

What people are saying about the Special Education Playbook for System Leaders

Robert Pasternack, former Assistant Secretary of Education of Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at US Department of Education

“The Special Education Playbook for System Leaders provides timely and cogent recommendations solidly grounded in evidence. Practical and actionable, this Playbook is a useful tool in planning for better results for students with disabilities (SWDs). In an era of so many challenges, the Playbook cuts through the maze of information to focus on the heart of the matter for students with disabilities and their families, better instruction and support for improved results. I highly recommend the Playbook.

It is of particular importance in this post Endrew era, where the unanimous decision of the Supreme Court noted that SWDs are not receiving the educational benefit to which they are entitled under IDEA. In addition, the ruling required special education to improve outcomes and results for SWDs, a nagging problem which requires us to use the Playbook to help achieve that goal mandated by the Supreme Court and sorely needed by the students and families receiving special education and related services. A step to making special education special in LA, something students and families deserve.”

Phyllis Wolfram, Executive Director of Council Of Administrators Of Special Education Inc (CASE)

“This resource brings forward both historic and new research-based practices and offers real solutions to many complex issues special education leaders and teachers face. The “playbook” is concise and outlines instructional practices that all educational leaders should embrace.”

JoHannah Ward, Director of Office for Exceptional Children at the Ohio Department of Education

“Louisiana has created a valuable Playbook which addresses three key instructional best practices which include: the importance of core instruction, the need for extra time, and the critical role of highly skilled, content-strong teachers. This resource makes a purposeful point to tie in High Quality Curriculum, Science of Reading and offers relevant resources such as charts, suggested schedule models, suggestions on how to best applying grouping and additional

consideration in the appendix. Appendix offers specific details tying these three key areas in with IDEA compliance, funding compliance and flexibilities for consideration.”

Irvin Scott, Senior Lecturer at Harvard Graduate School of Education and former Chief Academic Officer at Boston Public Schools

“When it comes to servicing students, I cannot think of a more important topic than servicing students with special needs. This is a must read for all educators. It provides tools and practical advice for educators doing the critical work of supporting America’s children.”

Lauren Morando Rhim, Executive Director and Co-Founder of Center for Learner Equity

"All too often efforts to improve the outcomes for students with disabilities focus on compliance. I appreciate that LDOE has developed a rich and highly accessible playbook to help school leaders and practitioners in Louisiana hone their skills to increase the rigor of instruction for students with disabilities and improve outcomes."

Paolo DeMaria, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction at Ohio Department of Education and current President & CEO at the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)

“Two sections of this document – IDEA Compliance Considerations and IDEA Funding Considerations – demystify the federal law and correct some common misperceptions about what IDEA does and does not require. It provides a tremendous service by showing how best academic practices, including time spent with a regular classroom teacher on quality core instruction, is an appropriate part of an individualized education program, and how IDEA funds can be used for a wide variety of services and supports.”

Mike Pitrelli, President of the Thomas B. Fordham Institute

“Educators should run, not walk, to make these common sense practices commonplace in their schools. They are exactly what our students need--students with disabilities included, but the framework is powerful for all of the young people our systems strive to serve.”

Karla Baehr, Former Deputy Commissioner at Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

“This playbook needs to guide the work in every state! It offers a common sense, systemic approach that is sorely needed if we are to get the dramatically different results our students need.”

Diane Ullman, former Chief Talent Officer at CT State Department of Education

“The three tenets of this Playbook – access to core instruction, extra time to learn, and content strong teachers – seem like common sense yet are rarely in place for special needs students. Each element in and of itself is a strong contributor to learning, but together they are a powerful system that creates an upward trajectory of learning. Every special needs learner needs to have access to this approach. Bravo to the Louisiana Department of Education for taking this bold and essential step to help all learners succeed.”

Bryan Hassel, Co-Leader of the Opportunity Culture Initiative

“Every student envisions their goals in life. For some, reaching those goals requires others to help remove obstacles and enhance each student's ability to reach them. This playbook does just that.”

Steve Sandoval, former Executive Director of Special Services at Westminster Public Schools, Colorado and 2016 EdWeek Leader to Learn From

"The playbook is brilliant in its simplicity and use of common-sense approaches for addressing the learning needs of students with mild-moderate needs. All our learners deserve the best instruction possible taught by our most talented teachers, regardless the labels we place on them. Guidebooks are often wrought with theory and 'out-of-touch' sensibility. However, this one is practical enough to begin the work tomorrow. Louisiana educators are fortunate to have this."