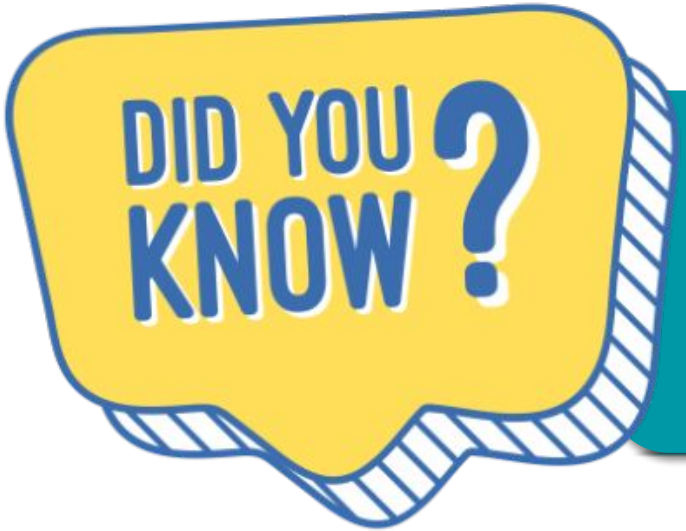
Graduation Pathway Perceptions and Innovations

National Center for Learning Disabilities



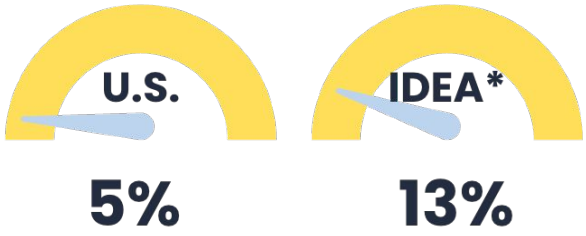
Students with disabilities drop out of high school at higher rates than their non-disabled peers.

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.

