

Inclusionary Outcomes in WA

*Leadership and Partnerships for
Sustainability and Continuous
Improvement*



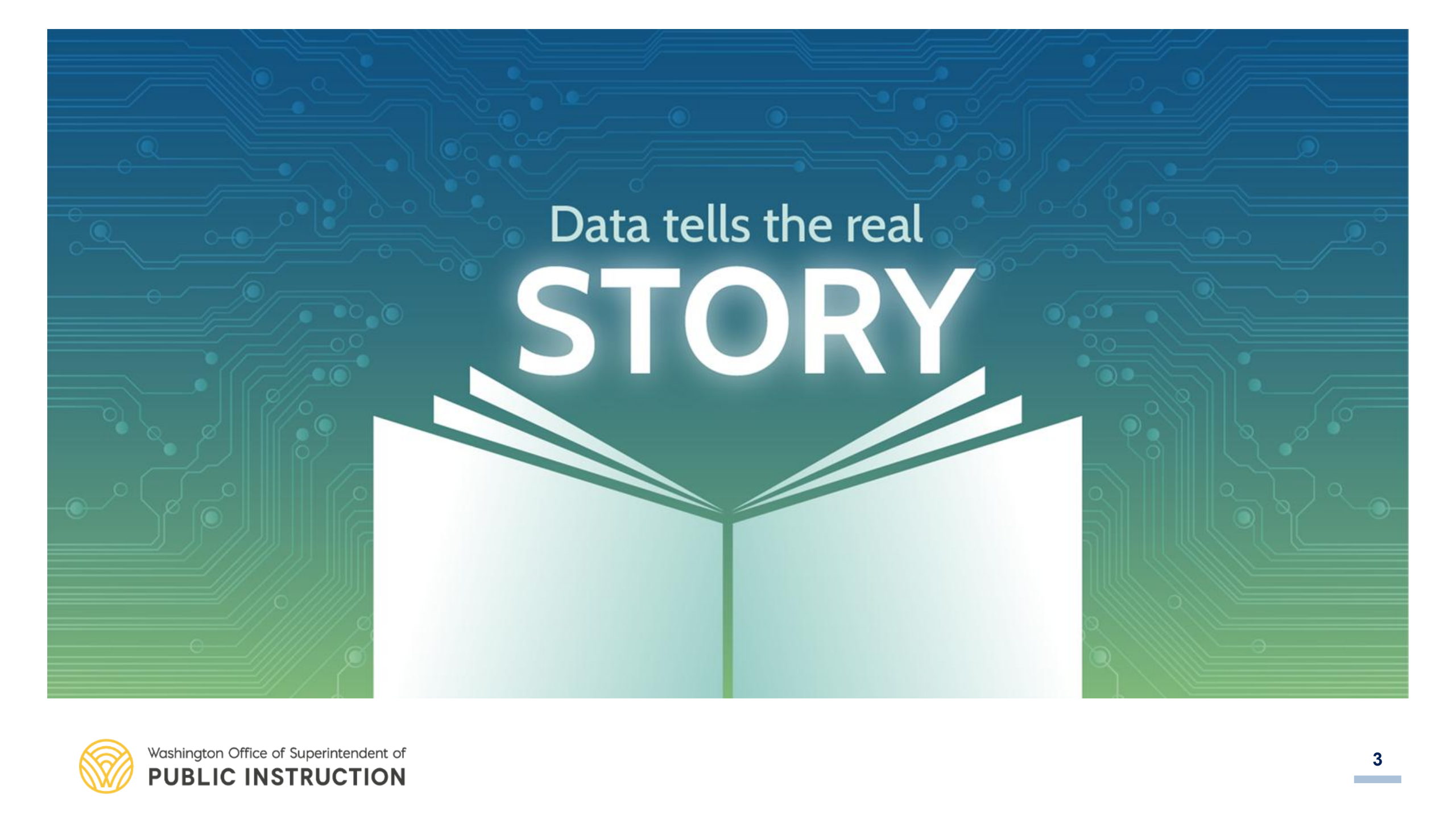
Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Today's Discussion:

- ❑ Research & Data on Inclusion
- ❑ Building Inclusive Systems Statewide
- ❑ Partnering to Support Students & Families



The background features a blue-to-green gradient with intricate white circuit board patterns. In the center, a white open book is depicted, with its pages fanning out. The text "Data tells the real" is in a smaller white font, and "STORY" is in a large, bold white font, both positioned above the book.

Data tells the real **STORY**



Washington State's Journey Toward Inclusion



In 2018, Washington state ranked 44th out of 50 states for K-12 inclusive practices¹.

To support more inclusive schools, the State Legislature funded a multi-year, statewide initiative to support professional development for inclusionary practices.



By 2025, year seven of this initiative, schools in Washington state reported a **10-point** increase in inclusive practices statewide for K-12 and a **12-point** increase for Pre-K².

This means that, since 2018, nearly **30,000** students with disabilities across Washington state have shifted into the highest rates of inclusion!

¹National Council on Disability. (2018). *The Segregation of Students with Disabilities*.

²OSPI. (2025). *Least Restrictive Environment and Child Count Report*.



