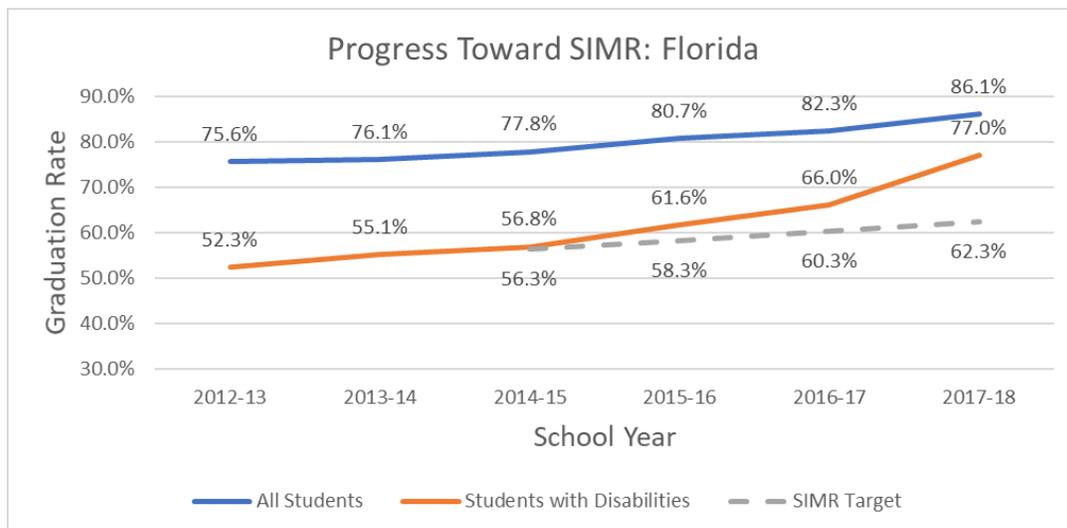


# State Data Use Spotlight Update: Florida

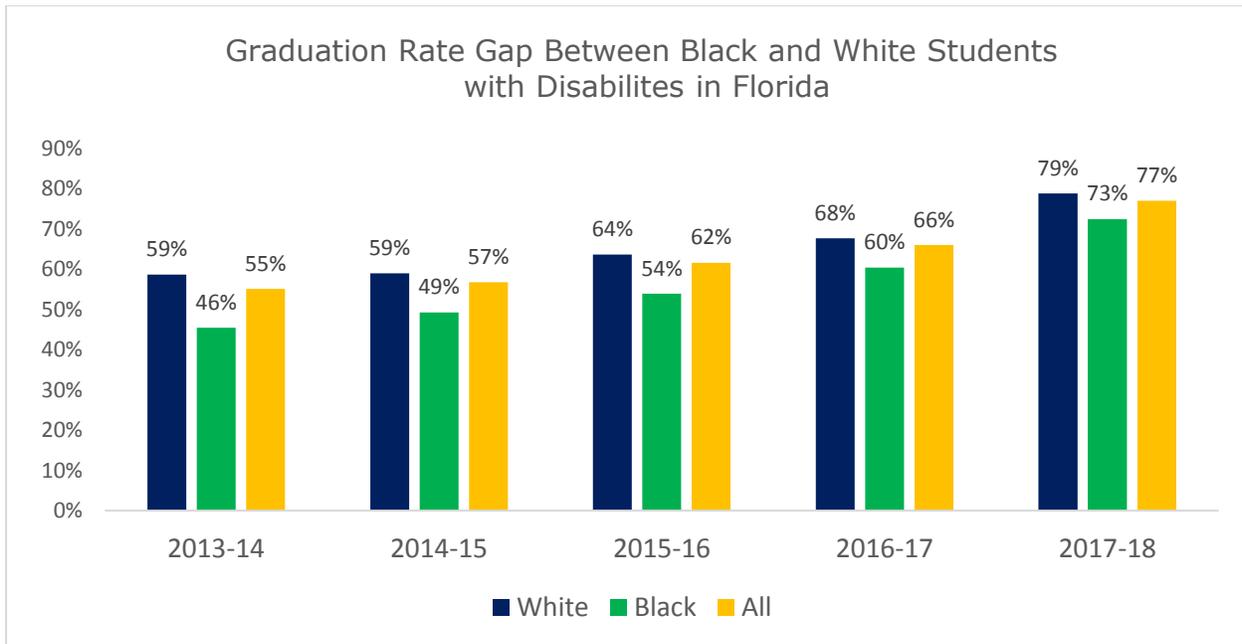
**Challenge:** How do we sustain local data literacy to improve graduation rates for students with disabilities?

