



WHO LEAVES?



The Facts About Students With Disabilities
Exiting New York State Public Schools
to Homeschool

Tai Arnold, Ph.D.

May 21, 2026

Preprint version. Citable version with dataset
forthcoming at [DOI pending].

About SNCC

The Students' Neurodiversity Community Coalition (SNCC) is based in New York. It is made up of parents, guardians, and educators. We advocate for special education policies and the civil rights of students with disabilities. SNCC investigates how policies are implemented. We use public records, state data, and family accounts. Our goal is to find patterns often hidden in official reports from the state and districts and use that information for change. The coalition shares its findings with families, advocates, journalists, and policymakers. We also support them as they navigate the complex special education system in their districts.

Citation

Arnold, T. (2026). *Who leaves? The facts about students with disabilities exiting New York State public schools to homeschool*. Students' Neurodiversity Community Coalition. [URL]

Contact: tai.arnold@nycap.rr.com

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Executive Summary

One in five students in New York public schools has a disability. This analysis explores the rates at which students with disabilities leave New York public education to homeschool and identifies the strongest patterns. All findings are statistically tested, with full results in each section.

1. Students with disabilities leave to homeschool at consistently high rates. The students with disabilities homeschool exit rate rose from approximately a quarter of a percent in 2018-19 to just over half a percent in 2024-25, a 132% increase. Since in-person instruction resumed, students with disabilities have exited at higher rates than their peers. The rate has stabilized at more than twice the pre-pandemic level and shows no signs of reverting.

2. The exits concentrate among families who are NOT economically disadvantaged in well-resourced districts. The disparity in the exit rate of students with disabilities occurs only among non-economically disadvantaged families. Among economically disadvantaged families, general education students exit at elevated rates comparable to students with disabilities. Disability status does not predict a higher exit rate. The largest disparity is in Low Need districts, which are the most well-resourced in the state, where students with disabilities exit at nearly twice the rate of their general education peers.

However, nearly two-thirds of all homeschool exits statewide come from economically disadvantaged families. The disparity for students with disabilities mainly exists among families with resources. The total number of exits is higher among those without resources. Among economically disadvantaged families, general education students already have higher exit rates, so students with disabilities do not exit at a greater rate than their peers.

3. The disparity in the exit rate of students with disabilities is a phenomenon of secondary school. No elementary or middle school grade shows a statistically significant disparity in exit rates between students with disabilities /general education students. The disparity first appears in the 9th grade and continues through the 11th grade. Grade 9 produces the highest exit rate of students with disabilities and the largest volume of exits for students with disabilities compared to any other grade.

4. Students classified with Emotional Disability and Other Health Impairment exit to home school at the highest rates. Students classified with Emotional Disability (ED) are nearly three times more likely to leave than other disability groups. Other Health

Impairment (OHI), including ADHD, has the next highest exit rate. The combined exit rate for ED and OHI students is 59% higher than the rate for all students with disabilities. Students classified with Emotional Disability are the subgroup whose classification criteria most closely describe responses to school settings.

5. Racial and ethnic patterns overlap with district-type and economic patterns and require further analysis to disentangle. White students with disabilities represent 55% of all students with disabilities in homeschool exits, but only 35% of students with disabilities in enrollment, indicating an overrepresentation of nearly 20 percentage points. Hispanic students with disabilities make up about 36% of students with disabilities enrollment, but account for less than half of exits, at 24%. The racial and ethnic exit patterns closely align with district types and economic statuses.

The largest disparities are among predominantly White populations in districts that are not economically disadvantaged and have Low or Average Need. The current data do not clarify whether the overrepresentation of White students with disabilities in exits is due to race, district type, or economic conditions. The FOIL tables lack cross-tabulation of race with district type or economic status, and additional data are needed for deeper analysis.

6. The pandemic amplified the pattern but did not create it. The number of homeschool exits tripled during the pandemic, reaching 19,144 in 2021-22. Since then, general education exit rates have approached pre-pandemic levels, but exit rates for students with disabilities remain higher. In 2020-21, when most districts used hybrid or remote learning, general education students exited at higher rates than students with disabilities.

In 2021-22, as districts returned to in-person learning, students with disabilities exited to homeschooling at more than twice the pre-pandemic baseline, and this trend has continued. The pandemic disrupted both groups, but only the exit rate for students with disabilities remained elevated afterward.

About This Report

This report presents findings from a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request to the New York State Education Department (NYSED), filed as FL-EM-26/347. NYSED provided the data from the Student Information Repository System (SIRS), the state's longitudinal student-level database. The FOIL request was designed to determine whether students with disabilities exited public school to homeschool at higher rates than general education students. Limitations in the data file resulted from the request; NYSED produced it accurately.

One in five students enrolled in New York public schools in 2024-25 carries an active disability classification. The data describe students with disabilities who exited New York public schools with Exit Code 255, the code NYSED assigns when a student leaves to be homeschooled.

Throughout this report, these exits are referred to as "homeschool exits." For each school year from 2018-19 through 2024-25, NYSED provided totals broken down by disability status, NYSED's Need/Resource Capacity (NRC) district category, economic disadvantage status, grade level, disability classification, and race/ethnicity. Full methodology and business rules are in the appendix.

Full methodology, business rules, statistical methods, and FOIL correspondence appear in a companion appendix available at [URL]. The underlying data file from NYSED is available at [URL] for independent analysis.

How to Read the Data

These measures appear throughout this report.

Exit rate is the number of students who exited public school to homeschool, divided by the total number of enrolled students in that category during that school year, expressed as a percentage. An exit rate of 0.56% means 56 out of every 10,000 students in that group left to be homeschooled.

Exit rate ratio is the exit rate for students with disabilities (SWD) divided by the exit rate for general education students. A ratio of 1.30 means students with disabilities exited at 30% higher rates than general education peers. A ratio below 1.0 means general education students exited at higher rates.

Odds ratio (OR) compares the odds of exiting to homeschool for students with disabilities to those for general education students. An OR of 1.30 means students with disabilities had 30% higher odds of exiting.

Each OR is reported with a **95% confidence interval (CI)**. When the CI does not include 1.0, the difference between the two groups is statistically significant. When the CI includes 1.0, the difference may reflect chance variation rather than a reliable pattern.

