**1. Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to more issues and concerns for all students and their families, but this is especially true for students with disabilities. Additionally, the gap in graduation and drop-out rates between students with and without disabilities continues to undermine their futures. For example, in the class of 2018, only 66 percent of Black students with disabilities, 71 percent of Hispanic students with disabilities, 77 percent of white students with disabilities, and 79 percent of Asian-American students with disabilities completed high school. Furthermore, just seven percent of students born with a disability graduate from college. What is your plan for ensuring that all students with disabilities receive a quality and appropriate education to acquire the critical and marketable skills necessary to compete in a job-driven economy?**

I will start by fully funding and enforcing IDEA and tripling Title I funding to increase resources available to educators to meet the needs of students with disabilities. I will support efforts to recruit and retain special education teachers, including diverse special education teachers, and provide professional development opportunities to all teachers and paraprofessionals who work with students with disabilities. Our Administration will promote universal design in teaching practices and classroom features, such as instructional techniques, classroom materials and resources, classroom seating, testing, and note-taking. To address the disparity in school discipline, including suspension, expulsion and segregation, I will fully implement the special education significant disproportionality regulation that the Obama-Biden Administration put in place and support the passage of the Keeping All Students Safe Act, which will end the use of seclusion and prevent and decrease the use of physical restraints in schools.

I will ensure that school districts are meeting their obligations under IDEA to provide transition services to all students with disabilities by the time they turn 16, and encourage them to start even earlier—at age 14 so they can graduate ready for continuing education or employment. I will direct the Department of Education to provide additional guidance to states and school districts on ensuring that all pathways to college and the workforce, such as advanced coursework, dual enrollment opportunities, and high-quality career and technical education, are accessible to all students with disabilities.

I will increase funding for programs such as the Model Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities Coordinating Center and the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (TPSIDs), which provide funding to community colleges and 4-year colleges and universities to create inclusive postsecondary programs for young people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. I will direct the Department of Education to provide guidance to all postsecondary programs to accept the accommodations students with disabilities have used in pre K-12 settings for postsecondary settings.

**2. In the economic expansion prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the national employment rate for working-age people with disabilities in America was 37.6 percent compared to 77.8 percent of people without disabilities. Further, there continues to be significant disparities in employment outcomes within the disability community, which varies from state to state. There are significant racial disparities in disability employment outcomes. 38.9 percent of working-age white people with disabilities have jobs compared to only 29.7 percent of working-age Black people with disabilities had jobs, 39.4 percent of working-age Hispanics with disabilities and 43.2 percent of working-age Asian-Americans with disabilities. The pandemic has ravaged the disability community and more than 1 million workers with disabilities have lost their jobs. If elected, what will you do to ensure that the government is removing barriers and promoting high quality, inclusive services built on evidence-based policies, practices and procedures leading to competitive, meaningful careers, which includes promoting entrepreneurial opportunities?**

Workers with disabilities deserve equal employment opportunities as well as a powerful commitment from the federal government to break down barriers, like discrimination, that keep them from seeking, getting, and keeping jobs in competitive, integrated employment. My commitment extends to LGBTQ+ Americans with disabilities and people of color with disabilities who, because of their race or sexual orientation, may face unique and especially difficult economic challenges. I will enforce the ADA to ensure that employers do not discriminate against people with disabilities, and provide reasonable accommodations for them to succeed at work.

I will phase out the subminimum wage based on disability and work with Congress to ensure that there is funding for impacted employees with disabilities to receive support in competitive and integrated work settings. I will work to pass the Transformation to Competitive Employment Act and expand supported and customized employment by: (1) Providing technical assistance and funding for jobs that allow people with disabilities to put their skills, talents, and abilities to work with reasonable accommodations in settings that include workers who do not have disabilities. (2) Restoring the Department of Justice’s guidance on the application of the Supreme Court’s Olmstead decision to state and local employment services (3) Directing the Department of Education’s Rehabilitation Services Administration to enforce the integrated employment provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (4) Increasing tax credits to employers, including small businesses, by passing the Disability Employment Incentive Act and (5) Increase funding for state vocational rehabilitation agencies.

Finally, I will provide small business resources for people with disabilities. As President, I will ensure that entrepreneurial training programs funded by the Small Business Administration focus on and benefit entrepreneurs with disabilities. I will also provide incentives for states and local governments to adopt programs that support entrepreneurship and small business development among the disability community.

**3. The disability community fundamentally believes in the need to ensure “Nothing about us, without us” – real inclusion and places at decision making tables – because we know solutions that work and want to be a part of making our communities stronger. What specific measures have you taken to make your campaign accessible for, and inclusive of, people with disabilities, as every issue impacts our lives?**

I believe that everyone should be treated with dignity and have a fair shot at getting ahead. That begins with my own campaign. We have hired individuals with disabilities, we have a dedicated Director of Disability Engagement, and as we transition to a fully virtual campaign we are working to ensure digital accessibility. If I have the honor of becoming President, every policy I pursue — from rebuilding our middle class, to fighting climate change, to achieving universal health coverage — will be created with the full inclusion and dignity of Americans with disabilities in mind.

