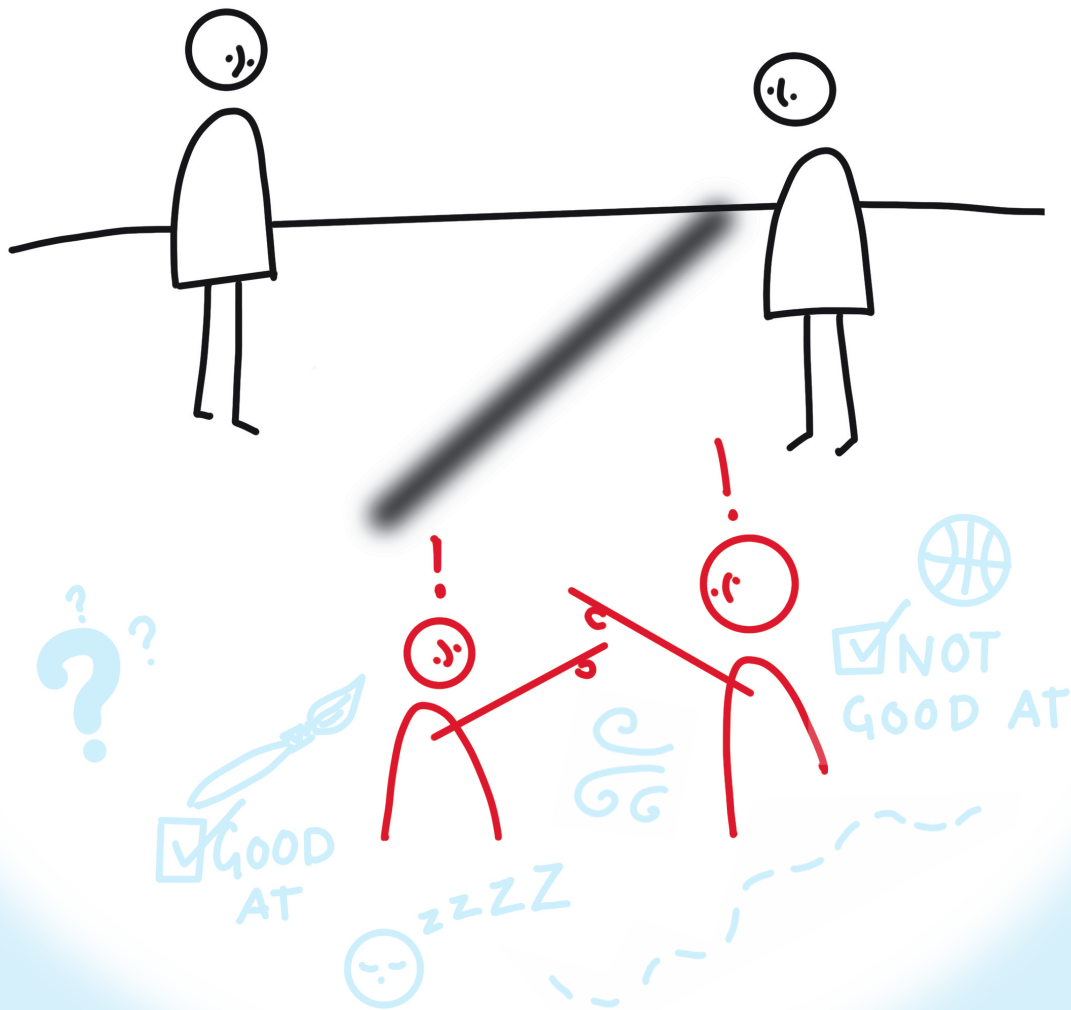
Every person had
things they were good at, and other
things they were not good at.

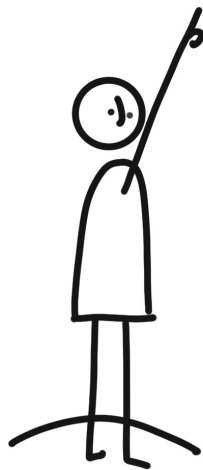


So, often
the lines were blurry.