Examples

The following row appears in Section 2:

Table 1. Odds Ratio and Confidence Interval Example 1

School year	SWD exits	SWD rate	Gen ed exits	Gen ed rate	OR	95% CI
2018-19	1,228	0.241%	4,359	0.205%	1.18	[1.11, 1.26]

In 2018-19, about 509,000 students with disabilities enrolled statewide, and 1,228 of them left public school to be homeschooled. That is a rate of 0.241%, or roughly 24 out of every 10,000 students with disabilities. Among approximately 2.1 million general education students, 4,359 left public school for homeschooling, which is a rate of 0.205%, or about 21 out of every 10,000. More general education students left in raw numbers (4,359 vs. 1,228), but the general education population is much larger. The exit rate adjusts for that difference in population size. The odds ratio of 1.18 means students with disabilities had 18% higher odds of exiting to homeschool than general education students. The confidence interval of [1.11, 1.26] means the true size of that difference could be as small as 11% higher or as large as 26% higher. Because both numbers are above 1.0, the finding is reliable: students with disabilities were leaving at higher rates than general education students, and this pattern is not due to chance.

By contrast, an odds ratio with a confidence interval that crosses 1.0, such as 0.90 [0.67, 1.21], indicates that the data cannot confirm a real difference between the two groups. In the example below, the interval includes values where students with disabilities are less likely to exit (0.67), equally likely (1.0), and more likely (1.21) to exit. In those cases, this report notes that the difference is not statistically significant.

Table 2. Odds Ratio and Confidence Interval Example 2

NRC category	SWD rate	Gen ed rate	SWD exits	OR	95% CI
Large City	0.243%	0.270%	54	0.90	[0.67, 1.21]

Introduction

Students with disabilities are leaving New York public schools for homeschooling at higher rates than their general education peers. The rate has more than doubled since 2018-19. The disparity between students with disabilities and their general education peers is widest in well-resourced, Low Need districts, where students with disabilities exit at nearly twice the odds of their peers.

Seven years of data show consistent patterns associated with well-funded districts, transitions to high school, and specific disability classifications. The data cover a population of approximately 480,000 students with disabilities enrolled in New York public schools during 2024-25. The 2,690 homeschool exits account for 0.56% of the population. The number is small, but the patterns are strong and statistically significant. They describe one part of a larger picture of how students with disabilities move through and out of New York public schools.

Existing research on families who leave public schools for homeschooling has largely relied on surveys and interviews at the family level (see Green-Hennessy & Mariotti, 2023). State administrative data complement that work by showing population-level patterns that survey samples cannot reach, and prior studies have used such data to examine outcomes for students with disabilities by district and disability category (Barrat et al., 2014; Hehir et al., 2012). NYSED does not publish these cross-tabulations in its public reports, and a search of published research did not find a comparable analysis for New York. The data required a public records request to obtain in this form.

The report provides a factual account of findings from a public records request and statistical analysis of existing state data. The data set and methods are available on the SNCC website. This approach can address questions that the current accountability framework does not answer. This report focuses on one exit pathway. Other pathways and the reasons for exit are outside its scope. Once students leave, they fall outside the state's regular reporting. The conditions surrounding their exits remain undocumented.

Future reports will examine cohort outcomes across exit pathways, the conditions surrounding exits, and whether disability status independently predicts homeschool exit after considering district and family characteristics. More questions remain than this report can answer, and the method can be expanded to address them.

Section 1: Enrollment Context

Between 2018-19 and 2024-25, total K-12 enrollment in New York State public schools decreased by 234,542 students, representing an 8.9% drop. Most of that decline was in general education, which fell by 205,625 students during this period. Enrollment of students with disabilities followed a different pattern.

Table 3. Enrollment 2018-19 to 2024-25: Total K-12, General Education, vs SWD

School year	Total enrolled	General education	SWD	SWD share
2018-19	2,639,348	2,130,004	509,344	19.3%
2019-20	2,603,182	2,093,529	509,653	19.6%
2020-21	2,530,533	2,030,265	500,268	19.8%
2021-22	2,469,824	2,002,645	467,179	18.9%
2022-23	2,429,555	1,964,020	465,535	19.2%
2023-24	2,419,071	1,953,051	466,020	19.3%
2024-25	2,404,806	1,924,379	480,427	20.0%

Students with disabilities remained relatively stable through 2019-20, then decreased by 9,000 during the pandemic in 2020-21, when most districts used hybrid or remote learning models, followed by a sharp decline of 33,000 students in 2021-22 as districts returned to full in-person instruction. SWD enrollment stayed near that lower level for two years. By 2024-25, one in five students enrolled in New York public schools carried an active disability classification, the highest share in the seven-year series.

The 2021-22 loss of 33,000 students with disabilities substantially exceeds the roughly 4,000 homeschool exits recorded that year. The remaining 29,000 students left through other pathways: aging out, moving out of state, declassification, consent revocation, private placement, or not re-enrolling. This report covers only homeschool exits, which represent a portion of the total attrition among students with disabilities.

Section 2: Homeschool Exit Rates, SWD, and General Education

Across all seven years of data, homeschool exits increased for both populations. The total number of students exiting public school to homeschool statewide rose from 5,587 in 2018-19 to a peak of 19,144 in 2021-22, then declined. By 2024-25, exits stood at 12,326, still more than double the pre-pandemic level.

The exit rate for each population is calculated by dividing the number of homeschool exits by total enrollment in that group for the school year.

Table 4. Homeschool Exit Rates SWD vs. General Education 2018-19 to 2024-25

School year	SWD exits	SWD rate	Gen ed exits	Gen ed rate	OR	95% CI
2018-19	1,228	0.241%	4,359	0.205%	1.18	[1.11, 1.26]
2019-20	1,835	0.360%	7,636	0.365%	0.99	[0.94, 1.04]
2020-21	2,847	0.569%	15,440	0.760%	0.75	[0.72, 0.78]
2021-22	3,985	0.853%	15,159	0.757%	1.13	[1.09, 1.17]
2022-23	2,247	0.483%	7,900	0.402%	1.20	[1.15, 1.26]
2023-24	2,558	0.549%	8,251	0.422%	1.30	[1.24, 1.36]
2024-25	2,690	0.560%	9,636	0.501%	1.12	[1.07, 1.17]

