

BOUND BROOK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bound Brook, New Jersey

A REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES



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Prepared By
Charles Bryant, Barbara Gemza and Patrick Keenoy
Educational Consultants

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Bryant Gemza Keenoy and Kozlik LLP

I. INTRODUCTION

Under the auspices of the Bound Brook School District, the firm of BGKK, LLP was commissioned to conduct a full review/evaluation of the district's special education and related services for the purpose of fulfilling its responsibility to implement the state and federal education acts, N.J.A.C. 6A: Chapter 14 and the Individuals with Educational Disabilities Act, respectively. Bryant, Gemza, Keenoy and Kozlik, LLP, set forth the following areas to be studied, evaluated and responded to through recommendations to the Bound Brook School District. The areas included:

- The determination of compliance with special education code mandates
- The process the Bound Brook School District utilizes for the referral, evaluation and eligibility of special education related services.
- The core values of the special education department which drive the decision-making process and procedures it implements to arrive at recommendations for students to receive special education and related services.
- Identify recommendations that can assist in enhancing existing special education programs and services in an effective and efficient manner including professional staff program development.

This review also compared prior results and progress towards previous recommendations. Additional data was gathered that will be provided in the form of recommendations to assist the Bound Brook School District staff to focus on the appropriate implementation of special education and related services.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this independent review of special education and related services is to provide the Bound Brook School District with an objective report that identifies areas of strength, needs and recommendations. This independent review conducted by BGKK, LLP allows for the system to be examined from the perspective of what is working well in the system; and, also speaks to areas that need to be strengthened. This review is focused on the specific domains of NJ Code compliance, referral process and patterns, special education eligibility, curriculum and program effectiveness, administrative structure, parent and staff satisfaction, related service recommendations, and staffing efficiency.

The review process was designed, through a multi-step approach, to assist the Bound Brook School District and its staff in having a guided and focused discussion that will enable effective short and long-range planning to occur, while recognizing and addressing issues such as:

- Identifying trends and patterns in referrals for special education and related services
- Identifying compliance issues in the development of Individual Education Plans
- Determining the effectiveness of current special education and related services interventions, including the I&RS process
- Staffing and resources that reflect student needs
- Creating a long-range plan that addresses the agreed upon needs of the students identified as eligible for special education and related services
- Determining a comprehensive approach to special education program development, best practices approach to the delivery of special education

services, and providing recommendations for focused professional staff development

This independent review process brings forth information that will enable the Bound Brook School District and school-based personnel to develop an action plan(s) that will lead to more effective approaches for serving the students identified and determined eligible for special education and related services. It is important to recognize that for the information contained in this report to be beneficial to the Bound Brook School District, the stakeholders must come together to discuss the findings and the recommendations. Through this deliberative process, short and long-range action plan(s) that will address the agreed upon issues may be developed.

III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

Sources of information for this report include:

- Comprehensive review of special education files
- Review of special education programs
- Observation of representative special Education programs
- Review of district classification percentage
- Completion of Staff Surveys for the following personnel
 - Administrators
 - General Education teachers
 - Special Education Teachers
 - Related Service Providers
 - Child Study Team
- Completion of Parent Survey
- Review of Special Education Processes and Implementation

IV. ABOUT the DISTRICT

Bound Brook is a Somerset County community with a population of nearly 11,000 with a median household income of approximately \$62,000. The 2012 census indicates that the population of Bound Brook is 48% Hispanic, 42% White, 5% Black and 2.5% Asian. There is a 5.6 percent poverty rate in the borough

The Bound Brook School District serves students in pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade. Students from South Bound Brook, New Jersey, attend the district's high school as part of a sending/receiving relationship with the South Bound Brook School District. Bound Brook Schools has also joined the Inter-district Public School Choice Program, which allows students from other area communities to attend the Bound Brook schools. That same year the high school started a biomedical program from Project Lead the Way in addition to the existing engineering academy program.

Elementary Schools

LaMonte School (Grades: special education pre-kindergarten, general and special education kindergarten, 168 students)

LaMonte School Annex (Grades: general education pre-kindergarten, first and second grades, 336 students)

Lafayette School (Grades: three, four and five, 392 students)

Middle School

Smalley School (grades six through eight 321 students)

High School

Bound Brook High School (grades nine through twelve, 1,697 students)

V. PRINCIPAL REVIEWERS

Charles Bryant has served as a Director of Special Services for twenty years in Glen Ridge, Livingston, and Princeton Regional School District. Over the past twelve years he has been an Interim Director in fourteen districts across Hunterdon, Somerset, Essex, Union, Morris and Bergen counties. He has provided services to suburban, urban and rural districts.

Barbara Gemza has over thirty years of public education experience as a speech therapist, special education teacher, administrator and consultant. She served as the Director of Special Services in Glen Ridge and Little Falls. Most recently, she served as the Interim Director in the Westwood School district. Her accomplishments in special education administration have been recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children.

Patrick Keenoy most recently served as the Assistant Superintendent of Schools and Director of Student Personnel Services in the Livingston Public Schools. His career spans thirty four years in the capacity of Director of Student Personnel Services, Supervisor of Special Education, Child Study Team member, and General Education Teacher. He most recently served as Interim Director of Special Services in Mountainside and currently serves as Interim Assistant Superintendent of the Morris Union Jointure Commission. He also sits on the National Board of Directors for the Council for Administrators in Special Education and has been recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children for his accomplishments in special education administration.

ASSOCIATE:

Candida Hengemuhle has more than 35 years of experience in Special Education and Counseling services. Prior to her recent retirement from Warren Township School as Director of Special Services, she held a central office position as the Director of Educational Services in Highland Park Public Schools. Ms. Hengemuhle also served in the capacity of School Psychologist in several school districts in New Jersey including Bridgewater, Livingston, Glen Ridge and Nutley Public Schools. Ms. Hengemuhle has effectively developed programs to meet the needs of students through a strong

collaborative approach, including a needs assessment and analysis of programs. She is vision-oriented while maintaining compliance and fiscal responsibility. In addition to oversight of Special Education, Related Services and Counseling Services, other responsibilities have included HIB and 504 Coordinator, Affirmative Action Officer, District Crisis Coordinator, professional development for staff, budget development, and oversight of relevant Federal and State reporting and grants. Ms. Hengemuhle has served a board member on the Somerset County Directors of Special Services and is a Board Trustee for the NJ Association of Pupil Service Administrators. Currently, Ms. Hengemuhle is a Consultant for NJ Association of Principal and Supervisors where she serves on NJ Leadership Academy Development Team, the Special Education Committee and conducts a variety of professional development workshops.

