

# Supporting Students with Disabilities To and Through Their Post-Secondary Journeys: A Learning Case Workshop



# the To&Through project

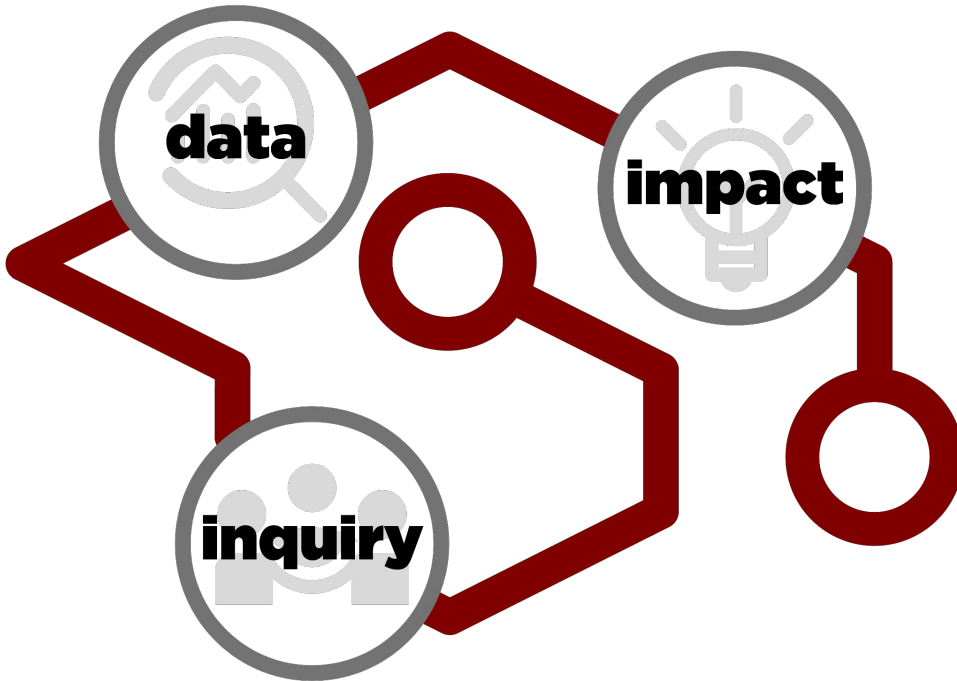
## vision

Schools should be places where all students have access to equitable learning experiences and pathways from the middle grades through college graduation

## mission

The To&Through Project strives to create equitable educational outcomes for Chicago Public Schools students by helping education stakeholders use data for inquiry and impact

# the To&Through project



We analyze and share **quantitative and qualitative data** on the educational journeys of Chicago Public Schools students



We work alongside **education stakeholders** from across the system to **make meaning of data** in ways that support and shift practice



We help realize **equitable learning experiences, pathways, and outcomes** for CPS students from the middle grades through college graduation

# Goals for Today

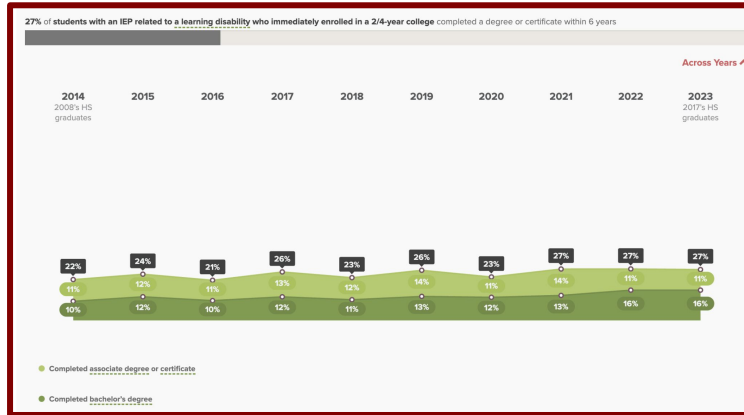
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Understand  
high-level CPS  
data around  
post-secondary  
enrollment and  
persistence for  
students with  
disabilities

Engage in  
discussion and  
reflection  
around a  
Learning Case

Spark action  
around  
improving  
supports for  
students with  
disabilities in  
post-secondary

# Quantitative and Qualitative



## Quantitative:

Who?  
What?  
Where?  
When?

## Qualitative:

Why?  
How?

