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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

**CE+HD** COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
+ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

**FYI**

**ICI** INSTITUTE *on*  
COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

Ensuring that all children, youth, and adults with disabilities, and those receiving educational supports, are valued by and contribute to their communities of choice.

**AUGUST 2022**

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## FEATURED STORIES



### Check & Connect Logs Strong Results

After a 75 percent drop in school absences and a 62 percent decline in suspensions last school year among students enrolled in the Institute's [Check &](#)

[Connect](#) intervention program, commissioners in St. Louis County recently expanded the county's roster of program mentors, from 42 to 47. In the upcoming school year, about 1,000 students in 33 schools will be served by Check & Connect.

Check & Connect is an evidence-based intervention that works with K-12 students who show warning signs of disengagement with school or dropping out. Mentors develop a supportive relationship with each student in the program, and monitor attendance, behavior, and grades using an evidence-based framework.

"The success of the program last school year has really been energizing," said [Jana Ferguson](#), the University of Minnesota program coordinator for Check & Connect in St. Louis County. "The County and the individual schools have allowed caseloads to be an appropriate size, giving mentors the chance to intervene and head off absences and behavior and other issues before those things become problems."

The longstanding program is also seeing strong results in a broad mix of other communities, including elsewhere in Minnesota and in Central Texas.

Read more about [Check & Connect](#).



Need to Know: Resources for New Education

# Leaders

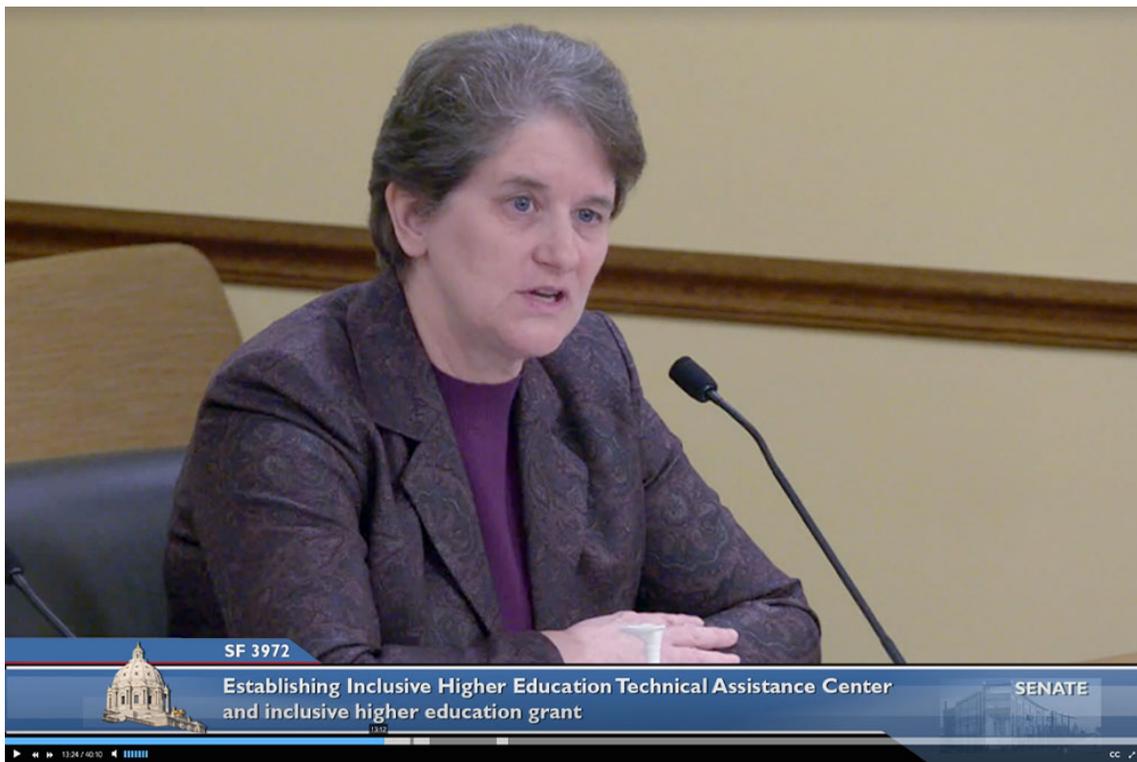
The [National Center on Educational Outcomes](#) (NCEO) at the Institute on Community Integration, which provides national leadership on the inclusion of students with disabilities in assessments, recently issued a primer for new state special education directors.

“State special education directors play an important role in ensuring that students with disabilities are appropriately included in assessments, and directors who are new to this role need to be up to speed quickly,” said [Sheryl Lazarus](#), director of NCEO.