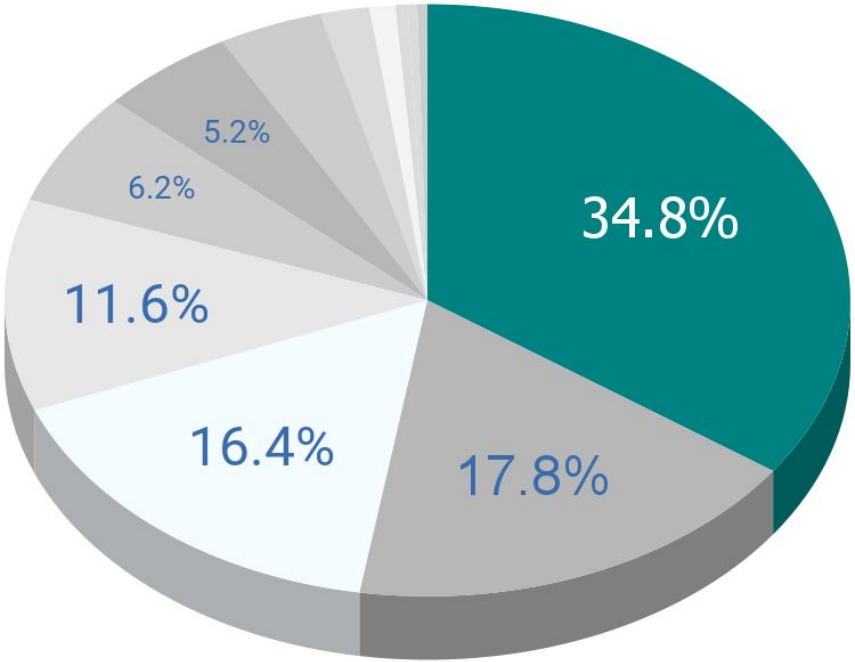
2x

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



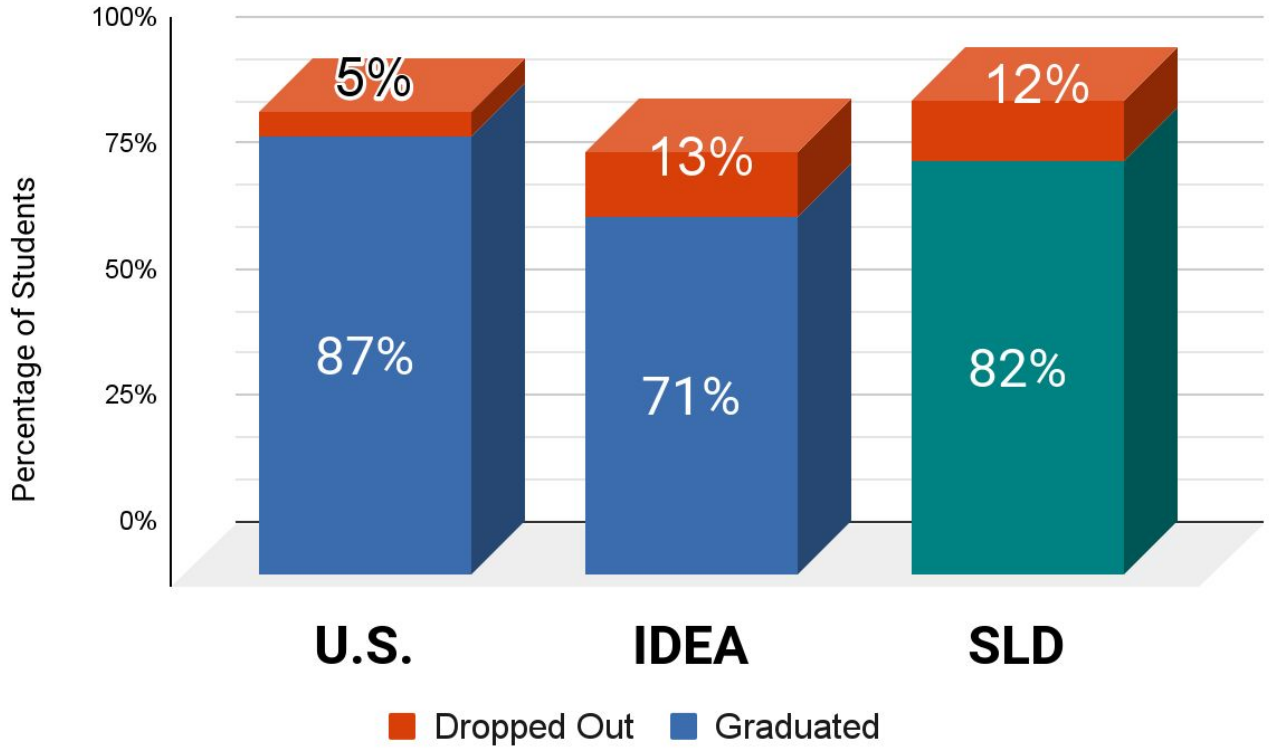
*The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) is a law that provides a free and appropriate public education to children with disabilities ages 3–21. There are 13 disability categories under IDEA.