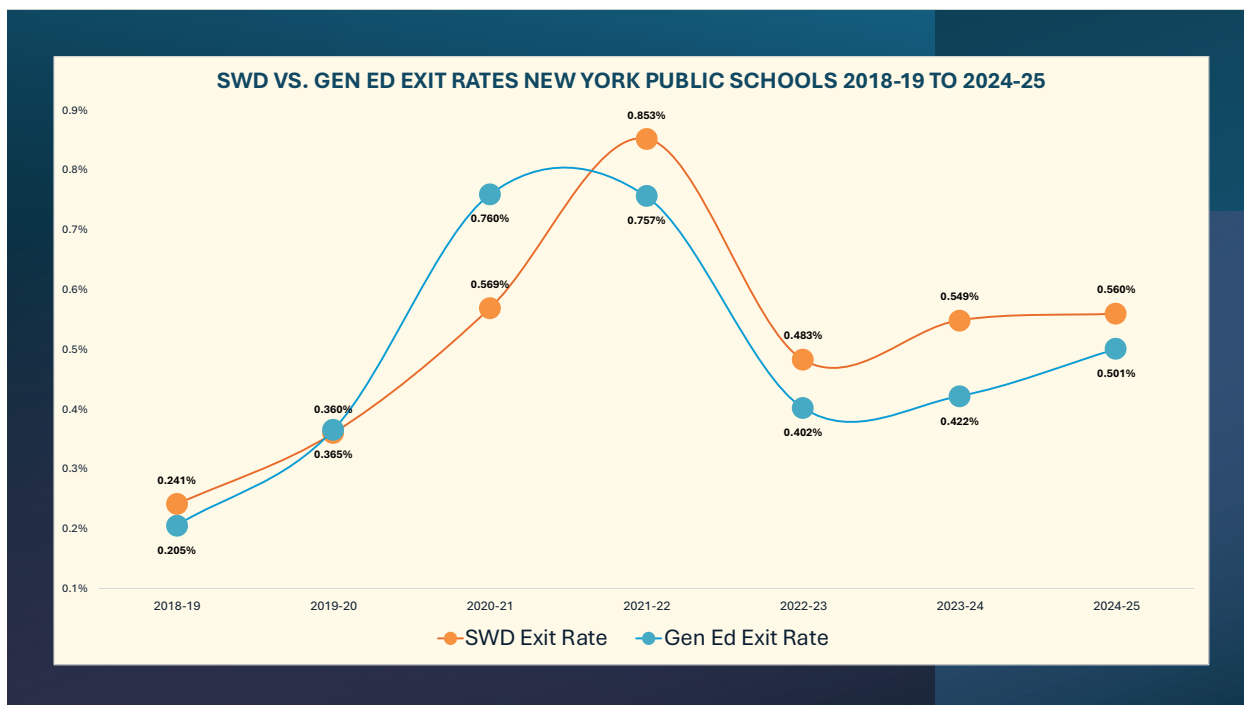


Chart 1. Line chart showing students with disabilities and general education homeschool exit rates from 2018-19 through 2024-25. Students with disabilities' exit rates remain elevated after 2021-22, while general education rates decline toward pre-pandemic levels.

Before the pandemic, homeschool exits were rare for both groups. In 2018-19, the rate of students with disabilities was 0.241% (about 24 per 10,000), and the general education rate was 0.205%. The odds ratio of 1.18 [1.11, 1.26] indicates a modest but significant disparity among students with disabilities. In 2019-20, the first year affected by school closures, the rates converged, and the difference was not significant (OR = 0.99 [0.94, 1.04]).

In 2020-21, when most districts used hybrid or remote models, the direction reversed: the general education rate (0.760%) exceeded the rate for students with disabilities (0.569%), with an odds ratio of 0.75 [0.72, 0.78]. General education families exited at higher rates during the period of greatest disruption to routine schooling.

The pattern reversed again in 2021-22 as districts resumed in-person instruction. The general education rate remained roughly steady at 0.757% while the students with disabilities rate jumped to 0.853% (OR = 1.13 [1.09, 1.17]). General education families made decisions about homeschooling during the disrupted year. The exits for students with disabilities accelerated when students returned to buildings.

In the three most recent years, general education exit rates have declined toward pre-pandemic levels. The students with disabilities rate also dropped from its 2021-22 peak but stabilized at more than double the pre-pandemic baseline (0.560% in 2024-25 compared to 0.241% in 2018-19). The odds ratio remained significantly above 1.0, peaking at 1.30 [1.24, 1.36] in 2023-24.

The general education homeschool increase was temporary. The elevated rate among students with disabilities has persisted. In 2024-25, students with disabilities had 12% higher odds of exiting than general education peers and exited at rates more than double those before the pandemic.

Section 3: Homeschool Exits by District Need/Resource Capacity

NYSED classifies every public school district with a Need/Resource Capacity (NRC) index that combines student poverty levels, district financial resources, enrollment size, and geographic area. Each district is placed into one of six categories: New York City (about one-third of statewide enrollment), Large City (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers), Urban/Suburban High Need, Rural High Need, Average Need, and Low Need. NYSED uses NRC categories in its reports, and the FOIL data were provided based on this classification.

The NRC breakdown in Table 5 separates two questions that statewide data combine: whether homeschool exits concentrate in under-resourced districts and whether the students with disabilities/general education disparity varies with district context.

The exit rate for each group is calculated by dividing the number of homeschool exits among students with disabilities or general education students in that NRC category by the total enrollment of that group in that category for the school year.

Table 5. SWD and general education exit rates by NRC category, 2024-25

NRC category	SWD rate	Gen ed rate	SWD exits	OR	95% CI
Rural High Need	1.716%	1.466%	454	1.17	[1.06, 1.30]
Average Need	0.754%	0.589%	940	1.28	[1.19, 1.38]
Urban/Suburban High Need	0.546%	0.405%	216	1.35	[1.16, 1.57]
New York City	0.398%	0.455%	841	0.87	[0.81, 0.94]
Low Need	0.329%	0.180%	185	1.83	[1.55, 2.16]
Large City	0.243%	0.270%	54	0.90	[0.67, 1.21]