VI. DISTRICT SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Over the course of three days, Mrs. Candie Hengemuhle was in the district visiting the special education classes and interviewing the Director, Child Study Team Case Managers, and Principals. The Case Managers provided a tour of the building programs.

LaMonte and LaMonte Annex

The LaMonte School houses the Pre-K programs which includes: a Pre-K self-contained class in the mornings for three year olds; Pre-K self-contained class with Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) component for three and four year olds; four Pre-K Integrated classes for four year olds; and one K-1 ABA Self-contained class.

Twenty-seven special education students are enrolled in the LaMonte programs. Services are provided by three special education teachers, five classroom aides, six one-on-one aides, and district related services personnel.

The LaMonte Annex contains full day kindergarten and first grade programs in the mainstream. Five special education teachers provide In-class resource center instruction in the subject areas of Math, Science, and Social Studies; pull-out resource instruction in Language Arts is provided to all special-needs students for 90 minutes per day; and there is a Language Learning Disabilities self-contained class. Related Services are provided by district personnel. Thirty-one special education students are enrolled in the Annex classes.

Lafayette School

The Lafayette School has second and third grade programs. There are 54 special education students provided services by four and a half special education teachers, 5 instructional aides, 2 one-on-one aides, and a speech therapist.

As in the LaMonte Annex, students receive In-class resource center instruction in Math, Science and Social Studies; pull-out resource instruction in Language Arts.

Both the second and third grades have self-contained Language and Learning Disabilities classes available to students.

Smalley School

Fourth and fifth grades are housed at Smalley School. Due to overcrowding, the sixth grade is currently located in the Middle School. Smalley is undergoing construction to add 12 classrooms for next year.

As in the younger grades, in-class resource room instruction is provided in general education classes in the content areas of Science and Social Studies. All special education students receive pull-out instruction in Math and Language Arts.

A self-contained Language and Learning Disabilities class has third, fourth and fifth grade students. A self-contained Behavioral Disabilities class has fourth, fifth and sixth grade students. Lastly, the middle school seventh grade ABA self-contained class is currently in Smalley School.

Sixty-nine students are enrolled in the Smalley special education classes. Services are provided by 8.5 special education teachers, 4 classroom aides, three one-on-one assistants, a speech therapist and a behaviorist.

Community Middle School

The seventh and eighth graders attend the Middle School. All special needs students have available to them In-class support for Science and Social Studies and pull-out Resource Center instruction for Language Arts and Math utilizing the iReady curriculum. Additionally, special needs students attend a Study Skills class as taught by the special education teachers.

A Language and Learning self-contained class has sixth, seventh, and eighth grade special needs students. These students are integrated with their non-disabled peers for PE and lunch.

Bound Brook High School

The ninth through twelve grade special needs students have In-class Resource Center instruction available in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Pull-out Resource Center is available in the major required content areas including: English I-IV; Alg. I, Geometry, Alg. II; Bio 1, Chemistry, Physical Science, and Science Interactions; US History 1&2, and Modern World History.

A Learning and Language Departmentalized program is available for ninth and tenth grade students, followed by an elective in Life Skills/Transition.

A Behavior Disability self-contained class is comprised of ninth through twelve grade students. Counseling services are integrated into the classroom and provided on an individual basis.

Accolades

This year the district has added a Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction for Special Education. The supervisor will focus on the training of special education teachers and the quality of instruction to students.

The district-wide Pull-out Resource Center programs have adopted the iReady for Language Arts and Mathematics. The special education teachers are currently being trained.

All related services are now delivered on a “3:1 model”. Three direct services to students and one indirect consultation within the classroom. This assures that the students are receiving meaningful classroom benefit.

The Director requires the completion of a packet of data justifying and demonstrating the need for additional student support from an instructional aide. This information is reviewed by the IEP Team to determine inclusion within the student’s program. This model has effectively limited the expenditure of unnecessary resources on non-professional services.

All K-8 students participate in Mindfulness Sessions on a daily basis.

All students have access to a Chromebook during the school day.

The Director is now also responsible for the South Bound Brook special education students. This sharing of services allows greater access to each district's program options.

The department has remained flexible in requiring special education programs in the face of unanticipated student populations.

Teachers have common planning time and are to meet with co-teachers at the end of the school day after the students have been dismissed. This enhances effective In-class Resource Center Instruction.

Impressions and Recommendations:

- It is recommended the District consider creating a Special Services Support Position (Secretary/Translator) to build foundational support for these needs. Ideally, this individual would be bi-lingual and assist the Child Study Team with scheduling IEP meetings, communicating with non-English speaking families, file the necessary paperwork and maintain accurate and up-to-date Special Services files. In addition, the individual should be trained to function as a dedicated translator for Special Services and in the understanding of the content, terms and information that is communicated during IEP meetings, thus providing parents/guardians equitable and meaningful opportunity to be notified and participate in the process. The individual would assist in the scheduling of meetings and translating meeting notices to support the CST in gaining parent participation. This newly created position would also be responsible to organize the Special Services Student files, receive and file paperwork from CST in student files, and maintain consistent and accurate student records in the Department of Special Services

- Inherent barriers exist in effective and efficient communication between CST and non-English speaking parents/guardians impacting active participation in the Evaluation/IEP process. A few CST members are bi-lingual but cannot be expected to be at all IEP meetings or conferences with families. The district does have a staff member available to act as a translator during meetings, but she does not have training or background in CST evaluation and IEP development. This has the potential to inhibit parent involvement and their ability to understand the results of CST evaluations and special education programs. The CST's are responsible for all communication with parents/guardians and coordination of efforts to attempt to schedule/reschedule IEP meetings. This can be particularly difficult with non-English speaking families.
- Ongoing staff training in the co-teaching model should be systematically planned and implemented. Based on conversations with Director, Mr. Marc DeMarco, the department has begun to move to a co-teaching model and he is hoping to consult with NJ Coalition for Inclusive Education (NJCIE). The recommendation to move forward with this is supported through this audit to foster increased inclusive opportunities for students of varied levels and disabilities. The Supervisor of Special Education for Curriculum and Instruction should be actively involved in this endeavor and instrumental in providing ongoing professional development and consultation to foster a culture and climate that embraces a co-teaching in-class support and in-class resource model.
- CST would benefit from annual training on Legal Hot Topics in Special Education. In addition, it would be worthwhile to use "tablet-top" activities during CST department meetings for monthly training. LRP Publications offers an informative online resource that can be useful for this purpose (SpecialEdConnection.com).

