



OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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New Special Education Director Call

Office of Enhancing Student Opportunities

August 12, 2021



Today's Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
- New SPED Director Series: Big Questions (Erica Gordon)



Land Acknowledgement


I'd like to acknowledge the many tribes and bands who call Oregon their ancestral territory and honor the ongoing relationship between the land, plants, animals and people indigenous to this place we now call <insert city/region>. We recognize the continued sovereignty of the nine federally recognized tribes who have ties to this place and thank them for continuing to teach us how we might all be here together.



Oregon Department of Education

Education Equity Stance

Education equity is the equitable implementation of policy, practices, procedures, and legislation that translates into resource allocation, education rigor, and opportunities for historically and currently marginalized youth, students, and families including civil rights protected classes. This means the restructuring and dismantling of systems and institutions that create the dichotomy of beneficiaries and the oppressed and marginalized.



New SPED Director Series: Big Questions

Erica Gordon, Mt. Angel SD
Special Services Director
August 2021

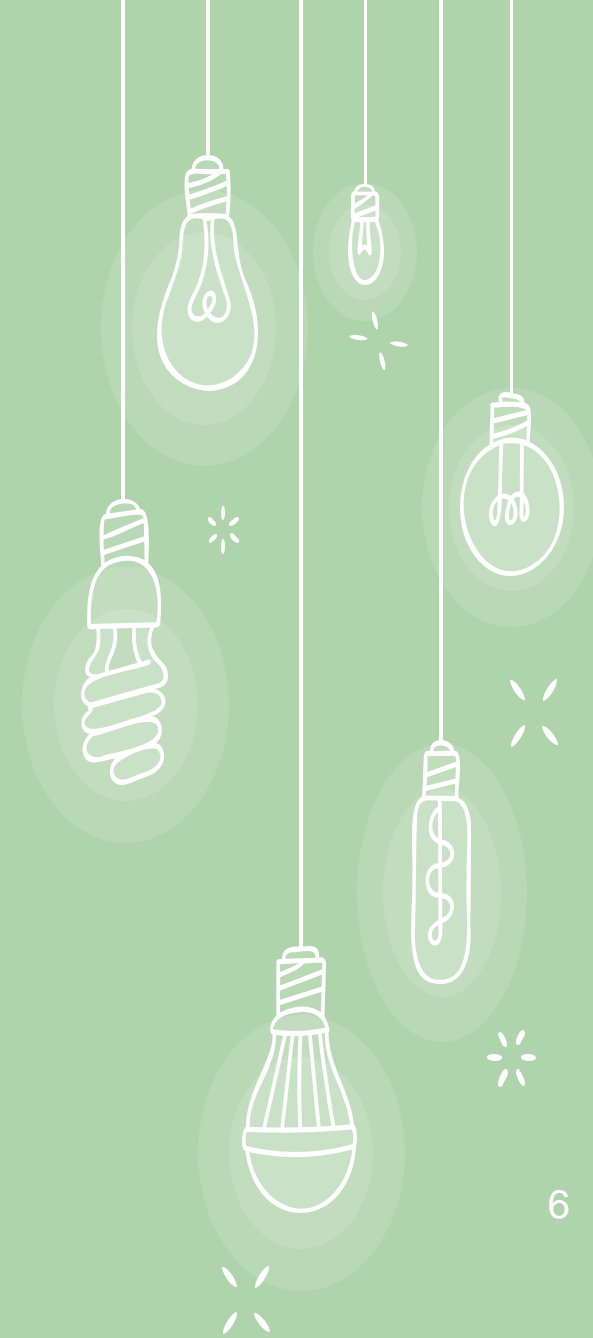


Hello!

I am Erica Gordon

I am here because my passion is in Special Education.

This is my 19th year (I think) and I hope that you will join me in defying the burnout odds!





Assumptions

You are in your first, second or third year of being a Special Education Director.

You may or may not be trained to do this job.

