

Decree 12.686/2025 in Practice: The Case Study as a Pedagogical Tool for Inclusive Education

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Abstract

Decree No. 12.686/2025 represents an advance in Inclusive Education policy by establishing the Case Study as a structuring axis for defining school accommodations. However, although it lists its stages, the normative text does not make explicit the technical-operational guidelines for conducting it in everyday school life, which may compromise its effectiveness. This study aims to critically analyze the aforementioned decree in light of the principles of Inclusive Education and to propose a technical-operational framework for implementing the Case Study in the school context. This is a theoretical-analytical and propositional study, with a qualitative approach and a documentary nature, grounded in the analysis of educational legislation and public policies, articulated with the biopsychosocial model of disability and the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). As a result, it presents a methodological pathway for the Case Study, understood as a continuous, interdisciplinary, and contextualized process aimed at identifying barriers, strengths, and support needs. It is concluded that the qualified operationalization of the Case Study is essential to ensure the effectiveness of the accommodations and to promote participation, learning, and equity in the school context.

Keywords:

Inclusive Education; Case Study; Accessibility; Public Policies; Equity.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion policy in Brazil is the result of a historical process of transition from welfare-based and segregating models to an approach grounded in human rights, equity, and inclusive education. Until the mid-twentieth century, the schooling of people with disabilities took place mostly in specialized institutions, outside regular education, under the strong influence of the biomedical model, which understood disability as an individual incapacity (Jannuzzi, 2004). The first educational laws, such as LDB No. 4.024/1961 and No. 5.692/1971, reflected this paradigm by maintaining special education as a parallel modality (Brasil, 1961; 1971).

The Constituição Federal de 1988 recognizes education as a right of all, ensures the Atendimento Educacional Especializado (AEE), and enrollment preferably in regular education (Brasil, 1988). This movement was strengthened in the 1990s with the incorporation of international commitments, especially the Declaração de Salamanca (1994), and consolidated by LDB No. 9.394/1996, which defines Special Education as a modality that cuts across the levels of education (Brasil, 1996).

In the 2000s, the Política Nacional de Educação Especial na Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva (2008) and, subsequently, the Convenção sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência (Decreto No. 6.949/2009) and the Lei Brasileira de Inclusão – LBI (Lei No. 13.146/2015) consolidated the biopsychosocial model of disability and the right to participation and learning in mainstream education.

More recently, Brazil published two new decrees that clearly reinforce the functional perspective for guiding the implementation of accommodations for the students who need them (Decreto No. 12.686/2025; Decreto No. 12.773/2025).

These documents represent an important advance by reaffirming the Brazilian State's commitment to Inclusive Education, aligning with constitutional principles, the Lei Brasileira de Inclusão (Lei No. 13.146/2015), and the Convenção sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência (Decreto No. 6.949/2009).

Among its main positive aspects, Decreto 12.686/2025 strengthens the right to inclusive education and access to regular education with adequate support, values the Atendimento Educacional Especializado (AEE) as complementary to regular teaching, promotes equity and accessibility, encourages teacher training, and improves the organization and accountability of school systems, recognizing that inclusion is not limited to access but involves retention with quality, participation, and learning.

The decree also reinforces the importance and mandatory nature of implementing the Atendimento Educacional Especializado (AEE), ensuring that it does not replace mainstream education and reinforcing its pedagogical function of eliminating barriers to learning and school participation. To this end, Decreto 12.686/25 establishes that the AEE professional is responsible for coordinating the Case Study, even though other people should participate in its construction.

Although the decree presents the stages that make up the case study — initial identification of individual demands and barriers; analysis of barriers and of the school context; identification of the student's strengths and support needs; and definition of accessibility strategies and resources for eliminating barriers — the normative text provides no clear guidance on how to conduct this process in practice.

The construction of the case study requires well-grounded technical guidance, with specific tools/protocols and clear indicators to assess, intervene, and measure the appropriateness and effectiveness of the accommodations offered.

In addition, the school needs to consider the workflow for the construction, implementation, and monitoring in order to ensure the logistics needed to qualify the actions derived from the case study. Therefore, the legal guidance is that a case study must be carried out for every student, which requires a review of the school's processes and routines. It also becomes necessary to train the pedagogical team regarding the guidelines that underpin the new inclusion policy, now set out more clearly since the publication of the Lei Brasileira de Inclusão (LBI) and strengthened by the new 2025 decrees.

In short, implementing the case study as a guiding tool for the provision of accommodations ensures an individualized perspective grounded in functionality, regardless of the presentation of a medical report from specialists external to the school.

Therefore, in view of this scenario, the objective of this study is to analyze Decreto 12.686/2025 from the perspective of Inclusive Education and to present a technical-operational proposal for conducting the case study as a pedagogical tool to ensure Inclusive Education.

