

TEXAS SPECIAL EDUCATION REPORT

13 Takeaways For Texans

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Meeting the educational needs of students with disabilities in Texas: Information Texans need to know.

The State's Responsibility

The federal government and the state of Texas share a critically important and legal responsibility to ensure every student has access to a high-quality public education. To ensure students with disabilities receive the services they need to support their learning, the U.S. Congress reauthorized the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004. IDEA requires that each state (1) implement IDEA with fidelity, (2) sustain special education programs that meet IDEA's educational standards, and (3) monitor special education effectively at the local- and state-levels. Each state is responsible for submitting a State Performance Plan to the U.S. Department of Education (ED), at least, every 6 years. Also, all states must annually report a series of goals and targets specific to meeting the needs of students with disabilities to the ED. Based on these reports, additional monitoring visits, and other information, the ED annually determines if a state meets requirements or needs assistance, intervention, or substantial intervention to implement IDEA with fidelity.

Troubling Track Record

Annual determinations of IDEA implementation are made publicly available, but members of the public who are interested in assessing special education implementation can find **navigating federal and state websites, legal jargon, and governmental data displays confusing or time intensive**. While Texas has made some progress in special education in recent years, the state has a troubling track record. For example, the state was rated as “meet requirements” by the ED in 2023-24, which was the first time this rating was given in over a decade. Yet, Texas has been cited multiple times for failing to accurately identify all eligible students with disabilities and failing to appropriately monitor special education. Texas has also made illegal cuts to special education funding.

Critical Need for Information

This report was designed **to provide accessible information to Texans who are also parents, journalists, policymakers, practitioners, community organizations, and other interested parties**. Rather than assessing all aspects of IDEA implementation, this report focuses on critical areas relevant to traditional public schools serving students ages 5 through 21 in grades K through 12. We identified key areas of action for Texans to support students with disabilities, after a year-long analysis of Texas special education data and in consultation with educators, administrators, disability rights advocates, and families of students with and without disabilities.

The key areas are presented as our main findings and include data displays, discussion, and an explanation of why Texas policymakers should prioritize addressing areas of need in special education for traditional public schools. We conclude with actionable items for the following entities in Texas: Texas Education Agency (TEA), traditional public school districts and charter management organizations, journalists, universities, families and community organizations, and the Texas legislature. Additional information related to research methods, data, and analysis procedures is provided in the Appendix.

Acknowledgments

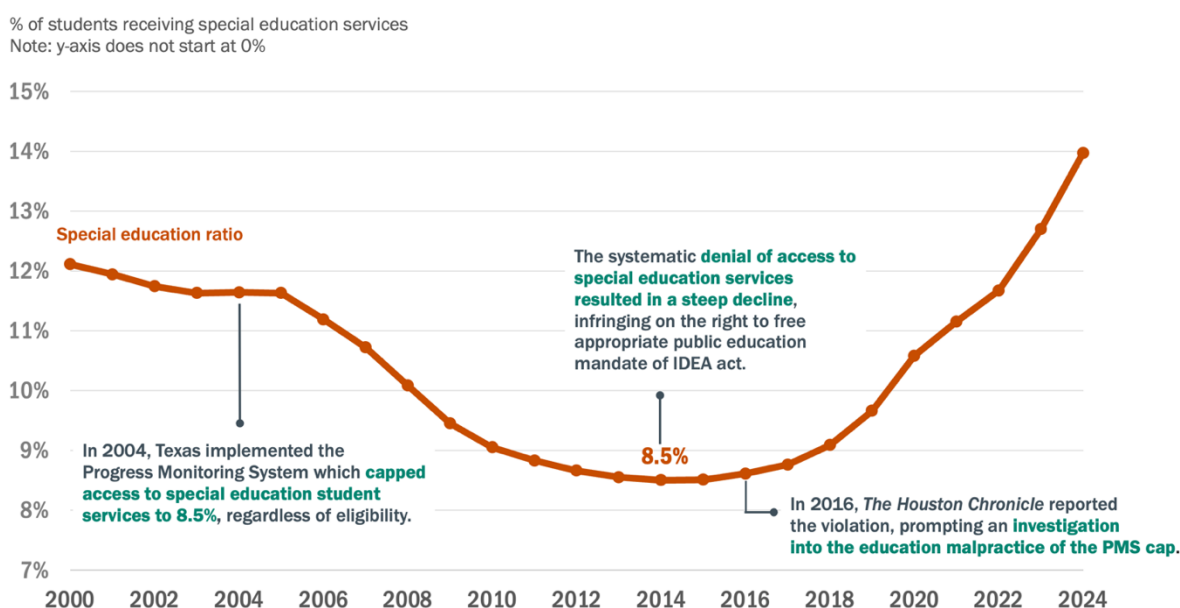
We are grateful for the contributions of many individuals that made this work possible. We thank the Transcending Research Analytics through Collective Exploration (T.R.A.C.E.) data team, including Laura Torres, Katie Mason, and Sarah Mason, for their efforts in supporting the data visualizations of the report. We also thank Drs. Rachel White, Shelby Cosner, Andrew Pendola, and David Knight for their thoughtful conversations and reviews.

The Texas Education Research Center, an evaluation center providing access to high-quality longitudinal data from Texas, provided data for this study. In addition, this study relied on publicly available data from the U.S. Department of Education, TEA, and public information requests made to TEA.

Finding 1: The drastic decline in special education enrollment from 2004-2020, largely caused by Gov. Abbott's 2004 8.5% cap on special education service delivery, is a cause for concern given the additional stressors of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 1 illustrates the percentage of students with disabilities receiving special education services relative to the total student enrollment from the 1999-2000 school year to 2023-24 school year. The figure shows a U-shaped enrollment pattern in special education, even while the population of students with disabilities grew significantly. The decline in special education enrollment began around 2004 when TEA implemented the Performance Based Monitoring and Analysis System, which included a maximum, or 'cap', of 8.5% enrollment of students in special education, limiting the number of students with disabilities eligible to receive needed special education supports. In 2018, Gov. Greg Abbott, after much attestation to ever having set the cap, declared that a plan for remediation be launched to improve special education service delivery in Texas public schools. The governor's call for such improvement came one week after the ED declared that Texas was in violation of meeting standards set by IDEA. The governor did not provide further comment on his part in enforcing the cap on public school districts.

Figure 1. Enrollment and percent of students with disabilities in Texas between 2000-2024.



