

MEETING THE HS GRAD & POSTSECONDARY SUCCESS CHALLENGE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Pathways to Adult Success Solution Forum
Everyone Graduates Center, Johns Hopkins University School of Education
December 14, 2021

Welcome and Agenda

- Meeting the High School Graduation and Postsecondary Success Challenge for Students with Disabilities:
 - **Are We Leaving Students with Disabilities Behind? Findings from the Building a Grad Nation Report**
Robert Balfanz, *Everyone Graduates Center*
 - **Meeting the High School Graduation and Postsecondary Success Challenge for Students with Disabilities**
Lindsay Kubatzky and Joey Hunziker, National Center for Learning Disabilities
- Open Discussion and Resource Sharing
- Upcoming Events

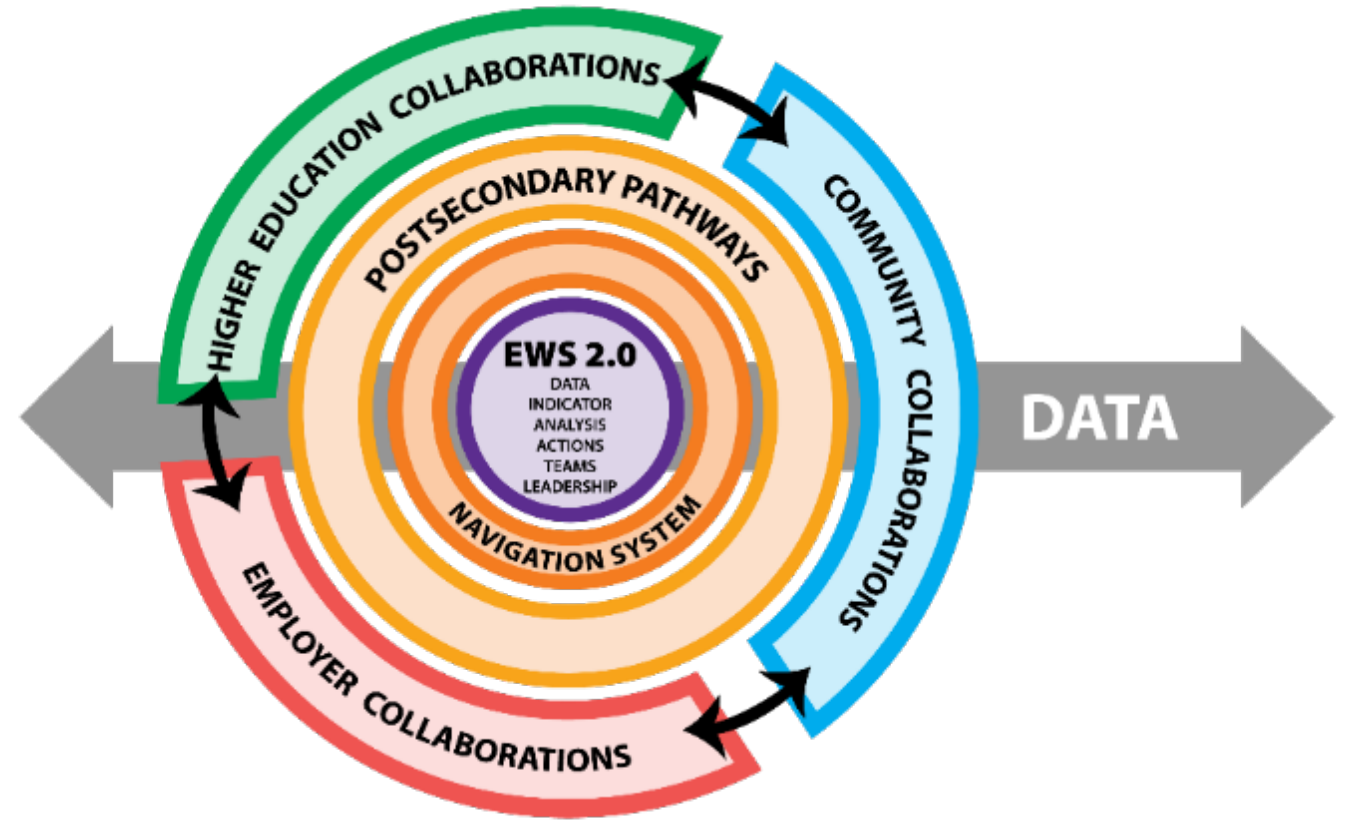
Organizing Our Discussion

- We have a large and diverse group of people and organizations participating in today's session (K-12, Higher Ed, Non-Profits, State Depts. of Ed.).
- Please share ideas, resources, and ask questions via the chat function.
- One of the moderators will read each question or comment out loud, and then ask for responses via the chat function.
- The moderator may ask the participant to respond verbally for elaboration or clarification.
- After the session, we will send out all resources shared and add to the Solutions Forum webpage on the PAS website.