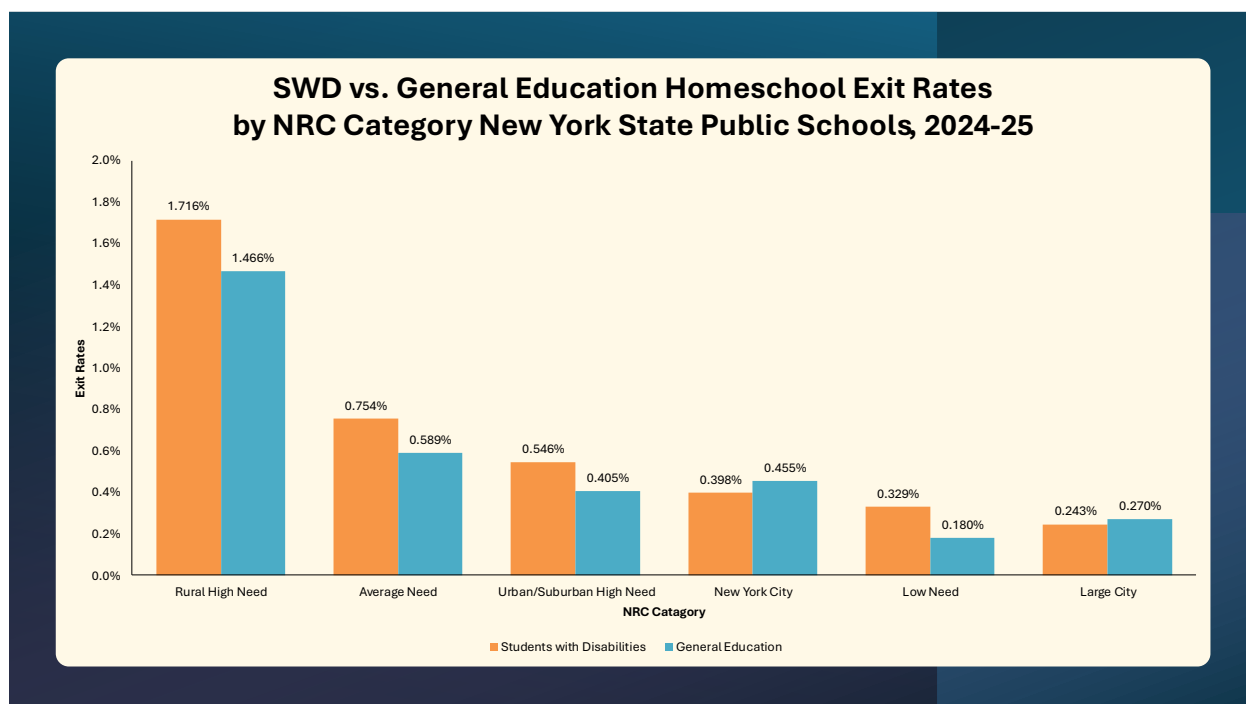


Chart 2. Bar chart showing students with disabilities and general education exit rates by NRC category, 2024-25, with ratio labels.

The highest raw exit rates and the highest odds ratios appear in separate places.

Rural High Need districts have the highest student with disabilities exit rate at 1.716%, more than double the next highest (Average Need at 0.754%). In these districts, general education families also exit to homeschool at high rates (1.466%). The odds ratio is modest (1.17 [1.06, 1.30]) because general education families in these districts also leave at high rates.

Low Need districts show the opposite pattern. The students with disabilities exit rate (0.329%) is modest, and the general education rate (0.180%) is the lowest in the state. The resulting odds ratio of 1.83 [1.55, 2.16] is the highest and most precisely estimated among the NRC categories. In the best-resourced districts, families in general education rarely leave. Students with disabilities have twice the odds of leaving.

Average Need districts produce the largest number of students with disabilities who exit to homeschool: 940, more than a third of the statewide total. The odds ratio of 1.28 [1.19, 1.38] is significant.

Urban/Suburban High Need districts show a significant odds ratio of 1.35 [1.16, 1.57] on a smaller volume of exits (216).

New York City is the only NRC category with a significant odds ratio below 1.0 (OR = 0.87 [0.81, 0.94]): general education students are more likely to exit than students with disabilities.

Large City (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers) also shows a ratio below 1.0, but the confidence interval includes 1.0 (OR = 0.90 [0.67, 1.21]), and only 54 students with disabilities exited in this category. The difference is not statistically significant.

These patterns have been consistent across the series. Rural High Need students with disabilities' exit rates nearly tripled from 0.611% in 2018-19 to 1.716% in 2024-25. The proportion of Low Need students with disabilities more than doubled from 0.150% to 0.329%. The increase in homeschool exits appears across district types. Rural High Need shows the highest raw rate, while Low Need shows the widest disparity among students with disabilities.

Readers who want to identify a specific district's N/RC category can search the district by name at data.nysed.gov, where the classification appears on each district's profile page. NYSED also publishes a statewide list of districts by category through its Office of Accountability.

Section 4: Homeschool Exits by Economic Status

NYSED designates students as economically disadvantaged based on eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch or other economic indicators reported by the district. The FOIL data cross-tabulate disability status by economic status, both statewide and within each NRC category, allowing two questions: whether the disparity in homeschool exits among students with disabilities varies by family economic status, and whether that variation holds across district types.

Table 6 shows statewide exit rates for students with disabilities and general education homeschoolers, separated by economic status.

Table 6. SWD vs. General Education Exits and Exit Rates by Economic Status 2024-25

Economic status	SWD exits	SWD rate	Gen ed exits	Gen ed rate	OR	95% CI
Not economically disadvantaged	790	0.527%	3,591	0.408%	1.29	[1.20, 1.40]
Economically disadvantaged	1,900	0.575%	6,045	0.579%	0.99	[0.94, 1.05]

Among families that are not economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities exited to homeschool at 29% higher odds than their general education peers (OR = 1.29 [1.20, 1.40]). Among economically disadvantaged families, the rates were essentially equal (OR = 0.99 [0.94, 1.05]).

The two confidence intervals do not overlap, which means the contrast between the two groups is itself significant. The students with disabilities-specific exit disparity exists only among families with economic resources. Among economically disadvantaged families, disability status does not predict homeschool exit.

Table 7 breaks this pattern down by NRC category, showing the students with disabilities versus general education odds ratios separately for non-disadvantaged and disadvantaged families in each district type.

Table 7. SWD vs. General Education Homeschool Exits within NRC Category by Economic Status 2024-25

	Not econ. disadvantaged		Econ. disadvantaged	
NRC category	OR	95% CI	OR	95% CI
Low Need	2.08	[1.70, 2.55]	1.19	[0.88, 1.60]
Urban/Suburban High Need	1.53	[1.12, 2.11]	1.29	[1.08, 1.53]
Average Need	1.45	[1.30, 1.62]	1.07	[0.97, 1.18]
Rural High Need	1.29	[1.05, 1.57]	1.05	[0.93, 1.19]
Large City	0.80	[0.39, 1.64]	0.93	[0.67, 1.30]
New York City	0.67	[0.54, 0.83]	0.90	[0.83, 0.97]

In every NRC category except NYC and Large City, the odds ratio is higher for non-economically disadvantaged families than for economically disadvantaged families. The most pronounced case is Low Need districts: among non-disadvantaged families, students with disabilities have more than twice the odds of homeschool exit (OR = 2.08 [1.70, 2.55]); among disadvantaged families in the same districts, the difference is not significant (OR = 1.19 [0.88, 1.60]).