- CST would benefit from IEP training that would also involve discussion around Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) decision-making and determination of removal from General Education. This training should be ongoing through a collaborative model to build a vision and understanding of programs Pre-K through 12th grade. Consistency with regard to program descriptions in IEP development, and a continuum of services is paramount to transition planning from level to level. It is suggested the CSTs proactively engage in ongoing planning with the Director of Special Services and Supervisor in order to project out programming options that would guide LRE decisions and options for maximum participation in general education with appropriate supports. Language in the IEP program, Related Services and Supplementary Aids and Services should reflect the actual services a student is receiving. There should be a common understanding and consistent language across all schools.
- Consideration should be given to creating a continuum of departmentalized programs at the secondary level whereby student in the LLD self-contained classes can be integrated with Resource Replacement classes for increased LRE opportunity as appropriate.
- There are several CST members who are new to the district. A CST Manual was recently revised. It should be reviewed and maintained to contain new information and requirements including a checklist of requirements, timelines, expectations and “what if” scenarios specific to Bound Brook Public Schools. It would be worthwhile to review the manual annually for updates and utilize this as a training tool with CST. It is helpful if the Manual is accessible electronically.

- It is recommended to provide multi-sensory reading for students at the High School level who would benefit from this targeted level of support, through such programs as the Wilson Reading System or Orton-Gillingham approach.
- It is recommended the district begin a long-term plan to implement a Community Based Instruction (CBI) program at the secondary level and include Structured Learning Experiences (SLE) at the High School level. Within this plan a timeline and necessary steps to expand services to include an 18-21 program for students eligible for a post – senior year program should be outlined. This will allow for students with more significant needs to remain in-district for a functional life skills and vocationally based program opportunities. The Boggs Center provides free training each year to help districts implement CBI. (<https://rwjms.rutgers.edu/boggscenter/training/CBI.html>).

Coupled with this recommendation would be enhancement of transition services and offering students coursework that would teach self-advocacy and understanding of transition-based decisions and related activities. The NJDOE website (<https://www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/transition/>) provides special education resources that can be utilized to begin your transition planning tasks. The district may want to consider within the scope of this plan creating a position or possibly job sharing with another school district or Educational Services Commission the position of a Transition Coordinator.

- Monthly collaborative “status” meetings with Director, Supervisor, Principal, CST and Guidance/School Counselor in each school is recommended effectively manage the ongoing need for communication and planning throughout the school year and proactively plan for your individual needs of students with disabilities and the programs and services to meet these needs. These meetings are best scheduled at the

beginning of the year, for the entire year, at a consistent time (one meeting per school building per month) so all participants block it out on their calendar September – June. This will foster an efficient and effective communication channel between Special Services, School Administrators, CST and Counselors.

- It is recommended Child Study Teams who work together (Elementary CST, Secondary CST) schedule common weekly planning time that can rotate between the schools to foster increased collaboration and scheduling related to common workflow responsibilities. This will also lead to effective planning of agenda items to be covered in monthly “status” meetings (recommended above) with Administrators.
- CST would benefit from minimally 2-3 meetings a year to discuss students who will transition from one school to another to plan appropriately well in advance of the next school year to reflect appropriate programming for the full year span of the IEP and assist in the transition of case management. CST may wish to develop a liaison relationship with the Somerset County Youth Services Commission, which offers varied support for families. The [Children’s Inter-agency Coordinating Council \(CIACC\)](#) of Somerset County has formed an Educational Partnership which meets several times through the year. It would be beneficial for representatives from the CST to become involved to better understand and coordinate services for families and students in need. The Somerset County Resource Directory is online and can provide staff with contact information for various Social Services and Agencies. The resource can be found at this [link](https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/human-services/youth-services/resource-directory-for-professionals). <https://www.co.somerset.nj.us/government/human-services/youth-services/resource-directory-for-professionals>

VII. DISTRICT COMPARISONS

When comparing school districts there are many factors to consider, size, location, state test scores, classification rates, etc. The Reviewers reviewed many of these factors in their analysis as well as comparing current data with that of the prior report. Bound Brook was compared in categories such as district spending and classification rate.

Six districts were found to be of similar size, (K-12 under 1800 students) and similar socioeconomic factors in the prior report. Manville was also compared as it is the only similar sized district in Somerset County. In comparing the six districts, Bound Brook Public Schools ranks second in overall cost per pupil. The highest cost per pupil in the group was Burlington City (\$28,168). The State average for K-12 districts of less than 1800 students is \$28,168. Bound Brook Public School's overall costs per pupil is \$17,217. Factors that contribute to this ranking include a student to classroom teacher ratio that ranks second (2nd) among similar districts (12.6) and a student to educational support staff (non-teaching staff members) ratio of 75.3 which ranks fourth (4th) in the group.

The district classification rate for special education is 15.83%, significantly below the statewide average 17.66%. This classification rate among the comparative schools demonstrates that Bound Brook ranks second (2nd) lowest.

According to US News and World Report, Bound Brook High School has a graduation rate of 81% which is well below the state median. Although the 62% rate of economically disadvantaged students plays a significant role in this number, it is still indicative of a need for stronger supports.

Impressions and Recommendations:

The low classification rate for special education students is significantly below the state average and has remained consistent over the past five years. The state average has grown by over two percent over the same period of time. When paired with a relatively low cost per pupil within the district this indicates that a solid foundation for educational spending but continues to raise questions as to the effectiveness of the

intervention and referral and special education identification processes. In light of the low incidence of child study team evaluations performed, the efficacy of the process comes into question.

VIII. SURVEYS

Surveys were developed and distributed to all staff and parents of special education students. The survey was confidential, and no names were attached to responses. Recipients were provided with a link to the survey that allowed only one set of responses. The parent surveys were offered in both English and Spanish. All responses were collected, sorted and analyzed. The results are presented by respondent category.

Parents

Thirty-two (32) parents submitted responses to the parent survey, twenty-two (22) in English and ten (10) in Spanish. This represents a significant drop off from the 2014 initial study where one hundred fifty-one (151) parents replied to the survey. Once again however a significant number of parents did not complete the seventeen (17) question survey. One respondent was the parent of a Preschool Disabled student and two respondents were families of students placed in specialized out of district programs. Three students represented were placed in self-contained special education programs within the district and two students received speech services only. The vast majority of students receive services in either resource center pull out, in-class support resource or a combination of the two.

Over sixty (60) percent of the parents responding to the survey reported that their child was referred to special education for difficulties with either reading or attention. Thirty-eight percent of respondents were unspecified as to the reason for their child's referral to special education.

Two thirds of the parents indicated that there were interventions performed prior to the referral of their child. One third of the parents responding indicated that there were interventions performed through intervention and referral service plans and one fifth indicated the interventions were performed through basic skills instruction and 504 plans. No behavior plans were indicated.