Takeaway for Texans

Texans should expect that their traditional public schools accurately and appropriately identify students in need of special education services, in accordance with IDEA. The U-shaped curve presented in Figure 1 reflects a problematic state policy that likely led to many eligible students being delayed or denied access to special education services. In 2016, *The Houston Chronicle* reported that the 8.5% cap “led to the systematic denial of [special education] services by school districts to tens of thousands of families of every race and class across the state.”¹ In 2017, the ED, via their Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), concluded that “TEA did not ensure that all ISDs in the State properly identified, located, and evaluated all children with disabilities residing in the State who were in need of special education and related services, as required by 34 CFR §300.111. Consequently, TEA failed to make a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to all eligible children with disabilities residing in the State” (p. 1).² *The Houston Chronicle*’s reporting and the subsequent investigation by the ED then triggered an increase in both the enrollment and ratio of students with disabilities in Texas. The increasing identification rates through the pandemic, while schools were closed or virtual, only raised questions about the quality of the special education identification process and the potential for inaccurate identifications of students in need of special education services. Equally concerning, as identification rates increased, the state made several illegal cuts to special education in prior years and was inappropriately coding Medicaid reimbursements, leading to a loss of additional federal funds.³

¹ Rosenthal, D. (2016a, September 10). Denied: Part 1: How Texas keeps tens of thousands of children out of special education. *Houston Chronicle*. Retrieved from <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/denied/1/>

² U.S. Department of Education (2017). Texas part B 2017 monitoring visit letter. https://static.texastribune.org/media/documents/USDE_Sped_Report.pdf

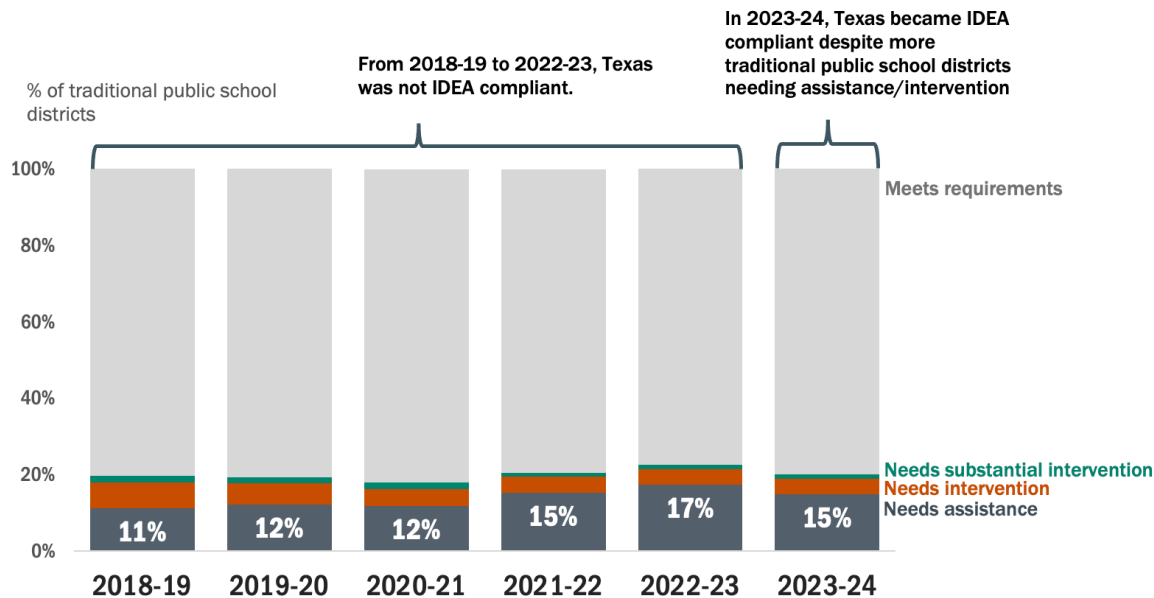
³ Phillips, C. (2024, January 11). Texas school districts lose \$300 million in federal special education funding. *Texas Public Radio*. <https://www.tpr.org/education/2024-01-11/texas-school-districts-lose-300-million-in-federal-special-education-funding>

Finding 2: The State of Texas has consistently struggled to implement IDEA.

Figure 2 shows the percentage of Texas school districts that meet requirements, need assistance, need intervention, or need substantial intervention based on the ED's review of TEA data and from monitoring visits. Between 2017 and 2023, the ED annually rated Texas as "needs assistance" with IDEA implementation.⁴ With nearly 1,200 school districts in Texas, roughly 230 are not meeting IDEA requirements annually. Meanwhile, about 15-25 school districts need substantial intervention. Despite fewer districts meeting requirements in 2023-24, the ED determined that Texas was meeting IDEA requirements as a state for the first time in nearly a decade.⁵

Since 2018, roughly 1 in 5 districts have consistently failed to meet IDEA requirements, yet Texas still became compliant in 2023-24.

Figure 2. Percentage of Texas districts rated as not meeting IDEA requirements.



Takeaway for Texans

IDEA protects the rights of students with disabilities and their families. Careful, attentive implementation of the law is essential to safeguard those rights and ensure that each student with a disability receives a high-quality education in alignment with federal requirements. Texans should expect that the Commissioner of the TEA and local traditional public school districts as well as charter management organizations are appropriately monitoring and taking action to improve IDEA implementation, especially where districts or schools are struggling to do so. When the implementation of IDEA is not adequately monitored at local and state levels, students with disabilities may not receive a high-quality education that meets their needs.

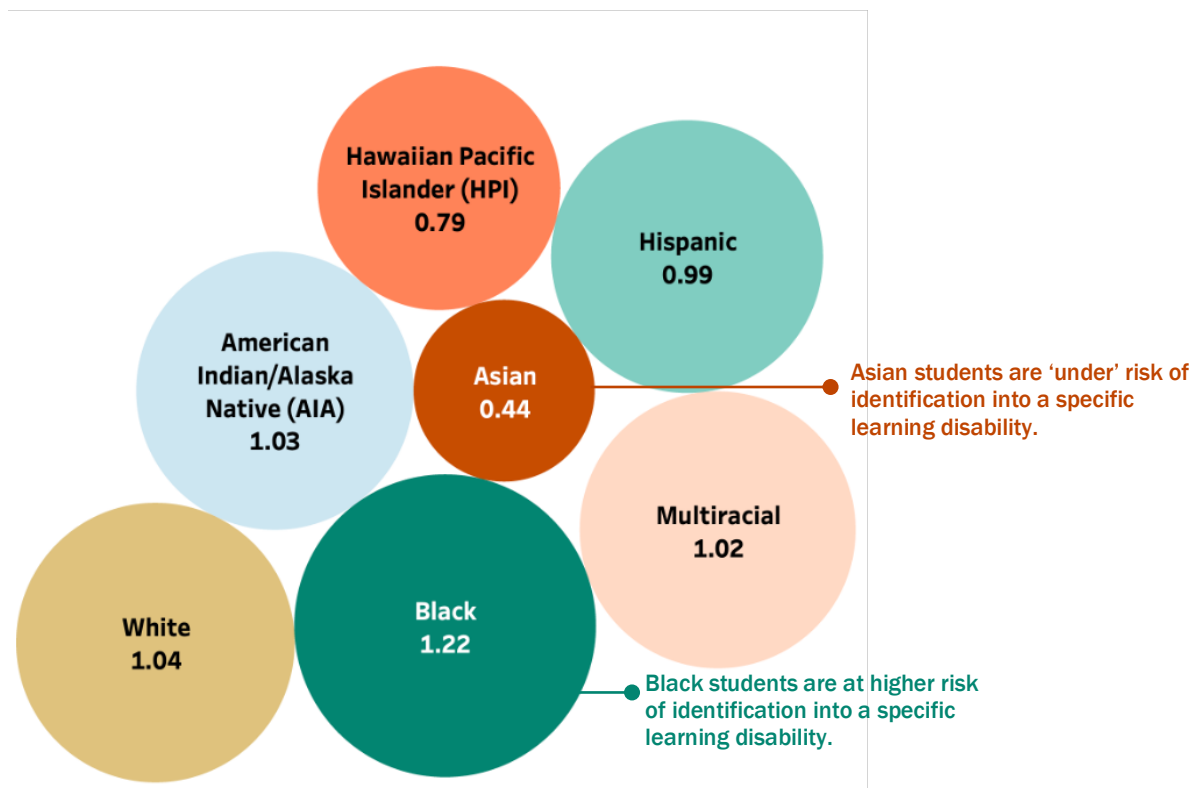
⁴ United States Department of Education. *State performance plans (SPP) letters and annual performance report (APR) letters*. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/spp-apr-letters?selected-category=sppapr-part-b&selected-year=&state=Texas>; Edison, J., & Nicholson-Messmer, E. (2024, September 4). Texas schools are hiring more teachers without traditional training. They hope the state will pay to prepare them. <https://www.texastribune.org/2024/09/04/texas-uncertified-teachers-staff-shortages/>

⁵ United States Department of Education. *2024 determination letters on state implementation of IDEA*. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/2024-determination-letters-on-state-implementation-of-idea/>

Finding 3: Black students are more likely to be identified for special education, while Asian and Hawaiian Pacific Islander students are less likely to be identified for special education.