What's in the



?

80+ years of research: Placement in general education improves outcomes for students with disabilities!

[Carlberg & Kavale \(1980\)](#)

50 research studies
from 1932 – 1970

[Wang & Baker \(1985\)](#)

Meta-analysis
from 1975 – 1984

[Oh-Young & Filler \(2015\)](#)

Research studies
from 1980 – 2013

[Theobald, et al. \(2018\)](#)

WA Study on
CTE & Outcomes

Inclusive practices have also been shown to have positive or neutral results for students *without* disabilities.

[Ruijs & Peetsma \(2009\)](#)

Positive/neutral effects

[Szumski, et al. \(2017\)](#)

Benefits for all students

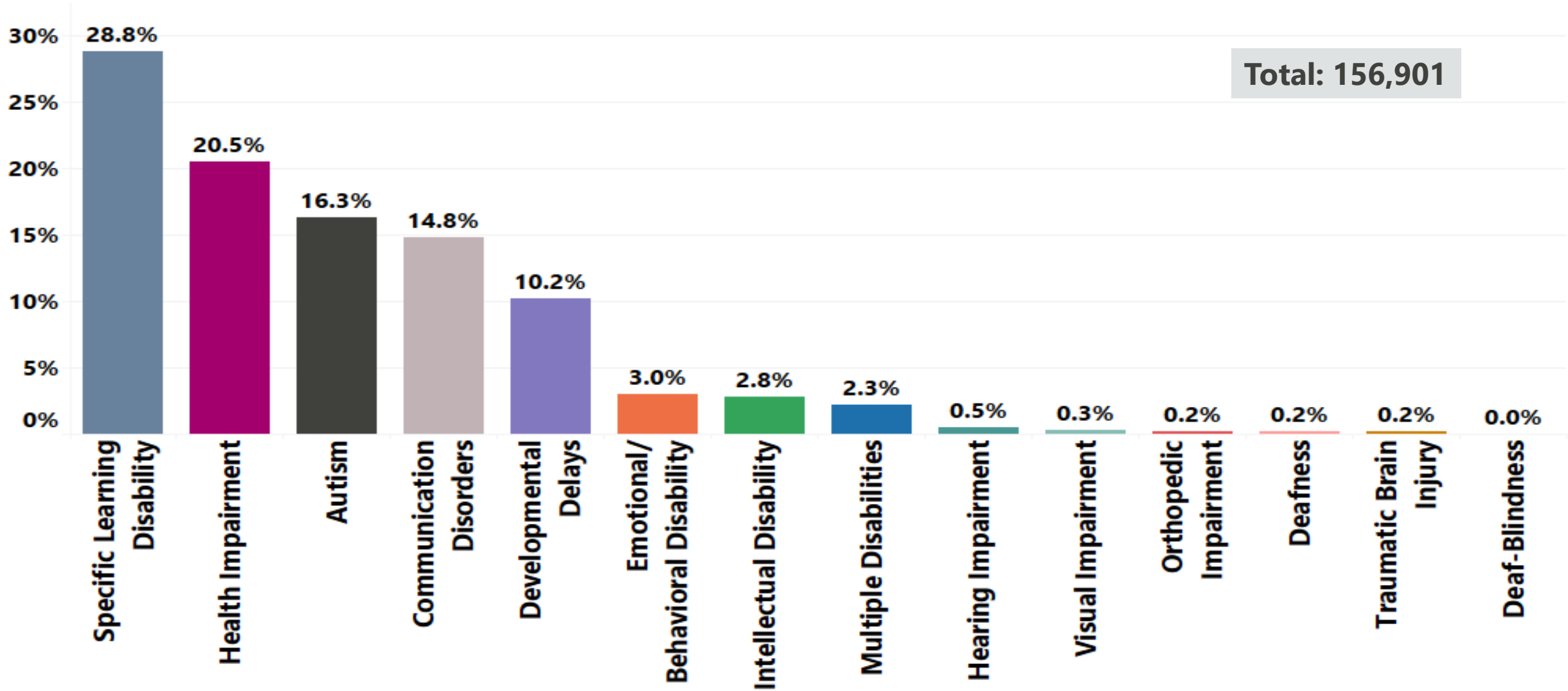
[Shogren, et al. \(2015\)](#)