[\*What New Special Education Directors Need to Know about Academic Assessments\*](#) steps education leaders through the basics of including students with disabilities in assessments. It includes specific considerations for English learners with disabilities, and also links to more in-depth resources.

“Even though the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that all students be included in all state- and district-wide assessments, some students with disabilities are still excluded. This often happens with district tests used to measure learning loss due to COVID-19, which frequently lack needed accommodations, such as availability in braille, or alternate assessments designed for students with significant cognitive disabilities. These are real challenges,” Lazarus said. “NCEO continues to be very engaged with helping states, districts, vendors, teachers, parents, and others better understand the law and that they need to be including all students with disabilities in assessments and thinking through how best to provide accommodations and alternate assessments.”

[Read more about NCEO's resources for new education leaders.](#)



## Moving Forward: Inclusive Higher Ed

[Mary Hauff](#) received the [Exceptional Advocate](#) award from the Minnesota Council on Disability, recognizing her contributions to building momentum for inclusive higher education in the state.

Hauff wrote the legislation for the Inclusive Higher Education Act, which earlier this year advanced through the Minnesota House of Representatives and was included in the Higher Education Conference Committee report. It would have established a technical assistance center with public information about higher education options for people with intellectual disability, provided expertise and support for faculty, and established grants for initiatives at public institutions of higher education in the state.

The full Senate did not vote on the measure by the deadline for the regular legislative session, but the bill would not have advanced so far without Hauff's dedication and passion, said Julia Burkstaller of The Arc Minnesota, who nominated Hauff for the award.

Hauff is part of a parent-led collaborative group called the Minnesota Inclusive Higher Education Consortium ([MIHEC](#)). The Institute is the host organization for MIHEC.

MIHEC's next learning community event, on [September 20](#), will feature Burkstaller

and Dupree Edwards, a teaching artist and member of the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities.

[Read more about Hauff.](#)

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## SOCIAL MEDIA SPOTLIGHT



### Recently featured on [ICI's Facebook](#)

Led by ICI's Jessica Simacek, the TeleOutreach Center at the Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain brings together researchers, clinical pediatric providers, and developmental specialists to use technology to understand and address barriers to assessment and intervention for children, youth, and adults with developmental and mental health needs, and their families. <https://teleoutreach.umn.edu/>

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## NEW RELEASES

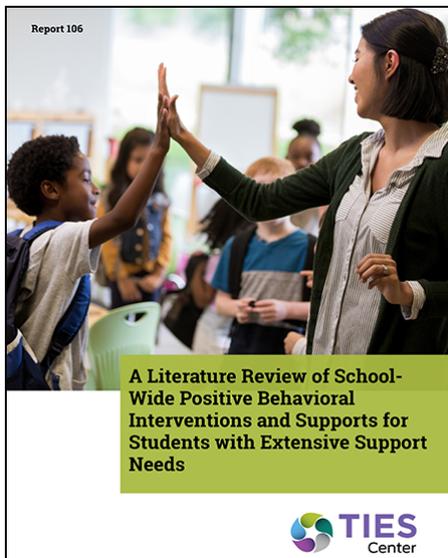
### TIES Center Report 105: Separate School



## Placement Trends by Category and Age for Students with Extensive Support Needs

Authors: Shawnee Y. Wakeman, [Yi-Chen Wu](#), [Gail Ghere](#), Holly Johnson, [Jessica Bowman](#), and A. M. Clausen

The purpose of [this report](#) is to examine the trends across the country over the past decade related to the placement of students with extensive support needs (ESN) in separate schools. For this report, state-level data from federally reported sources for students with ESN were analyzed, specifically, students identified with the disabilities of autism, intellectual disability, multiple disabilities, and deaf-blindness, to determine changes over time in the number of students served in separate settings as well as any variances that may have occurred by age and location (state). The current study confirmed that there has not been a significant change in the overall placement for students with ESN since 2012 even though academic expectations have become more rigorous over time. Published by ICI's National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) in collaboration with ICI's TIES Center. Part of the [TIES Center Reports series](#).



## TIES Center Report 106: A Literature Review of School-Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports for Students with Extensive Support Needs

Authors: Lyndsey Aiono Conradi, Virginia Walker, Patricia McDaid, Holly Johnson, and M. Kathleen Strickland-Cohen

[This report](#) presents the findings of a literature review to summarize the current literature of School-wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), a multi-tiered framework that offers a

continuum of supports to address the behavioral needs of all students within a school. Research indicates that PBIS effectively promotes positive student outcomes and improves school climate and culture. However, little is known about the involvement of students with extensive support needs (ESN) and effectiveness of PBIS for these students. Students with ESN include students with significant cognitive disabilities. This report also presents implications for practice and future research initiatives. Published by ICI's TIES Center and the Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. Part of the [TIES Center Reports series](#).