Figure 3 presents the risk ratio of students with disabilities for each racial/ethnic group in Fall 2023. Risk ratio compares the likelihood of an event occurring in one group to the likelihood of it occurring in another group. In our context, it shows how likely students from a racial or ethnic group are to be identified for special education services compared to the other student groups. These metrics highlight potential disparities in special education identification across different racial/ethnic groups. Although not presented in Figure 3, our analysis shows students classified by the state as economically disadvantaged are also at higher risk of identification into specific disability classifications, including specific learning disability, emotional disturbance, and intellectual disability. Meanwhile, Asian and Hawaiian Pacific Islander students are less likely to be identified into special education.

Figure 3. Risk ratio of students with disabilities by race/ethnicity in Fall 2023.



Takeaway for Texans

Disproportionate identification for any student group is a red flag, signaling systemic failures and potential discrimination. Still, lax federal accountability policies allow Texas to set low bars for identifying and addressing racial disproportionality in special education. Problems stemming from the illegal 8.5% special education cap, the COVID-19 pandemic, and a steep rise in alternatively certified and uncertified teachers in schools serving low-income students and students of color may also be contributing to inaccurate or disproportionate identification.⁶

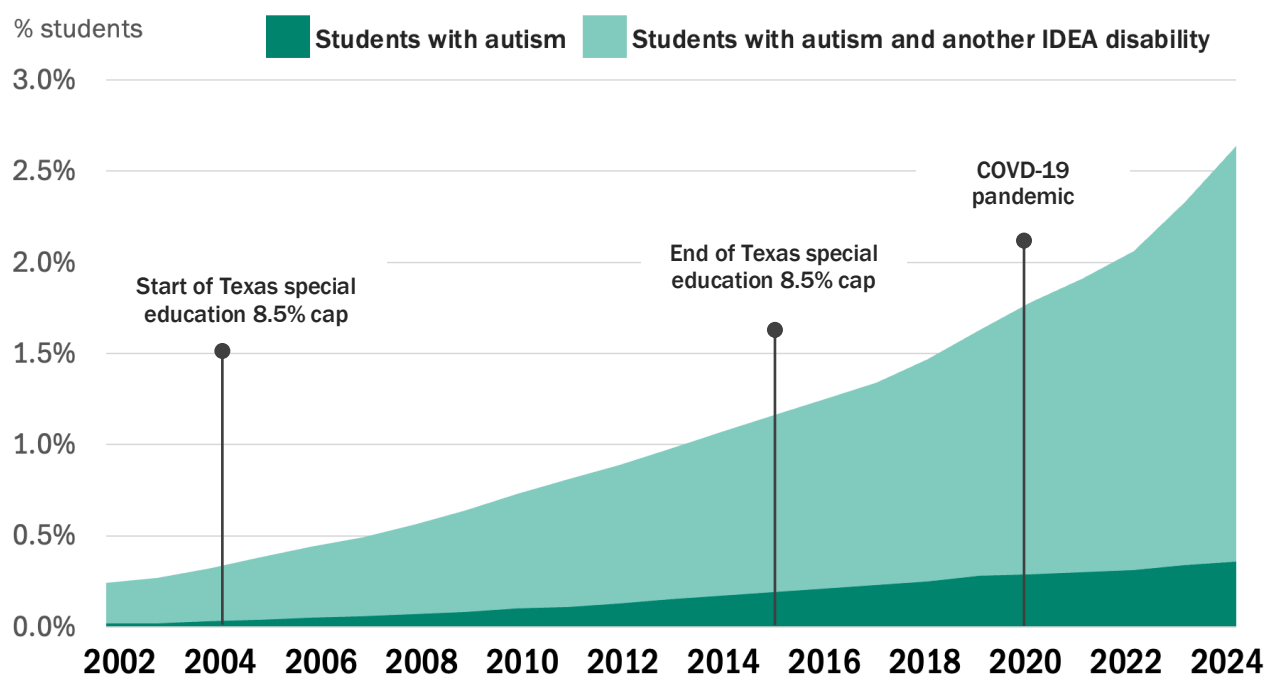
⁶ DeMatthews, D., Knight, D., & Shin, J. (2021). The principal-teacher churn: Understanding the relationship between leadership turnover and teacher attrition. *Educational Administration Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X211051974>

Finding 4: The number and percentage of students identified under IDEA with autism has skyrocketed over the past 22 years.

Figure 4 tracks the percentage of students identified with autism under IDEA in Texas from 2001-02 to 2023-24. The figure distinguishes between students solely identified with autism and those identified with autism along with other IDEA disability classifications, illustrating how the representation of these groups has shifted over time. Between 2002 and 2024, the number of Texas students identified with autism under IDEA went from 8,650 to 119,641. This increase persisted even during the illegal 8.5% Texas special education cap of 2004-17 and the COVID-19 pandemic. The sharp increase of students identified with autism under IDEA in Texas mirrors national trends. With this development in Texas' special education demographics, extra attention may need to be paid for resource development (e.g., professional development, teacher workforce, etc.) to ensure the needs of all students are met. Additionally, while the rate of students with disabilities being placed in the general education classroom for 80% or more of the school day is increasing, proper support for students with disabilities is essential to ensure each student receives an education that meets their needs.

Students with autism have increased even during the Texas special education cap and COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4. Percentage of students with autism from 2002 through 2024.