SEL benefits



2025 WA Students with Disabilities, by Eligibility Category

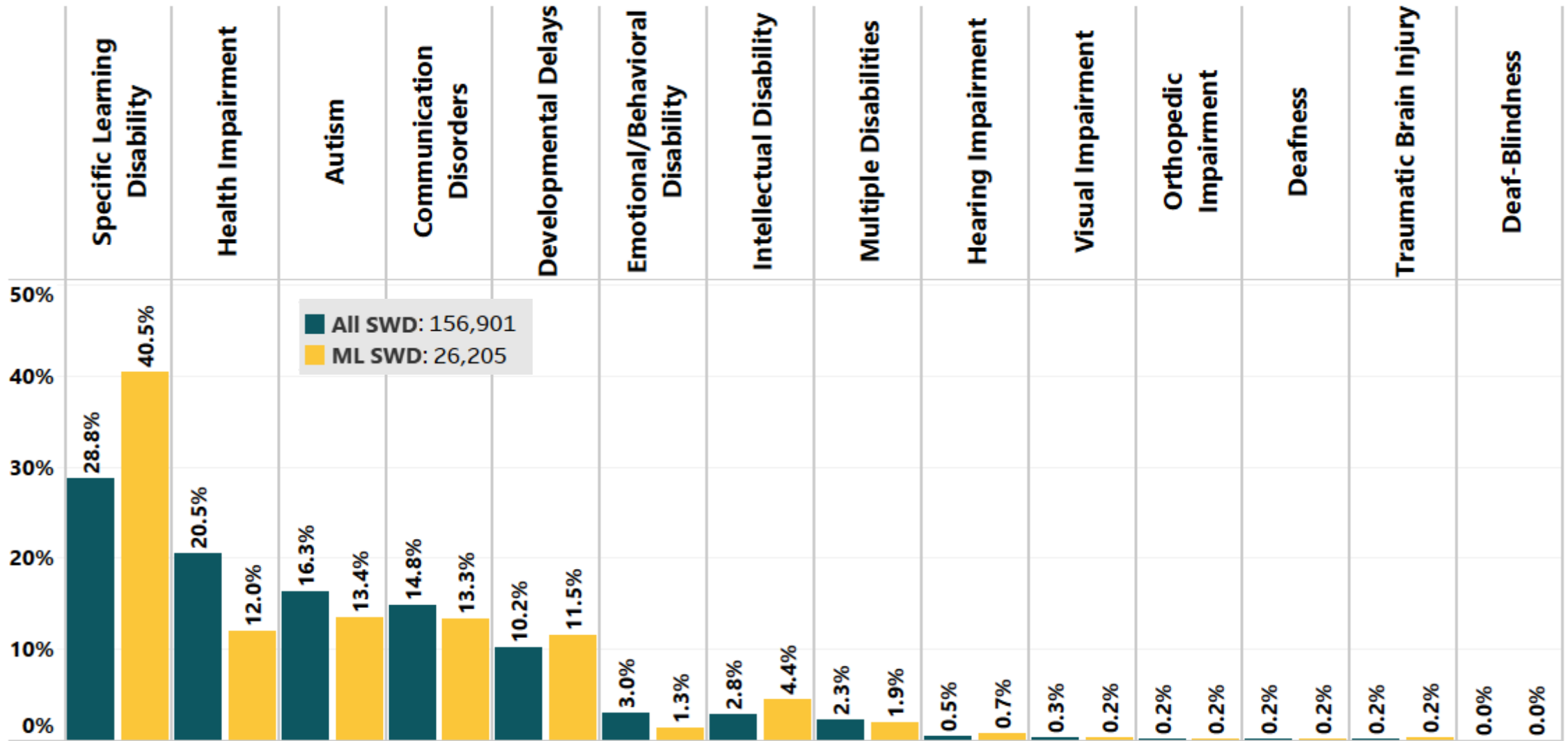
(Age 5 Not in PK and All Students Ages 6-22)



Washington Office of Superintendent of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Source: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. (2025).
[*Special Education Federal LRE and Child Count Data.*](#)

2025 WA Students with Disabilities and Multilingual SWD, by Eligibility Category (Age 5 Not in PK and All Students Ages 6-22)





Inclusionary Outcomes – Disaggregated

	All PreK-12 Students	Students with Disabilities	Black Students with Disabilities
2025-26 PreK-12 Student Enrollment	1,096,285	169,091	9,533
2025-26 PreK Inclusion (LRE Indicator 6A)	N/A	34.95%	30.38%
2025-26 Kindergarten Ready (WaKIDS)	50.9%	23.6%	12.3%
2025-26 K-12 Inclusion (80-100% general ed)	N/A	66.47%	54.11%
2025 Graduation	82.6%	65.7%	57.9%
2025 Drop-out	9.8%	14.2%	17.3%
2023-24 Leavers Post-School Outcomes	N/A	71.3%	68.31%

Sources: OSPI. (2025). [State Report Card](#); [Least Restrictive Environment \(LRE\) and Child Count Data](#); [Data Performance Profile](#).

The Equity Imperative



Barriers to equity for students with disabilities:

- Low expectations.
- Disproportionate identification, segregation & discipline for students of color.
- Lack of access and opportunity to core instruction from content experts.
- School schedules contribute to removals from core instruction in general education.
- Teacher and staff shortages.
- Training needs for educators & school staff.
- Staffing models that reinforce segregation.



**How can we
remove or reduce
these barriers?**



Why does the IPTN focus on Black students with IEPs?

