Graduation Pathway Perceptions and Innovations
Students with disabilities drop out of high school at higher rates than their non-disabled peers.

How do we support students with disabilities on their path to graduation?
Students with disabilities (served under IDEA*) graduate at lower rates than their non-disabled peers.

IDEA* 87%

IDEA* 71%

Students with disabilities drop out at over twice the rate as their non-disabled peers.

U.S. 5%

IDEA* 13%

*The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) is a law that provides a free and appropriate public education to children with disabilities ages 3–21. There are 13 disability categories under IDEA.
Percentage of IDEA Students, 2020–2021

- **34.8%** Specific Learning Disability
- **17.8%** Speech or Language Impairment
- **11.6%** Other Health Impairment
- **6.2%** Autism
- **5.2%** Intellectual Disability
- **6.2%** Emotional Disturbance
- **5.2%** Developmental Delay
- **5.2%** Multiple Disabilities
- **5.2%** Hearing Impairments
- **5.2%** Orthopedic Impairments
- **5.2%** Traumatic Brain Injury
- **5.2%** Visual Impairments
- **5.2%** Deaf Blindness
U.S. Graduation Rates, 2019–2020

Percentage of Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dropped Out</th>
<th>Graduated</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDEA</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLD</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend: [Dropped Out, Graduated]
The Road to Student Success

Identify

Evaluate

Implement

Analyze
Students with disabilities are over 50% more likely to be chronically absent than students without disabilities.

U.S. Department of Education (2016)
Behavior Support Matters

Students with disabilities are more than twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension than students without disabilities.

Academic Supports Matter

NAEP Mathematics
National public schools

-28
Grade 4

-36
Grade 8

-35
Grade 12

* 2022 NAEP score gaps between SWDs and non-disabled peers; all differences are statistically significant

NAEP Reading
National public schools

-40
Grade 4

-36
Grade 8

-39
Grade 12

* 2022 NAEP score gaps between SWDs and non-disabled peers; all differences are statistically significant

80% of students with SLD struggle with language and reading
Ravine of Missed Opportunity

Cumulative information gathering

Ongoing information gathering
New Orleans Convening- February 22, 2023

- 36 educators
- 7 caregivers
- 6 young adults
- 14 experts
Guiding Inquiry

- How can we make structural changes to existing frameworks to better support students with disabilities on their path to high school graduation?
- How do we best support key decision makers in the implementation of a supportive system so that they all work in unison?
- What is the knowledge required to successfully support students?
Building Solutions

Building Student Success Systems to Support Students with Disabilities
The Aftermath
Pathways to Success
Mindset

Growth mindset

Collaborative & inclusive mindset

Stay focused without tunnel vision
Knowledge

Include all viewpoints

Caregiver & student preparation

Teacher preparation
Systems

Make sure systems are collecting meaningful data that provide a holistic picture

Be mindful of flaws within systems
Systems

Don’t muddy the waters with too many systems

Procedures shouldn’t be another check box
Biggest Takeaway

A failure in one area breeds failure in others.