The disparity disappears for economically disadvantaged families. Their students with disabilities exit rate (0.575%) is comparable to their general education rate (0.579%). Non-disadvantaged general education students leave at a much lower rate (0.408%), so when non-disadvantaged students with disabilities leave at 0.527%, the gap is visible. Among disadvantaged families, the general education baseline is already high enough that disability adds no measurable difference.

The volume moves in the opposite direction of the disparity. In 2024-25, economically disadvantaged students made up 7,945 of 12,326 total homeschool exits statewide, nearly two-thirds. The disparity in students with disabilities is concentrated among families with means. The considerable number of exits is concentrated among families without.

Section 5: Homeschool Exits by Grade Level

The data show homeschool exits by grade level and disability status for each academic year. Grade-level data are not cross-tabulated with NRC or economic status, so this section is statewide.

Table 8 compares exit rates for students with disabilities and general education students by grade level. The disparity in students with disabilities appears at the secondary school level. In elementary and middle school grades (K through 8), no grade shows a statistically significant difference in exit rates between students with disabilities and those in general education.

Table 8. SWD vs. General Education Exits and Exit Rates by Grade Level 2024-25

Grade	SWD exits	SWD rate	Gen ed exits	Gen ed rate	OR	95% CI
K	118	0.340%	386	0.294%	1.16	[0.94, 1.42]
1	138	0.399%	465	0.346%	1.15	[0.95, 1.40]
2	136	0.403%	481	0.352%	1.15	[0.95, 1.39]
3	128	0.375%	658	0.469%	0.80	[0.66, 0.96]
4	145	0.425%	591	0.429%	0.99	[0.83, 1.19]
5	146	0.423%	719	0.505%	0.84	[0.70, 1.00]
6	205	0.608%	887	0.620%	0.98	[0.84, 1.14]
7	241	0.731%	929	0.636%	1.15	[1.00, 1.33]
8	245	0.757%	1,155	0.771%	0.98	[0.85, 1.13]
9	448	1.189%	1,430	0.830%	1.44	[1.29, 1.60]
10	323	0.945%	1,056	0.641%	1.48	[1.31, 1.68]
11	179	0.590%	619	0.390%	1.52	[1.28, 1.79]
12	62	0.204%	260	0.156%	1.31	[0.99, 1.73]

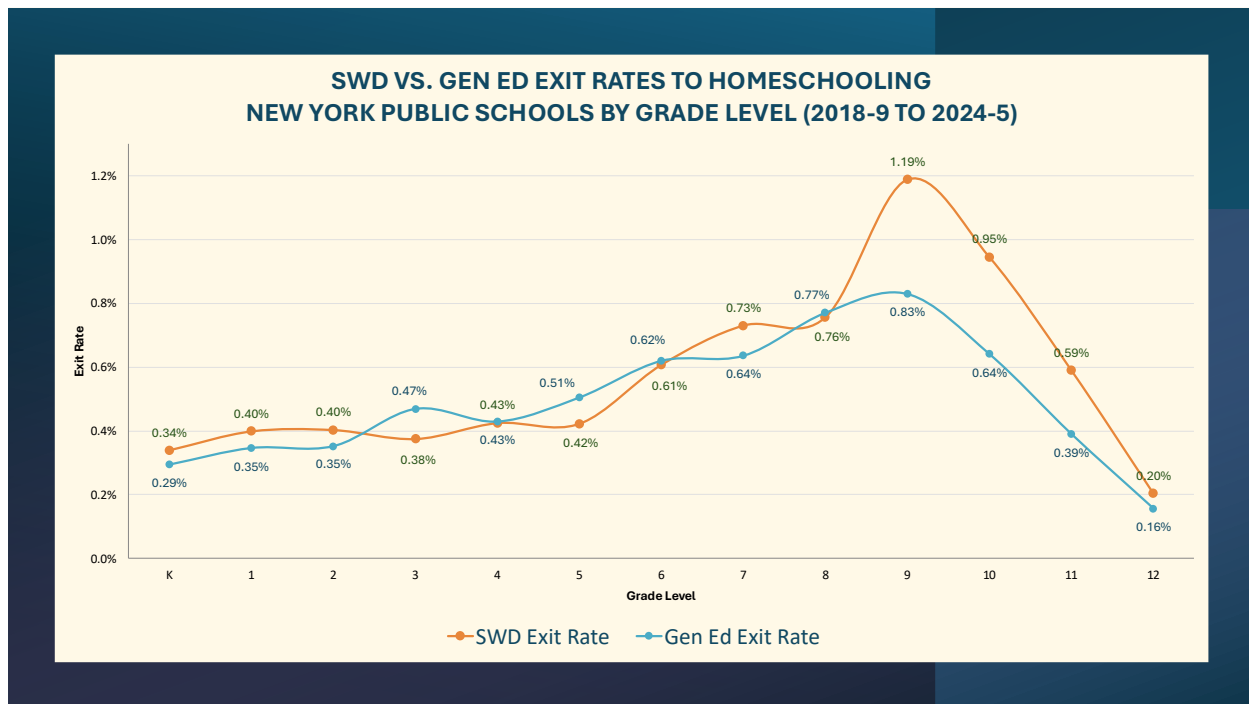


Chart 3. Bar chart showing students with disabilities and general education exit rates by grade level, 2024-25.

The pattern changes in the 9th grade. Grades 9, 10, and 11 are the only grades with significant odds ratios above 1.0. The odds ratio increases with each grade, from 44% higher odds in 9th grade to 52% higher odds in 11th grade. At 12th grade, the odds ratio of 1.31 trends in the same direction, but with only 62 students with disabilities exits at this grade, the confidence interval [0.99, 1.73] crosses 1.0, and the difference is not statistically significant.

Grade 9 stands out for both its exit rate and its volume. The students with disabilities' exit rate of 1.189% is the highest of any grade, and the 448 students with disabilities who exit are the largest single-grade count. The transition to high school is when students with disabilities are most likely to leave and when the gap between students with disabilities and general education exit rates first becomes significant.