Building Pathways to Adult Success for and with all students has never been so crucial

- The pandemic has disrupted existing student support and guidance systems.
- Uncertainty is the norm.
- Momentum to and through postsecondary is being impacted.



Are we leaving students with disabilities behind? Findings from the Building a Grad Nation Report

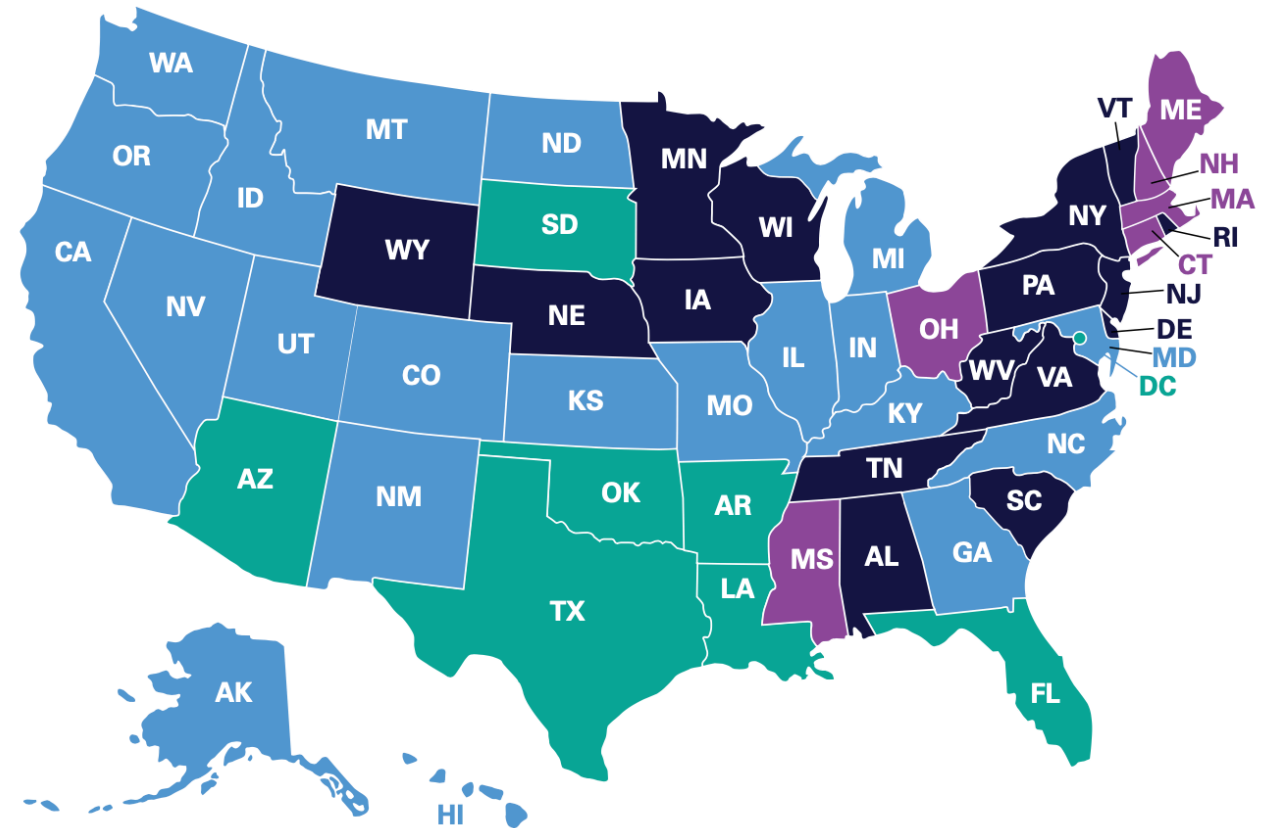
Robert Balfanz, Director
Everyone Graduates Center
Johns Hopkins University School of Education

Are we leaving students with disabilities behind?