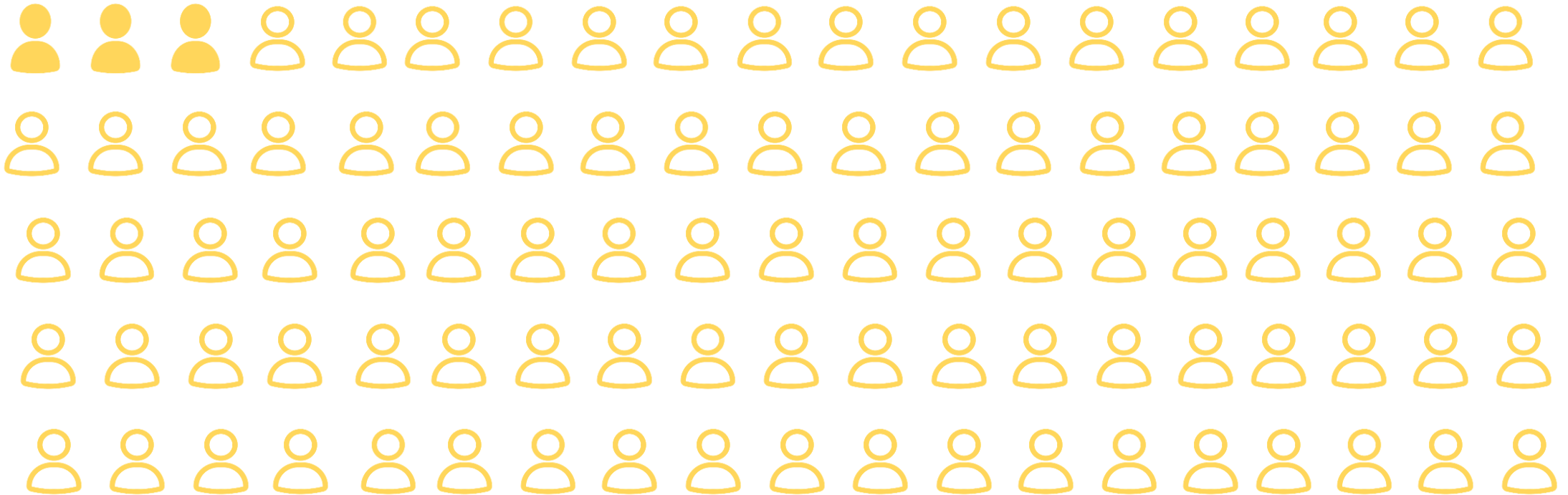
About 5 of 10 Black students with disabilities spend at least 80% of the school day in a general education setting.



In comparison, **about 7 of 10** of White students with disabilities spend at least 80% of the school day in the general education setting.