Based on this objective, it is important to note that the originality of this study lies in problematizing the Case Study as a technical-pedagogical device in the context of Inclusive Education, shifting its understanding from a predominantly descriptive or diagnostic logic to a perspective centered on the contextual analysis of barriers, school participation, and support needs. By articulating the biopsychosocial frameworks of disability with educational decision-making processes, this work seeks to broaden the debate on the operationalization of school inclusion beyond the strictly normative dimension of public policies.

METHODS

This is a theoretical-analytical and propositional study, with a qualitative approach and a documentary nature, which analyzes Decreto No. 12.686/2025 from the perspective of Inclusive Education regulations in Brazil and proposes a technical-operational framework for conducting the case study in the school context. It is based on the analysis of central legislation and public policies, including the Constituição Federal de 1988, LDB No. 9.394/1996, the Política Nacional de Educação Especial na Perspectiva da Educação Inclusiva (2008), the Convenção sobre os Direitos das Pessoas com Deficiência (Decreto No. 6.949/2009), the Lei Brasileira de Inclusão (Lei No. 13.146/2015), and, centrally, Decreto No. 12.686/2025.

The choice of this approach is justified by the nature of the object under investigation, since the study seeks to discuss frameworks related to the operationalization of the Case Study in the context of Inclusive Education based on the analysis of normative instruments and theoretical references in the field. The analytical-documentary approach proved pertinent because it allows for the critical problematization of elements present in Decreto No. 12.686/2025, as well as the construction of technical-analytical categories aimed at organizing educational supports and pedagogical decision-making in everyday school life.

The analysis was guided by a critical-theoretical framework on educational public policies and Inclusive Education, with emphasis on the concepts of equity, educational justice, the biopsychosocial model of disability, and the implementation of public policies, understood as dynamic and complex processes. In the specific case of Decreto No. 12.686/2025, an analytical-interpretive reading was carried out aimed at understanding the case study as a structuring instrument of inclusive policy, seeking to identify its normative advances, the limitations arising from the absence of practical guidelines, and the

implications of these gaps for pedagogical decision-making and the organization of school accommodations.

The analysis also considered Decreto No. 12.773/2025, which revoked and reformulated some guidelines of Decreto No. 12.686/2025. Regarding the case study, however, the new decree did not reduce its importance but expanded its function, by establishing that this instrument should serve as the basis not only for drafting the Plano de Atendimento Educacional Especializado (PAEE), as previously provided, but also for constructing the Plano Educacional Individualizado (PEI). As a result, the case study comes to occupy an even more central role in organizing pedagogical decisions in the context of inclusive education.

Accordingly, the study comprised three complementary stages: (1) an analytical reading of Decreto No. 12.686/2025, identifying the provisions related to the organization of educational supports and to the Case Study; (2) interpretation of the main conceptual elements present in the literature on Inclusive Education, accessibility, and school participation; and (3) the elaboration of a technical-operational proposal for organizing the Case Study in the school context.

Analytical framework for operationalizing the Case Study

The operationalization of the Case Study proposed in this study can be understood through an analytical framework organized into interdependent dimensions: identification of the student's educational demands; analysis of contextual barriers; recognition of strengths and forms of school participation; definition of support and accessibility needs; and collaborative construction of educational strategies. These dimensions should not be interpreted as linear or protocol-based stages, but as analytical organizers intended to support processes of contextualized pedagogical decision-making. Table 1 presents the analytical framework.

The construction of these categories was grounded in the biopsychosocial frameworks of disability, especially those related to functionality, participation, accessibility, and the elimination of barriers, present in the Lei Brasileira de Inclusão and in the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).

Table 1

Analytical framework for operationalizing the case study

Dimension	Elements analyzed	Purpose
Educational demands	Participation, functionality	Understand needs
Contextual barriers	Environment, interaction,	Identify obstacles
Strengths	Interests, interactions, resources	Expand participation
Supports	Strategies, resources, adaptations	Sustain inclusion
Monitoring	Continuous review	Adjustments

The case study as a technical-methodological device

In the educational field, and particularly in Inclusive Education, the Case Study has been widely used to analyze complex situations of learning and school participation, fostering an understanding of the pedagogical practices and institutional dynamics that guide or limit school inclusion (Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2024).

In the Brazilian literature, the Case Study has been adopted to investigate different aspects of school inclusion and educational processes in specific contexts. For example, recent research has explored teachers' pedagogical practice in relation to students with specific educational needs in elementary school, revealing gaps between normative intentions and classroom actions (Souza et al., 2025).

In methodological terms, the Case Study favors an integrated analysis of multiple data sources (observations, interviews, pedagogical documents), allowing for a broader understanding of the situation in the educational context. This tool is particularly useful when seeking to capture the complexity inherent in inclusive education, as it makes it possible to articulate individual, social, and institutional factors that influence teaching and learning practices (Yin, 2018). International research also highlights the capacity of this methodology to reveal how environmental variables and contexts shape the school experiences of students with disabilities or special educational needs (Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2024).