Both raw exit rates and the students with disabilities-specific disparity emerge at the transition from middle school to high school. Grade 8 shows a high overall exit rate (0.757% for students with disabilities, 0.771% for general education) but no disparity between the two populations (OR = 0.98).

Table 9 shows that both grade 9 populations exit at higher rates than before the pandemic, and the rate of students with disabilities has risen more. The grade 9 students with

disabilities rate more than doubled, from 0.498% in 2018-19 to 1.189% in 2024-25. The grade 9 general education rate also rose substantially, from 0.342% to 0.830%. Both populations returned to buildings after 2020-21, exiting at higher rates than they had left, but the rate of students with disabilities rose faster, and the odds ratio has been above 1.35 in every year since.

Table 9. Grade 9 Exit Rates for Students With Disabilities and General Education by Year

School year	Grade 9 SWD rate	Grade 9 gen ed rate	OR
2018-19	0.498%	0.342%	1.46
2019-20	0.482%	0.445%	1.08
2020-21	0.429%	0.422%	1.02
2021-22	1.079%	0.798%	1.35
2022-23	0.936%	0.639%	1.47
2023-24	1.223%	0.757%	1.62
2024-25	1.189%	0.830%	1.44

Section 6: Homeschool Exits by Disability Classification

NYSED defines 13 disability classifications. District Committees on Special Education (CSEs) assign students to these categories based on their primary disability. The FOIL data provide exit counts by classification for each school year. Because Table 10 only includes students with disabilities, the comparison is between each disability type and all other students with disabilities combined. The odds ratio indicates whether a student with a specific classification has higher or lower odds of exiting to homeschool than a student with any other disability classification.

Table 10. Exit Rates by Disability Type vs. All Other SWD students Combined 2024-25

Disability classification	Exits	Exit rate	OR vs. other SWD	95% CI
Emotional Disability	254	1.536%	2.96	[2.60, 3.37]
Traumatic Brain Injury	7	1.082%	1.95	[0.92, 4.10]
Other Health Impairment	683	0.770%	1.51	[1.38, 1.64]
Learning Disability	825	0.560%	1.00	[0.92, 1.09]
Autism	434	0.554%	0.99	[0.89, 1.09]
Orthopedic Impairment	6	0.515%	0.92	[0.41, 2.05]
Multiple Disabilities	50	0.402%	0.71	[0.54, 0.94]
Visual Impairment	4	0.380%	0.68	[0.25, 1.81]
Intellectual Disability	40	0.360%	0.64	[0.47, 0.87]
Speech or Language Impairment	378	0.316%	0.49	[0.44, 0.55]
Hearing Impairment	7	0.304%	0.54	[0.26, 1.14]
Deafness	2	0.205%	0.36	[0.09, 1.46]
Deaf-Blindness	0	0.000%	—	—

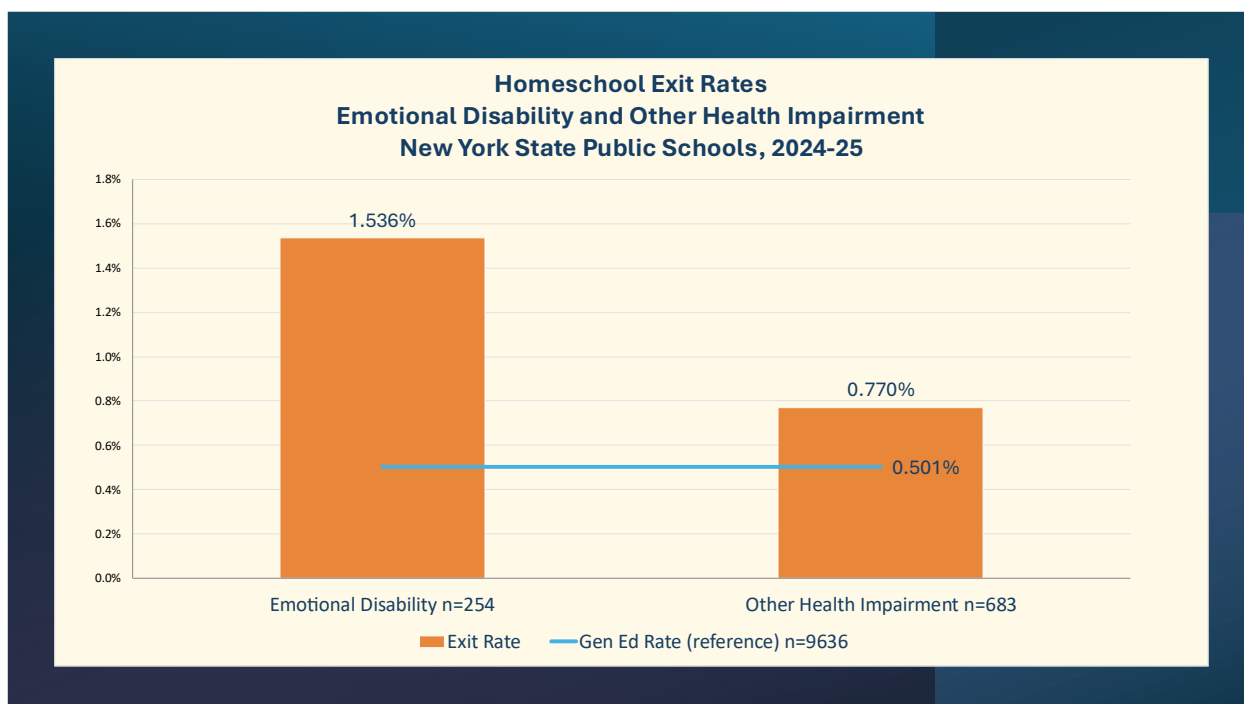


Chart 4. The bar chart shows exit rates for Emotional Disability and Other Health Impairment compared to the overall general education exit rate, 2024-25.

Two disability classifications produce exit rates significantly above the average for students with disabilities. Several classifications have rates significantly below it. The rest are indistinguishable from the average.

Emotional Disability has the highest exit rate (1.536%) and the highest odds ratio (OR = 2.96 [2.60, 3.37]). Students classified with Emotional Disability have nearly three times the odds of exiting to homeschool as students with any other disability classification. This is the highest finding by disability type in the dataset.

