

NDPC-SD School-Completion Probes

Description	Probe
Graduation	
Graduation	Do you know where to obtain graduation data for your school
Graduation	What are the district's targets for graduation rates? Were these targets met last year
Graduation	Does the district or school have a graduation gap (= all-student - youth with IEPs)'
Graduation	What is the trend in graduation rates over the last 3 years in the district? (decrease, no change, increase)
Graduation	What is the definition of graduation in your district or school
Graduation	How was the graduation rate calculated (what general method and what specific equation)
Graduation	Does the state or the district control diploma options'
Graduation	What alternatives to a standard diploma are available to all students? ... for youth with IEP:
Dropout	
Dropout	Do you know where to obtain dropout rate data for your school'
Dropout	What are the district's targets for dropout rates? Were these targets met last year'
Dropout	Does the district or school have a dropout gap (= all-student - youth with IEPs)'
Dropout	What is the trend in dropout rates over the last 3 years in the district? (decrease, no change, increase)
Dropout	At what age do students generally drop out? Are there peak ages at which dropout occurs
Dropout	What is the definition of dropout in your district or school
Dropout	How was the dropout rate calculated (what general method and what specific equation)
Dropout	Does your school currently have a dropout-prevention initiative in place? Does it specifically include students with disabilities'
Dropout	What is the process for a student to withdraw from school? Who is involved (e.g., parents, principal, judge, etc)?)
Academics	
Curriculum	Does the local curriculum follow the state's academic content standards
Curriculum	Is the district's curriculum reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure that it is aligned with state standards and is relevant to general and special education students alike
Curriculum	Are youth with IEPs given the same access to the general curriculum as their general education peer:
Curriculum	Does the district's dropout plan include one or more components designed to improve academic performance
Instructor	Are teachers using research based effective teaching principles and strategies consistently
Instruction	Is there a system to ensure instructional fidelity? (E.g., How do you know what is being taught? How do you know research validated approaches and strategies are used consistently across general education and special education classes?)
Instruction	Are youth with IEPs fully engaged in the instructional process in general education classes? (E.g., Are students held to the same standards with appropriate accommodations?)
Instruction	Are teachers thoughtful and deliberate in designing and implementing a coordinated course of instruction? (E.g., Are teachers teaching the same content? Are students receiving additional opportunity for content mastery with special education teachers or is instruction with the special education teacher replacing general education instruction?)
Instruction	Are students provided additional time and opportunities to master content through extended learning programs and targeted interventions? (E.g., After school tutoring and remedial or extra help periods built into the school day)
Instructor	Does the district or school use diagnostic assessments to identify academic needs
Instructor	Do the diagnostic assessments show needs for academic improvement in the district or school
Achievement	Are performance results on state- and district-wide assessments improving for youth with IEP
Achievement	Has the district set performance goals with respect to scores on statewide assessments of reading and math'
Achievement	What are the district or school's targets for reading scores? Were these targets met last year
Achievement	What are the district or school's targets for math scores? Were these targets met last year'
Achievement	Are there patterns or trends in student grades? ...from grade to grade ... among groups
Achievement	Are there "problem" classes that have low pass rates? Are there particular teachers who have low pass rates?
Achievement	Are there achievement gaps between all students and youth with IEPs in reading or math'
Course completion rates	What are the course-completion rates for core classes'
Course completion rates	Are Sp Ed students completing academic courses at comparable rates to their non-disabled peers:
Course completion rates	What percentage of seniors didn't earn enough credits toward graduation last year'
Course completion rates	Do all students have adequate access to the classes they require in order to graduate
Discipline & behavior support:	
Discipline	Has the district set performance targets with respect to discipline? What are they? Were they met
Discipline	Has the district established performance indicators to assess progress toward achieving these goals'
Discipline	Does the district have a plan to improve discipline'
Discipline	What alternatives to suspension/expulsion are employed in the district? (e.g., in-school suspension, etc
Behavior supports	Does the district have behavior supports in place'