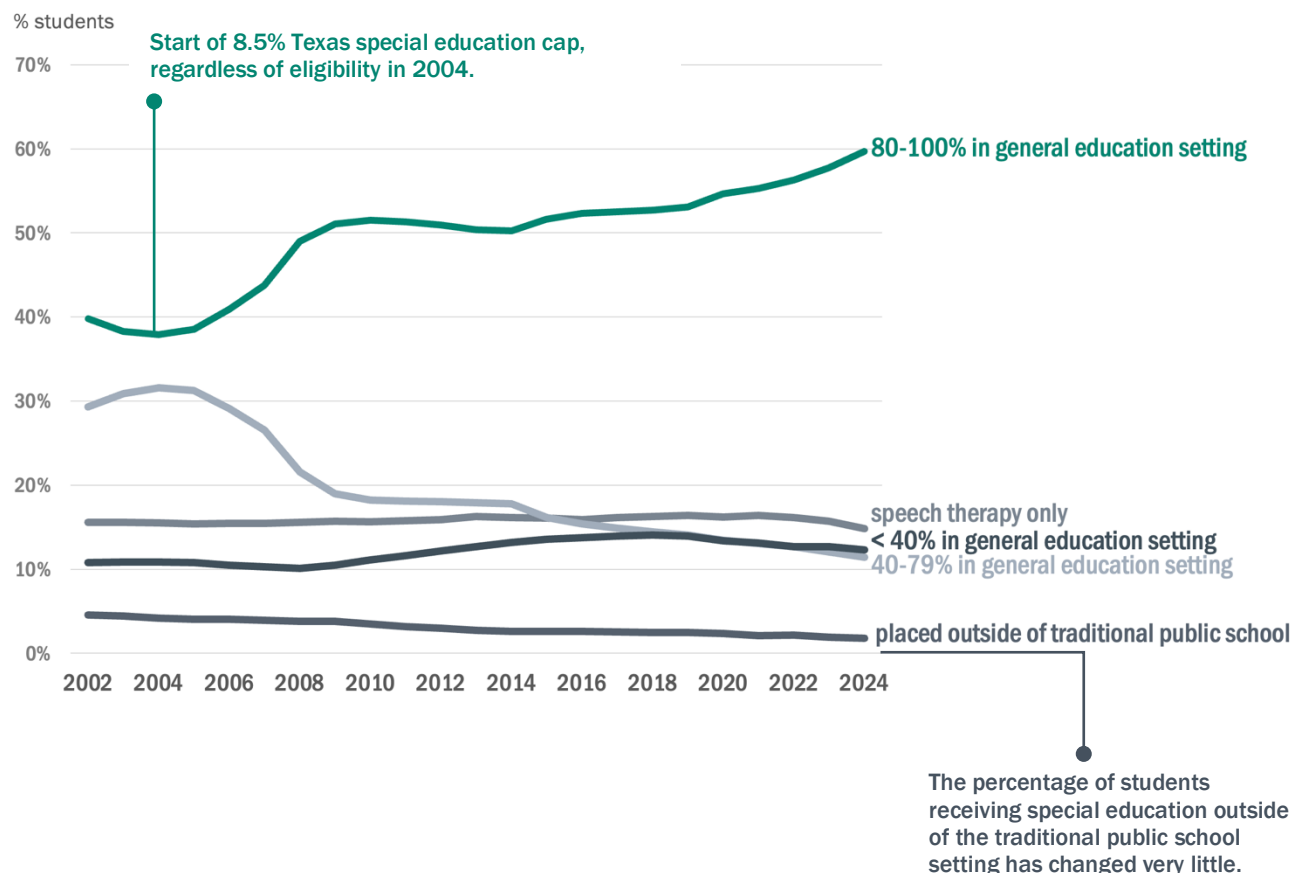
Takeaway for Texans

The significant increase in students identified under IDEA with autism likely has a myriad of causes, which are regularly examined in the fields of public health, medicine, and education. While understanding what is prompting significant growth is beyond the scope of this study, the rapid growth of enrollment of students identified under IDEA with autism requires substantial shifts in how educators and administrators are prepared, as well as the types of programs and supports made available to traditional public schools in Texas.

Finding 5: More students with disabilities than ever before spend 80% or more of the school day in the general education classroom, but access to the general education classroom varies by a student's race/ethnicity.

Figure 5 depicts the percentage of students with disabilities receiving special education services within various educational settings between 2001-02 to 2023-24. The percentage of students with disabilities educated for 100% of the school day in the general education classroom has increased over time. However, the percentage of students with disabilities educated less than 40% of the school day in the general education classroom or outside of traditional public schools has changed very little since 2001-02.

Figure 5. Percentage of students with disabilities receiving special education services within various educational settings.



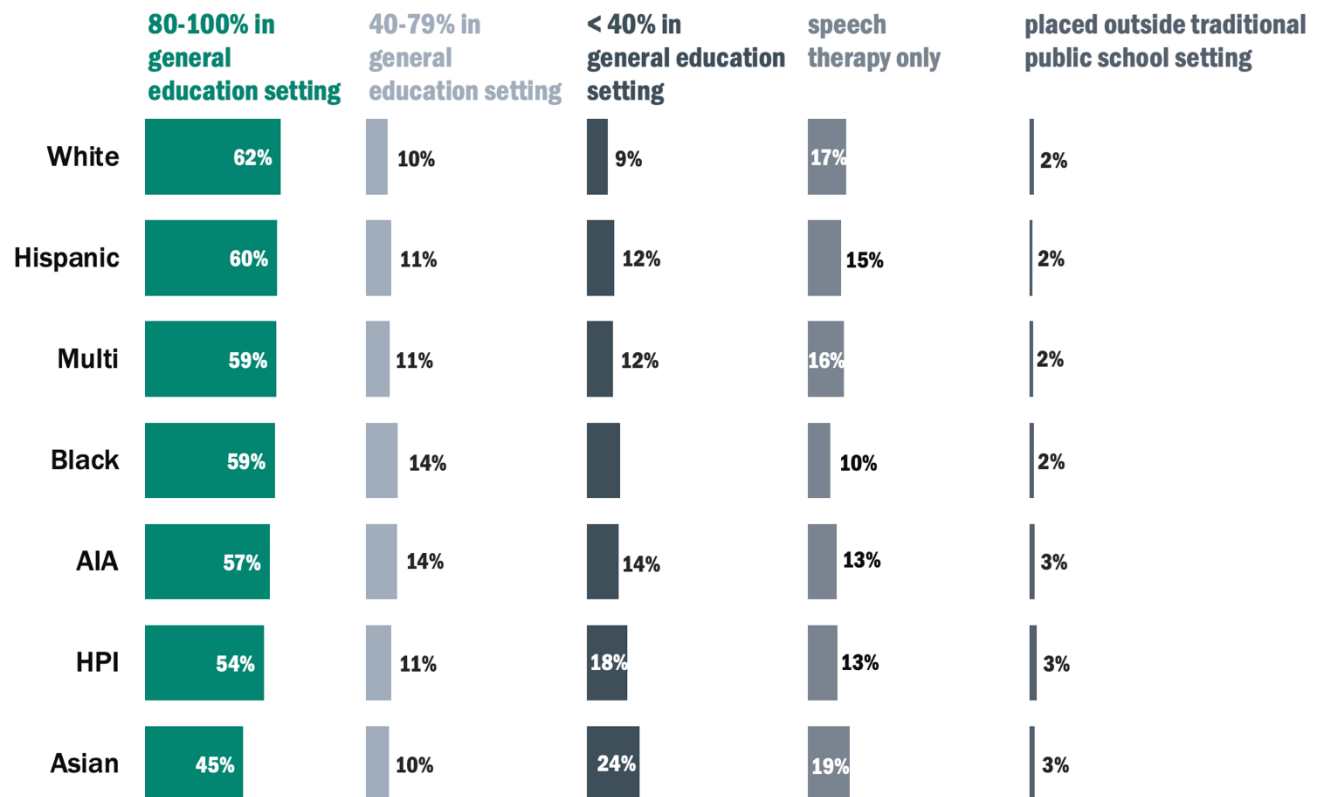
Takeaway for Texans

Under IDEA, a student with a disability is entitled to be placed in their least restrictive environment, which is to be determined through a collaborative process, stipulated in IDEA, to create a continuum of potential educational settings that may meet the student's needs. Guided by input from a general education teacher, special education teacher, representative of the local education agency (e.g., the school principal, assistant principal), and a member of the student's family, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is developed, driven by data collection and analysis specific to the student's learning and/or behavioral goals, that specifies a student's appropriate placement in an educational setting. The trends displayed in Figure 5, while promising in the steep increase in students with disabilities' placements in general education classrooms for 80% or more of the school day, call for greater attention to be paid by Texans on the development of students' IEPs to ensure designed goals, specific interventions, and the use of data are driving students' placements.