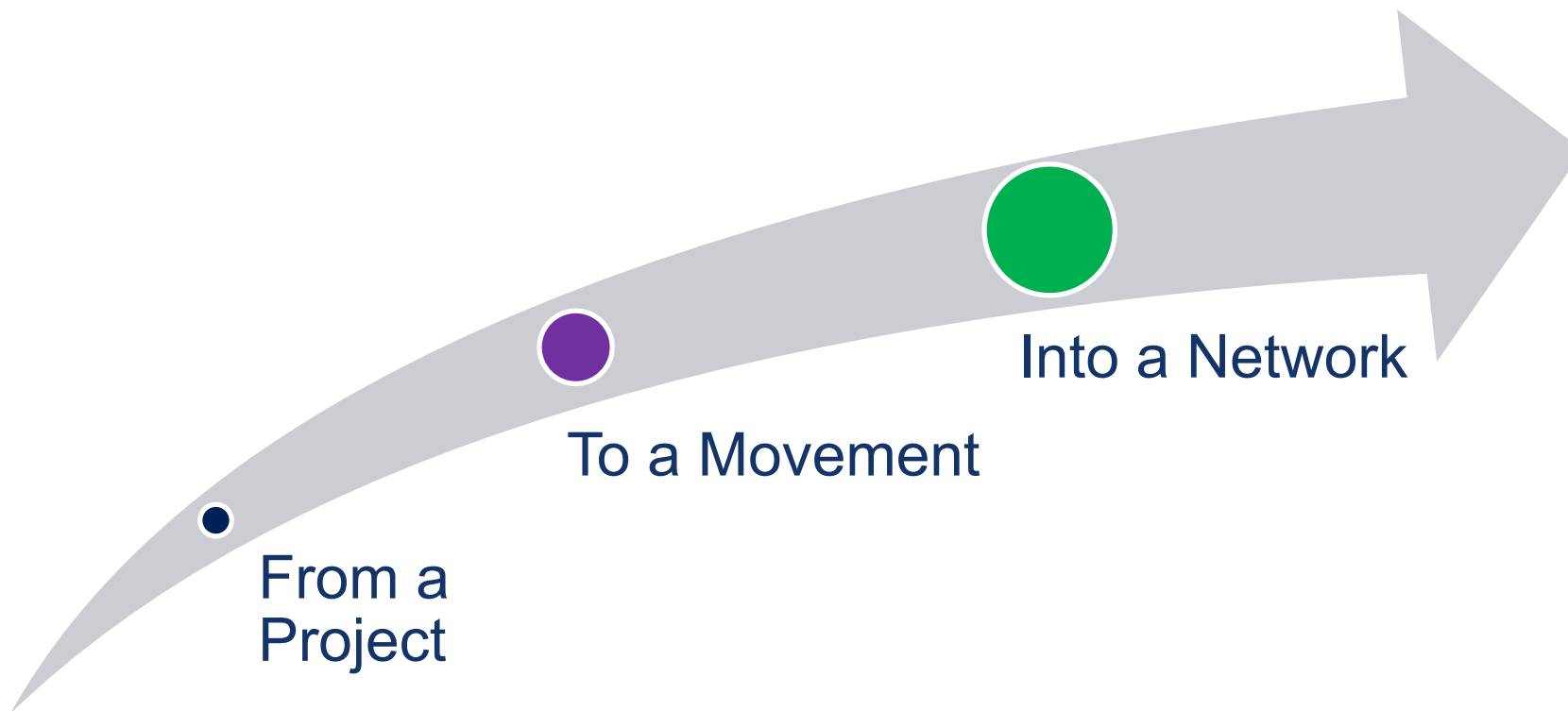


Why does the IPTN focus on students with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD)?



About 3 of 100 of students with intellectual or developmental disabilities spend at least 80% of the school day in a general education setting.

Washington's Inclusionary Practices Technical Assistance Network (IPTN)



<https://ospi.k12.wa.us/iptn>



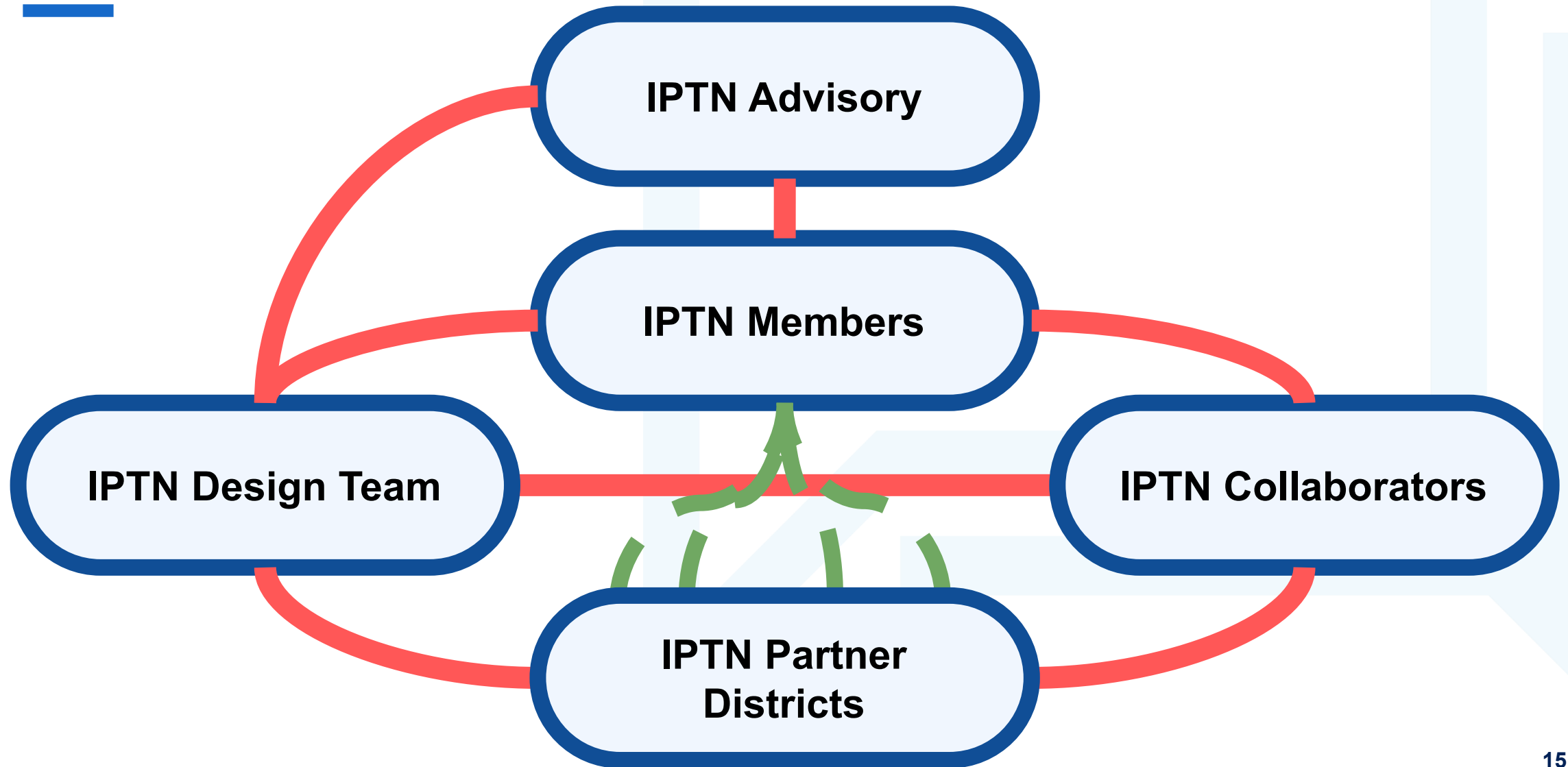


IPTN Aim Statement

The IPTN will provide high-quality guidance, technical assistance, and professional development resources to districts to disrupt segregated systems of disproportionality and reduce exclusionary practices in Washington schools.