In a previous state data use spotlight, NCSI [highlighted](#) the systematic approach used by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) to build the capacity of local education agencies (LEAs) to use data effectively and the associated rise in the 2016–17 school year (SY) graduation rates of students with disabilities. One year later, the graph below shows that Florida continues to experience significant gains in the percentage of students with disabilities receiving a traditional diploma. In the 2017–18 SY, graduation rates were at an all-time high of 77%, significantly higher than Florida’s state-identified measurable result (SIMR) goal of 62.3%. More remarkable is that the gap between students with disabilities and all students decreased to 9.1% from 23.3% in the 2012–13 SY. Furthermore, as shown in the graph on the following page, the graduation gap between Black and White students with disabilities decreased from 13.2 percentage points in the 2012–13 SY to 6.3 percentage points in the 2017–2018 SY. Efforts to improve local data use were critical given that the 2017–18 graduating cohort was the first cohort not to have the option of a special diploma. This updated spotlight highlights how Florida is successfully sustaining local data use capacity and continuing to improve graduation outcomes.



Source: Florida’s PK-12 Education Information Portal

May 2019



Source: Florida's PK-12 Education Information Portal

## Strategies for Sustaining Local Data Literacy

Florida uses the following strategies to sustain local data literacy and improve outcomes for students with disabilities:

- *Ensure a common understanding of data literacy.* FDOE frames all data literacy activities within the *Moving Your Numbers* (MYN) framework ([www.movingyournumbers.org](http://www.movingyournumbers.org)). This common understanding of data literacy, based on the six key practices from MYN, allows the FDOE to consistently facilitate problem solving during on-site monitoring and technical assistance visits and to help LEA leadership teams more efficiently identify barriers and resources for each practice. In some cases, LEAs have incorporated the MYN language and practices into their own policies and procedures, further promoting sustainability.
- *Provide a continuum of professional learning opportunities to improve data literacy.* FDOE provides ongoing professional learning opportunities aimed at building educators' knowledge and skills in understanding, selecting, and using data at all levels of the system. For example, FDOE provides guidance to all LEAs on collecting and managing data and provides training on using an early warning system to identify students at risk for dropping out. Furthermore, FDOE has built local data literacy capacity by providing training in evidence-based interventions, such as Check and Connect, which include a focus on data use and problem solving.

May 2019

- *Build infrastructure to support data literacy.* The ability to sustain local data literacy depends on systems and structures that facilitate this work. FDOE uses a multi-tiered system of support to provide varying levels of assistance to LEAs based on their performance on State Performance Plan/Annual Performance Report (SPP/APR) indicators and additional state-identified indicators. To promote local data use, FDOE shares LEA data by size-alike districts and pairs higher-performing LEAs with lower-performing LEAs to collaborate on improving outcomes for students with disabilities.
- *Engage key stakeholders in data use.* FDOE partners with stakeholders to analyze data and assist with root cause analysis and continuous improvement. Stakeholder groups review data and provide suggestions to improve implementation. During on-site monitoring visits, school and LEA stakeholders participate in data-based problem-solving meetings and contribute to action planning to address identified barriers. In addition, FDOE conducts focus groups with families on topics including graduation and transition and shares the data with LEA leadership teams to inform problem solving.

### Available Resources

- National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI), Technical Assistance State Facilitators (Find your state on the map [here](#))
- [NCSI State Data Use Spotlight: Florida](#)
- NCSI Data Use Team Technical Assistance Support (Contact: Kristin Ruedel at [kruedel@air.org](mailto:kruedel@air.org))
- National Center on Educational Outcomes, [Moving Your Numbers: What Matters Most and Key Practices](#)
- Data Quality Campaign: [Resources to Support Evidence-Based Decisionmaking in States](#)

*About this resource:* This resource was developed by members of the NCSI Data Use Service Area Team, including Zach Weingarten (AIR), Tessie Bailey (AIR), and Kristin Ruedel (AIR), in collaboration with Monica Verra-Tirado, Bureau Chief, and Judith White, Educational Program Director, Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services, Florida Department of Education. The content was developed under cooperative agreement number #H326R140006 (NCSI) from the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government. Project officer: Perry Williams.

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