## Journal Articles Published

[Houseworth, J., Pettingell, S. L., Stancliffe, R. J., Bershadsky, J., Tichá, R., & Zhang, A. \(2022\). Community employment, facility-based work, and day activities for working age people with intellectual and developmental disability. \*Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation\*, 57\(1\), 97–112.](#)

Fortune, N., Curryer, B., Badland, H., Smith-Merry, J., Devine, A., [Stancliffe, R. J.](#), Emerson, E., & Llewellyn, G. (2022). [Do area-level environmental factors influence employment for people with disability? A scoping review](#). *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(15), 9082.

Finestack, L. H., Elmquist, M., Kuchler, K., Ford, A. B., [Cakir-Dilek, B.](#), Riegelman, A., Brown, S. J., & Marsalis, S. (2022). [Caregiver-implemented communication interventions for children identified as having language impairment 0 through 48 months of age: A scoping review](#). *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*.

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## EVENTS



## Art for All: "**woven** from life itself"

**August 22–October 30**

**Norway House**

**Reception: August 25, 5:00–7:00 pm**

Beginning on August 22, Norway House hosts *woven from life itself*, a new [Art for All](#) exhibition on the theme of peace. Art for All is an ICI program that offers a venue for artists with disabilities, usually at ICI's home at the University of Minnesota. This particular Art for All exhibition is off-campus, celebrating disability pride and pride in other identities. It presents the diverse cultural and ethnic community that surrounds Norway House in the Ventura Village neighborhood of Minneapolis. In partnership with Norway House's Minnesota Peace Initiative—which serves to foster engagement related to peace issues and peacemaking efforts worldwide—the group exhibition will feature local artists as well as artists from Norway. The show runs through October 30.

Join us on Thursday, August 25 at 5:00 pm for an evening of art, catered refreshments, and hors d'oeuvres. Located at Norway House, 913 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis.

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**STAFF UPDATES**





**Brian Abery, Renáta Tichá, Belle Khuu, and Lucy Evans:** In June, [Abery](#), [Tichá](#), and project partner Satomi Shinde (pictured shaking hands with a robot in a Tokyo cafe) from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls spent a week in Japan, visiting the cities of Tokyo and Hiroshima, as part of their projects funded by the U.S. Embassy in Japan. While there, they observed the Japanese approach to transition services, visiting schools, an employment program at the SEGA Sammy Group, and a number of job sites. Meeting with OryLabs' management, Abery, Tichá, and Shinde observed Oryhime robots piloted by people with significant

physical disabilities serving as waitstaff and a barista at a local cafe. Discussions with Ory staff included how such robotics could be used in the U.S. and adapted to increase the effectiveness and reach of job coaches who work with people with IDD.

Tichá, Abery, and Vassilos Morellas from the University of Minnesota's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering recently took delivery of Nao, a Socially Assistive Robot (SAR) being used in a CEHD-funded project on the use of SARs to support increased physical activity among the aging population. Nao is being programmed at ICI by two students from the UMN Computer and Electrical Engineering program.

On July 10–14, Tichá, Abery, [Khuu](#), [Evans](#), Jan Šiška (a visiting scholar at ICI), and Shinde attended the 17th Biennial Conference of the International Association of Special Education (IASE) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Tichá, Abery, and Shinde presented, "Customized and Supported Employment of People with Disabilities in Japan" and "Supporting Self-determination of Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities." Khuu, Tichá, and Abery presented a roundtable discussion on "Advancing Toward an Inclusive Society: Optimal Strategies Among Frontline Champions." Abery, Tichá, Šiška, and Timothy Riesen of Utah State University delivered a panel presentation on "Successful Community

Collaborations for Transition for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities” at the conference. Tichá is IASE president and was the conference co-chair.



**Rachel Freeman:** In June, [Freeman](#) virtually delivered the keynote address, “Systems change: Involving people with learning disabilities in leadership roles,” at the British Institute for Learning Disabilities Positive Behaviour Support Conference in Bristol in the United Kingdom. In July, she contributed to the podcasts “Meeting midway: Tier 2 prevention” (parts 1 and 2) for the Missouri Department of Mental Health Division of Developmental Disabilities. On July 26, Freeman co-presented the webinar, “Learn More About the APBS IDD Committee’s White Paper and the New Member Section in

Progress.” On August 3, she presented, “Minnesota Positive Behavior Support. Evidence-based practices for students with autism and emotional behavioral health needs,” at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis.



