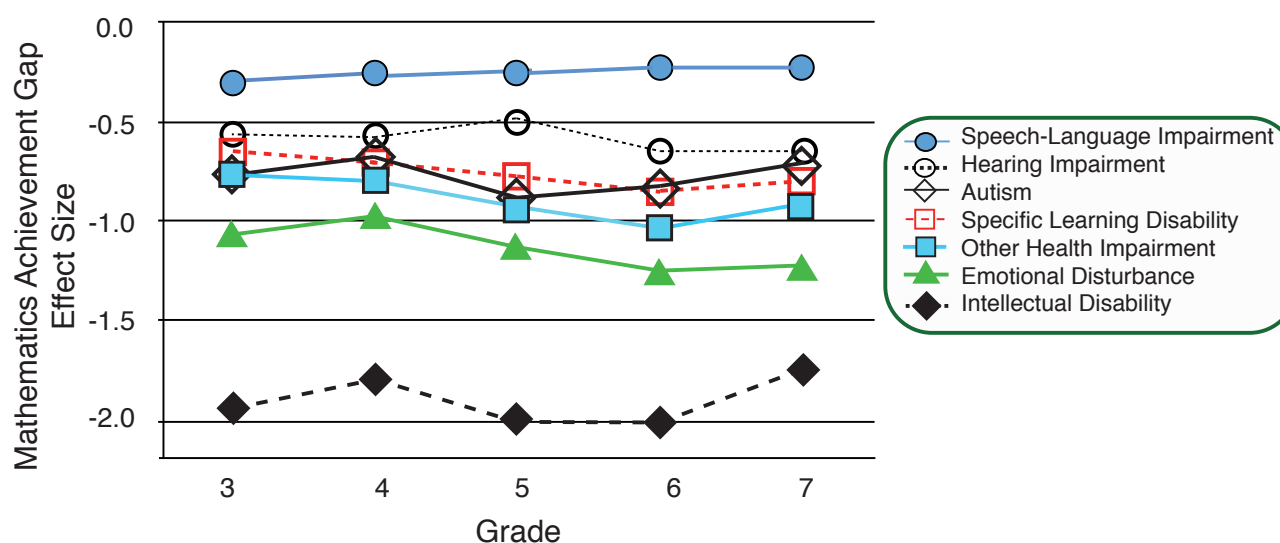


### Mathematics achievement gaps for special education students vary by exceptionality.<sup>1</sup>

**The good news:** Although students with disabilities are often treated as a single subgroup, examining exceptionality subgroups separately reveals *relatively small achievement gaps for some exceptionalities.*

**The challenge ahead:** Understanding *how the unique needs of each exceptionality can be addressed* to narrow mathematics achievement gaps.

#### Longitudinal Achievement Gap Effect Sizes for Exceptionality Subgroups Compared to General Education Students



- An effect size (ES) is the mean difference between two groups, where the scale represents standard deviation units. An ES of zero is equivalent to no difference; ES of about -0.20 is considered “small,” about -0.50 is “medium,” and -0.80 or more is “large”
- Mathematics achievement gap effect sizes ranged from small (-0.30 for Speech-Language impairments) to large (nearly -2.0 for Intellectual Disability), but remained stable across time.
- The variation in gap sizes by exceptionality has implications for research and practice. For example, although cognitive impairments are not a defining feature of emotional disturbance, this subgroup’s large achievement gaps at each grade suggest an important area of need.

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see:

Stevens, J. J., Schulte, A. C., Elliott, S. N., Nese, J. F. T., & Tindal, G., & (2015). Growth and gaps in mathematics achievement of students with and without disabilities on a statewide achievement test. *Journal of School Psychology, 53*, 45-62. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2014.11.001 or visit our website: [www.ncaase.com](http://www.ncaase.com).

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