In addition, the Case Study has been used to examine the role of school management in conducting inclusive processes, demonstrating that administrative practices and pedagogical decisions directly influence the organization of school activities and the implementation of inclusion policies (Flores, 2025). Another important example concerns investigations into the relationship between teacher training and inclusive didactic proposals, in which cases were developed so that teaching-degree students could construct teaching strategies aimed at students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, for instance (Monteiro & Faria, 2025).

Recent scholarship shows that the Case Study can be articulated with different theoretical approaches to explore how teachers, families, and administrators interpret and engage with inclusive processes (Valentos & Junsay, 2025). These studies reinforce the importance of treating the case study not merely as a description of events, but as a structured analytical process capable of revealing the complex relationships that guide educational practices and pedagogical decisions.

In Inclusive Education, the case study also takes on a role of pedagogical mediation, as it makes it possible to identify environmental and organizational barriers, students' strengths, and the conditions for the effectiveness of interventions. This integrative function lies in the capacity to reconcile objective data (documents, observations) and subjective perspectives (interviews, accounts), articulating them into a contextualized interpretation that can inform professional choices and adjustments to pedagogical practices (Yin, 2018; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2024).

Despite its potential, the literature converges in pointing out that the case study is often reduced to descriptive accounts without analytical reflection, which weakens its function as an instrument of pedagogical decision-making (Souza et al., 2025). Overcoming this limitation requires the adoption of rigorous analytical processes that articulate empirical evidence with theoretical and normative frameworks, enabling a critical interpretation that sustains qualified inclusive educational practices.

In sum, it becomes evident that the case study, when understood in its technical-methodological and analytical dimension, constitutes a privileged device for mediating between the normative principles

of inclusive education and everyday pedagogical decisions. However, the recurrent weakening of its practical application, marked by descriptive and poorly systematized approaches, highlights the need to move beyond conceptual discussion.

The operational limits of the Case Study in Decreto No. 12.686/2025

Decreto No. 12.686/2025 establishes that the Case Study must be composed of four stages. However, it merely mentions them, without making explicit the procedures, criteria, instruments, or how these stages should be articulated in school practice. This absence of operational guidance compromises the effectiveness of the Case Study as a device for supporting accommodations, since the mere normative definition of the stages does not, in itself, ensure either the quality or the effectiveness of the process. In this regard, Bray and Russell (2018), in analyzing the implementation of individualized education plans in inclusive contexts, demonstrate that formal instruments can take on a predominantly bureaucratic character when not accompanied by methodological guidelines capable of guiding their operationalization in everyday school life.

For the Case Study to fulfill its purpose of grounding the definition of supports, resources, and accessibility strategies, it must be organized as a technical, systematic, interdisciplinary, and contextualized process. This process should be guided by a functional analysis of the student's participation in the different spaces, activities, and demands of everyday school life. From this perspective, the Case Study should be understood as a continuous process of investigation, analysis, and pedagogical decision-making, anchored in the concrete reality of the school and in the specific demands of each student.

In the absence of this methodological systematization, there is a risk of the Case Study being reduced to a bureaucratic procedure aimed only at formally complying with a legal requirement. Sierra-Martínez et al. (2025) show that inclusive policies frequently coexist with school practices marked by conceptual ambiguities and operational implementation difficulties, producing gaps between normative discourses and the everyday practice of inclusion. When this occurs, the document tends to become detached from pedagogical practice and to lose its capacity to produce real effects in identifying and eliminating barriers to student participation. Thus, the Case Study comes to exist in a way disconnected from classroom dynamics, social interactions, curricular demands, and the institutional conditions of the school, undermining the very objective of the Decree: promoting accessibility and equity in the school context.

In addition, contemporary approaches from Implementation Science emphasize the need for clear operational structures, with the definition of essential components, monitoring mechanisms, and contextual adaptation strategies, in order to ensure the effectiveness of complex interventions in educational systems (Fixsen et al., 2005). These frameworks help broaden the understanding of the Case Study proposed in this study, situating it not merely as a normative instrument, but as a device dependent on implementation conditions for its realization in everyday school life.

In view of this scenario, we propose the construction of a methodological pathway for the Case Study that seeks to bridge the gap between the legal text of Decreto No. 12.686/2025 and its practical application in everyday school life. Such a pathway aims to offer technical, well-grounded guidelines that guide the reading and understanding of the demands presented, the analysis of barriers, the identification of the student's strengths, and the definition of accessibility strategies in a coherent, articulated manner aligned with pedagogical reality, reaffirming the Case Study as a central instrument for qualifying

inclusive practices, and not as a mere administrative artifact.