**Jessica Simacek and Jennifer Hall-Lande.** On July 12–13, [Simacek](#) (pictured), Nicole Berning of the Minnesota Department of Human Services, and [Hall-Lande](#) (virtually) attended the 2022 SPHARC (State Public Health Autism Resource Center) Peer-to-Peer Exchange in Charlottesville, Virginia. They presented a poster on autism and telehealth in Minnesota.

**Megan Sanders and Barb Kleist.** On July 18, [Sanders](#) (pictured) and [Kleist](#)



presented a plenary presentation at The Arc National Conference of Executives' Summer Leadership Institute conference in Chicago about the national survey of direct support professionals and their experience with the COVID-19 pandemic. The survey, which began in 2020, is a joint project of ICI and the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals.



**Muna Khalif, Macdonald Metzger, Susan O'Neil, and Charity Funfe Tatab Mentan.** On July 22–23, [Khalif](#) (pictured) and [Metzger](#) presented the plenary session, “Leveraging Telehealth to Address Mental Health Needs in Africa,” at the 8th African Mental Health Summit at Metro State University in St. Paul, Minnesota. [O'Neil](#), [Funfe Tatab Mentan](#), and Metzger also participated in outreach activities at the conference. The trio staffed an ICI booth at the conference.

**Reinventing Quality.** A number of ICI staff attended the Reinventing Quality Conference, July 31–August 2, in Baltimore, Maryland. The RTC on Community Living has been a co-host of this conference since its beginning in 1991. [Amy Hewitt](#) (pictured) was a panelist in the keynote address, “There’s Reason for Hope: Responding to the Workforce Emergency,” along with David Ervin, Alicia Babcock-Raposo, BJ Stasio, and Andrew Reese; [Jerry Smith](#) moderated the panel discussion. [Jolene Thibedeau Boyd](#) and [Michelle Smith](#) presented the Moving Mountains awards and led the session, “Best Practices in Direct Support Workforce Initiatives: 2022 Moving Mountains Award Winners.” [Julie Bershadsky](#) presented the session, “Uplifting the Direct Support Professional Voice” with Dorothy Hiersteiner and Joe Macbeth. [Rachel Freeman](#) presented, “Overview and Discussion on Positive Behavior Support White Paper and Its Value as a Resource”



with David Rothholz. [Barb Kleist](#) and Jerry Smith presented, "Now I've Got Your Heart: Knowledge and Skill-Building for Direct Support Professionals." Hewitt, Dorothy Heirsteiner, and Shannon McCracken presented, "Using Data to Address Key Challenges in the Direct Support Workforce." And Jerry Smith, Joe Macbeth, and BJ Stasio presented the session, "Showing and Telling our Story: Practical Tips for Crafting and Framing Your Message." [Tom Donaghy](#), Thibedeau Boyd, and Michelle Smith staffed the ICI booth and answered questions about ICI's research, products, and services. [Pete McCauley](#)

produced a highlight video of the conference that was shown following the closing plenary session.

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## UPDATE



### Milena Bates

Milena Bates (MNLEND 2021–22), co-founder of the Minnesota Autistic Alliance, is recruiting self-advocates for new projects supported by a grant from the

Minnesota Department of Human Services.

**Cultivate**, a 10-hour online self-advocacy course covering how to identify needs, navigate barriers, and understand intersectionality (among other topics), begins August 23. It is designed for and by neurodivergent self-advocates. **Lattice** is a partnering program that will connect a team of three partners best suited to the support needs of a self-advocate. The group also is recruiting writers for an accessible, digital resource database. Contact [admin@mnaautisticalliance.org](mailto:admin@mnaautisticalliance.org) for more information.

Bates' co-founder is Jules Edwards (MNLEND 2020–21). The group became a non-profit organization last year after beginning as a social media group in 2018.

“Our goal with **Lattice** is to create a new version of the support people have been getting in our Facebook group. It’s a little like mentoring, but a more interwoven support from multiple sources, rather than the power dynamic of a single mentor,” Bates said. “With the database, we’re trying to push the limits of accessibility, and that’s a big challenge, we’re finding.”

[Read more about Bates.](#)

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The University of Minnesota stands on *Miní Sóta Makhóche*, the rightful homelands of the *Dakhóta Oyáte*. ICI recognizes that the U.S. did not uphold its end of these land treaties. It is the current and continued displacement of the *Dakhóta Oyáte* that allows the University to remain today. At ICI, we affirm our commitment to address systemic racism, ableism and all other inequalities and forms of oppression to ensure inclusive communities.