Finding 6: White students with disabilities are most likely to spend 80% or more of the school day in the general education classroom relative to their peers.

Figure 6 below illustrates the percentage of students with disabilities across various educational settings by race/ethnicity for the most recent school year, 2023-24. Each bar represents the percentage of students with disabilities from a specific racial/ethnic group in various educational settings, highlighting differences in placement patterns among racial/ethnic groups.

Figure 6. Percentage of student race/ethnicity and educational environment in 2023-24.



Note: AIA stands for American Indian/Alaska Native and HPI stands for Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Multi stands for Multiracial groups.

Takeaway for Texans

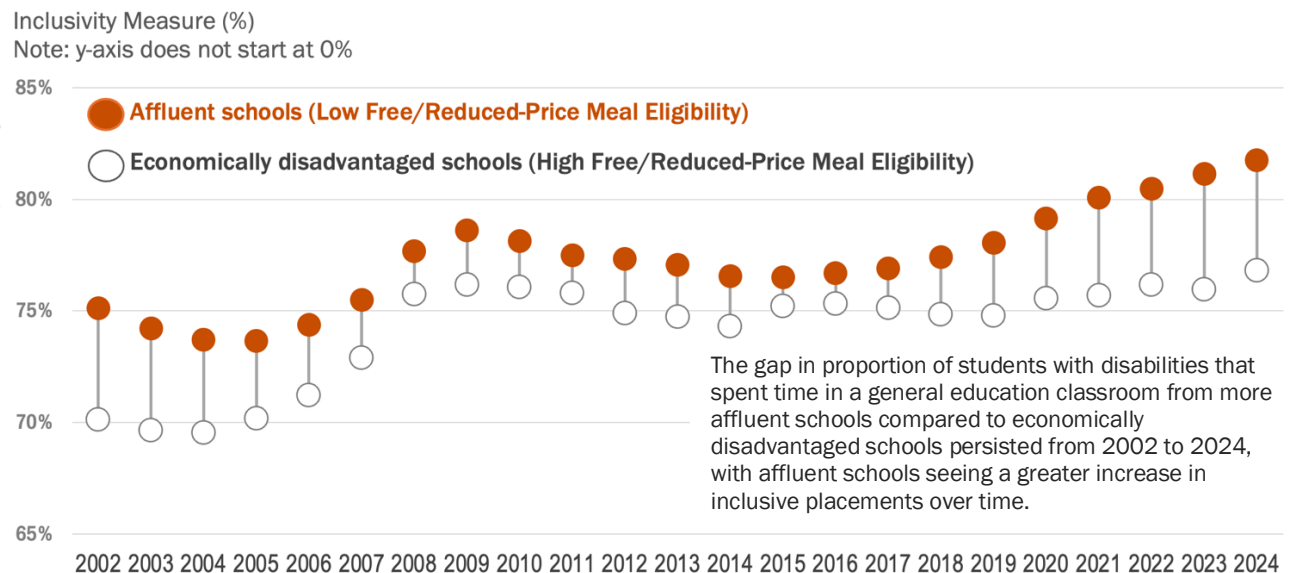
The state's increasing access to the general education classroom for students with disabilities can have academic and social benefits for all students. However, simply locating students with disabilities in the general education classroom is an insufficient measure for a school's overall inclusivity for students with disabilities. Teachers must be well-trained and have adequate time and resources to meet their students' needs, which may be in question given the current teacher shortage and increased volume of uncertified teachers in Texas. Moreover, decisions about the educational environment where a student with a disability is educated should not be based on race/ethnicity or family income but rather on their individual needs and the supports and services available within a district or school.

Finding 7: Schools serving more economically disadvantaged communities are less likely to be inclusive for students with disabilities when compared to more affluent schools.

Figure 7 below illustrates the variation of inclusive placements for students with disabilities in schools of varied economic statuses (i.e., affluent schools v. economically disadvantaged schools). The designation of schools as affluent or economically disadvantaged is based on the proportion of students eligible for free- and reduced-price lunch. Our inclusivity measure reflects the percentage of the school day that the average student with a disability spends in the general education setting. Affluent schools have had a steeper increase in access to the general education classroom for students with disabilities over the past 5 years. Although not included in Figure 7, we also found that rural schools have higher rates of inclusive placements for students with disabilities than urban and suburban schools.

Gaps in inclusive placements for students with disabilities persists by school locale type and rates of free- and reduced-price lunch eligibility amongst student populations.

Figure 7. Overall inclusivity for students with disabilities in affluent and economically disadvantaged schools.



Takeaway for Texans

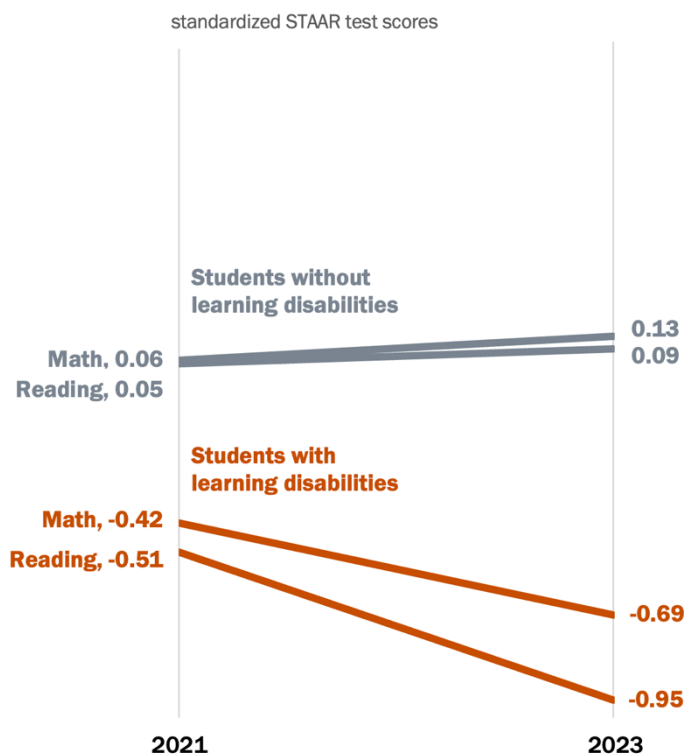
As previously noted, the setting in which a student with a disability is educated should be an individualized decision based on their strengths and areas of growth. Students in less affluent schools should not have substantially different access levels to the general education classroom than peers in more affluent schools. Disparities between students in more and less affluent schools should raise red flags that necessitate inquiry and state monitoring.

Finding 8: Students with disabilities perform significantly lower on state-mandated assessments in math and reading relative to peers ineligible for special education services.

Figure 8 compares the 5th grade STAAR test performance of students with learning disabilities and students without disabilities over the past three years, with separate math and reading bars. The test scores have been converted to a standardized normal distribution to make comparing relative performance between the two groups across subjects easier. While not included in Figure 7, our analysis revealed other concerning patterns of achievement outcomes for students with disabilities generally and among certain disability groups.