**4. RespectAbility published Disability in Philanthropy & Nonprofits, based on our study on the levels of disability inclusion in the social sector across the country. This large scale study found significant data showing that nationwide, organizations overall want to be inclusive, but are unintentionally excluding the one-in-five people with disabilities. What will you do to promote policies and practices designed to support full community engagement, access and inclusion of people with disabilities?**

My comprehensive [Plan for Full Participation and Equality for People with Disabilities](https://joebiden.com/disabilities/) seeks to do just that through a broad sweep of laws, policies, and actions designed to uplift dignity and opportunity. The plan creates a senior White House position dedicated to asserting the interests of Americans with disabilities in every area of policy development — ensuring that disability rights are embedded in everything we pursue. I will also aggressively enforce existing civil rights laws for people with disabilities as well as appoint leaders in the Departments of Justice, Education, Health and Human Services, Labor, and Housing and Urban Development, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and across the rest of the federal government, who share my commitment to tough and effective enforcement of all civil rights laws.

I will make bold investments in home and community care through Medicaid to help states clear the backlog of 800,000 people who need support, but can’t get it. I will give a major, long-overdue raise to the direct care workforce. And I will guarantee access to high quality, affordable health care — including mental health care — for every American.

**5. Elected officials have multiple opportunities to demonstrate a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, full community participation and celebrating the contributions and accomplishments of people with disabilities through press releases, speeches, celebratory events including National Disability Employment Awareness Month. There are significant stigmas that create attitudinal barriers that limit options and perpetuates low expectations for people with disabilities. What measures will you take to combat these stigmas and promote opportunities for people with disabilities?**

I believe that everyone should be treated with dignity and have a fair shot at getting ahead. This year, on July 26, we marked the 30th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Thanks to the leadership of people with disabilities, disability advocates, and their allies, we have made progress towards the goals of this law—“equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency” for people with disabilities. But, there is much more work to do in order to ensure that all people with disabilities are able to participate fully in our communities and enjoy the same kinds of choices and opportunities that many Americans take for granted. In June, I released a comprehensive plan to achieve full participation and equality for people with disabilities, which you can read at <https://joebiden.com/disabilities/>.

I recognize that we need to view all policies—ranging from climate change and the economy to education and housing—through an inclusive lens. I will work with the disability community to build a stronger, more expansive middle class so that everyone—regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or disability— can find a place. That means amending our laws, policies, and culture to ensure full inclusion of the 61 million individuals with disabilities in the United States in all parts of our society. I will prioritize enacting and implementing policies that break down the barriers to access for people with disabilities living and succeeding in their chosen communities, which means good jobs in competitive, integrated employment; affordable, accessible, and integrated housing; accessible and affordable transportation; inclusive voting processes; and any needed long-term services and supports. I will aggressively enforce existing civil rights laws for people with disabilities, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Fair Housing Act, the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Help America Vote Act, and the Air Carrier Access Act. I also will expand competitive, integrated employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

**6. In our nation’s public schools, there are 6.3 million students with disabilities. The changing demographics of America are reflected in these students, with 11.4 percent of students with disabilities nationwide, almost 720,000, also identified as English-language learners. Their accommodation needs are compounded by the fact that many come from households that do not speak English at home, adding an extra challenge for parental interaction. It can also be harder to diagnose disabilities in children when they are English language learners. Additionally, immigration issues and fears over the public charge rule impact students with disabilities, their families and the wider workforce. What policies would you advance to enable students and their families who are English language learners with disabilities to succeed in school and employment?**

I will immediately revoke the Trump Administration’s [public charge rule](https://www.uscis.gov/archive/final-rule-on-public-charge-ground-of-inadmissibility), which discriminates against immigrants with disabilities. Immigrants with disabilities may be prevented from receiving an immigration status simply because of their disability or, conversely, may have to forego necessary services in order to be granted a visa or residency status. I will ensure that our country welcomes immigrants with disabilities and their families, including refugees, asylum-seekers, and victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, and that they can access services and support they need to succeed in the United States. I will ensure that newly arrived immigrants are not subject to mistreatment and receive appropriate accommodations and that the U.S. Customs and Immigration Services (USCIS) complies with the ADA at every step of the naturalization process.

I will also work to ensure that language barriers do not lead to denial of vital services and resources including education services and needed accommodations. I have called for the creation of neighborhood resource centers or welcome centers to help new immigrants find jobs; access services and English-language learning opportunities; and navigate the school system, health care system, and other important facets of daily life. And I will work to ensure that all public schools have sufficient English-language learning support to help all children reach their potential.

**7. Housing, criminal justice, climate issues, transportation and every other area have significant impacts on people with disabilities. What additional policies and priorities, other than those already discussed above, do you plan to focus on to improve the lives of people with disabilities?**

In June, I released my plan for the full participation and equality of people with disabilities. You can read it here: [www.joebiden.com/disabilities](http://www.joebiden.com/disabilities) It outlines my commitments and priorities. As President, I will:

* Ensure full inclusion of people with disabilities in policy development and aggressively enforce the civil rights of people with disabilities.
* Guarantee access to high-quality, affordable health care, including mental health care, and expand access to home and community-based services and long-term services and supports in the most integrated setting appropriate to each person’s needs and based on self-determination.
* Expand competitive, integrated employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
* Protect and strengthen economic security for people with disabilities.
* Ensure that students with disabilities have access to educational programs and support they need to succeed, from early interventions to post-secondary education.
* Expand access to accessible, integrated, and affordable housing, transportation, and assistive technologies and protect people with disabilities in emergencies.
* Advance global disability rights.