

## Equity and the Statistics

Looking at Data to Drive Decisions for Equity

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## Data as a Tool

- Data is benign, it is neither good nor evil but the way it is articulated can create a sense of good or evil. One of the biggest challenges in using data is the mistrust with which people view data. As Bracey (2007) comments:  
When I served as director of research and evaluation for a school system, I noticed some people, notably some principals, tended to avoid me. I soon realized why: They were the district's insecure principals and I was the guy with the data. I could make them look bad. It didn't occur to them that data could make them look good, too. (p. 1)
- Creighton (2007) stated that: "Too many of our school leaders make decisions based on "informed intuition." Meaningful information can be gained only from a proper analysis of data" (p. 11).

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## Using the Data

- What Data do we have?
- What is that data telling us?
- What more data do we require?
- How does that data change practice?

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## The Research

- ✓ The Japanese eat very little fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than do the British or Americans.
- ✓ The Mexicans eat a lot of fat and suffer fewer heart attacks than do the British or Americans.
- ✓ The Japanese drink very little red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than do the British or Americans.
- ✓ The Italians drink excessive amounts of red wine and suffer fewer heart attacks than do the British or Americans.
- ✓ The Germans drink a lot of beer and eat lots of sausages and fats and suffer fewer heart attacks than do the British and Americans.

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## Conclusion

Eat and drink what you like.

Apparently speaking English is what kills you!

*Scott Tunison – Presentation at Principals' Short Course July 2008*

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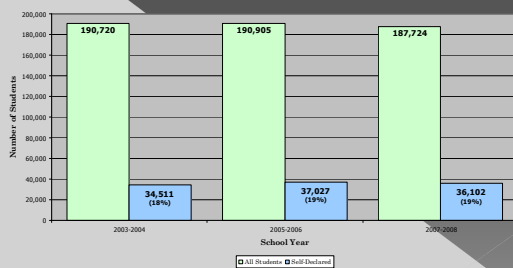
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## The Saskatchewan Picture

Figure 1: Saskatchewan Student Enrolment Total and Self-Declared, 2003-2008



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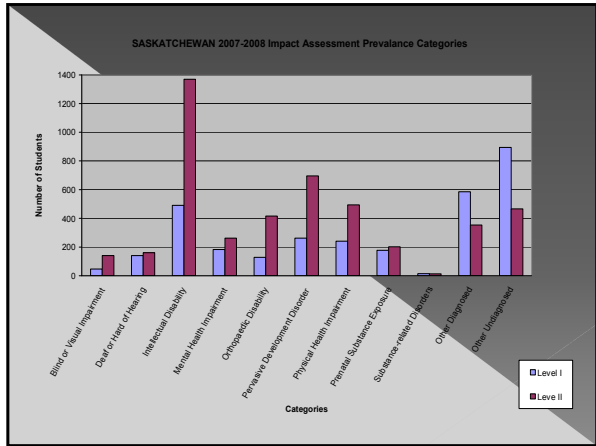
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### 2007-2008 Saskatchewan Staffing Profile

Position	Staff Numbers
Classroom Teachers	9637
Education/Teacher Assistants	3603
Special Education Teachers	952
Counselors	135
Speech Language Pathologists	98
Social Workers	72
Psychologists	65
Coordinators	46
Consultants	46
Superintendents of Student Services	20
Occupational Therapists	18
Physical Therapists	1
Other	182

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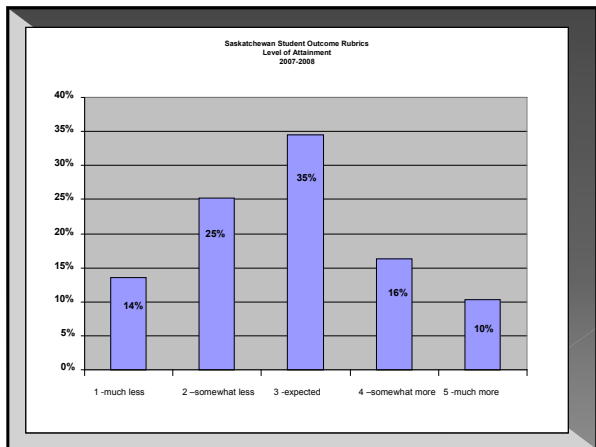
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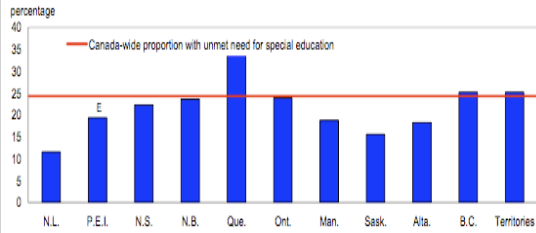
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Proportion of children with disabilities aged 5 to 14 with unmet needs for special education, by province and territories, 2006



Note: coefficient of variation of estimate between 16.6% and 33.3%.

Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2006.

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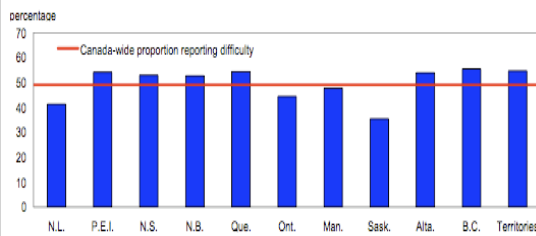
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Proportion of children with disabilities aged 5 to 14 whose parents reported difficulty obtaining special education, by province and territories, 2006



Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2006.

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## Eliminating the gap...

- It is easy to state that we are going to eliminate the achievement gap for any cohort that may be achieving at lower levels than the majority however, as stated by Barton (2007) "An ambitious goal of eliminating achievement gaps in total knowledge requires an ambitious effort to deal with the conditions and experiences that contribute to creating those gaps" (p. 73).
- In other words, if we have identified the elimination of the gap as the goal we must provide the required resources and scrutiny to ensure that we understand why there is the gap to begin with. Only then will the investment move towards a long-term sustainable solution that is based in data and that focuses on improvement.

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## Questions...

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