Percentage of IDEA Students, 2020–2021

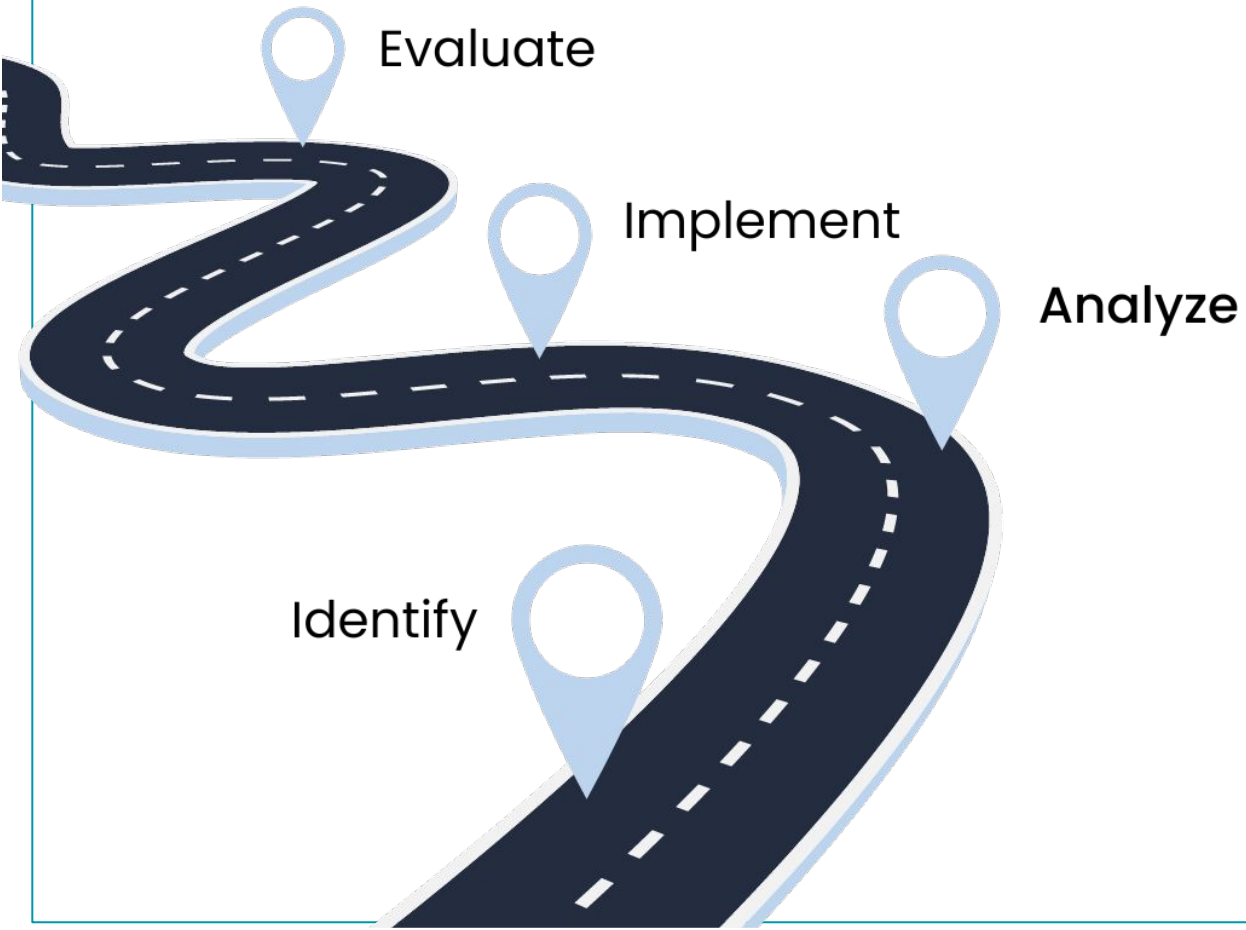


- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Autism
- Intellectual Disability
- Emotional Disturbance
- Developmental Delay
- Multiple Disabilities
- Hearing Impairments
- Orthopedic Impairments
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairments
- Deaf Blindness