The Emotional Disability classification applies to students showing, over time and to a significant extent, one or more of five features: difficulty learning not explained by other factors, trouble forming or maintaining relationships, inappropriate behavior or feelings, persistent unhappiness or depression, or physical symptoms or fears linked to school. Four of these describe responses to the school setting.

The exit rate has been increasing. In 2018-19, it was 0.593%. By 2024-25, it was 1.536%, a 159% increase. The ED population has decreased over the same period, from 26,479 students in 2018-19 to 16,533 in 2024-25. A smaller population leaves at a higher rate.

Other Health Impairment (OHI) has the second-highest exit rate (0.770%) and a significant odds ratio of 1.51 [1.38, 1.64]. OHI is a broad classification that covers chronic

or acute health conditions affecting alertness or strength, including ADHD and, depending on how the Committee on Special Education frames it, anxiety disorders. OHI is the largest disability category in the state with 88,727 students, more than five times the size of the ED population.

Considerable variation in classification exists between ED and OHI. A student with anxiety, emotional dysregulation, or behavioral responses to school environments could be classified under either category depending on whether the CSE emphasizes the health basis of the condition (leading to OHI) or its behavioral and relational impact (leading to ED). In practice, CSEs tend to classify toward OHI because the ED label carries stigma. The ED population has been declining while the OHI population has remained stable.

The combined ED and OHI population in 2024-25 was 105,260 students, with 937 homeschool exits and an exit rate of 0.890%. This combined rate is 59% higher than the overall exit rate for students with disabilities, 0.560%. Students exit at an elevated rate under both labels.

Learning Disability and **Autism** are the two largest remaining categories, with 147,335 and 78,371 students, respectively. Neither shows a significant difference from the average for students with disabilities (Learning Disability: OR = 1.00 [0.92, 1.09]; Autism: OR = 0.99 [0.89, 1.09]).

Speech or Language Impairment shows a significantly lower exit rate (0.316%, OR = 0.49 [0.44, 0.55]). Students in this category have about half the odds of exiting as those with other disabilities. This population is concentrated in younger grades, where Section 5 showed no disparity between students with disabilities/general education exits.

Intellectual Disability (OR = 0.64 [0.47, 0.87]) and **Multiple Disabilities** (OR = 0.71 [0.54, 0.94]) also show significantly lower exit rates.

Traumatic Brain Injury shows an elevated exit rate (1.082%) and odds ratio (OR = 1.95), but only 7 students exited. The confidence interval is wide [0.92, 4.10] and includes 1.0. The finding is not statistically significant.

The remaining categories (Hearing Impairment, Deafness, Orthopedic Impairment, Visual Impairment, Deaf-Blindness) do not show significant findings.

Section 7: Homeschool Exits by Race and Ethnicity

This section presents homeschool exits by race and ethnicity in two ways. Table 11 compares students with disabilities to those in general education within each racial or ethnic group. Table 12 shows each group's proportion of students with disabilities in enrollment versus exits. The two tables answer different questions, and the racial patterns cannot be clearly separated from the NRC and economic-status patterns discussed earlier.

The odds ratio presented in Table 11 compares students with disabilities to general education exit rates within each racial/ethnic group: whether disability status predicts homeschool exit differently depending on the student's race or ethnicity.

Table 11. Students with Disabilities vs. General Education Exit Rates by Race/Ethnicity 2024-25

Race/ethnicity	SWD exits	SWD rate	Gen ed exits	Gen ed rate	OR	95% CI
White	1,476	0.868%	5,385	0.667%	1.30	[1.23, 1.38]
Hispanic or Latino	631	0.369%	1,664	0.299%	1.23	[1.13, 1.35]
Black or African American	363	0.410%	1,102	0.471%	0.87	[0.77, 0.98]
Multiracial	132	0.740%	632	0.855%	0.87	[0.72, 1.04]
Asian	64	0.228%	739	0.315%	0.72	[0.56, 0.94]
American Indian or Alaska Native	20	0.503%	88	0.641%	0.78	[0.48, 1.28]
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	4	0.457%	26	0.629%	0.72	[0.25, 2.08]

Within each racial/ethnic group, the students with disabilities/general education comparison shows:

White students with disabilities show a significant disparity relative to their general education peers (OR = 1.30 [1.23, 1.38]). White students with disabilities had 30% higher odds of exiting to homeschooling than White general education students.

Hispanic or Latino students show a similar pattern. Hispanic students with disabilities had 23% higher odds of exiting than their general education peers (OR = 1.23 [1.13, 1.35]).

Black or African American students show a significant finding in the opposite direction: students with disabilities had lower odds of exiting than general education peers (OR = 0.87 [0.77, 0.98]). Among Black families, general education students are more likely to exit to homeschool than students with disabilities. This is the same direction as the NYC and Large City findings in Section 3 and is consistent with them, as Black students are concentrated in urban districts.

Asian students also show a significant odds ratio below 1.0 (OR = 0.72 [0.56, 0.94]). Both students with disabilities and general education exit rates are low for Asian students (0.228% and 0.315%), and the relatively small number of students with disabilities who exit (64) produces a wider confidence interval than the White or Hispanic findings.

Multiracial, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander groups show odds ratios below 1.0, but none are statistically significant. Small numbers of exits in these categories (132, 20, and 4, respectively) limit the precision of the estimates.

Table 12 shows whether each racial/ethnic group's share of students with disabilities homeschool exits matches its share of statewide students with disabilities enrollment. A positive difference indicates a group is overrepresented in exits relative to enrollment; a negative difference indicates underrepresentation.

Table 12. Difference Between Enrollment Share and Exit Share By Race/Ethnicity 2024-25

Race/ethnicity	SWD enrollment share	SWD exit share	Difference
White	35.4%	54.9%	+19.5 pp
Multiracial	3.7%	4.9%	+1.2 pp
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.8%	0.7%	-0.1 pp
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%	-0.0 pp
Asian	5.8%	2.4%	-3.5 pp
Black or African American	18.4%	13.5%	-5.0 pp
Hispanic or Latino	35.6%	23.5%	-12.1 pp

White students with disabilities account for 55% of all students with disabilities homeschool exits (1,476 of 2,690). That figure alone could suggest a racial concentration, but it must be read against enrollment share. White students represent 35.4% of all students with disabilities enrollment statewide, but 54.9% of students with disabilities exits, an overrepresentation of 19.5 percentage points.

Hispanic students with disabilities, with a similar share of the enrollment of students with disabilities (35.6%), account for less than half the exit share (23.5%). Black students with disabilities are similarly underrepresented in exits relative to enrollment.