An impressive eighty-five (85) percent of the parents responding indicated that they felt they were an equal partner on the IEP team. Over ninety (90) percent felt that their

child was progressing steadily or better with special education services. Over eighty (80) percent felt that their child was receiving the interventions he/she requires.

Over eighty (80) percent of parents responding to the survey were either very satisfied or satisfied with their child's special education teacher(s), case managers and related service providers, a significant increase from the 2014 study. Fifteen (15) percent were dissatisfied with the special education leadership.

The survey also allowed for open responses to various questions, thus allowing respondents to express their answers in their own words. A few parents responding indicated that the strengths of the department included good teachers. Areas of improvement needed in the department centered mainly on increased communication and a faster process. When asked what improvements could be implemented, parents once again focused on communication and consistency of staff.

Staff

A total of one hundred eleven (111) staff members completed the Staff Survey, down slightly from 2014. Of those, forty-nine were identified as general education teachers, thirty-two as special education teachers, ten child study team members, twelve related service providers, five building administrators and three district level administrators. The staff evidenced a good level of experience with forty-two percent working in Bound Brook Schools for five years or more. This is indicative of an acceptable long term retention rate.

General Education Teachers

The responses by the general education teachers indicated that eighty percent had six college credits or less in the area of special education. This is a rather low percentage considering that most college and university programs today require at least six credits in special education courses to receive a degree in teaching. This percentage is also indicative of a probable need for professional development in this area.

The general education teachers responded that two thirds of them had referred a child to the Child Study Team. Sixty-two percent of the general education teachers responded that they referred at least one student per year, with twenty-eight percent referring two or more. These numbers are down from the prior study. The most common reason for student referral was identified as reading and math difficulties. Referrals for attentional difficulties have decreased markedly since the prior study. Although nearly two thirds of the general education teachers indicated that the district has written criteria for special education eligibility criteria, one third indicating they knew the criteria, none were able to correctly cite the criteria.

A series of questions were posed to the general education teachers regarding different eligibility criteria for speech and other related services as well. The general education teachers demonstrated no knowledge in this area. They were also questioned regarding mainstreaming determinations and the determination for the assignment of teacher assistants. Little knowledge of the criteria for mainstreaming students was demonstrated nor did they have any idea as to the criteria for assigning a teacher assistant/personal aide but indicated that teacher assistants assisted students to achieve academic success. The teachers also could not identify criteria for de-classifying a student. This lack of knowledge should be addressed through staff training. A better understanding of special education leads to increased student progress within the general education setting as well as more accurate referrals to the child study team.

Questions involving the understanding and developing of student IEPs indicated that eighty percent of the teachers felt they were not involved in the process of IEP development however sixty-six percent felt that the CST adequately explained the IEPs of their students. The teachers indicated that on average they attend IEP meetings two times per year. It is clear that the general education teachers require additional support from the child study team as well as additional training.

Responses to questions regarding interventions provided within the school indicated that ninety-three percent believed that interventions are attempted prior to a referral to special education and that the interventions were attempted for one to two months on average. The most popular intervention was alternate strategies for the teacher (96%) followed by modifications and accommodations for the student (89%). Basic Skills

instruction was indicated by fifty six percent of the teachers and reduced work load was indicated by seventy-eight percent of the general education teachers responding. The teachers also indicated that assessment data was important, reviewed and utilized. Sixty-three percent deemed it as somewhat important and thirty-seven percent as very important. These responses are very similar to the prior study.

Suggestions for improvement among the general education teachers centered mainly on the need for better guidelines and supports in their classrooms.

Special Education Teachers

Special education teachers answered many of the same questions as general education teachers however were re-directed away from questions that would not apply such as how often they refer a non-classified student to the child study team, and on to other questions such as their involvement in the IEP process, where as expected nearly one hundred percent stated they played an active role in IEP development for their students. Seventy-nine percent of the special education teachers responding indicated that they attended IEP meetings at least once or twice per month. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers however stated that the Child Study Team meets with them each year to discuss and explain the child's IEP

In the area of interventions prior to referral, fifty-nine on average for one to two months prior to referral. The most common intervention stated, surprisingly was basic skills instruction at eighty-one percent. Eighty-six percent of the special education teachers felt that assessment data was reviewed and utilized with forty-five percent stating that it had a direct correlation to eligibility and services.

On the open response section, special education teachers were asked questions involving the use of teacher assistants. The most common response involved instructional support for students followed closely by re-focusing students and controlling their behavior. These responses are very similar to those in the prior review.

When asked for suggestions for improving the department, most responses involved the need for professional development, additional resources and better communication.

The need for additional classroom materials and tools was cited as one area of significant need as was the need for more in class support options. Suggestions for improvement in the area of department leadership centered on better communication and knowledge of special education laws.

Child Study Team and Related Services Providers

Twenty-two staff members identified themselves as either Child Study team or Related Service providers, ten CST and twelve related service providers. Seven of the respondents have over five years in Bound Brook while fourteen have between one and three years in Bound Brook, representing a fairly large turnover rate in this area. Less than half of the respondents indicated that they had accrued fifteen or more college credits in the area of special education. CST and related service certifications do not require special education courses or experience however additional training in this area certainly assists in understanding and planning for programming. Seventeen of the twenty-two respondents skipped the eligibility and mainstream questions. Of the five that responded all but one answer was vague and incomplete. A consistent criteria based on state and district guidelines is essential for proper classification, placement, and programming.

Questions were also posed as to the criteria for eligibility to receive related services such as speech, occupational therapy and physical therapy. On these questions four of the CST members felt that they knew the criteria however only one was correct. All related service providers skipped these questions. In 2014 most indicated that this was a moving target changing frequently. It appears that a lack of clarity remains in this area.

Mainstreaming is an important component of special education placement and was often mentioned on parent surveys. Of the twenty-two staff respondents, only one was able to identify even one component of the recommended criteria for mainstreaming special education students. Similarly, only two respondents were able to identify any of the reasons to assign a personal aide to a student or the high level of restriction this creates. One respondent cited a “justification packet” which does not appear to be utilized uniformly throughout the department.

The Child Study Team and Related Service Providers responded that the district provides intervention services of one to three months prior to Child Study Team referral. The CST members cited Basic Skills and alternate strategies as being employed one hundred percent of the time while the related service providers cited classroom modification as the number one strategy one hundred percent of the time with Basic skills cited by an additional eighty-five percent. It is certainly noteworthy that both subgroups place such emphasis on the Basic Skills option.

Suggestions for improvements the quality of special education programs centered on additional program options as well as professional development and communication. Related Service professionals also indicated a need for behavioral support options. Suggestions for improving the leadership of the department mainly involved the need for knowledge of the administrative code and better oversight of the department. Two staffing recommendations that arose were more secretarial support and the need for a supervisor of special education.