Accordingly, the analysis shows that, for the stages provided for in the Decree to become effectively operational, it is necessary to consider other equally fundamental stages for carrying out a technically consistent and pedagogically effective case study. These complementary stages are presented and detailed below.

Practical proposal for implementing the case study in the context of accommodations

Definition of those responsible for constructing the Case Study

The construction of the Case Study should be understood as a collective, interdisciplinary, and institutional process, not restricted to a single professional or field of knowledge. Considering that its objective is to ground the definition of accommodations based on the analysis of barriers and of the student's conditions of participation, the Case Study requires the shared responsibility of the different actors involved in the teaching and learning process.

In this way, the AEE teacher is responsible for coordinating the process of constructing the Case Study, with the participation and collaboration of the school's management and pedagogical team. This coordination involves organizing the workflow of the Case Study, convening the professionals involved, systematizing the information produced, and monitoring the decisions arising from the process, ensuring their consistency with institutional and legal guidelines.

The management and pedagogical team supports the coordination of the Case Study, ensuring the organization of the process, the availability of time for its completion, and its articulation with the school's pedagogical project, in addition to monitoring and recording the determinations defined throughout the process.

The classroom teachers contribute by describing pedagogical practices, curricular requirements, strategies already used, and the strengths and difficulties observed in everyday classroom life, providing essential elements for the analysis of pedagogical, organizational, and attitudinal barriers.

Specialized professionals, internal and/or external to the school, such as occupational therapists, psychologists, speech-language therapists, educational psychologists, and other members of the multi-professional team, collaborate through a technical reading of the student's functioning in the school context, contributing to the identification of barriers, strengths, and support needs from a functional, contextualized, and non-clinical perspective. The international literature corroborates this view, shifting the focus away from models centered exclusively on clinical diagnosis (Buntinx & Schalock, 2010).

The family participates as a source of relevant information about the student's trajectory, their everyday strategies, and their needs, contributing to a broader understanding of the case, without being assigned technical responsibility for defining the accommodations.

The student, whenever possible, should be included in the process through qualified and accessible listening, being recognized as an active subject in constructing the strategies that affect their participation, learning, and retention in school.

The image below presents the main actors responsible for constructing the case study, highlighting its multidisciplinary nature. As described above, this process involves the student and their family, the management and pedagogical team, the classroom teacher, the AEE teacher (as coordinator), and the specialized professionals. The articulation among these actors ensures a contextualized analysis, guiding pedagogical decisions and the definition of supports and accessibility strategies.

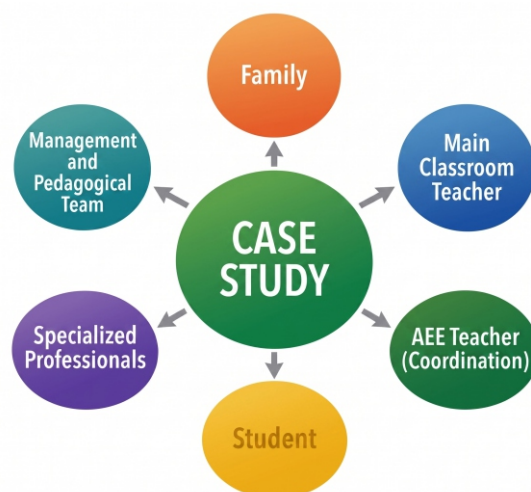


Image 1

Participants in the construction of the Case Study

The use of standardized assessment instruments in the Case Study

Standardized assessment instruments can make an important contribution to the Case Study, provided they are understood as support tools and not as the purpose of the process. Their role is to qualify the understanding of the student's functioning at school, helping to identify barriers, support needs, and the most appropriate strategies.

These instruments should not be used in an isolated or decontextualized manner, and their results need to be analyzed together with observations of everyday school life, as well as teachers' accounts, listening to the student and the family, and the analysis of pedagogical practices and dialogue with external specialists who follow the student. Attention must be paid to this, because, when read out of context, these instruments tend to reinforce a deficit-centered view that is of little use for pedagogical decision-making. This understanding is already well discussed internationally, as shown by the studies of Hallinger & Heck (2011) and Slee (2018).

It is essential to emphasize that the use of standardized instruments is not intended to classify the student or confirm diagnoses, but to broaden the reading of how the student responds to school demands and under which conditions they show better performance and participation.

When used critically and in articulation with the Case Study, standardized assessment instruments strengthen the technical character of the process and contribute to the construction of more precise, contextualized, and quantifiable accommodations, aligned with the student's real needs and the school's concrete possibilities. These include structured classroom observation guides, functional checklists based on the ICF, systematic pedagogical records, school participation scales, and interdisciplinary monitoring protocols. These instruments should be used in an integrated manner with everyday observations, listening to the student and the family, and dialogue among the professionals involved, avoiding their isolated or merely classificatory use.