Limitations of Race and Ethnicity Data

The racial/ethnic pattern aligns with the NRC and economic status findings from Sections 3 and 4. White students are disproportionately enrolled in Average Need, Low Need, and Rural High Need districts and are less likely to be classified as economically disadvantaged. These are the same contexts where the disparity in homeschool exits among students with disabilities is strongest. Black and Hispanic students are concentrated in NYC and urban districts, where the disparity is absent or reversed.

This data set cannot be used to determine whether White students with disabilities' overrepresentation in homeschool exits reflects race or the district types and economic conditions in which White families are concentrated. The FOIL tables do not cross-tabulate race by NRC or race by economic status, so the independent contribution of race cannot be isolated. Answering this question requires additional data that simultaneously cross-reference race with district type, economic status, and disability status.

Key Findings

1. Students with disabilities have exited to homeschool at significantly higher rates than their general education peers every year since in-person instruction resumed (2021-22 through 2024-25). The students with disabilities exit rate in 2024-25 (0.560%) is more than double the pre-pandemic rate (0.241%).
2. The increase in general education homeschooling during the pandemic was mostly temporary. However, the rise in the number of students with disabilities has continued. Exit rates from general education have declined toward pre-pandemic levels but exit rates for students with disabilities have not.
3. The students with disabilities homeschool exit disparity is widest in well-resourced districts. These Low Need districts have an odds ratio of 1.83 [1.55, 2.16], indicating that students with disabilities are almost twice as likely to exit compared to their general education peers.
4. The students with disabilities homeschool exit disparity exists only among families that are not economically disadvantaged (OR = 1.29 [1.20, 1.40]). Among economically disadvantaged families, students with disabilities and general education students exit at the same rate (OR = 0.99 [0.94, 1.05]). The difference between these two groups is itself statistically significant. However, nearly two-thirds of all homeschool exits statewide come from economically disadvantaged families.
5. The students with disabilities homeschool exit disparity appears only in secondary school. No elementary or middle school grade shows a significant difference between students with disabilities and general education students. Grades 9, 10, and 11 all show significant odds ratios above 1.0, with grade 9 showing the highest exit rate (1.189%) and the largest number of students with disabilities exiting (448).
6. Students classified as Emotional Disability have nearly three times the odds of homeschool exits compared to students with other disability classifications (OR = 2.96 [2.60, 3.37]). Other Health Impairment, a broad category that includes ADHD and may encompass students whose profiles overlap with ED criteria, has the second-highest odds ratio (OR = 1.51 [1.38, 1.64]). The combined ED and OHI exit rate (0.890%) is 59% higher than the overall rate for students with disabilities.

7. White students with disabilities account for 55% of all homeschool exits among students with disabilities, while representing 35% of students with disabilities enrollment, an overrepresentation of 19.5 percentage points.

Hispanic students with disabilities show the opposite pattern at the population level: they make up a similar share of enrollment (35.6%) but only 23.5% of exits. Within racial groups, however, both White and Hispanic students with disabilities exit at significantly higher rates than their general education peers (OR = 1.30 [1.23, 1.38] for White; OR = 1.23 [1.13, 1.35] for Hispanic).

Among Black and Asian students, students with disabilities exit at lower rates than their general education peers. These racial and ethnic patterns overlap with the district-type and economic patterns documented in Sections 3 and 4. Whether race contributes independently cannot be determined from the current data.

Limitations

These data describe patterns. They do not explain causes. Several constraints limit what can be concluded from this report.

1. The data measure exits, not reasons for exit. A homeschool exit indicates a student left public school to be homeschooled. The request for this dataset was limited, and the data have no information about what happened before the exit: no attendance records, no placement history, no indication of whether a CSE meeting occurred, no record of parent complaints, and no measure of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the school. The data show who left, not why.
2. The data are snapshots within each year, not longitudinal records. Each year's data stands alone. A student who leaves in 2020-21 and re-enrolls in 2021-22 is listed as an exit in the first year and as enrolled in the second. A student who left and never came back is no longer included in the denominators for later years. The data do not measure overall attrition, whether exits are permanent, or if students who exited eventually returned.
3. These data describe students who were enrolled in NY public schools. Students who attended only nonpublic schools or were homeschooled from kindergarten are not included.
4. The cross-tabulations are not fully crossed. The data include four tables: NRC by economic status by disability, grade by disability, disability classification by exit, and

race/ethnicity by disability. No single table combines all variables. As a result, the report cannot determine, for example, whether the grade 9 exit disparity is concentrated in Rural High Need districts or among non-disadvantaged families. Interactions between variables reported in different tables cannot be evaluated with the current data. Answering those questions would require a fully crossed tabulation or individual-level records.

5. Small cell sizes limit some findings. Large City produced only 54 exits for students with disabilities. Traumatic Brain Injury produced 7. Several racial/ethnic groups produced fewer than 25. Odds ratios for these subgroups should be interpreted with caution.
6. The disability classification reflects the label at the time of exit, not the full profile. A student classified as Other Health Impairment may have anxiety, ADHD, or a mix of conditions that overlap with Emotional Disability criteria. The data reflects CSE decision-making and the students' underlying needs. The boundary between categories, especially between ED and OHI, is not rigid.
7. Homeschool exits are one pathway out of public school. Students also leave through private schooling, residential programs, moving out of state, declassification, consent revocation, aging out, and simply not re-enrolling. The 2021-22 enrollment loss of 33,000 students with disabilities exceeded the roughly 4,000 homeschool exits recorded that year by approximately 29,000 students. This report covers that fraction of total attrition among students with disabilities, not the full scope.
8. The data cannot explain why families choose homeschooling. Families who chose it as a preferred alternative and families who chose it because the school environment was not working both appear in the same data with Code 255 exits.

Next Steps

This report is the first analysis in an ongoing examination of how students with disabilities move through and out of New York public schools. A follow-up Freedom of Information Law request has been filed for additional data. It will support three lines of inquiry:

1. Whether disability status independently predicts homeschool exit after accounting for district type, economic status, and race.
2. Whether the overrepresentation of White students with disabilities in homeschool exits reflects race or the contexts in which White families are concentrated
3. What conditions preceded exits, including placement history, attendance patterns, and duration of classification

A subsequent request will examine cohort outcomes across all exit pathways to identify where students with disabilities leave the public school system and whether they are counted when they do. SNCC will publish subsequent analyses as data becomes available.

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