Administration

Eight administrators responded to the survey, five identified as building level administrators and three as district level administrators. One hundred percent of respondents indicated that the district provides interventions prior to Child Study Team referral in the forms of alternate teaching strategies and modifications. Half of the building level administrators and one third of the district level respondents indicated that Basic Skills was a primary intervention. One building level administrator indicated that a teacher assistant is utilized. The administrators felt very strongly that relevant assessment data had a direct correlation to special education eligibility.

Suggestions for improvement in the special education department included more co-teaching and training. Suggestions regarding leadership in the department indicated better communication and consistency.

Impressions and Recommendations:

A common theme surfacing in all surveys was the need for additional professional development and better communication. Few teachers, related service providers, or child study team members demonstrate adequate knowledge the areas of eligibility criteria or placement. These factors likely result in decisions being made without adequate data and is consistent with the prior study. State special education code needs to be distributed and reinforced and district procedures developed and utilized uniformly.

The most common area for child study team referral identified by both staff and parents was reading difficulties. This was a common area in the last audit and it is unknown if the district provided training for the general education and special education staff in additional techniques and strategies for teaching reading in the classroom. As students learning styles are better identified, general education teachers, with the support of the special education department, can reach more students within the general education classroom.

Communication was cited as an area in need of improvement, this is not uncommon. Both parents and staff indicated that communication was lacking between the department and both parents and staff. A clear message and consistent implementation can provide the knowledge and confidence needed for all to feel comfortable in the decision-making process.

The Intervention and Referral Services process appears to have improved the consistency of timelines since the prior study with all survey respondent indicating the one to two month intervention timeline. The heavy use of Basic Skills instruction as a primary intervention is somewhat concerning however and may be a product of insufficient knowledge of alternate teaching strategies. The need for additional professional development to provide more tools for classroom teachers is evident.

There is a strong desire for additional support and leadership within the department. As the field of special education continues to become increasingly litigious, a greater knowledge and support is needed in the area of special education code and

implementation. A consistent and accurate procedure for special education processes and implementation is essential.

IX. RECORD REVIEW

As reported to the New Jersey Department of Education, the most current data recorded states the total student enrollment of the Bound Brook Public School District as of the October 15, 2017 school year was 1,923 of which 251 were students with identified special education needs. The average classification rate for the State for 2017 was 17.39%. The district's classification rate is considerably lower than the state average at 13.05%.

A comprehensive audit of the special education department was completed in 2014 and an IEP review requested by the Director was completed in 2017. For the current assessment, a representative sample of special education files were reviewed. Hard copies of files and electronic files scrutinized.

During the 2014 audit, reviewers found that sampled files did not completely fulfill code specifications. Specific areas for concern during the 2014 audit included identification and referral, initial evaluation an/eligibility, IEP document, transition planning, goals and objectives, modifications and supplementary aids and services, rationale for removal from general education, special education determinations, graduation requirements, notice requirements and transfer student requirements. Similar issues were identified during the smaller 2017 IEP review. Progress toward addressing these areas has been limited.

Analysis of the current 2019 Record Review is as follows:

Identification and Referral

New Jersey Special Education Code requires procedures to be in place for the identification and referral of students. The procedures include, but are not limited to, dating referral letters upon receipt of the letter, holding a meeting within 20 days of receipt of the referral letter and documenting interventions attempted in the general education setting.

Reviewers found that many of the sampled files did not fulfill code specifications. Specific areas of noncompliance with code mandates include:

- Required Access Log form was missing in almost all records reviewed
- Referral letters not dated and stamped or missing entirely
- Limited or no documentation of interventions attempted in general education
- Written notice was not provided within 15 calendar days of identification meeting
- IEPs not implemented within 30 days of enrollment of transfer students
- Mandatory reevaluation of students aging out of preschool at age 5 not completed

The district files illustrate noncompliance with basic procedural requirements. Focused training needs to be completed regarding the IEP processes of referral, consent and written notice. Basic file maintenance is lacking in both hard copy files and electronic files. This is a critical area and should be addressed immediately.

Initial Evaluation & Eligibility

Procedures for conducting evaluations and determining eligibility are specified in N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4 and 3.5. Procedures to address the identified issues below need to be adopted.

The following were often found as problems in the records reviewed:

- Evaluations must include at least two assessments but many files lack evidence
- Initial evaluations not always conducted and completed within 90 days (i.e. student referred Jan. 19 but not eligible until May 10)
- Documentation of evaluation reports sent to parents 10 days prior to the meeting not in files
- Eligibility statements, if in the IEP, tended to be generic, did not describe the student's weakness or used code definitions
- Protocols missing from files
- Documentation of the requirement for sending reports to parents 10 days prior to meeting was missing

- Required paperwork missing from files and Document Repository
- Ensuring that all required team members (social worker, psychologist, LD, parent and general education teacher) attend the initial identification meeting
 - Members of the initial planning meeting are difficult to determine

Evaluation reports must be sent to the parents 10 days prior to the IEP meeting to determine eligibility. Of the files reviewed, many did not contain documentation that the records were sent per code mandates. This is an area that can be corrected easily through comprehensive professional development targeting code requirements as they pertain to the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Special education eligibility requires the collection of data from evaluation reports and other forms of information in order to make a determination that the student requires special education and related services. The IEP team that consists of the student's parents and qualified professionals must develop written documentation of their determination of the presence of a disabling condition and eligibility for special education. The documentation must contain statements explaining the group's findings and how the disability affects the student's progress in the general education curriculum. This must be memorialized at the eligibility meeting and written into the IEP document. Concise descriptive statements regarding student eligibility was lacking. Case managers tended to use the code classification definition rather than a preferred descriptive statement.

Questions come to light regarding how the district interprets and determines eligibility under numerous classification categories as specified in NJAC 6A:14-3.5. Classification of students as Communication Impaired (CI) is an area of concern. It is quite possible that several students classified as CI may truly be students who need English as a Second Language (ESL) services and not special education. The classification category of Communication Impaired requires a functional assessment of language and performance below the 10th percentile on two standardized language tests but documentation of the functional assessment was not in the files. The criteria for eligibility under the classification category of Specific Learning Disabled (SLD) needs to be reviewed with child study team members. A distinct and flawed pattern is quite evident regarding how this classification is determined. It appears that the criteria for

determining SLD in the district is inconsistent with a form found that indicated the discrepancy was 21% but in subsequent IEPs the discrepancy was anywhere from 12.8% to 15%. The process for determining how a child may be determined eligible under the category of Specific Learning Disability (SLD) needs to be examined and then applied consistently throughout the district. Code allows districts to utilize a response to scientifically based interventions methodology as described in N.J.A.C. 6A14-3.4(h)6 or a severe discrepancy formula that utilizes a statistical formula and criteria for having a severe discrepancy. Per code, the term severe discrepancy does not apply to students who have learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, general cognitive deficits, emotional disturbance or environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

It is apparent that child study team members are not aware of code requirements and procedures for eligibility. Every child study team member should be required to attend training pertaining to the requirements for classification under each eligibility category.