This will result in improved student outcomes, with an additional focus on the outcomes and inclusion of students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) & Black students with disabilities.

IPTN 3.0 - Organizational Structure





Special education has its fair share of myths and facts about inclusion for students with significant cognitive disabilities. This resource was developed to challenge those myths and highlight the facts of why inclusionary practices work for each and every student.



MYTH #1: COSTS OF INCLUSION

MYTH #2: WHO CAN PROVIDE SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION?

MYTH #3: READINESS FOR INCLUSION

MYTH #4: CURRICULUM & STANDARDS

MYTH #5: PARENTS & INCLUSION

MYTH #6: DISABILITY & PLACEMENT

MYTH #7: ASSESSMENT & ACADEMICS





MYTH #3:

Students with significant cognitive disabilities must show they are ready for the general education setting.

FACT:

Every student is a general education student. All students have the right to be educated in general education settings.

The Truth Is...

- Students should not be required to reach specified benchmarks (e.g., a 2nd grader at Kindergarten proficiency) before receiving instruction in general education.
- A student's needs, rather than disability, should determine placement. For example, a student with an intellectual disability should not automatically be placed into a segregated setting.
- Mission and vision statements that read "all means all" should include the experiences of students with significant support needs.
- Students with IEPs, including students with significant support needs, should not have to "earn their time" in general education or "prove" they will not engage in challenging behaviors before gaining access to general education environments.

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT THE FACTS:

- OSPI's [Inclusionary Practices Project \(IPP\)](#) defines inclusion as all means all: Inclusive instruction rebukes the problematic perspective that students receiving special education services need to 'fit in' or 'earn their way' into general education classes. The belief that general education instruction is not malleable and that students should be making adaptations to be included in the general education setting has contributed to the continuation of two parallel systems of education in which students receiving special education services are marginalized and devalued as a result of their environmental segregation.
- TIES Center Resource: [Taking the Alternative Assessment Does NOT Mean Education in a Separate Setting!](#)
- [Outcomes of Inclusive Versus Separate Placement: A Matched Pairs Comparison. Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities](#) - Gee, K. Gonzales, M., & Cooper, C. (2020)

STRATEGIES FOR DISPELLING THE MYTH:

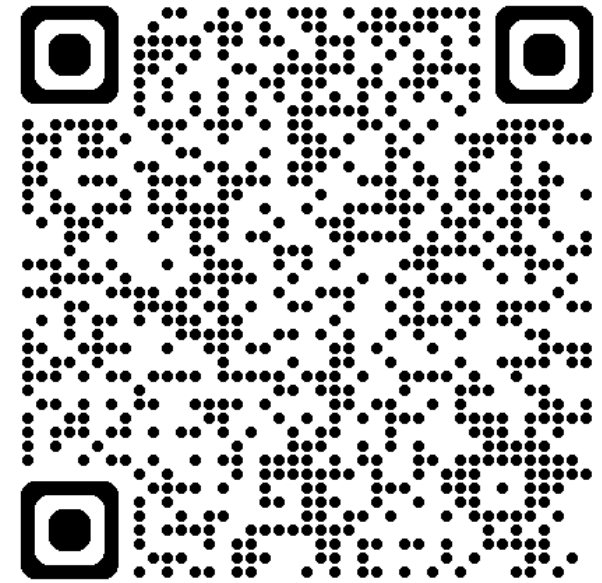
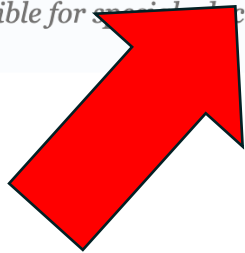
- Provide [examples/frameworks that show how students with significant cognitive disabilities can engage in lessons/units](#) (e.g., lesson examples, share inclusive IEP process, and Inclusive Education at a Glance).
- Include core content data and stories about students with and without disabilities. [Identify environmental, attitudinal, and other barriers to general education curriculum and access](#). Presume competence for all and meaningfully consider supports needed for instruction in general education settings.
- Implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into all lesson planning and ensure students with significant cognitive disabilities are included in all aspects of classroom- and school-wide [Multi-tiered Systems of Support \(MTSS\)](#) including academic, behavior and social-emotional.
- Assign every student to the roster of a general education teacher with a seat in a general education classroom. This means that there is no negotiation about whether a student belongs in general education. It also clearly conveys that special education services are supplementary to general education.

Comprehensive Inclusive Education in WA

Comprehensive Inclusive Education

Inclusive education for students who receive special education services involves both access and learning in general education and the inclusive Individualized Education Program (IEP). All members of a student's educational team, including the student and their family, have a role to play in effective instruction and support in inclusive settings.

Download the guide, [Comprehensive Inclusive Education in Washington \(PDF\)](#), for a step-by-step process to develop inclusive IEPs and promote equitable learning opportunities and post-school outcomes for students eligible for special education services.