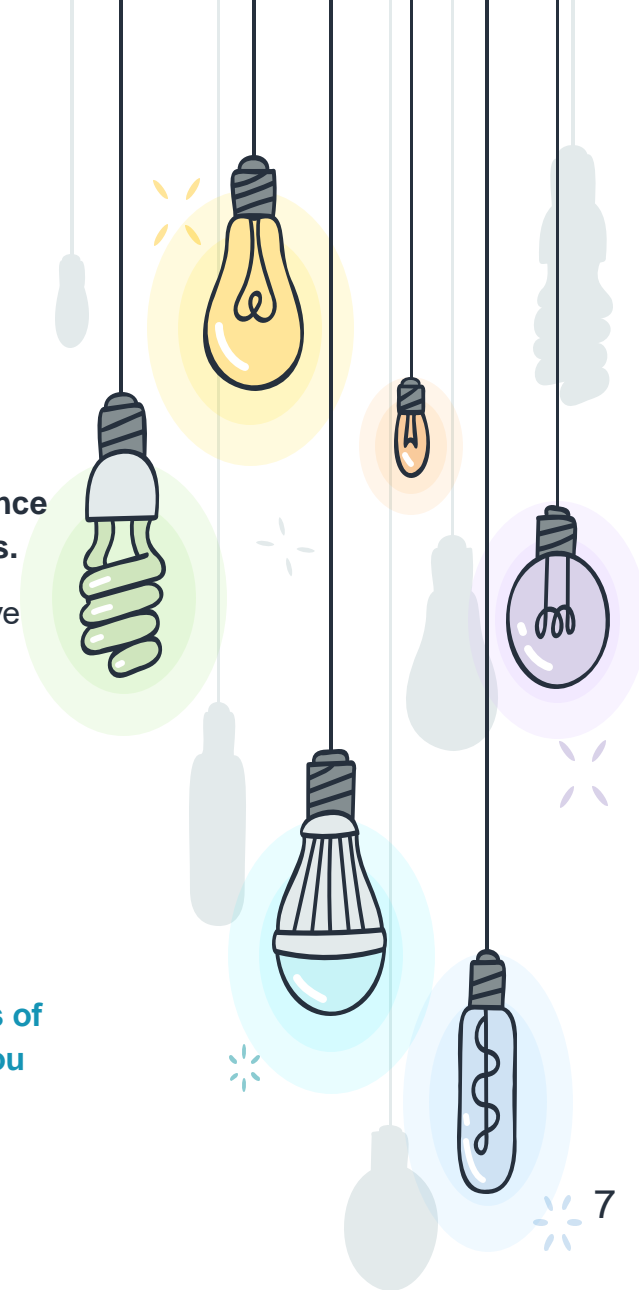
You likely have other duties in addition to being the Special Education Director.

→ **ODE has a Contact specifically to support you! Brad Lenhardt has years of Special Education experience. He is here to support you and/or connect you with the right resources~**

You attended the COSA Conference last week for New Sped Directors.

You might be wondering what you've gotten yourself into.