Academic achievement for **students with learning disabilities** decreased over time.

Figure 8. 5th grade STAAR test performance of students with learning disabilities and their peers between 2021 and 2023.



Takeaway for Texans

Students with learning disabilities represent the largest group of students receiving special education under IDEA in Texas and in the nation. Nationally, researchers have expressed concern that the achievement of students with learning disabilities is not progressing relative to their peers.⁷

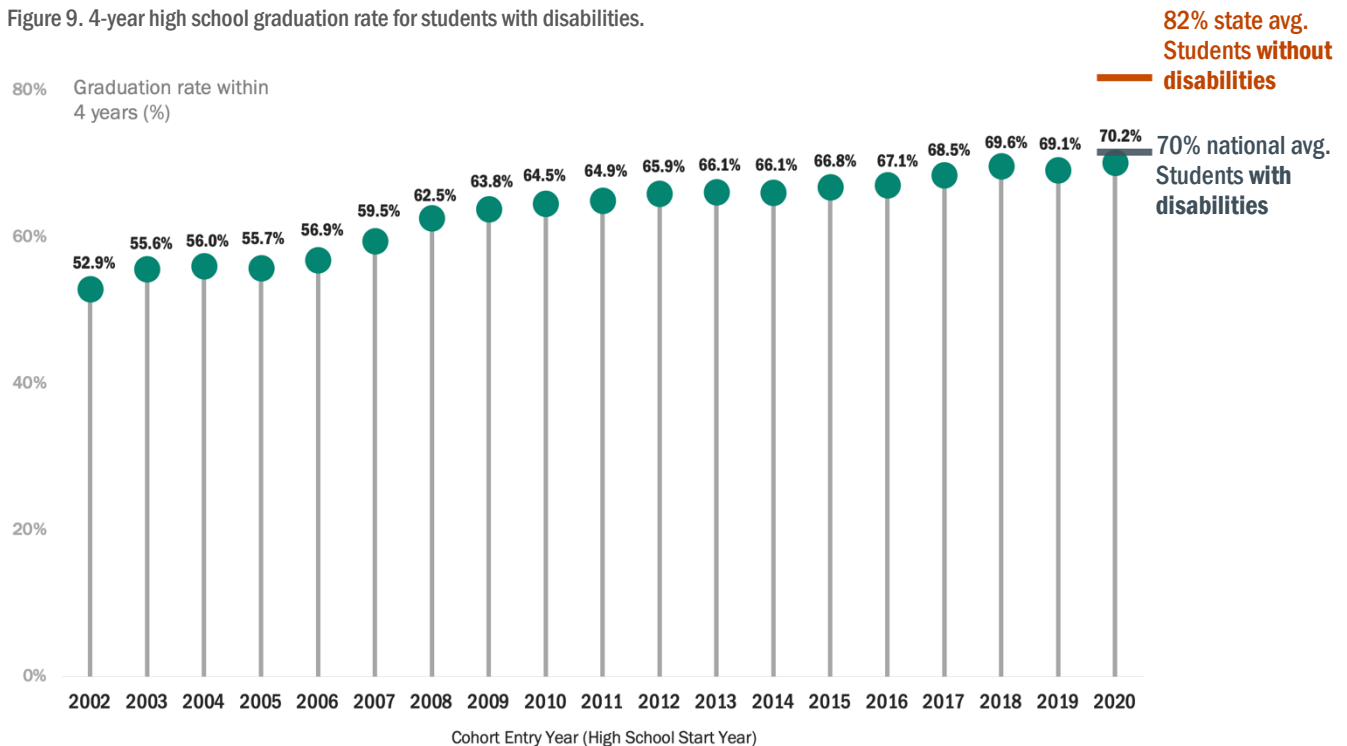
The lack of progress in this area suggests a need for additional efforts to support educators in building capacity around IDEA implementation, best practices for serving students with disabilities, and state resource allocation to ensure schools can offer wraparound services to meet students' needs (e.g., tutors, reading specialists, counselors, special education teachers, paraprofessionals) as well as evidenced-based interventions and approaches to schoolwide improvement.

⁷ Gilmour, A., Fuchs, D., & Wehby, J.H. (2019). Are students with disabilities accessing the curriculum? A meta-analysis of the reading achievement gap between students with and without disabilities. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0014402918795830>

Finding 9: Students with disabilities are increasingly likely to graduate from high school within 4 years.

Figure 9 displays the 4-year high school graduation rates for students with disabilities, starting from the 2002 cohort through the 2020 cohort. Cohorts are defined based on the first year a student is observed in high school with adjustments for students first observed in 10th, 11th, or 12th grade. The increasing graduation rate for students with disabilities was promising (70% for cohort 2020). The state's cohort graduation rate for students without disabilities was 82%. Comparisons between these two groups are complex because some students with disabilities have more intensive needs, in which case the traditional public school and student's family may agree to alternative education pathways.

Figure 9. 4-year high school graduation rate for students with disabilities.



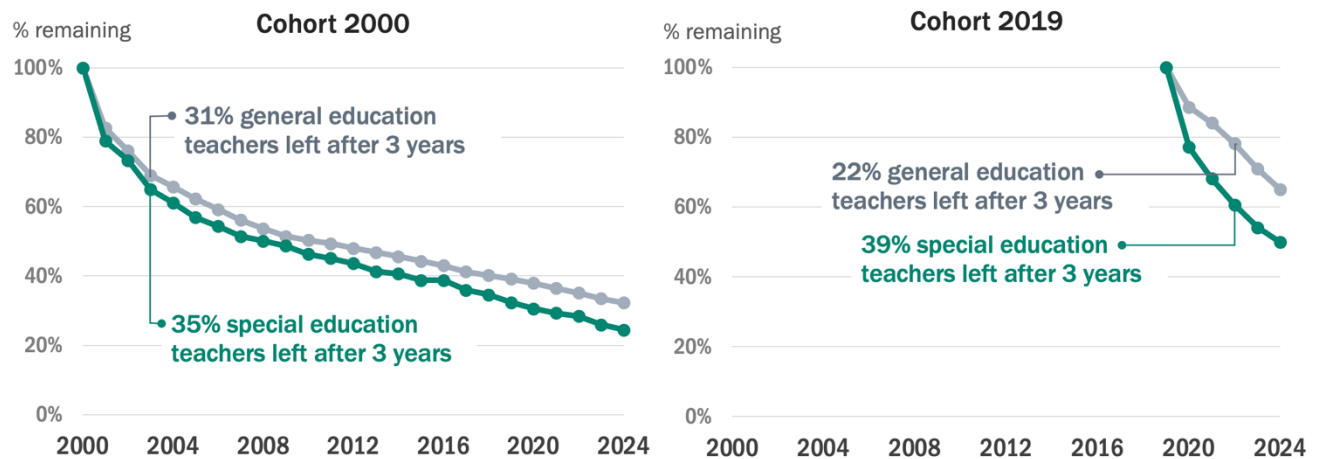
Takeaway for Texans

High school graduation with a standard diploma is an essential outcome for students seeking entry into college, the military, and trade schools. The increase in the high school graduation rate suggests that students with disabilities will be able to access a broader range of postsecondary opportunities.

Finding 10: Special education teachers are retained at lower annual rates than general education teachers.