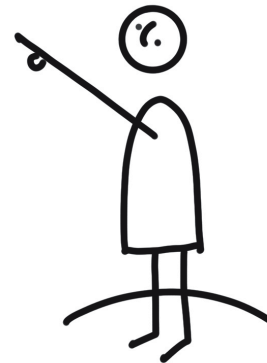
Sometimes
people couldn't agree on where
to place the lines.





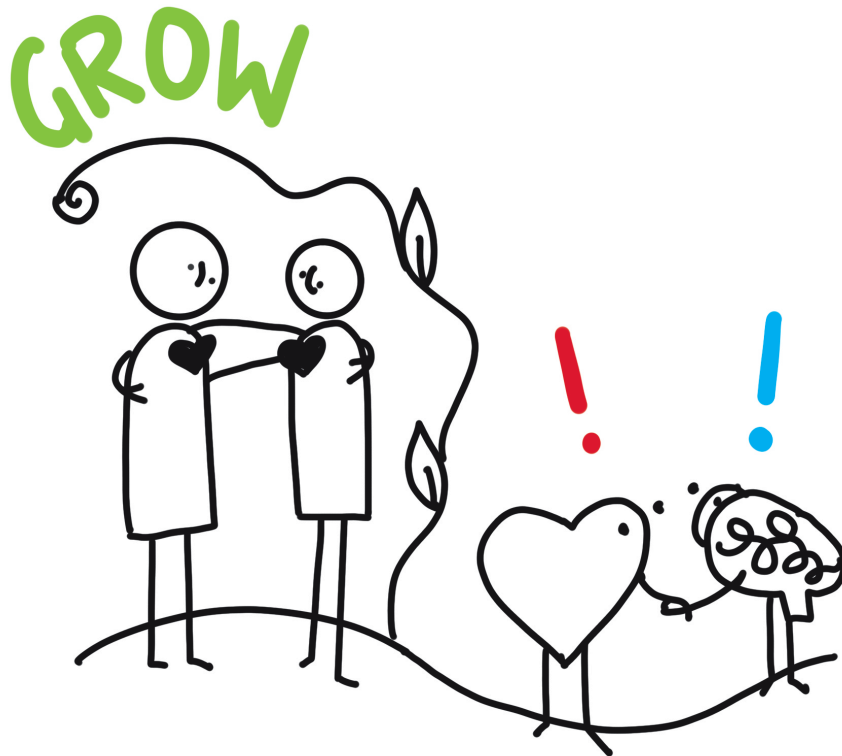
NOT
EQUAL

These lines and these
boxes weren't real.
But, people
thought they were.
At the same time,
we knew that separate
was never equal.



NOT
REAL!

We knew that
humans need to be together
and belong in order to learn and to grow.



We knew that separation from other people
was likely to affect everyone's
hearts and minds.

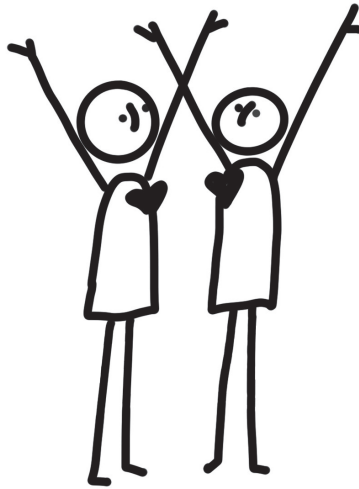
So, in education,
we decided we had to do something.
We had to bend some lines, move some lines
and erase others. We had to take all the lines, and
stick them together end to end.



It took a lot of time and a lot of work. This
now made a brand new long line that
we kept bending and bending
and bending.

The new line connects end to end.
This new line is called...

INCLUSIVE *education!*



The new line is a circle.