- Pre-pandemic high school graduation rate for students with disabilities (SWD) was only 68%
 - the lowest of any sub-group and 18 points below the national high school graduation rate for all students (86%)
- SWD represent about 12% of all high school students, but 27% of the students who do not graduate in four years
- Pre-pandemic, 31% of SWD high school students were chronically absent – compared to 23% of all high school students
- Secondary school SWD miss 2x as many instructional days due to out-of-school suspensions than students without disabilities

Student with disabilities are disproportionately represented among most states' non-grads

FIGURE 10 Percent of State's Non-Graduates that are Students with Disabilities, 2018–19



● 40% or more ● 30–39% ● 20–29% ● less than 20%

BGN Report: <https://www.americaspromise.org/report/2021-building-grad-nation-report>

Students with Disabilities Outcomes in High Poverty Districts in a State (2019)

District	SWD % of All Students	SWD Grad Rate	SWD Grade 9 Passing All Courses	SWD Adv. Course Completion
District #1	26.8%	69.5	40	25.0
District #2	16.5%	47	43.4	40.6
District #3	18.9%	67	30.8	6.2
District #4	25.1%	57	57.9	10.8
District #5	16.7%	57	68.1	21.3
District #6	21.4%	42	51.4	3.5
District #7	25.7%	69.5	66.7	42.3

Why isn't IDEA enough?

- Historically not focused on attendance, belonging, or postsecondary pathways
 - critical elements on the pathway to adult success that were deeply impacted by pandemic
- Belief that IEP has it covered, so SWD students not included in other systems of student support
 - i.e., early warning and on-track systems
- Also, many inconsistencies in how states calculate high school graduation rates for SWD
 - i.e., what type of diplomas count

Meeting the High School Graduation and Post- Secondary Success Challenge for Students with Disabilities

Joey Hunziker, Director of Young Adult Initiatives

Lindsay Kubatzky, Director of Policy & Advocacy

Meeting the High School Graduation and Post-Secondary Success Challenge for Students with Disabilities

The National Center for Learning Disabilities



Presented by:


Joey Hunziker,
Director of Young Adult Initiatives

Lindsay Kubatzky,
Director of Policy & Advocacy

Today

- Explore findings from several different focus groups
- Discuss implications for policy
- Hear first-hand student perspectives on what practitioners and policymakers should remember when building systems to graduate students with disabilities.

What we know about transition:



Students with disabilities face significant hurdles during the transition period, including a lack of access to quality information about their post-secondary education options and navigating the difficult process of disclosing their disability and securing accommodations in college or the workplace.

Disability Disclosure

Only 1 in 4 students with a learning disability disclose their disability to their college.

In K-12, more than 1 in 3 students who qualify for special education services have a Specific Learning Disability (SLD). In postsecondary education, fewer than 1 in 20 students with disabilities identify themselves as having SLD.

Accommodations


While 94% of students with LD received accommodations in high school, only 17% received accommodations in postsecondary education.

43% who didn't receive accommodations in postsecondary education reported that they wish they had.


Post-HS Outcomes


Only 38% of young adults with disabilities complete postsecondary education, compared to 51.2% of their peers.

Working-age adults with learning disabilities are twice as likely to be jobless as their peers who do not have disabilities.




In 2019, NCLD & Understood
conducted focus groups with
young adults across the
country about their experience
transitioning out of HS.





The goal of these focus groups was to understand what resources and tools young adults with LD need to successfully transition out of HS and into college & life.





Key Transition Themes Identified by Young Adults

- Limited knowledge of resources available to assist young adults with their goals
- Feelings of being stigmatized because of their learning differences or attention issues and potentially compounded stigma as members of a particular demographic (ethnic group, LGBTQIA, gender, class and other cultural groups)
- The desire to have teachers, bosses and counselors receive more training on how to work with people with learning differences and attention issues
- Lack of knowledge of their rights in settings as individuals dealing with learning differences and attention issues
- The desire to have guidance/a mentor figure to help them in their lives



Key Transition Themes Identified by Young Adults (continued)

- Young adults identified not having their learning difference or attention issue formally diagnosed as an issue in transition
- Fear about asking for accommodations to assist them in their endeavors
- Lack of knowledge regarding resources already available to them and even when they are aware of them, a proclivity not to use them due to calling attention to themselves in front of peers and others
- The desire to have a “real” person that they could go to for support and guidance as they journey through life




Overall, young adults in these focus groups wanted 2 key imaginary resources: a College Compass and Career Compass

Specifically...