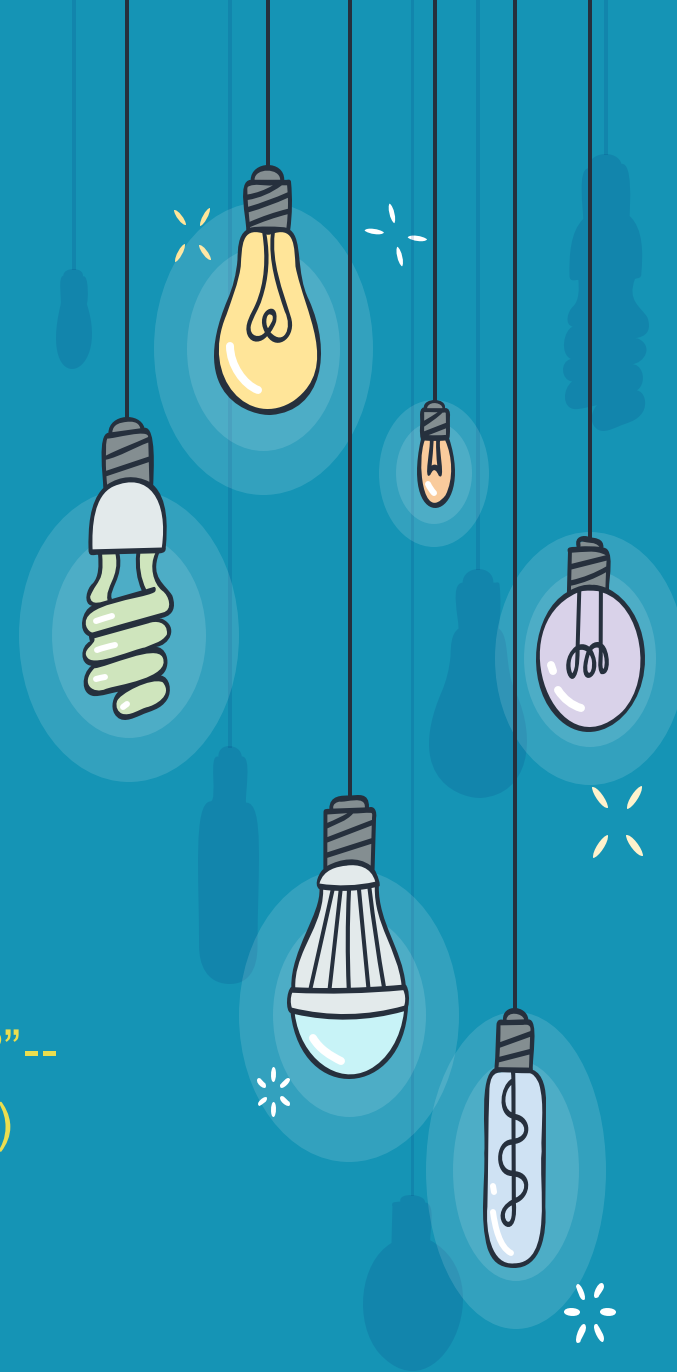
You need to connect with someone who is in the same role as you; someone who understands the complexities of your position.



What is your why?

Think/Write Time--2 minutes

“Why do you get out of the bed in the morning and why should anyone care?”--
Simon Sinek (The Golden Circle, 2017)