Individual Education Plans

The district utilizes a computerized program, IEP Direct/Frontline, to maintain files on classified students. IEP Direct is a viable computerized IEP system that facilitates IEP compliance but does not guarantee quality as the system is only as good as the information entered. The district has begun to use the Document Repository in IEP Direct but needs a consistent procedure so that all files contain the mandated information. Comprehensive training on utilizing the computerized system is needed. The system allows IEPs and other records to be readily available to supervisory staff, so it is very possible for administrators to monitor IEPs either on a random or selected basis.

The district hard copy files are very disorganized making it very difficult for reviewers to determine timelines and procedural compliance. It is the reviewers understanding that case managers file their own records. The reviewers found that current IEPs were not filed, files contained duplicate meeting notices weeks/months apart with no explanation and missing letters and correspondence.

Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance:

Although the district IEPs contained the required New Jersey components because of the computerized system, the IEPs continue to lack the personalization required. This was especially obvious in the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP). The purpose of this section of the IEP is to describe the disability related problems that interfere with the student's education so that annual goals can be developed to address the documented areas of need. A well written PLAAFP creates a baseline for developing future programming and measuring progress.

The first section of the PLAAFP, relevant data, requires the district to consider the results of the initial or most recent evaluation and, as appropriate, consider the student's performance on any general Statewide or districtwide assessment [N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(c)3]. The IEP should list the sources of information including evaluation data, teacher reports, classroom observations, interests and preferences of the student and parental input used to develop the IEP.

The PLAAFP should be well written and meet the stranger test in that a stranger should be able to read the document and understand the child's learning issues and what is proposed to address them. This was not apparent with the IEPs reviewed. The IEPs reviewed did not demonstrate completion of all the fields provided by the IEP Direct platform. Completing all the areas in the IEP is necessary in order to develop a defensible IEP. It is very evident that the district needs extensive training on how to write a clear descriptive PLAAFP statement and how to use IEP Direct.

Procedures to address the identified issues below need to be adopted:

- PLAAFPs must include summaries of the initial or most recent evaluation reports. Several IEPs merely listed the evaluations completed.
- Statewide/Districtwide Assessment results were blank
- Standardized test results need to be memorialized within the IEP. In the IEPs reviewed, this section was blank or "considered but not applicable"

- Strengths of Student and Concerns of Parents were poorly written or stated none
- Eligibility statements are a major part of the IEP. The majority of IEPs contained poorly written eligibility statements, do not delineate areas of weakness, or merely quoted code with no individualization.
- Additional issues with eligibility statements include:
 - Not differentiating areas of delay for preschool students
 - Not providing specific area(s) of discrepancy for students classified as SLD
- Summaries of the student's educational progress with benchmarks in each subject area should be described in full in this section. Data needs to be included to explain statements and describe how the student's progress compares to the average student
- A statement of how the disability affects involvement and progress in the general education curriculum was poorly written
- There was no mention of the required hearing and vision screening in IEPs reviewed

Improving IEP quality is a never-ending practice for school districts. Professional development for both Child Study Team members and teachers needs to be ongoing. Suggestions for the district to consider to improve the Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance include:

- Considering whether the data requires interpretation when describing the student's present levels
- Using quantifiable statements instead of qualitative statements for each subject area
- Making sure that all areas of disability related performance deficits are described in terms of specific, observable and measurable behaviors
- Remembering that the PLAAFP provides the baseline that determines the goals to be developed and the short-term benchmarks

The district may also consider adopting the use of specific headings under the PLAAFP section to provide the staff with topics that must be addressed when entering pertinent

and required information. Sample headings could include: Explain at least 3 strengths/skills achieved; Areas in need of improvement and how they impact the student's ability to handle classroom requirements; Strategies or modifications you employ to help student achieve success (ex. Modify content/length of assignments, modify questions asked, provide word banks, allow for test corrections or provide specific hints regarding procedures); Describe the student –personality and behaviorally.

The following IEP components were also reviewed for compliance.

Statement of Transition Planning:

Transition is a formal process of long-range cooperative planning that will assist students with disabilities to successfully move from school into the adult world. High quality transition planning and services will enable students with disabilities to pursue their desired postsecondary goals.

Transition planning is required beginning at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team). The IEP must include a statement of the student's needs that focus on the student's course of study. The IEP team must determine what instruction and educational experiences will help the student prepare for the transition from school to adult life. For example, if a student's transition goal is to secure a job, a transition service need might be enrolling in a career development class to explore career options and specific jobs related to that career. A statement of transition service needs should relate directly to the student's goals after high school and show how planned activities are linked to these goals. Transition planning continues to be addressed in the student's IEP each year until graduation or exit from high school.

Of the IEPs reviewed, the following areas need to be addressed:

- Agency invitation not in file
- Minimal statements of student strengths interests and preference, courses of study, related strategies, consultation and school liaison, statement of interagency linkages
- Vague boilerplate statements

- Student turning 14 during IEP must have statement of transition planning

Behavioral Intervention Plan

A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) is required under IDEA to ensure that challenging behaviors are addressed through positive behavioral interventions. A Behavior Intervention Plan is a document that describes just how the IEP team will help the child improve his or her behavior. If a child's behavior disrupts the classroom and significantly interrupts his or her education, then a BIP is very much in order.

Very few of the IEPs for students having documented behavioral issues have Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs). This could be easily “flagged” by requiring staff to consider a BIP for all students identified as having a disability.

Of the records reviewed:

- Behavior plans were not included even though social, emotional, and behavioral needs were indicated

Instructional Goals and Objectives/Benchmarks

Goals and objectives provide the focus for development of the child’s program and provide a means to measure annual progress. A well written goal should allow a person unfamiliar with the IEP to implement the goal. Academic goals need to be based on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Preschool academic goals should be tied to the Preschool Teaching & Learning Standards. All of the IEPs reviewed contained goals and objectives but they were not easily measured. This is most likely a result of using the computerized IEP program’s bank of goals and objectives instead of writing student specific measurable goals and entering them into the computer program for future use.