The need to construct a form for recording the Case Study

So that the Case Study is not restricted to isolated discussions or fragmented records, it becomes essential to construct a specific form for recording it. This instrument serves to organize the information produced throughout the different stages of the Case Study, ensuring systematization, continuity, and transparency of the process.

The use of a form helps the Case Study to be conducted in a more objective and consistent manner, preventing decisions about accommodations from being based only on isolated perceptions or informal records. In addition, the form facilitates the articulation among the professionals involved by bringing together, in a single document, the information coming from the school, the family, the multidisciplinary team, and the student themselves.

This record also makes it possible to follow the student's trajectory over time, facilitating the review of the strategies adopted, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the accommodations implemented, and adjustments whenever necessary. In this way, the form ceases to be merely an administrative document and comes to function as a technical instrument to support decision-making.

Once those responsible for constructing the Case Study have been defined and the form of recording has been established, it becomes necessary to turn attention to the development of each of the stages proposed in Decreto 12.686/2025.

The stages of the Case Study provided for in Decreto No. 12.686/25 are described below, with the aim of translating them into the everyday reality of the school. As stated earlier, the legal text presents the stages in general terms, without detailing how they are operationalized on a day-to-day basis; thus, this section seeks to offer a practical path for their implementation, respecting institutional conditions, school schedules, and the dynamics of pedagogical work.

To illustrate each stage that will be described, we will use the case of João, aged 8, a student in the 3rd year of Elementary School. João has difficulties with writing, including the organization of sentences, the formation of words, and the legibility of his handwriting, which affects his participation in classroom activities.

Stage I – Initial identification of individual demands and barriers

This stage corresponds to the moment the case enters the school system, and its objective is to identify the educational demands and the barriers present in this context. It is the initial moment of analysis, in which the school recognizes the situations that prevent the student's full participation in the school context. This identification stems from direct observation of everyday life and not from the search for diagnostic or clinical explanations.

Educational demands refer to situations in which the student encounters obstacles to accessing the curriculum, participating in activities, organizing themselves within routines, interacting with peers and adults, or exercising their autonomy in the school environment. These demands usually appear in concrete situations, such as difficulties in following collective explanations, understanding instructions, engaging in group activities, taking assessments, or dealing with changes in routine. The focus, at this stage, is to describe clearly what happens, in which situations, and with what impacts on the student's everyday life at school.

In parallel, the barriers that interfere with the student's participation are identified. These barriers may be related to pedagogical practices, such as inflexible methodologies, a fast pace of lessons, or static forms of assessment; to the physical environment, such as excessive stimuli, the organization of space, or the use of inadequate materials; to the organization of the school, including routines, rules, and the distribution of supports; or even to attitudinal barriers, present in the expectations, attitudes, and forms of interaction of the school team. Identifying barriers means shifting the focus from the student to the context, recognizing that the environment can limit or favor their participation.

In practice, this stage can be carried out by listening to and recording the observations made by teachers, pedagogical coordination, and other professionals involved with the student. It is important to observe the student in the different learning spaces, such as the classroom, recess, guided activities, assessment situations, and movements around the school.

The records of this stage should prioritize objective and contextualized descriptions, avoiding interpretations based solely on diagnosis or on assumptions about the student. At the end of this stage, the school comes to have an initial overview of the educational demands and the barriers present in everyday life, which will serve as the basis for the subsequent stages of the Case Study. In this way, the identification of demands and barriers ceases to be a list of difficulties and becomes a starting point for constructing strategies that are more appropriate and coherent with the school reality.

At this stage, João's difficulties were observed by the teacher during the first activities of the year. The school then sought to obtain more information about João and, to this end, talked with the family. João's parents reported that the student shows interest in games and stories but avoids tasks involving writing, showing frustration and low self-esteem. The AEE teacher, together with the classroom teacher, observed João more systematically and identified that the student participates well in collective and oral activities but takes a long time to begin writing activities, requiring frequent assistance and tending to copy from classmates.

Stage II – Analysis of barriers and the school context

The second stage of the Case Study consists of analyzing the barriers and the school context. After the initial identification of educational demands, this moment aims to deepen the understanding of how the school environment influences the student's participation, shifting the exclusive focus from individual characteristics to the conditions offered by the school environment.

This understanding relates directly to the biopsychosocial frameworks of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), incorporated by the Lei Brasileira de Inclusão (LBI) as a basis for understanding disability. From this perspective, the student's participation is not determined exclusively by individual characteristics, but by the dynamic interaction between functionality, contextual barriers, accessibility, and the supports available in the school environment. Thus, the analysis proposed in the Case Study seeks to operationalize these frameworks by considering not only the student's demands, but also the environmental and pedagogical factors that may limit or favor their participation and learning.