Figure 10 illustrates the annual retention rates of teachers from the 2000 and 2019 cohorts, grouped by whether they were special education teachers, teaching students with disabilities explicitly, or exclusively taught general education students during their first year of teaching. The graph divides the data into four groups, tracking how retention rates vary over time based on these initial assignments and cohort years. In the 2000 cohort, 31% and 35% of general education and special education teachers left their teaching position within their first 3 years of teaching. For the 2019 cohort, 22% and 39% of general education and special education teachers left their position within their first 3 years of teaching.

Figure 10. Special education and general education teacher turnover across the 2020 and 2019 entering cohorts.



Takeaways for Texans

General education and special education teachers are critically important in educating students with disabilities. Many general education and special education teachers work together to serve students with disabilities, especially given the high rates of students with disabilities being served in general education classrooms in Texas. High teacher turnover rates disrupt the development of strong relationships among teachers and between teachers and families, which are often critically important for the success of all students, including students with disabilities. Teacher turnover can also be costly, as the state and districts must spend money to recruit, train, and retain new teachers. School administrators may spend more time recruiting new teachers and providing basic training than on other essential and advanced efforts to improve their schools.

Finding 11: Charter schools serve fewer students receiving special education services than traditional public schools.

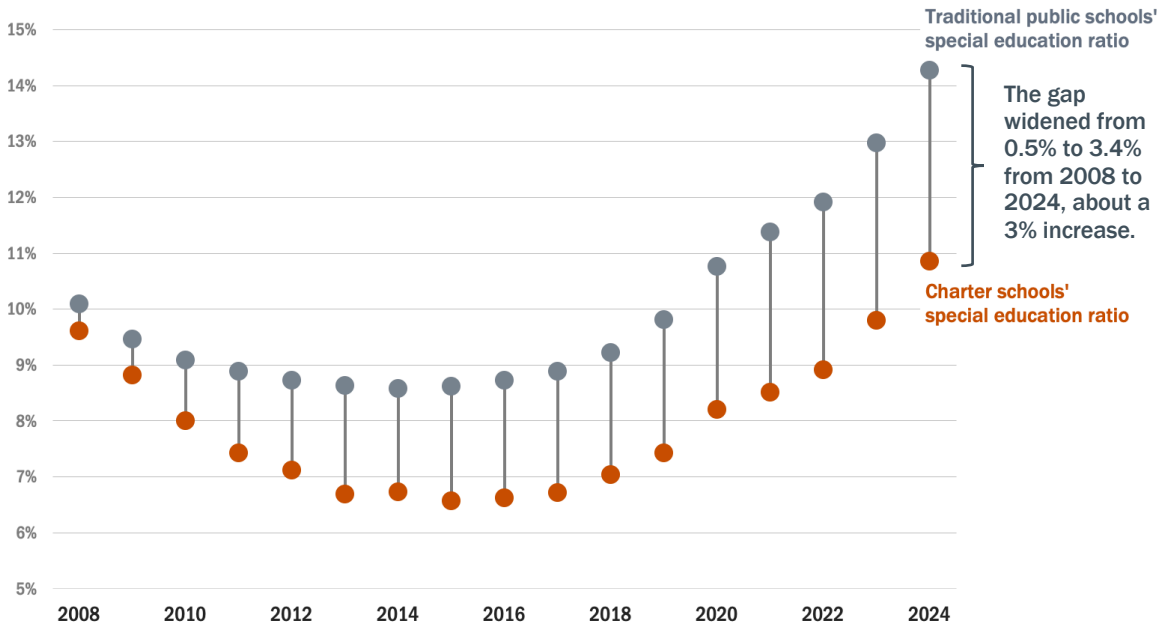
Figure 11 illustrates the percentage of students receiving special education services in traditional public schools and charter schools between 2002 and 2024. This line graph highlights a widening gap between the percentage of students receiving special education services served in traditional public schools compared to charter schools.

Disparities among enrollment of students receiving special education services in traditional public schools vs. charter schools has expanded over time.

Figure 11. Percentage of students receiving special education services in traditional public schools and charter schools.

% enrollment rate of students receiving special education services

Note: y-axis does not start at 0%



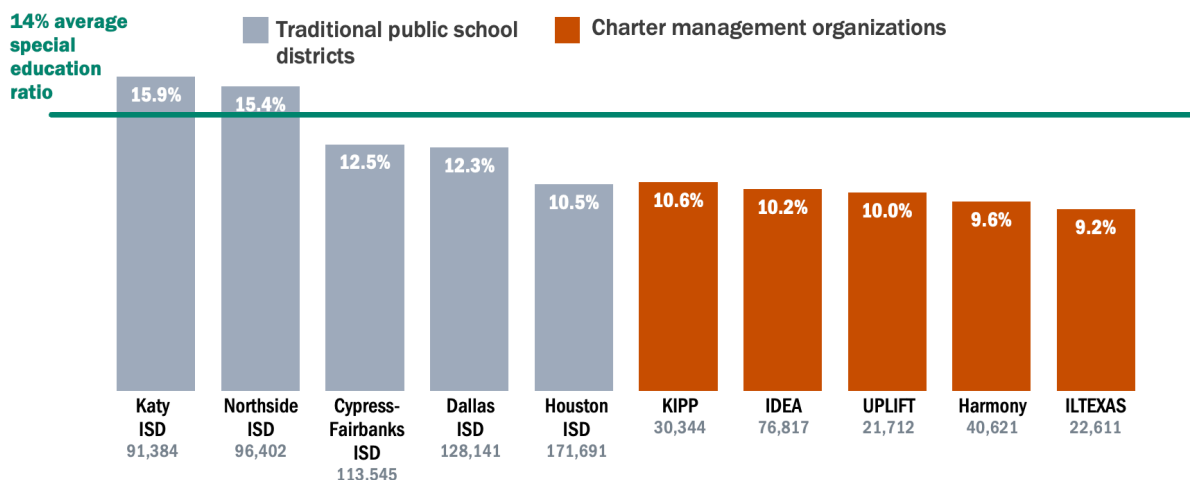
Takeaway for Texans

The drastic expansion of the gap between the enrollment of students receiving special education services in traditional public schools vs. charter schools is a glaring cause for concern on many fronts. Given the ongoing lack of students receiving special education services in charter schools, questions arise around how charter schools market their availability to diverse student groups, or whether they do at all; the availability of pertinent special education services in charter schools, which are public schools of choice that are responsible for upholding the promises of IDEA; and the quality of instruction within charter schools for all students. Additionally, with the awareness that traditional public schools continue to have the highest population of students receiving special education services in the state of Texas, the state legislature should attend to increasing the per pupil allotment for traditional public schools to ensure students receive the high-quality education they are entitled to by federal law.

Finding 12: The largest charter management organizations serve fewer students receiving special education services than the statewide average, although some large traditional public school districts also fall below the state average.

Figure 12 represents the percentages of students receiving special education services enrolled in Texas's five largest traditional public school districts and the five largest charter management organizations in 2024. For each school system, the total number of students and the percentage of students receiving special education services served is displayed.

Figure 12. Percentage of students receiving special education services in traditional public school districts and charter management organizations in 2023-2024.