U.S. Graduation Rates, 2019–2020



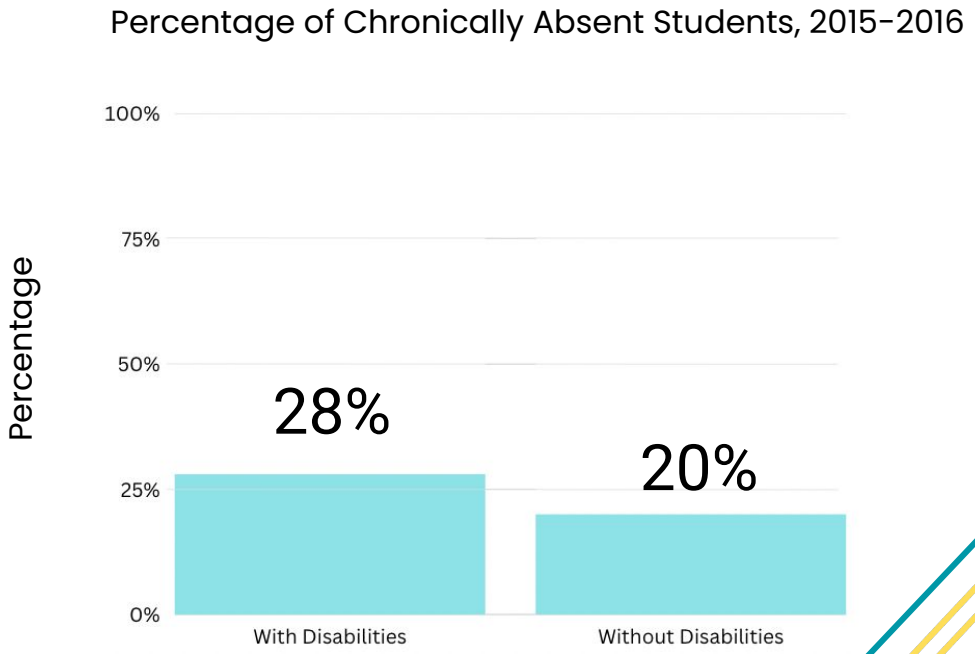
The Road to Student Success



Attendance Matters

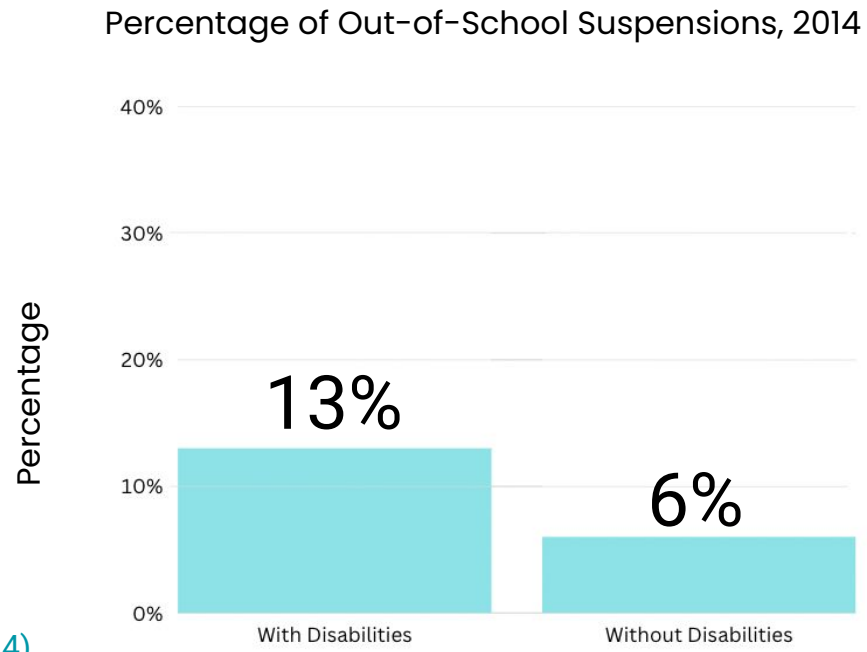
Students with disabilities are over 50% more likely to be chronically absent than students without disabilities.

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.



U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (2014)