### A Seat at the Table:

A perspective on college pathways for students with disabilities

#### Context

During the 2024-2025 school year, there were 16,435 students with disabilities<sup>1</sup> in CPS high schools (16.2% of students)<sup>2</sup>. Students with disabilities are not a monolith and have a wide range of disabilities, experiences, goals, and accompanying services and accommodations. As stated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), "disability is a natural part of human experience and in no way diminishes the rights of individuals to participate in or contribute to society." It is also important to

# LEARNING CASES

## DEVELOPING THE CASE



Common Problem of  
Practice

Interviews &  
Shadowing

Written Narrative  
Resource

# Why Learning Cases?

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**Leverages strong  
adult learning  
and facilitation  
practices**

**Provides  
distance from  
problem of  
practice that  
feels safe to  
analyze**

**Helps teams  
surface mindset,  
values, and  
beliefs of  
members**

# Theory of Action

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## If we can

center real stories of educators navigating adaptive problems of practice AND create meaningful opportunities to examine how these challenges currently play out in their support of students...

## Then we can

support educators and institutions in refining their practice, mindsets, and alignment around potential solutions to improve outcomes and experiences for students.

# Learning Case: A Seat at the Table



# College enrollment and completion

	Chicago Public Schools overall	CPS students with IEPs related to a learning disability	CPS students with IEPs related to any other disability
<b>College Enrollment</b> Class of 2024 college enrollment (includes 2-year, 4-year, and certificate programs)	66%	46%	38%
<b>College Completion</b> (degree or credential) within 6 years for students who initially enrolled in college for the class of 2018	48%	26%	32%

# Intersectionality of Disability

Racial/ Ethnic Group	Student without an IEP/504	Student with an IEP/504
Asian	92%	4.4%
Black	80%	17%
Latino	82%	14%
White	80%	11%
Other + Unknown	85%	8.6%
Gender		
Female	86%	10%
Male	77%	18%

# A Seat at the Table Case

- We conducted **interviews and visits** with 13 practitioners, educators, leaders who work closely with students with disabilities and CPS alumni who have disabilities.
- This **represents real experiences** but an anonymized school and counselor so we can all start out on equal footing of context and learn by being just one step removed. Quotes from alumni represent actual CPS alumni's words.



# Read the case

- Take 12 minutes to read and annotate the learning case to yourself.
- As you read, make note of:
  - What are some of the **challenges** in the case?
  - What are some of the **solutions** Ms. Doyle and her Post-Secondary Leadership Team try?

## A Seat at the Table:

A perspective on college pathways for students with disabilities



### Context

During the 2024-2025 school year, there were 16,435 students with disabilities<sup>1</sup> in CPS high schools (16.2% of students)<sup>2</sup>. Students with disabilities are not a monolith and have a wide range of disabilities, experiences, goals, and accompanying services and accommodations. As stated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), "disability is a natural part of human experience and in no way diminishes the rights of individuals to participate in or contribute to society." It is also important to acknowledge the intersectionality of disability. Nationwide, "About two-thirds of disabled students (65%) are male, while 34% are female."<sup>3</sup> Research suggests that "Black and Hispanic students are diagnosed as needing SPED services at rates 40% and 20% higher than their white peers."<sup>4</sup>

College may not be the chosen pathway for all students with disabilities, AND we want to ensure college is a true option for those students with disabilities who choose it. On the [To&Through Milestones Tool](#), we see significant differences in college enrollment and completion rates for students with disabilities.

	Chicago Public Schools overall	CPS students with IEPs related to a learning disability	CPS students with IEPs related to any other disability
<b>College Enrollment</b> Class of 2023 college enrollment (includes 2-year, 4-year, and certificate programs)	63%	48%	39%
<b>College Completion</b> (degree or credential) within 6 years for students who initially enrolled in college for the class of 2017	47%	27%	30%



# Norms for Discussion

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- Live into our goals: **Reflect, Collaborate, and Apply**
- Believe people in this room are **good, wise, powerful,** and **profoundly interconnected**
- Think about **inclusivity of language**; break down your acronyms where possible!
- Embrace healthy disagreement and **different perspectives**; there are no “right” answers
- Accept **non-closure**

## Systems and Structures

District  
State and Federal Policies  
Higher Education Systems

## Teams & Institutions

PLTs  
School  
College or University

## Individuals

Students  
Educators

# Table Group Discussion

Rooted in the case, what <b>challenges</b> exist at that level for students with disabilities?	What <b>solutions</b> were presented in <b>the case?</b>	What <b>questions or new ideas</b> does this case prompt?

# Whole Group Share Out

## Systems and Structures

District  
State and Federal Policies  
Higher Education Systems

## Teams & Institutions

PLTs  
School  
College or University

## Individuals

Students  
Educators

Choose the level where you have most energy, connection, or influence

Rooted in the case, what **challenges** exist at that level for students with disabilities?

What **solutions** were presented in **the case?**

What **questions or new ideas** does this case prompt?

# Closing



# Facilitating the Case

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The case is publicly available on our website.

We encourage you to use this case for your own contexts!

What ideas do you have for how you might want to use this case?

# Connect with us

- Questions
- Data problems
- Presentations
- Thought partnership

Email [toandthrough@uchicago.edu](mailto:toandthrough@uchicago.edu)

