

Privilege is a right or immunity granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor (Merriam Webster, 2020). It is “a set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group” (Ferguson, 2014) or lack of a specific disadvantage. Privilege is a right or exemption from liability or duty granted as a special benefit or advantage.

It is important to consider the institutional power of privilege and oppression in our schools. For example, consider the **achievement gap**, or the “gap in grades and scores between white (and some Asian American) students and most students of color . . . For the gap is not a natural phenomenon. It is the measure of constructed difference, a difference that pretends that the racial and class privilege in America is simply a matter of objective meritocracy” (Ayers, 2018, para. 2).

It is critical that special education practitioners acknowledge and consider these kinds of differences. We must do the hard work and self-reflect on our role within this institution. Then, we can better be prepared to start dismantling it.