The analysis of the school context involves observing how the organization of the school, pedagogical practices, the physical environment, and the relationships established interfere with the student's access to activities and to the curriculum. This stage stems from the recognition that participation does not depend only on the student, but also on the way teaching is planned, on the expectations of the school team, and on the participation opportunities offered in everyday life.

In practice, this stage can be carried out through systematic observation of the student in different learning spaces and moments of the school routine, always considering what the environment requires and what it offers. It is important for the school team to observe, for example, how activities are presented, how time is organized, which resources are available, and how interactions occur inside and outside the classroom. The analysis should consider not only the moments in which difficulties arise, but also those in which the student participates with greater autonomy and engagement, identifying what in the context

favors this participation.

The records of this stage should highlight the relationship between the demands identified previously and the barriers present in the environment, avoiding explanations centered solely on the student or on diagnosis. At the end of the analysis of barriers and the school context, the school gains a clearer understanding what needs to be adjusted in the environment and in practices, creating a solid basis for defining strategies and resources in the subsequent stages of the Case Study.

At this stage, the pedagogical team continued the Case Study, directing attention to the identification of barriers and to understanding how the school context affected João's functionality. Pedagogical barriers were identified, characterized by the emphasis on copying from the board and the limited offer of oral tasks; instrumental barriers, related to the type of pencil used — which required strength and precision incompatible with the student's functional profile — and to the reduced size of the space allotted for writing; and, finally, attitudinal barriers, evidenced by the team's expectation that João keep up with the class's pace without the provision of accommodations.

Stage III – Identification of the student's strengths and support needs

The third stage of the Case Study corresponds to the identification of the student's strengths and support needs. After analyzing the barriers and the school context, the focus turns to a deeper understanding of how the student participates, what they are already able to do, and which accommodations will be necessary to expand their participation and learning.

Identifying strengths means recognizing the skills, interests, forms of communication, personal strategies, and modes of engagement that the student already displays in everyday school life. These strengths may appear in the way the student engages in certain activities, responds better to certain types of explanation, shows interest in specific content, or establishes relationships with peers and adults. This identification is essential to avoid a reading centered only on difficulties and to build interventions that start from what the student is already able to do.

In parallel, support needs are identified, understood as the situations in which the student needs mediation, adjustments, or additional resources to participate in school activities. These needs do not refer to incapacities, but to the conditions necessary for the student to be able to access the curriculum, organize themselves in tasks, understand instructions, interact socially, or remain engaged in the school routine. Support needs should be understood in relation to the barriers already identified, considering that many of them arise from the interaction between the student and the context.

In this direction, support needs cease to be interpreted as the exclusive consequence of a clinical diagnosis and come to be understood as the result of the interaction between the student and the conditions offered by the school context, a perspective consistent with the biopsychosocial model proposed by the ICF.

In practice, this stage can be carried out through observation of the student in varied situations, especially those in which they show greater engagement or better performance. The school team should observe which strategies facilitate participation, which types of mediation are effective, and at what moments the student needs more structured support. Listening to the student themselves, whenever possible, and to the family also contributes to understanding preferences, interests, and forms of support that already work in other contexts.

The records of this stage should articulate strengths and support needs, avoiding isolated lists of

of skills or difficulties. In the end, the school comes to have a more assertive and functional view of the student, recognizing their capacities and identifying the supports needed to expand their participation. This understanding is essential for the next stage, in which the strategies, accessibility resources, and supports to be implemented will be defined in a planned and contextualized manner.

At this stage, the team observed that João showed good oral comprehension, interest in shared reading, creativity in verbal productions, and ease in activities involving images, as well as good social interaction with classmates. Regarding support needs, the importance of mediation became evident both for initiating the writing tasks and for organizing and carrying them out. A meeting among the professionals involved was also indicated, with the aim of discussing and defining the necessary adaptations.

Stage IV – Definition of accessibility strategies and resources for eliminating barriers

The fourth and final stage of the Case Study corresponds to the definition of the accessibility strategies and resources needed to eliminate or reduce the barriers identified throughout the process. This is the moment when the analysis carried out in the previous stages is transformed into concrete actions aimed at expanding the student's participation, learning, and retention in the school context.

At this stage, the accessibility strategies and resources should be defined based on the articulation among the educational demands, the barriers present in the school context, the student's strengths, and the support needs. The objective is not to create a generic set of adaptations, but to plan individualized and contextualized responses that make sense for the reality of the school, the classroom, and, above all, the student.

Strategies may involve adjustments to pedagogical practices, such as diversifying the ways content is presented, making the time for carrying out activities more flexible, using different forms of recording and assessment, and organizing activities that favor the student's active participation. Accessibility resources, in turn, include materials, assistive technologies, visual resources, adaptations of teaching materials, and other tools that broaden access to the curriculum and to the proposed activities. Whenever necessary, human supports may also be defined, provided they are clearly linked to promoting the student's autonomy and participation.