Note. % special education ratio, name of traditional public school district or charter management organization, total number of students within the traditional public school district or charter management organization

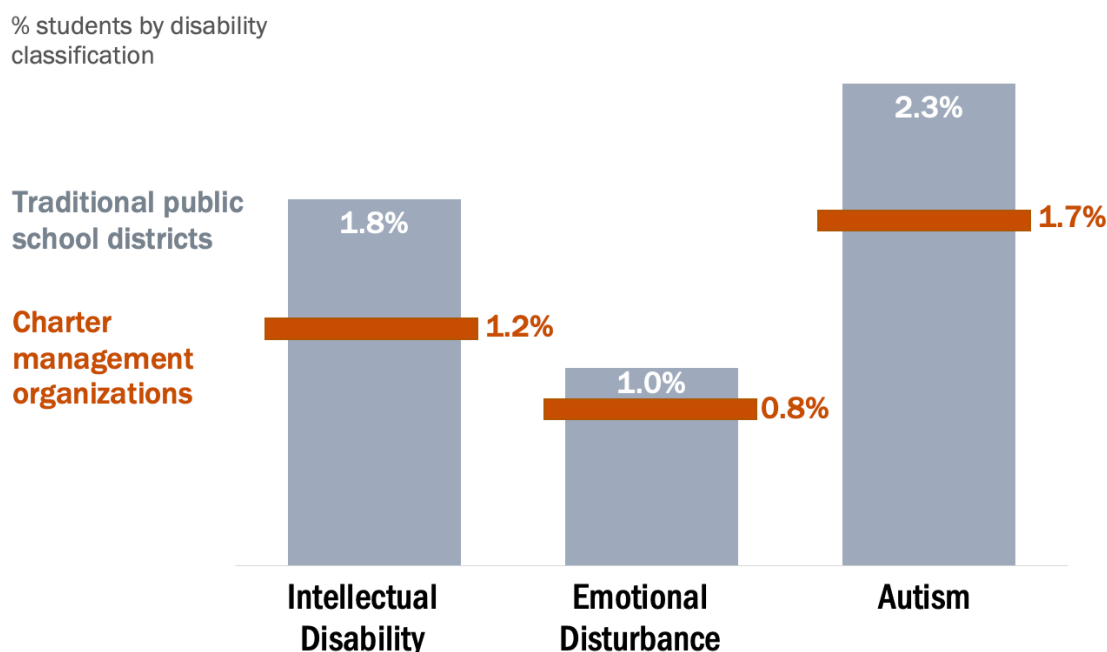
Takeaway for Texans

Texas has a haunting history of failures in meeting the needs of students with disabilities through inequitable and unethical practices, such as the state's prior 8.5% special education cap, that have limited access to special education services for students. Additionally, the state has an ongoing reputation for withholding needed funds from the public education system, despite an ongoing teacher shortage, economic inflation, and potential increases in students' needs because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the state's governor and legislature continue their push to create a third funding stream with private school vouchers, the glaring discrepancies in the enrollment and support of students with disabilities in traditional public school districts and charter management organizations continues to be unaddressed. The variability in the percentage of students receiving special education services in Texas's five largest traditional public school districts and charter management organizations calls for policymakers and the TEA to reevaluate and address education policies tied to enrollment, funding, and monitoring of special education services across school systems. Only when such attention and responsiveness exists within the state legislature will Texas students and educators receive the support they need to be within high-quality educational systems.

Finding 13: Traditional public school districts serve a larger percentage of students with intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, and autism than charter management organizations.

Figure 13 includes bar graphs comparing the percentages of students with intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, and autism in traditional public school districts and charter school management organizations in 2023-24.

Figure 13. Percentage of students with intellectual disabilities, emotional disturbance, and autism enrolled in traditional public school districts and charter management organizations in 2023-2024.



Takeaway for Texans

Traditional public school districts and charter management organizations are both publicly funded and responsible for IDEA implementation as well as adhering to a broad array of civil rights protections that prohibit discrimination based on race, gender, or disability. Charter management organizations enrolling lower percentages of students with disabilities might indicate discriminatory marketing practices that decrease the awareness of their accessibility to diverse student populations.

If charter management organizations are not providing adequate access to students with disabilities, traditional public school districts may have higher percentages of students in need of special education services. In turn, traditional public school districts may require greater financial and staffing resources to ensure students receive the high-quality education they deserve.

Recommendations and Conclusions

While the Texas government and the TEA have primary responsibilities in improving special education in Texas, **all Texans must do their part to support students with disabilities**. Below, we outline additional actions that we believe can help improve special education in Texas and the lives of our state's **733,994 students with disabilities**.

The Texas Education Agency can:

- Release an annual report on special education teacher turnover that includes a calculation for when teachers change schools or exit the profession;
- Identify and study model districts and schools that are becoming more inclusive and raising achievement so that these efforts can be replicated;
- Investigate charter management organizations that enroll significantly fewer students with disabilities or certain disability types;
- Audit traditional public school districts and charter management organizations to evaluate the extent to which they appropriately identify students with disabilities.

Texas universities preparing educators and leaders can:

- Audit curriculum and program objectives to ensure educators and school leaders are prepared to create and sustain high-quality inclusive schools and classrooms through the implementation of evidence-based practices and interventions;
- Partner with state professional associations and school districts to develop teacher and administrator residencies that allow additional time and opportunity to build skills and practice;
- Conduct high-quality qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method research identifying best practices and evaluating policies related to special education and students with disabilities.

Texas families and community organizations can:

- Advocate for additional funding to support special education and special education teachers, especially amid funding shortages and high rates of teacher turnover;
- Attend school board meetings and make regular visits to campuses to stay informed and advocate for students with disabilities across the district;
- Write op-eds, consult with local media, and connect with grassroots organizations supporting students with disabilities and their families.

The Texas legislature can:

- Hold public hearings on the status of special education, including concerns around teacher turnover, student outcomes, and low rates of enrollment in charter schools;
- Provide resources to strengthen teacher and administrator preparation programs and residencies to ensure all school personnel are prepared to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities;
- Ensure educators are adequately paid in light of the high cost of living increases and given that special education teachers often have more significant workloads but are not appropriately compensated for their contributions.

Texas public school districts and charter management organizations can:

- Evaluate existing district and school improvement plans to ensure special education is a key priority;
- Cultivate partnerships with universities to strengthen educator and administrator preparation;
- Conduct in-house research on IDEA implementation in key areas beyond federal and state requirements;
- Regularly audit aspects of IDEA implementation (e.g., the quality of Individualized Educational Programs [IEPs], self-contained programs, due process complaints) to improve practices.

Texas journalists can:

- Educate themselves on special education policy and common implementation challenges;
- Build relationships with special education professors and associations like the Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education;
- Ask district administrators and school boards about special education implementation during interviews;
- Interview parents of students with disabilities across Texas and experts in special education at local universities and in grassroots organizations.

Appendix: Methodology

The Texas Education Research Center, an evaluation center providing access to high-quality longitudinal data from Texas, provided data for this study. In addition, this study relied on publicly available data from the U.S. Department of Education and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and public information requests made to TEA.

To develop the findings, we analyzed trends over time, calculated percentages and ratios (e.g., enrollment rates, risk ratios by race/ethnicity, and teacher retention rates), and compared outcomes across groups such as students with and without disabilities, racial/ethnic categories, and school types (traditional public schools vs. charter schools). Visualizations, such as line graphs and bar charts, were created to highlight key patterns and disparities. Specific statistical methods or detailed procedures are not included here but are available upon request from the research team.