The following areas should be addressed when writing goals and objectives:

- Goals do not relate to the PLAAFP – this is a continuing problem and noted in the 2014 audit and 2017 IEP review

- Goals are not measurable and not individualized per the student's needs
- Goals were missing for individual subject areas
 - Science and social studies goals were missing
- Most of the objectives, criteria, evaluation procedures listed at 75-80% proficiency
- Goals do not match the eligibility statement

A few years ago, the New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Special Education clarified the requirements regarding the need for annual goals and objectives in IEPs for students with disabilities, particularly for those students being educated in general education programs. The clarification is as follows:

“The consideration of annual goals and objectives must be made on an individual student basis, according to the unique needs of a child. A decision regarding what is appropriate for an individual student cannot be predetermined or made solely based upon a student's placement. For each student with a disability, the student's IEP team must consider the need for goals and objectives that: (a) enable the student to be involved and progress in the general education curriculum; and (b) address other educational needs that result from the student's disability. See N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(e) 3.

While it is recognized that a student's disability may not impact learning in every subject area, the IEP for each student with a disability must include one or more goals and related objectives that are responsive to the considerations in (a) and/or (b) above. These factors must be considered regardless of placement. See 34 CFR §300.320(a) (2). The goal(s) and objectives should represent modified instructional content and/or address other skill areas, including but not limited to, social skills, communication skills, organizational skills, study skills, self-regulatory skills, transition related skills, etc. in response to the individual student's needs. At the next IEP meeting for each student with a disability in your district, the IEP team must review the IEP and ensure that one or more goals and related objectives are included in the IEP.”

Goals and objectives provide the focus for development of the child's program. They also provide a means to measure annual progress. A well written goal should allow a

person unfamiliar with the IEP to implement the IEP. Academic goals need to be based on the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and preschool academic goals should be tied to the Preschool Teaching & Learning Standards. All of the IEPs reviewed contained goals and objectives predominantly from the Frontline/IEP Direct goal bank. These goals are basic and not easily measured. IEP goals could be strengthened by writing student specific measurable goals and entering them into the computer program for future use. This will require intensive training for CST and staff on writing Smart goals. However, once written, the IEP would be highly defensible.

Modifications & Supplementary Aids and Services

Statements of program modification were completed in most of the Individual Education Plans, but many of the modifications listed were merely a laundry list of good teaching techniques. These do not need to be in an IEP. The review reveals that more modifications were listed in the IEPs than what teachers describe as being used in their classrooms.

Child Study Team members and staff must review individual modifications annually and remove those that are just “good teaching” and those that the student no longer requires.

Diana Browning Wright, *Teaching & Learning 2003*, writes:

“Special education must balance between 1) keeping the student with his peers with or without supports, and 2) providing specialized instruction, often requiring systematic re-teaching of previously inadequately learned basic skills. All educators struggle with the balance, with a very real danger inherent in a pendulum swinging too widely to either pole. For example, an over emphasis on accommodations might result in failure to systematically instruct in the basic skills that would lessen the very need for accommodations! An over emphasis on remediation and systematic basic skills instruction may result in less exposure to material others are learning if the remediation is occurring during the regular school day. This may therefore result in reducing the students’ exposure to the required curriculum that culminates in the high school exit exam. It also contributes to the students’ sense that their removal was due to a global inability

on their part. This reduces effort, and belief in ability to succeed, which reduces outcomes. Learning to read comes first; reading to learn comes second. The older the student, the more difficulty teachers experience in providing a balanced, effective educational approach". This article, "Hierarchical Differentiated Supports/Accommodations/Modifications" is included in its entirety in the Appendix.

Additional professional development would be helpful for staff to understand the difference between modifications and accommodations. Modifications are changes to *what* the child is taught or expected to do in school. Modifications are not the same as accommodations, which are changes to *how* the child learns.

The following information taken from a Q&A from the National Center on Educational Outcomes on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities is relevant:

1. When should accommodations be used?

Accommodations should be provided to ensure that an assessment measures the student's knowledge and skills rather than the student's disabilities. Most often, these accommodations are ones that are routinely provided during classroom instruction. Accommodations should not be introduced for the first time during an assessment. Decisions about assessment accommodations should be based on what students need in order to be provided with an equal opportunity to show what they know without impediment of their disabilities.

2. Who makes the decision?

Most decisions about who needs assessment accommodations should be made by people who know the educational needs of the student. Federal law now requires that this be the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. It is important, however, for a student's general education teachers to provide input to accommodations decisions – even if they are not members of the IEP team.

3. How fair is it to provide assessment accommodations to some students, but not others?

When answering this question, it is important to remember that the intent of providing accommodations is to "level the playing field" for students, ensuring that the test is measuring the student's skills, not just the effects of disability.

Some states have decided to extend availability of most accommodations to all students, not just those with disabilities. Variability in policies on assessment accommodations often is due, in part, to differences in definitions and test characteristics, as well as to variations in which accommodations are counted in accountability systems.

5. What is the difference between an accommodation and a modification?

An **accommodation** generally refers to a change in the way a test is administered, or a change in the testing environment, with the added characteristics that the construct measured does not change.

A **modification** generally refers to a change to the test that is thought to change the construct measured. It is important to remember that most states do not have empirical evidence about construct validity and accommodations, and that these distinctions are made by professional judgment, not empirical evidence.

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- A comprehensive compilation of research on accommodations is contained in [NCEO Online Accommodations Bibliography\(link is external\)](#).

Supports for School Personnel

Per N.J.A.C.6A:14-3.7(E) 4, the IEP needs to state the supports for school personnel that will be provided for the student. Supports may include, but are not limited to, training for school personnel, consultation, and access to research-based materials and resources. Typically, IEPs stated “consultation” or “none.”

Progress Reporting

The IEP must state how parents will be regularly informed of their student’s progress toward the annual goals. Descriptions of how progress is reported was compliant.

Rationale for Removal from General Education

Decisions regarding placement are based on the individual needs of students and must begin with consideration of the general education setting. The purpose of this section of the IEP is to document the discussions that have occurred with respect to accommodations, modifications, and supplementary aids and services in each academic or functional area that are necessary to educate the student in the general education setting. This section is only completed for those students who are not included in general education for more than 80% of the day. IEPs reviewed provided limited information in this section and used boilerplate language.

During the 2016-2017 school year, the Office of Special Education Programs presented, an LRE Training Module entitled, "Effective IEP Development LRE Decision Making Part 2: Practical Application." Per the training, if a student is not included in general education for more than 80% of the day, the IEP must include the Rationale for Removal from General Education for each content/subject area. Three questions must be answered for each student and one for students in separate settings. The questions are:

Question 1: Identify the supplementary aids and services that were considered to implement the student's annual goals. Explain why they are not appropriate to meet the student's needs in the general education class.

The training highlighted that common errors include:

- IEPs that frequently contain information that just answers one of the two parts
- The question is not individualized for each student. Stock statements cannot be used for students with similar needs.