Academic Supports Matter

NAEP Mathematics
National public schools

Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 12
-28	-36	-35

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

NAEP Reading
National public schools

Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 12
-40	-36	-39

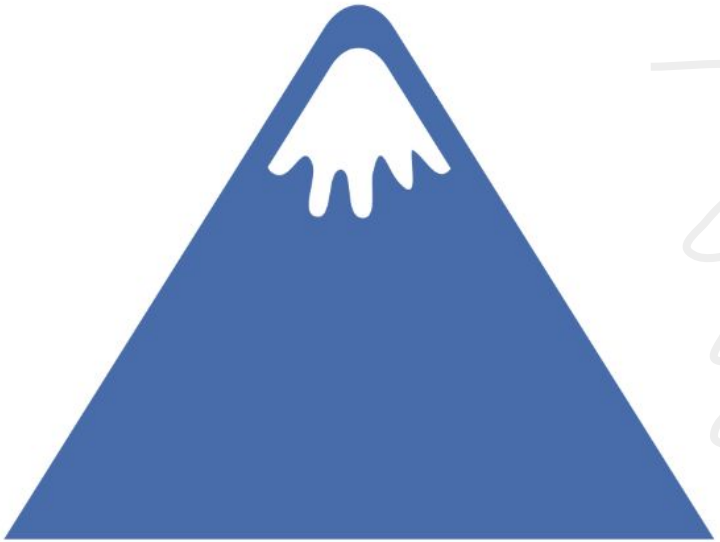
* 2022 NAEP score gaps between SWDs and non-disabled peers; all differences are statistically significant

[National Assessment of Education Progress]

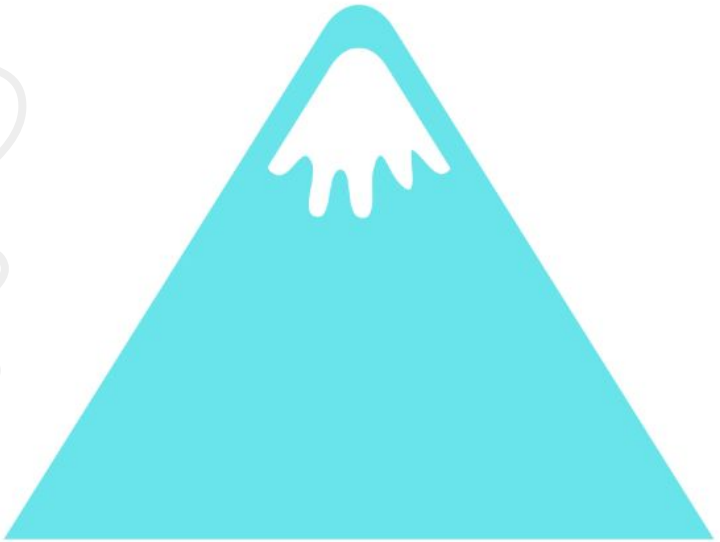
80% of students with SLD struggle with language and reading

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

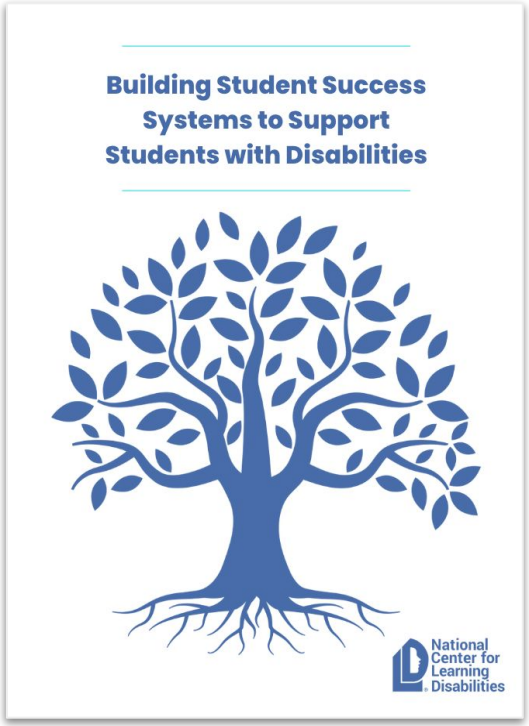
Guiding Inquiry

- 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?