In practice, this stage should be carried out collaboratively, involving teachers, pedagogical coordination, support professionals, and, when possible, the family and the student themselves. The school team should discuss which strategies have already been tested, which worked best, and which adjustments need to be made. It is important that each strategy defined be clearly related to the barrier it intends to eliminate or reduce, avoiding decisions based only on diagnosis or on ready-made models.

The records of this stage should make explicit the strategies and resources defined, as well as the criteria for their monitoring and review. Decisions should not be understood as definitive, but as part of a continuous process that can and should be adjusted according to the student's development and changes in the conditions of the school context. At the end of this stage, the Case Study fulfills its function of guiding more consistent inclusive practices, transforming the analysis of barriers into effective accessibility actions in everyday school life.

The proposal presented does not intend to rigidify the process, but to support school teams in organizing the Case Study as a technical, collaborative, and contextualized pathway. By implementing the stages provided for in Decreto 12.686/2025 in professional practice, the aim is to foster a more functional understanding of schooling, guiding the analysis of the student's demands, of the barriers present in the

context, and of the strategies needed to ensure their participation, learning, and retention in school.

In this way, the stages are presented as a flexible guide that can be adjusted according to the characteristics of each school and each student, without losing sight of the principles of accessibility, equity, and shared responsibility among the different professionals involved in the process.

As the last step in constructing the Case Study, the following accommodations were defined for João's teaching and learning process:

- adaptation of written activities, with a reduction in the amount of copying and the use of alternatives, such as oral and/or collective productions;
- use of low-complexity assistive technology resources (triangular pencil, enlarged writing lines, and visual supports);
- provision of visual models to support text production;
- mediation by the school support professional during writing activities;
- periodic monitoring of the student's progress, with continuous adjustments to the strategies according to the evolution and needs observed.

Although this is also not clear in the Decree, it is important that the Case Study be continuously monitored and reviewed, since the student's needs and the conditions of the school context change over time. It is a dynamic process that must be constantly revised based on observations of everyday school life, on dialogue among professionals, and on listening to the family and the student themselves. Without this monitoring, the Case Study runs the risk of being reduced to a merely formal document, detached from pedagogical practice. Ongoing review makes it possible to adjust strategies, reorganize supports, and ensure that the proposed actions remain meaningful, strengthening its role as an instrument for promoting learning, participation, and equity.

For the purpose of monitoring the effectiveness of the Case Study, we propose the use of monitoring indicators related to the student's participation in school activities, the level of access to the curriculum, the degree of functional autonomy, engagement in pedagogical tasks, and the reduction of the barriers identified in the school context. These indicators make it possible to verify, over time, the adequacy of the strategies and the need for adjustments to the accommodations defined.

The accommodations defined in the final stage of the Case Study should be recorded in the Plano Educacional Individualizado (PEI), making explicit the proposed strategies, defining the responsibilities of each professional involved, and establishing clear criteria for monitoring and evaluation. This record ensures the continuity of actions in everyday school life, favors alignment among the team, and enables systematic monitoring of the student's progress. In addition, the PEI comes to function as an instrument guiding pedagogical practice, allowing adjustments throughout the process and ensuring that interventions remain consistent with the student's needs and the demands of the school context.

The following image summarizes, in table form, the central elements of each stage of the Case Study, indicating what should be analyzed, the guiding questions, and their practical application in the school context.

Table 1*Summary Table – Stages of the Case Study in the School Context*

I – Identification of educational demands and barriers	Initial recognition of situations in which the student encounters the most difficulties in participating, learning, or organizing themselves in daily school life, as well as the barriers present in the environment.	• In what situations does the student experience the most difficulty participating? • What happens in the environment when this difficulty appears? • Do these difficulties occur constantly or in specific situations? • Are there moments when the student participates better?	Observe the student at different moments of the routine (classroom, recess, guided activities). Record what happens, in which situations, and with what impacts, avoiding labels or explanations based solely on the diagnosis.
II – Analysis of barriers and the school context	In-depth analysis of factors in the school environment that interfere with the student's participation, considering pedagogical practices, school organization, physical environment, and attitudes.	• What does this activity require of the student? • What resources are available? • Is there flexibility in how the task is performed? • Does the environment foster concentration and interaction? • Do the strategies used encompass different forms of participation?	Observe how activities are proposed, how time and resources are organized, and how interactions occur. Relate the observed difficulties to the conditions of the school context, not just to the student.
III – Identification of the student's potential and support demands	Recognition of the student's skills, interests, and forms of engagement, as well as the support required to expand their participation and learning.	• In which activities does the student participate with greater autonomy? • What seems to motivate them? • Which strategies facilitate their understanding and organization? • In which situations do they need more support? • What type of support makes a difference for participation?	Observe the student in different situations, especially those in which they show greater engagement. Record potentials and support demands in an integrated manner, considering what fosters or hinders their participation.
IV – Definition of strategies and accessibility resources for barrier removal	Planning of pedagogical strategies, accessibility resources, and supports, defined in an individualized and contextualized manner.	• Which barrier is this strategy intended to reduce? • In what way does it foster the student's participation? • Is this strategy feasible in daily classroom life? • Who will be responsible for its implementation and monitoring?	Define actions directly related to the identified barriers, prioritizing strategies that are feasible to implement. Record responsibilities, monitoring methods, and criteria for reviewing strategies.