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Behavior supports	Does the district have a process for ensuring that behavioral support plans exist for students with IEPs and are of high quality?
Behavior supports	Does every E/BD student in the district have a behavior support plan
Behavior supports	Are all behavior support plans based on a functional behavior assessment (FBA)
Behavior supports	Who conducts functional behavior assessments in the district
Behavior supports	Does the same person who conducts a student's FBA write that student's behavior support plan
Behavior supports	Is the teacher an integral part of writing the behavior support plans for his or her students
Behavior supports	Are all behavior support plans of high quality
Behavior supports	Are school wide behavior and classroom management interventions explicitly taught and reviewed
Attendance	
Attendance	Does the district or school's attendance program include both sanctions and incentive
Attendance	What was the attendance rate? (If students miss more than 10 to 18% of year, there is a problem)
Attendance	What patterns are visible in attendance rates (e.g., from grade to grade, from month to month)
Attendance	Does the district or school have targets for attendance rates?
Attendance	How many days absent does it take to trigger parental contact and other measures to find a student
Grade retentions	
Grade retention	What was the retention rate per grade?
Grade retention	What percent of high school students have been retained once
Grade retention	What percent of high school students have been retained two or more years
Parental factors	
Parental factors	Approximately what percentage of parents of general education students are involved in school activities or endeavors?
Parental factors	Approximately what percentage of parents of special education students are involved in school activities or endeavors?
Parental factors	Approximately what percentage of parents of youth with IEPs attend their child's IEP meeting
Parental factors	Which of the following policies/practices does the district have in place to encourage parents of youth with IEPs to participate in school activities or endeavors? Open-door policy; district-level parental advisory committee; parents of youth with IEPs on the school board; annual meeting with parents to review/develop policies; other(s)
Parental factors	Does the district take steps to ensure that parents of minority children understand the special education process and potential benefits of participation?
Parental factors	Do schools in the district provide the necessary supports for families of youth with IEPs, identified as being non-native speakers to fully participate in the identification of their student as a child with a disability and in planning their student's program?
Parental factors	What is the average level of parents' education
Parental factors	Do parents, in general, expect their child will graduate
Parental factors	Do parents take an active role in pushing and helping their children to graduate
School climate	
School climate	Is there a district wide safe-schools initiative?
School climate	Does the district use a school climate survey or similar assessment in its schools?
School climate	Do students generally perceive school as a safe and welcoming place?
School climate	Do parents generally perceive school as a safe and welcoming place
School climate	Do school staff generally perceive school as a safe and welcoming place
Extracurricular activities	
Participation in activities	Is there a variety of interesting/enjoyable extracurricular activities for students to choose from
Participation in activities	Do students regularly participate in extracurricular activities
Transition and PSO	
Quality of IEPs	Are IEPs in the district of high quality?
Quality of IEPs	Does the IEP process address factors that put students at risk for school completion?
Quality of IEPs	Are annual goals or short-term objectives included in IEPs that will help students make progress towards their stated post-secondary goals?
Quality of IEPs	Do all IEPs meet the requirements of Indicator 13
Quality of IEPs	Are students included meaningfully in the IEP process?
Transition	Does the district have one or more staff members dedicated full-time to transition planning
Transition	At what age does the district begin transition planning with students? (Prior to age 14, age 14-15, age 16)
Transition	With which of the following agencies does the district have an interagency agreement? Vocational rehabilitation, Developmental Disabilities, Mental health, Social Security, Department of Labor, Other(s)

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Transition	What percentage of youth with IEPs actually achieve the outcomes in their transition plan
Transition	Does every child who has an IEP in the district age 16 and above have a transition plan
Transition	Are measurable post-secondary goals stated in students' transition plan:
Transition	Does the district employ age-appropriate transition assessments
Transition	Are students' courses of study aligned with their post-secondary goals
Post-school outcomes	Does the district have a follow-up mechanism to track students in their post-school outcomes
Professional preparation	
Professional preparation	Which of the following steps does the district offer to help certify those special education teachers in the district who are NOT "highly qualified"? (degree programs, contract courses, full-day workshops, workshops longer than 2 days, other)
Professional preparation	Does the district have a clear, written definition of "highly qualified special education teacher"
Professional preparation	According to the definition above, what percentage of special education teachers in the district are "highly qualified"?
Professional preparation	Are professional development activities and materials tailored to students' academic or other need
Professional preparation	Are general education teachers provided sufficient professional learning to instruct students with IEPs adequately?
Professional preparation	Do teachers and other relevant staff receive adequate training to write appropriate, clear and effective IEPs
Professional preparation	Do teachers receive training on behavior support
Professional preparation	Which of the following are taught to general education teachers during professional learning workshops/courses, to help them develop better instruct youth with IEPs? Instructional strategies, positive behavior supports, classroom management techniques, assistive technologies, accommodations for assessment, dropout prevention strategies, other(s)
Professional preparation	Are teachers and other staff encouraged to develop genuine relationships with students at risk for dropping out of school?
District or school policies & procedures	
Policies and procedures	What priority does dropout prevention receive in the district?
Policies and procedures	Does the district have written board policy or procedures on dropout prevention?
Policies and procedures	Does the district have written administrative procedures that address dropout prevention?
Policies and procedures	To what extent are youth with IEPs included in the district's dropout prevention policy?
Policies and procedures	Does the district have a system in place to track dropouts?
Policies and procedures	Is there a district wide system for assigning and tracking student ID numbers
Policies and procedures	Are there district-wide or school-wide factors that are pushing students out of school
Policies and procedures	Are there positive supports that appear to be absent in the district or school
Policies and procedures	Is there other evidence of systemic factors the district or school should address to remedy the dropout problem?
Policies and procedures	Are particular students or groups placed at risk because of systemic factors in the district or school
Policies and procedures	Are dropout prevention resources utilized efficiently to target the "neediest" schools/students?
Policies and procedures	Does the district have a dropout prevention program for general education students?
Policies and procedures	Does the district have a dropout prevention program for students with disabilities?
Policies and procedures	Have district staff received direct training on the district's dropout policies, procedures and program
Policies and procedures	Are district, state, federal, and community dropout prevention resources pooled to maximize efficiency
Policies and procedures	Are systems in place to review and monitor dropout prevention program effectiveness
Policies and procedures	Which of the following interventions or programs offered by the district to students experiencing academic difficulty: Mentoring; Peer tutoring; Alternative schools; Service learning; Credit recovery program (e.g., use of online courseware); Other(s) (Please specify)?
Policies and procedures	Is there a written policy that mandates teachers become "highly qualified"?
Policies and procedures	When the district hires special education teachers, is there a requirement that they be "highly qualified"?
Policies and procedures	Does the district provide assistance to regular classroom teachers in the development of specific in-school regular education program modifications and interventions
Policies and procedures	Is the effectiveness of the modifications and interventions reviewed regularly? If yes, describe when and how this is accomplished.
Policies and procedures	Are there sufficient numbers of administrators, teachers, related services providers, paraprofessionals, and other providers to meet the identified educational needs of all youth with IEPs?
Policies and procedures	Are there policies or procedures that have a negative impact on school completion