This new circle
was very difficult for the original
line makers.



You see, when they went to school, straight lines existed, straight lines were important. They grew up thinking some children belong on certain sides of certain lines. And change is hard—especially for line makers.

This new circle is
called **INCLUSIVE EDUCATION** and
it means we value everyone.



connect
NOT
S-E-P-A-R-A-T-E

We use this new line to connect,
not to separate.

INCLUSIVE Education

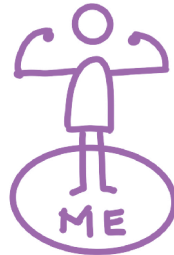
Inclusive education
means...



We are curious
about how we are alike
and how we are different.



We
challenge and
support everyone.

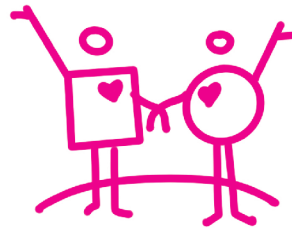


We teach
to students'
individual strengths.



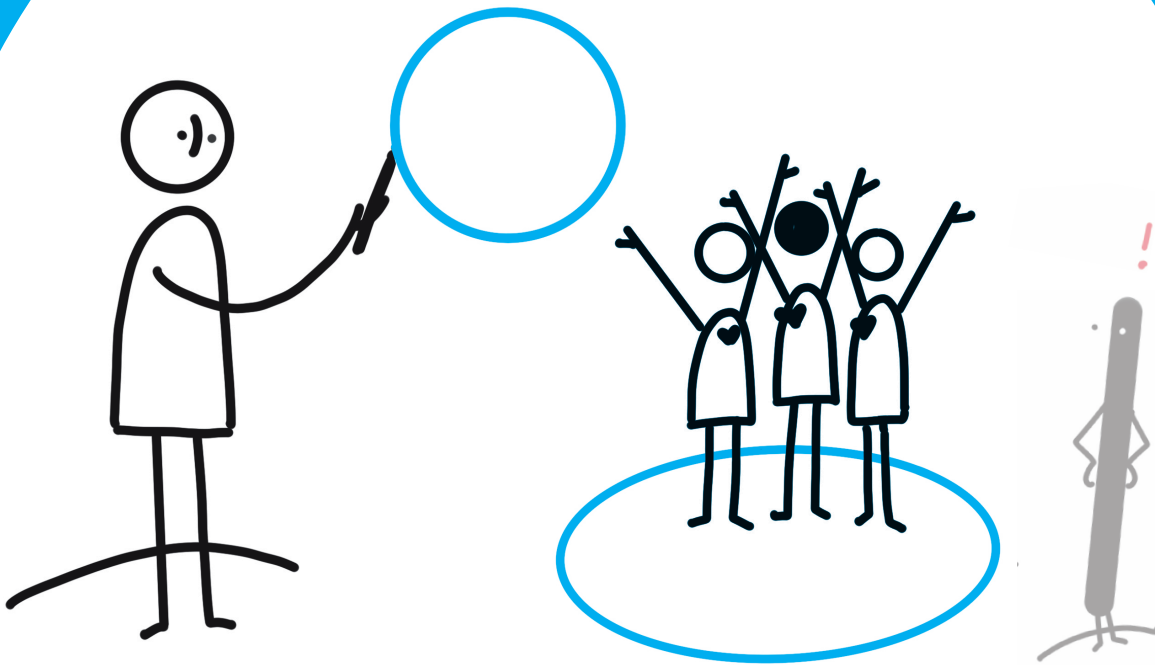
We celebrate
what is unique
about each
person.

We give
students
choices.