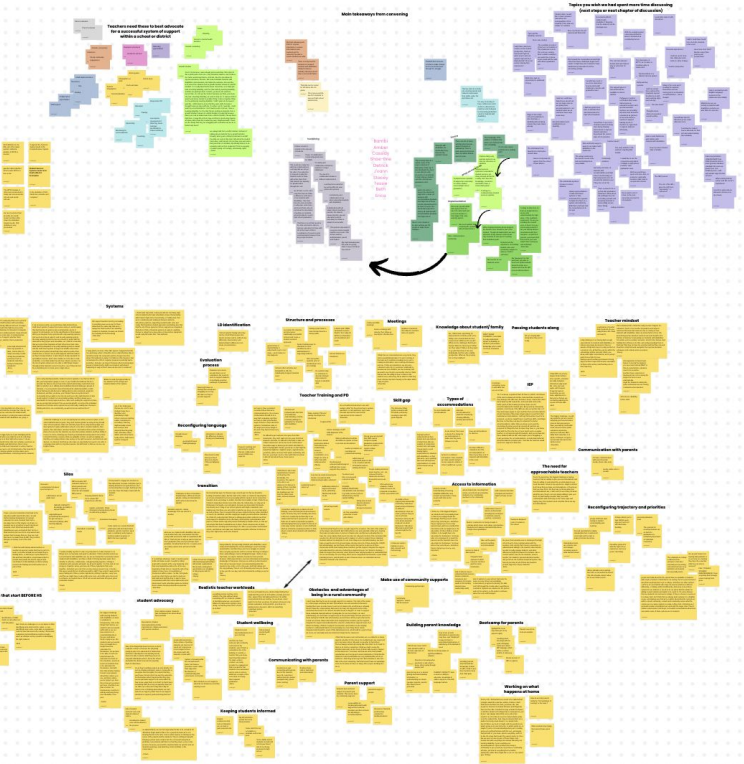
Meeting Participants
Educators
Caregivers
Young Adults
NCLD Partners
Your voice matters!
EXIT