Visit the [Comprehensive Inclusive Education](#) webpage for a summary of each step, implementation tools, and additional resources





STUDENT SUCCESS

[Resources by Subject Area](#) ▶

[Learning Standards & Instructional Materials](#) ▶

[Graduation](#) ▶

[Testing](#) ▶

[Career & Technical Education \(CTE\)](#) ▶

[Special Education](#) ▶

[Support Programs](#) ▼

[Attendance, Chronic Absenteeism, and Truancy](#) ▶

[Building Bridges](#) ▶

[Center for the Improvement of Student Learning \(CISL\)](#) ▶

[Comprehensive Inclusive Education](#) ▼

[Step 1: Collaborative Conversations](#)

[Step 2: Creating an Inclusive IEP](#)

[Step 3: Education Day-at-a-Glance](#)

[Step 4: Ongoing Education & Support](#)

[Dual Credit Programs](#) ▶

[Early Learning](#) ▶

[Inclusionary Practices Technical Assistance Network \(IPTN\)](#)

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OSPI affirms the following principles in this work:

- Every student is a general education student.
- The IEP is not the student's entire educational program or curriculum. For a student eligible for special education services, their education program has three parts:
 - The general education curriculum
 - The school's routines and activities
 - The IEP
- Students learn and thrive when they are valued, visible members of their classroom and school communities and activities.

Inclusionary Practices



[Step 1: Collaborative Conversations](#)

Collaborate with the family and school team for a solid foundation to start the school year.

[Step 2: Creating an Inclusive IEP](#)

Develop an IEP that honors student and family voice and intentionally aligns supports to the general education settings, curriculum, routines, activities, and social opportunities that are available for all students in the school.

[Step 3: Education Day-at-a-Glance](#)

Efficiently implement the IEP by linking goals and supports with the student's daily schedule.

[Step 4: Ongoing Education and Support](#)

Continually collaborate to implement the IEP and ensure all students are learning.

Principles of Comprehensive Inclusive Education

Principles of Comprehensive Inclusive Education

The IEP is not the student's sole educational program or curriculum.

For each student eligible for special education services, their educational program has **three** parts:

- The general education curriculum
- The school's routines & activities
- The IEP

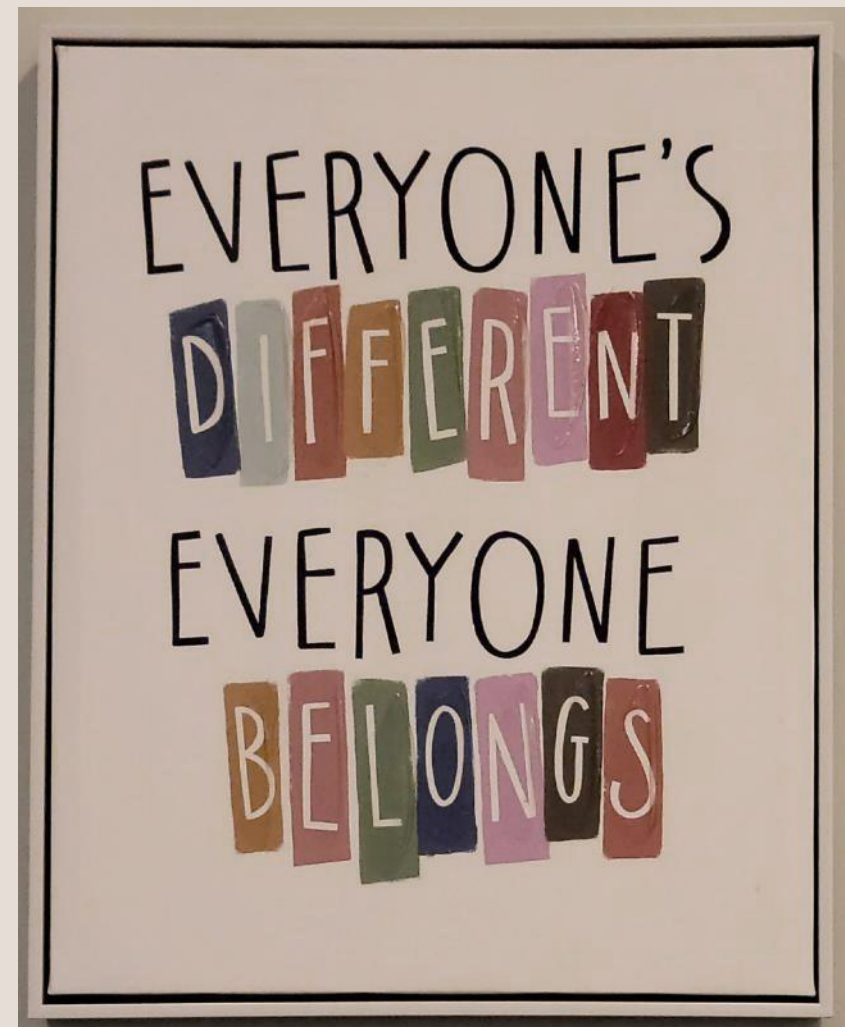
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Students learn and thrive when they are valued, visible members of their classroom and school communities.