Study limitations

The reflections developed in this study should be understood in light of the complexity that permeates the processes of implementing Inclusive Education in the different Brazilian educational contexts. The organization of educational supports, the construction of inclusive practices, and the operationalization of the Case Study are influenced by multiple institutional, political, territorial, and organizational factors, including regional inequalities, working conditions in schools, the availability of specialized human resources, training processes, and the different institutional capacities of education systems.

In addition, it is understood that the operationalization of the biopsychosocial frameworks of disability in everyday school life still constitutes a developing field, marked by challenges related to the articulation among educational regulations, accessibility, school participation, and the definition of support needs. In this sense, the categories presented in this manuscript should not be interpreted as prescriptive or universal models, but as organizing possibilities intended to support processes of pedagogical reflection and decision-making in a contextualized and collaborative manner.

Although this study presents a technical-operational proposal for conducting the Case Study in the school context, it is recognized that its practical application still requires processes of empirical validation. In this sense, future studies may develop field research, pilot studies, and implementation investigations in different education systems, in order to analyze the applicability, potential, and challenges of the proposal in everyday school life.

Another relevant consideration concerns the feasibility of implementing the Case Study, which may vary significantly among different education systems and educational contexts, depending on factors such as the availability of specialized human resources, the training of school teams, institutional organization, and the material conditions of schools. In this sense, the proposal should be understood as a flexible framework, amenable to adaptation to the different educational realities, without losing its structuring principles based on Inclusive Education and the biopsychosocial model of disability.

Final considerations

The provisions introduced by Decreto No. 12.686/2025 represent an unquestionable advance in the field of educational public policies aimed at inclusion. By establishing the Case Study as a structuring axis for defining accessibility strategies, the decree overcomes generic approaches and reinforces the need for decisions grounded in the real functioning of each student in the school context. This movement contributes to strengthening practices that are more coherent, responsible, and aligned with the principles of school inclusion.

However, the effective reach of public policies is not achieved through normative formulation alone. For them to materialize in the everyday life of schools, it is essential that they be accompanied by technical implementation devices capable of guiding practice and reducing fragmented or bureaucratic interpretations. In this sense, the Case Study takes on a central role by offering a pathway that analyzes and organizes observation, reflection, and decision-making, transforming the law into concrete pedagogical action.

Understood in this way, the Case Study is not limited to an administrative procedure. It constitutes an ethical strategy, by shifting the focus from explanations centered exclusively on diagnosis to a contextualized reading of the student's participation, respecting their individuality. At the same time, it

constitutes a tool for qualifying practice, insofar as it promotes decisions based on technical criteria, reducing the use of standardized solutions that have little dialogue with the school reality.

In addition, the Case Study operates as a bridge between the norm and the school context, articulating the legal principles of inclusion with the real conditions of the school and the specific needs of each student. This articulation favors more consistent and sustainable practices, capable of ensuring not only access, but also participation, learning, and retention in the school environment.

From a normative standpoint, it becomes relevant to develop complementary documents that guide the application of the decree, such as technical guides, monitoring frameworks, and quality indicators for the Case Study. Such instruments can strengthen the implementation of the policy, support schools in operationalizing the proposed stages, and ensure greater coherence between normative intention and everyday practice. Thus, this study contributes to the field of Inclusive Education by proposing an analytical systematization of the Case Study grounded in the biopsychosocial frameworks of disability, broadening the debate on the operationalization of educational supports beyond exclusively diagnostic or normative approaches. In addition, the study helps to bring the frameworks of the LBI and the ICF closer to the educational analysis practices developed in the school context, offering theoretical and technical-operational contributions for future investigations and training processes related to the implementation of inclusive policy.

In this way, it is reaffirmed that Decreto No. 12.686 inaugurates an important milestone for school inclusion, whose potential expands as the Case Study is understood and used not as a formality or bureaucracy, but as a technical, ethical, and pedagogical device in the service of a truly inclusive education.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the analysis of the Decree was used in this study as an element of theoretical contextualization for constructing the proposal presented, and a comprehensive evaluation of educational policy in its entirety does not constitute the central objective of the manuscript.

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