



Inclusive Education Fast Facts

Creating more inclusive education opportunities for all students is supported by U.S. law and nearly 50 years of educational research. Below we have highlighted fast facts to help you get up to speed quickly and advocate for the rights of students with disabilities.

Inclusive Settings Benefit Everyone. Did you know...

- Students with disabilities educated in inclusive settings have improved academic, social, emotional and behavioral, and post-secondary outcomes when compared to their peers with disabilities in segregated settings (Cole et al., Mazzotti et al., 2021).
- The more general education classes a student with disabilities is enrolled in, the closer to grade level the student will be in reading and math abilities (Cosier et al, 2013; Test et al, 2009).
- Students with disabilities educated in inclusive settings report a greater sense of belonging and are more likely to make friends and see them outside of school (Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2010).
- Inclusion increases communication skills and interpersonal skills for students with disabilities. And students with more complex support needs make the most significant gains (Foreman, Arthur-Kelly, Pascoe, & King, 2004; Woodman, Smith, Greenberg, & Mailick, 2016).
- Inclusion leads to fewer disciplinary referrals and fewer absences from school for students with disabilities (Dell'Anna et al., 2022).
- Inclusion in general education is a critical predictor of graduation from high school, access to post-secondary education, gainful employment, and independent living (Mazzotti et al., 2021; Test et al., 2009).

- Students without disabilities educated in inclusive settings-- academic achievement *increase* or stay the same (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2008; Choi et al., 2016; Kart & Kart, 2021).
- Students without disabilities educated in inclusive settings report they feel more supported by teachers and report an increase in empathy and understanding for diversity (Molina, Marauri, Aubert, & Flecha, 2021; Shogren et al., 2015).

Segregated Settings are problematic. Did you know...

- Students in segregated special education classes and programs spend *less* time on academic instruction than they do in general education (Causton-Theoharis, Theoharis, Orsati, & Cosier, M., 2011).
- Students in segregated special education classes and programs receive more support from paraprofessionals than highly qualified special educators (Barrett et al., 2020; Causton-Theoharis et.al, 2011).
- Students in segregated special education classes and programs experience higher levels of distractions (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2011) and increased instances of restraint and seclusion.
- Students in segregated special education classes and programs receive less individualization of instruction than they would in general education classes. (Barrett et al., 2020; Causton-Theoharis et al., 2011).
- Students in segregated special education settings are less likely to attend post-secondary educational experiences, gain employment or live independently (Mazzotti et al., 2021).

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Additional Research-Based Resources

- SWIFT Education Center *website hub where research is summarized* [[link](#)]
 - SWIFT Education Center Benefits of Inclusion summary [[pdf](#)]
- What Does the Research Say About Inclusive Education *Wrightslaw blog* [[link](#)]
- Does Self-Contained SPED Deliver on its Promises [[article](#)]
- A Landmark Study Strikes a Resounding Note for Inclusion *Edutopia blog* [[link](#)]
- Article for families about research and law [[pdf](#)]