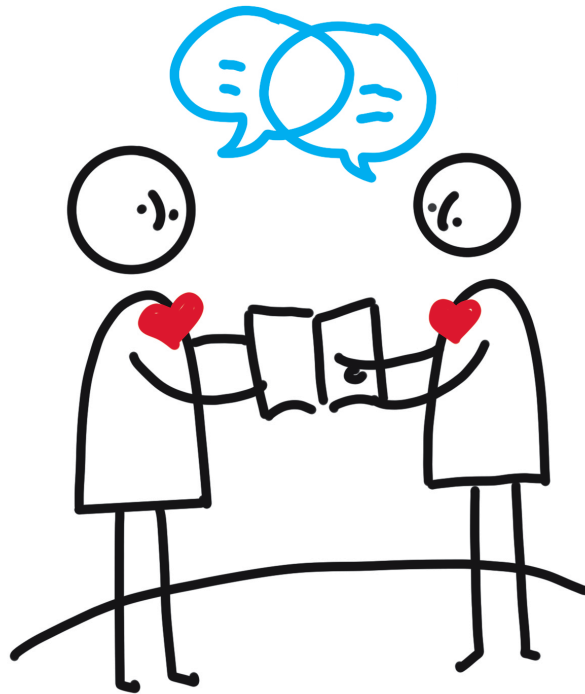
*Because we learn best from and with those
who are different from us.*

What happened
to the line makers? Turns out line
makers are the most excellent circle makers.



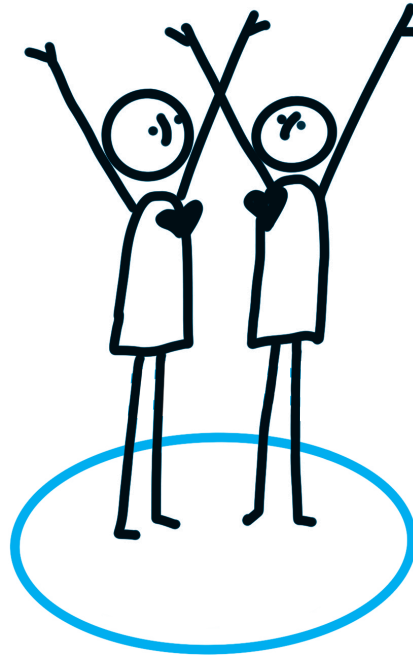
As soon as they saw that these circles created new
opportunities for their students, and new connections
and a sense of belonging, these circles helped
every student do better, to learn more,
to make friends.

It turns out
that students who used to be on
one side of the line were excellent teachers
of students who used to be on the other side of the line.



And, the exact opposite was also true. It turns out that
it wasn't just good for students on one side of
the line. It ended up to be better for
all students on every side
of any line.

But the story
does not end with just drawing the
circles—like a circle, this story has no end.
It is simply the beginning.



Being together inside the circle is the very first step.
It is what happens inside the circles where
the true magic can be found.

To all of you
circle makers—let's continue
to create wider and wider circles...

TOGETHER!



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MAKERS

JULIE CAUSTON, PH.D.



ABOUT THE BOOK

Our outdated school systems of drawing sharp lines, labeling and segregating students has never made sense. The first in a series, this book takes a playful look at what is possible when we think differently about human difference. Intended to inspire everyone to widen our school communities to finally and actually include all.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julie Causton has spent her life making circles or teaching circle making. She is founder and CEO of Inclusive Schooling. She is a former Professor in the Inclusive and Special Education Program at Syracuse University. She has spent the past 20 years studying best practices for inclusive education and as a former elementary, middle and high school special education teacher herself, she knows firsthand how inclusion leads to better lives and outcomes for students. She is an educational consultant and works with administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and families across the country to help them promote and improve inclusive practices. Her dynamic presentations focus on engaging ways to educate all students within the context of general education. Julie is the author of the children's book *The Too Much Unicorn* and the author of many books about inclusive education. She has published articles in over thirty educational research and practitioner journals. She lives in Upstate NY with her fabulous family—her wife, two teenage children, dogs and three cats.

INCLUSIVE
schooling

Visit www.inclusiveschooling.com
to connect to Julie and her work.