Young adults with disabilities wanted a specialized tool to help them navigate post-HS career and college choices, give them tailored resources based on their interests and post-HS goals. This is significant because they noticed a lack of resources tailored to their needs and interests as students with LD.



IEP Focus Groups



**In 2021, NCLD worked with the
PROGRESS Center at the
American Institutes of Research
to conduct focus groups with
parents & young adults about
their IEPs and IEP transition
plans**

WHAT WE LEARNED

<u>Poll Question</u>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I feel like my teachers, principals, and other staff have, or had, high expectations for me.	7%	27%	33%	33%
2. I feel or felt like my teachers helped me reach my goals.	0%	19%	48%	33%
3. I was involved in developing my individualized education plan or IEP.	15%	30%	45%	10%
4. I think having an IEP and the supports provided through my IEP were important for my success in school.	0%	13%	13%	75%
5. I feel or felt like I was included in my special education classroom/s and general education classroom/s.	5%	10%	35%	50%

KEY THEMES

1. Young adults overwhelmingly valued having an IEP and attributed much of their success and ability to meet their educational goals to having an IEP.
2. Young adults wanted to be more involved in the development of their IEPs, and be treated as equal partners in the setting and management of their goals.
3. Young adults think that schools should focus on early identification of disabilities and early supports, which are critical to helping other students be successful.
4. Young adults value accommodations that are tailored to their needs, and educational programming that is built off of their needs and strengths..


The image features a central white area with the word "Questions?" in a dark blue, sans-serif font. The corners are decorated with abstract geometric patterns. The top-left corner has a dark blue triangle with a yellow diagonal line. The bottom-left corner has a yellow semi-circle on a dark blue background, with a red square and a cyan square below it, and a dark blue semi-circle on a cyan background at the very bottom. The top-right corner shows a cyan background with a dark blue, yellow, and light blue wavy pattern. The bottom-right corner has a red square with two dark blue circles, followed by a cyan square, a dark blue square, and a yellow and dark blue triangle, and a red and blue wavy pattern at the very bottom.

Questions?




Policy Implications







1. Congress should increase funding for research on effective transition planning and self-advocacy skills for students with disabilities.




2. The U.S. Department of Education should issue guidance around college entrance exams, licensure, and certification tests.



3. The U.S. Department of Education should prioritize and award grants to conduct longitudinal research on postsecondary experiences of students with disabilities.



4. The U.S. Department of Education should specify that transition teams create IEPs that contain adequate information to secure accommodations in postsecondary education and assist students in contacting disability service offices on college campuses.



5. The U.S. Department of Labor should invest in comprehensive data collection on disability in the workforce (disaggregated by race/ethnicity and disability type).

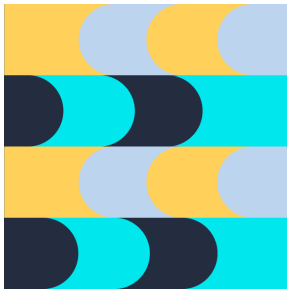
The image features a central white area with the word "Questions?" in a dark blue, sans-serif font. The corners are decorated with abstract geometric patterns. The top-left corner has a dark blue triangle with a yellow diagonal line. The bottom-left corner has a yellow semi-circle on a dark blue background, with a red square and a cyan square below it, and a dark blue semi-circle on a cyan background at the very bottom. The top-right corner shows a cyan background with a dark blue wavy line, a yellow wavy line, and a light blue wavy line. The bottom-right corner has a red square with two dark blue circles, a cyan square, a dark blue square, and a yellow square, with a red wavy line and a dark blue wavy line at the bottom.

Questions?

Contact Us:



Joey Hunziker
Director of Young Adult Initiatives
Jhunziker@ncld.org



Lindsay Kubatzky
Director of Policy and Advocacy
lkubatzky@ncld.org

Open Discussion and Resource Sharing



Announcements

- Opinion: Fewer Georgia students are going to college. That's a problem
 - Atlanta Journal Constitution, by Tina Fernandez, Executive Director of Achieve Atlanta
- Continuous Improvement in Schools, Helping More Students Succeed
 - By Martha Abele Mac Iver and Robert Balfanz
- NLU's Pathways Model a Win-Win for Students and Employers
- NEW Gates Accelerated[ED] Grant Opportunity
- **SAVE THE DATE:** PAS Solutions Forum, January 25, 2022





Thank You, Be Well, & Onward!

We will follow up with a recording of the session, slides, and a list of references and materials shared today.