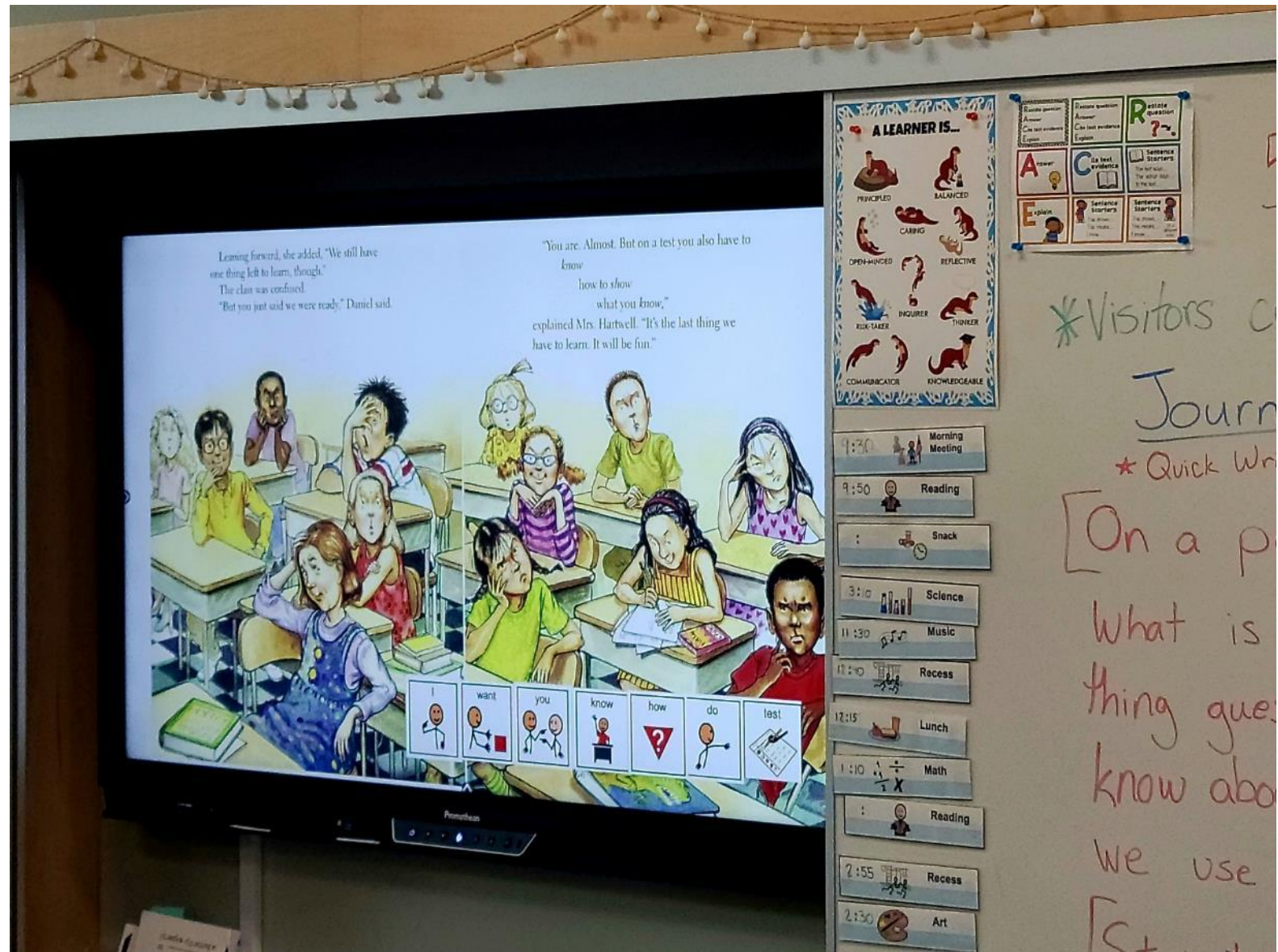




Models of Excellence: Inclusionary Practices Demonstration Sites



Inclusive (Accessible!) Instruction



Progress not Perfection...

What is the Next Right Step We're Ready to Take?



- ❖ Elevate and celebrate the strengths of the team and larger system for including and supporting students with disabilities.
- ❖ Stay curious: analyze data, systems, and support structures... are students with disabilities included across all areas, with all staff roles?
- ❖ Balance urgency with sustainability: it's not possible to 'fix' everything at once. What is the next step the team is ready to take?
- ❖ Embrace the messy middle: be open with the team, students, and families that change takes time; collect input along the way.



Resources to Support Inclusive Practices

- [Inclusionary Practices](#)
- [Inclusionary Practices Technical Assistance Network \(IPTN\)](#)
- [Comprehensive Inclusive Education guide](#)
- [CAST UDL Guidelines](#)
- [Online Module on Inclusive Schools: A Model for School Leaders](#)
- [Myths & Facts about Inclusionary Practices](#)
- [Inclusionary Practices Demonstration Sites](#)



Discussion & Questions



<https://media.istockphoto.com/photos/red-flag-with-question-mark-on-map-background-3d-rendering-picture-id537276026>