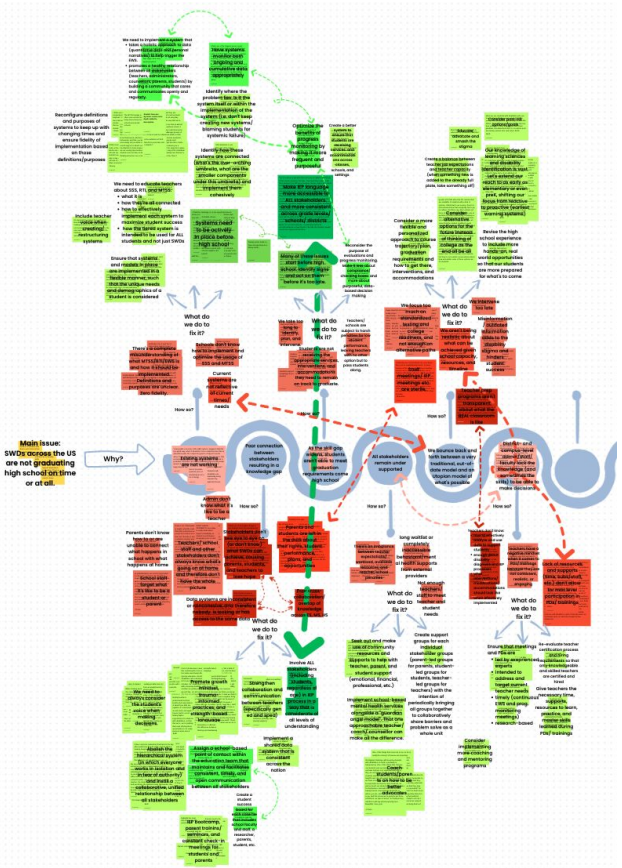
Gathering Expert Opinions

Building Solutions



The Aftermath





Pathways to Success

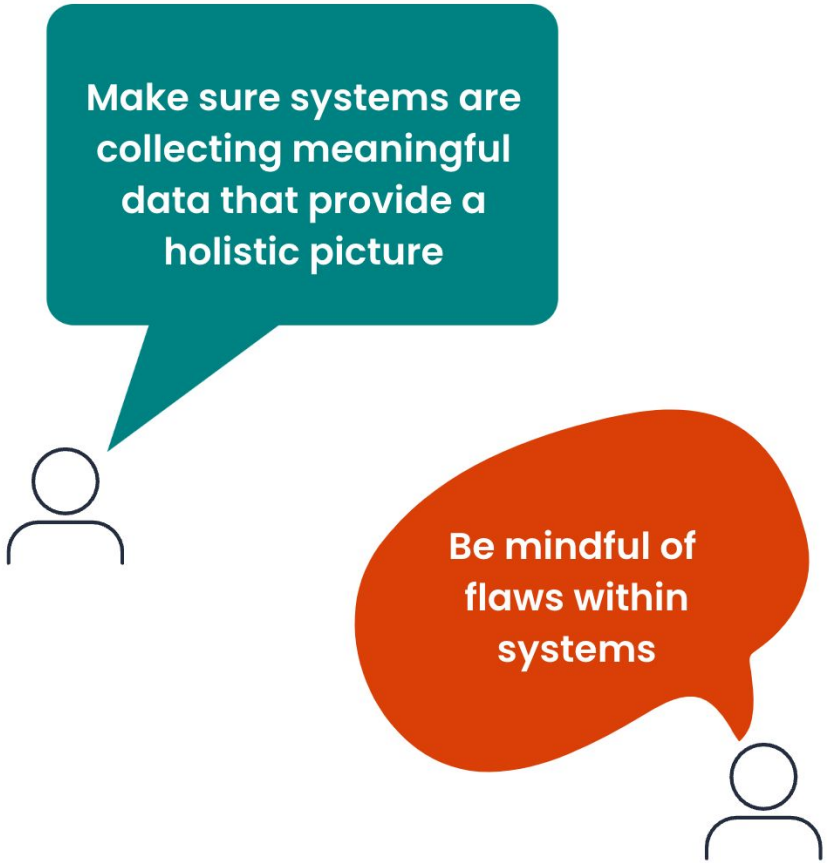
Mindset

Collaborative & inclusive mindset
Growth mindset
Stay focused without tunnel vision

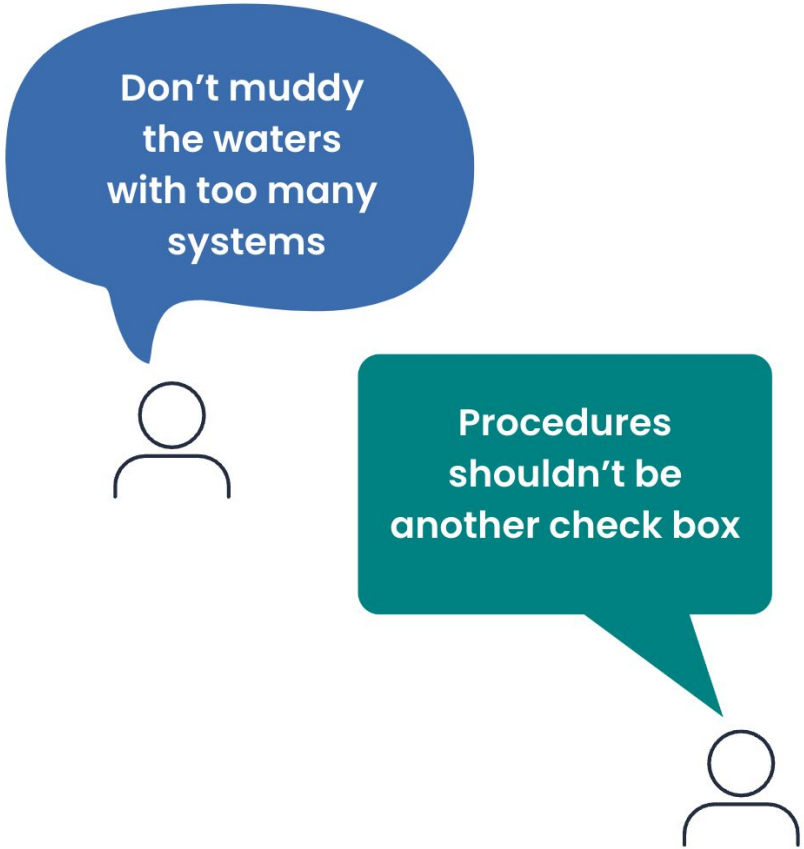
Knowledge

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