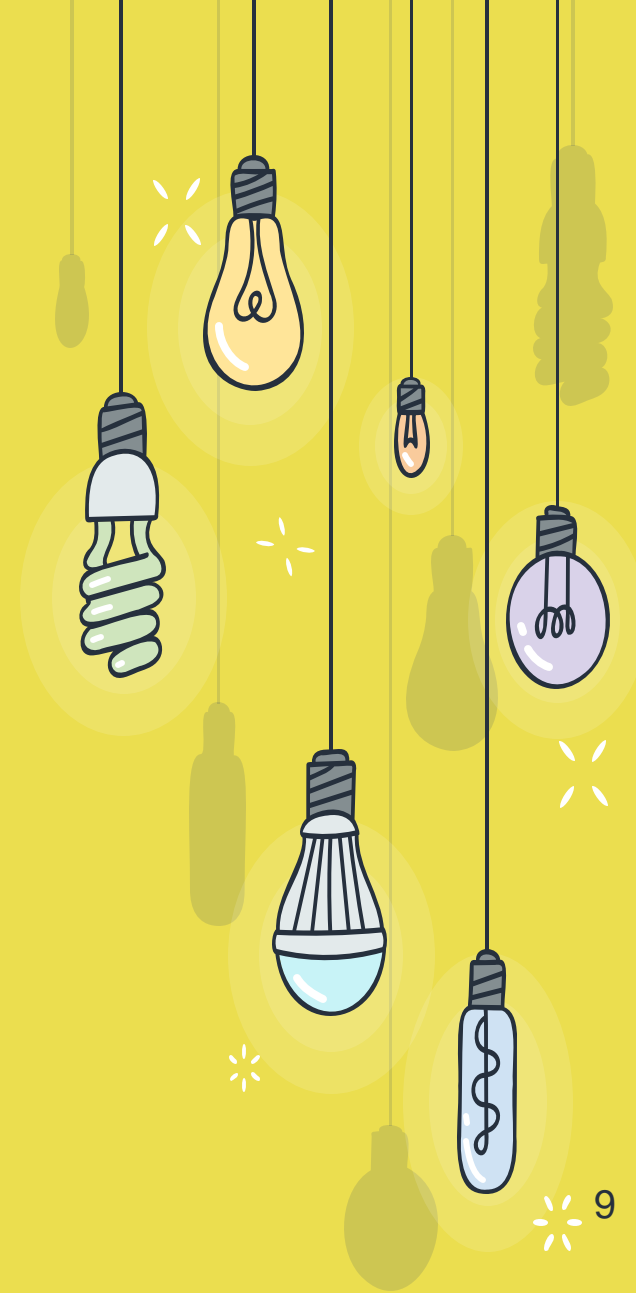


Every student deserves a champion, an adult who will never give up on them. Who understands the power of connection and insists they become the best they can possibly be. Is this job tough? You betchya...oh God, you betchya. But it is not impossible. We can do this. We are educators. We are born to make a difference.”

--Rita Pierson, TED Talk 2003

[Excerpt](#)

[Full Video](#)



Now we'll shift
to "the what"



1

Supervision

- Who do you supervise?
- What's the evaluation philosophy (gen ed supervision, co-supervision, or..?)?
- What's the system (both technology and rubrics)?
- Timelines?
- What training is offered to you?



2

Budget

- What's in your budget?
- What are your different funding sources and how can they be spent?
 - General funds, Federal funds, LSP
 - Supplement not Supplant
- What is MOE?
- What level of control do you have over your budget? District process/Chain of command?
- What if you want to make changes?



3

Contracts

- Related Services
- Out-of-District Placements
- Other Entities
- Timelines



4

Legal Counsel

- Who is your attorney?
- Are there different attorneys for different issues?
- How/When do you access this person?
What's the process/chain of command (do you have free reign to access)?
- Do you currently have anything active? Due process, complaints, tort claims, advocates?



5

Professional Development

- For you (as a professional)
- For your staff
 - What are you responsible for?
 - Is there a district focus? Is there anything being directed by the state?
 - District philosophy--gen ed/sped...silos?
 - Budget? What do you have control over?
- Timelines

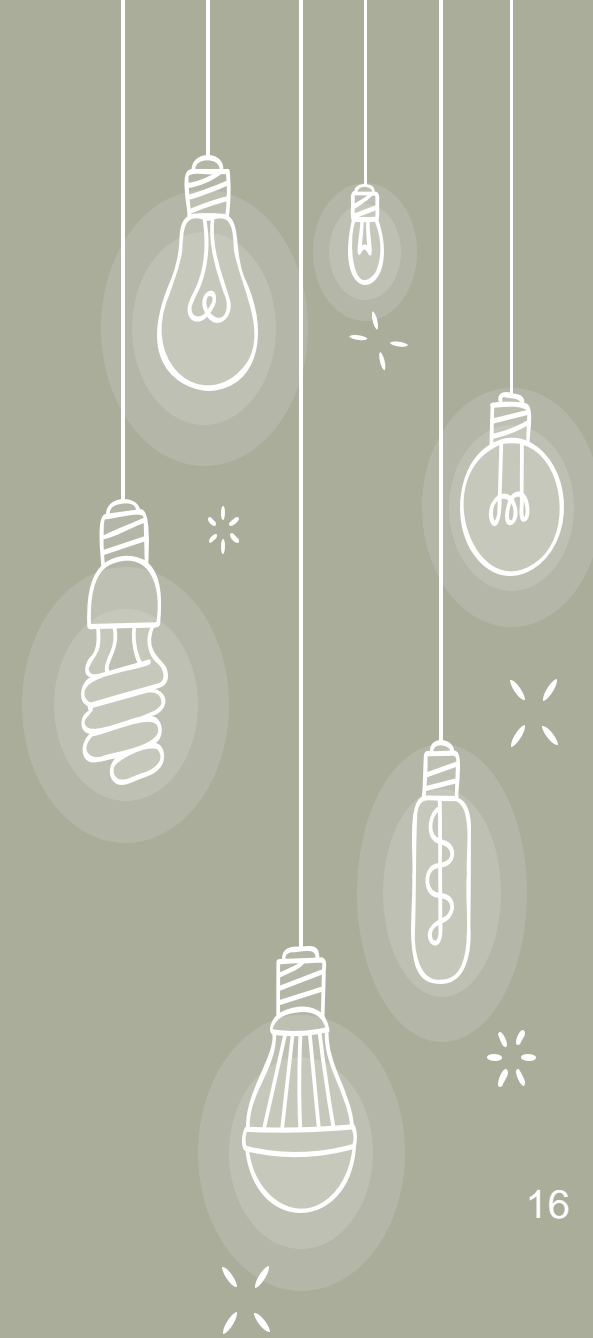


“Other Duties as assigned”

Ask what other roles you may have and what the expectations are of you as you start your new role.

You will need to find out who your contacts are (ODE, other districts, within your district) to help you succeed in this new role and the timelines associated with them.

There are many awesome people out there who want to see you do great things!

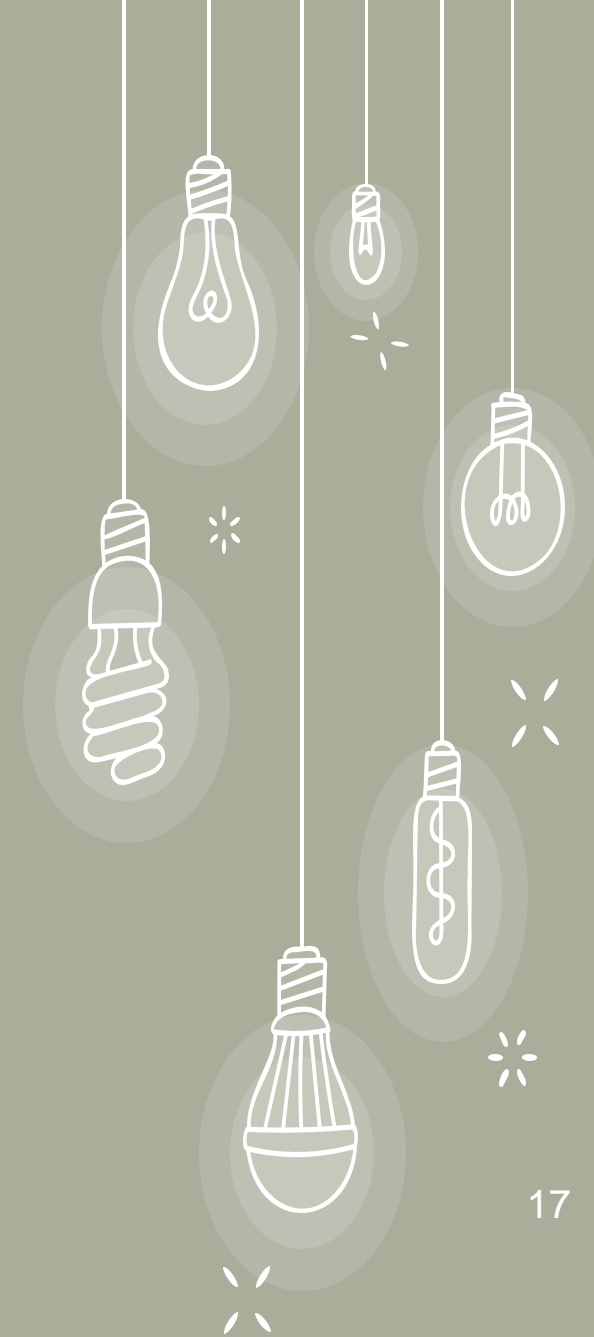


“Other Duties as assigned”--

Do you know your district?

Think about your district--do you know who is responsible for the following areas?

- 504
- TAG
- Counseling
- SEL, Mental Health, Suicide Prev.
- Alt. Ed./GED/Teen Parent
- Nursing
- Psych/Testing
- Community Involvement
- Title I-A
- Title II-A, Prof. Dev., Mentoring
- Title III, ELL
- Title IV “Well Rounded Ed”
- McKinney-Vento, Foster Care
- Paraprofessionals
- Migrant
- Summer School/Programs

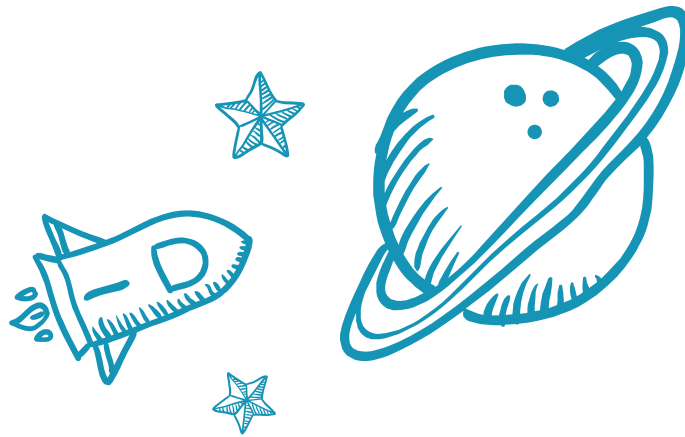




Things That I Find Helpful

- + Make Best Friends with you Business Manager
- + While you're at it, get to know ALL of your ODE contacts...they want you to do well!
- + Establish an organization system that works for you
- + Networking is key
 - × Find someone (or several someones!) in each area that you oversee; create a COMMUNITY for yourself
- + Attend webinars, create your own area meetings if they don't already exist
- + Ask what listservs others are on and what meetings they are going to--then get on those lists and attend those meetings
- + BE ACTIVE AND GET INVOLVED! Things change rapidly (even before the pandemic) so stay active, build a community and you will feel much less-stressed.





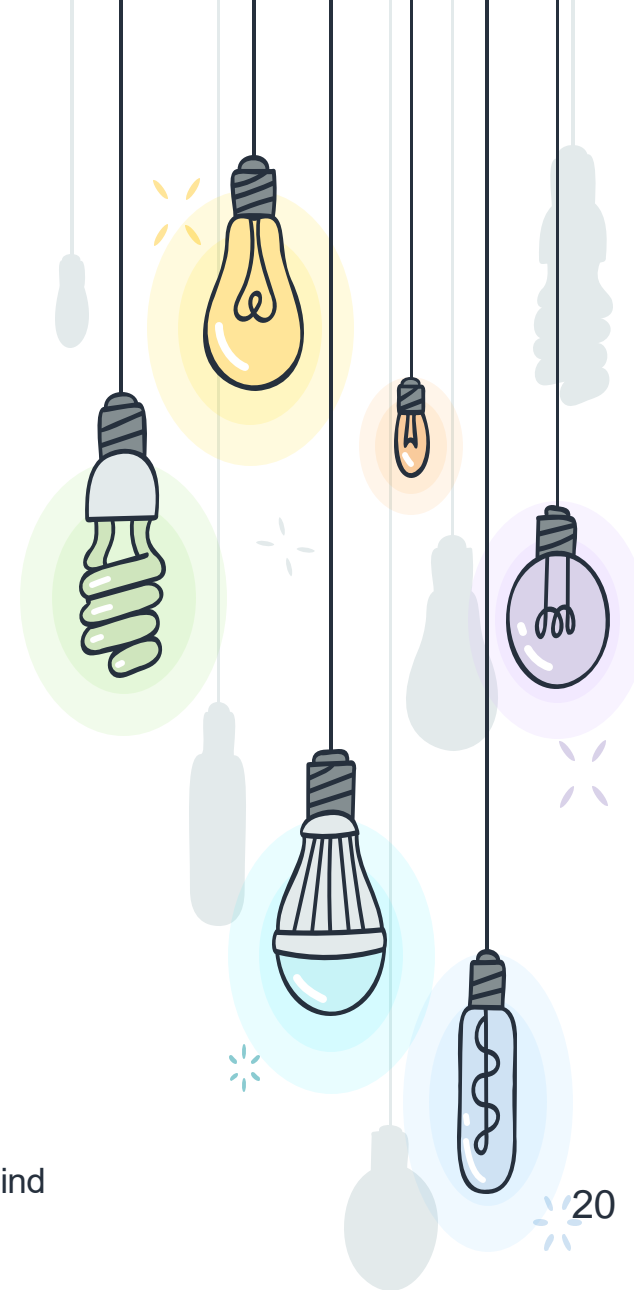
What I wish I knew

From some fellow SPED Directors who
have been in your shoes...



What I wish I knew...

- + That you should have a mentor that is SPED--find one!
- + Small towns are a whole different world when you come from a big district
- + There are listservs
- + Board policies are hard to change
- + Unions...
- + How to work with principals
- + Self-contained teachers and related service providers are REALLY hard to find
- + File-reviews are really time-consuming
- + You will be busier than you could have ever imagined
- + It's difficult to provide quality PD that staff can/will implement with fidelity
- + Your admin asst. should keep your schedule
- + Everything in a small town spreads in about 10 minutes
- + You can't possibly do it all; you have to take breaks and rest your mind



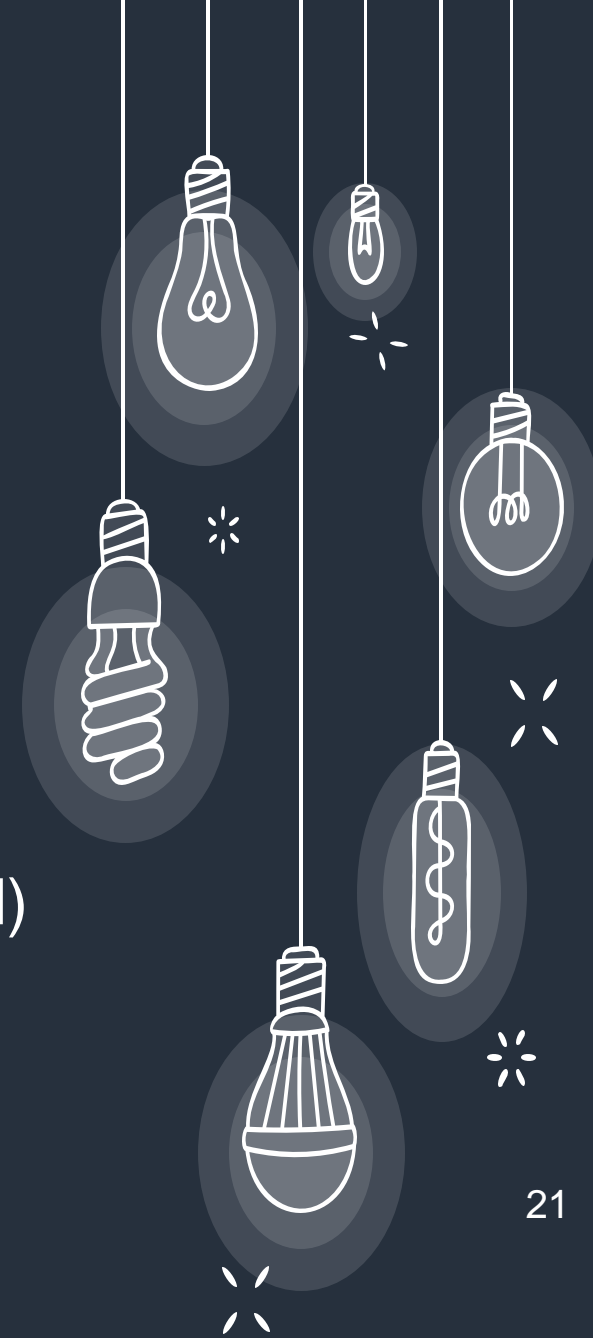
Thanks!

Any questions?

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