Response considerations:

- Does the response include the specific supplementary aids and services that were considered
- Does the response include a reason why each was rejected - why the student would not be able to learn in the general education curriculum even with a specific supplementary aid or service;

- Does the response address each content area where removal from general education is being considered?

Question 2: Document the comparison of the benefits provided in the general education class and the special education class. Ensure that both settings and subjects are addressed in the response.

Per the training, common errors include:

- responses that only address one of the two settings
- responses include why a general education setting is not appropriate
- responses do not address all subject areas

Response considerations include:

- Create a chart that includes all subject areas for which the student will be removed from general education that provides information for benefits in both settings
- Ensure that both settings and all subject areas are addressed in the response

Question 3: Document the potentially beneficial or harmful effects which a placement in the general education class may have on a student with disabilities or other students in the class.

Per the training, common errors include:

- Stock language used for all students who are removed from general education for more than 80% of the day

Sample considerations:

- Limited variety of peers to interact with within the special class setting
- Inability to keep up with the pace of instruction in the general education biology class resulting in a widening of the achievement gap.

Extended School Year

An extended school year program is provided in accordance with the student's IEP when an interruption in educational programming causes the student's performance to revert to a lower level of functioning and recoupment cannot be expected in a reasonable length of time. [N.J.A.C. 6A:14-4.3(c)]. In considering whether a student's performance will revert to a lower level of functioning, data gathered from breaks in the provision of services should be considered.

In the IEPs reviewed, the following need to be addressed:

- Relevant factors in determining need for ESY were not described
- No description of extended school year program (subjects, start/end dates, frequency, and duration)
- Location not listed

Participation in district & state assessments

Decisions about participation in Statewide and district-wide assessments should be documented in the IEP. Additional training on accommodations on the NJ Student Learning Assessment, NJSLA_ELA/M (English language Arts and Literacy/Math) would be beneficial for child study team members. IEPs must document the need for accommodations and clearly specify what accommodations are needed for statewide/district testing.

The IEPs reviewed contained the necessary information.

Graduation Requirements

Beginning at age 14, the State and local graduation requirements that the student will be expected to meet must be identified and reviewed annually. If the student is exempted from meeting any of the graduation requirements that all students are expected to meet or if any of the requirements are modified, a rationale must be provided and alternate proficiencies the student is expected to achieve listed.

- The Summary of Performance is required to be completed during the year the student will graduate. The files reviewed did not contain the Summary of Performance.

Special Education, related services and supplementary aids

Every IEP needs to include a statement of the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services that will be provided for the student. Per NJ Code, these special education, related services and supplementary aids and services need to be based, to the extent practicable, on peer reviewed research. The IEP also needs to include a statement that specifies the projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications, and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications.

Supplementary aids and services were blank or contained information belonging in other parts of the IEP. For example, OT and Speech were listed as supplementary aids but should be in the related services section.

It was difficult to determine if any student has a personal aide or classroom aide. If students require an aide or paraprofessional the need for the aide must be documented as well as a written process to fade the aide as the child becomes more independent. These components (rationale, fading) should be documented in full in the IEP whenever an aide is required.

Notice Requirements

This section of the IEP describes the information required in each of the components of written notice for an IEP meeting. The written notice includes the IEP as a description of the proposed action and a description of the procedures and factors used in determining the proposed action. Per N.J.A.C 6A: 14-2.3(f) written notice is provided when the district proposes to initiate or change the identification, classification, evaluation, educational placement of the student or the provision of a free and appropriate public education to the student; or declines to initiate or change the

identification, classification, evaluation, educational placement of the student or the provision of a free and appropriate public education to the student.

The following need to be addressed:

- Boilerplate statements with no description of relevant factors
- Proposed actions accepted and rejected are not described

Reevaluation

Within three years of the previous classification, the district is required to complete a multi-disciplinary reevaluation to determine whether the student continues to be a student with a disability.

The following need to be addressed:

- Reevaluations are not consistently completed within 60 days
- Code requires by June 30 of a student's last year of eligibility for a program for preschoolers that a reevaluation be conducted. This was not documented.
- Documentation of reports being sent 10 days prior to the meeting is not in files
- Reevaluation planning documents are missing in files
- Meeting held but no supporting documentation is in file

Transfer Students:

- Required 30- day IEP missing
- Date issues (i.e.: student didn't register in district until 10/9 but was referred on 9/14; another registered Sept. 17 but no paperwork until April 5)

Files:

The hard copy files reviewed contained stacks of papers with little organization. Documents were misfiled, letters and correspondence were missing. It was impossible to determine if the IEP process was conducted within code timelines. Referral

information, mandatory notice, eligibility and evaluation reports were missing in many files and indicate a need for a complete system overhaul.

Although the district has the ability to use the Document Repository within the electronic data collection platform (IEP Direct), there is no consistency in the documents uploaded in the files reviewed. Some of the items missing in the Document Repository included: referral information, mandatory signature pages, required letters, eligibility, medical reports, evaluation reports, and correspondence. The district needs to develop procedures for all case managers to follow when uploading required documents and provide professional development on the intricacies of uploading file information.

Whether hard copy files or in electronic format, files should be meticulously maintained so that the special education process is clearly documented from referral through IEP development. This is especially critical to ensure that district IEPs are defensible.

Content of Special Education Files:

Since many students remain in special education programs for a number of school years, the special education file tends to become very large and may be contained in multiple volumes. Although it is up to the district to decide what record keeping system fulfills their particular needs, the following system will provide an efficient method to manage student records and aid in maintaining compliance. The recommendation is to create a process for maintaining special education and/or Section 504 records so that files are compliant and defensible. If the district chooses to use paper record files instead of a computerized system, each file should contain separate sections, each maintained in chronological order that include the following information:

1. Referral information:
 - a. Access log
 - b. Referral letter
 - c. Building level support team (I&RS) —early intervening documentation
 - d. Initial consent to evaluate/consent for reevaluation
 - e. Evaluation plans
 - f. Consent to evaluate

2. Evaluations/reports
 - a. Eligibility determination
3. Correspondence
 - a. Written notice
 - b. Meeting notices
4. IEPs
 - a. Consent for implementation of initial IEP
5. Protocols
6. Miscellaneous information (legal, medical, parental contact sheet, etc.).

Electronic IEP Data Management Program

The district uses IEP Direct/Frontline as their student information system. This New Jersey specific IEP program contains compliance validations that increase data accuracy by requiring the input of specific data allowing for the development of a more defensible IEP. IEP Direct is cloud based and has the capability for files to become “complete electronic files” by uploading all files, reports, letters, evaluations, etc. that pertain to a particular student.

Impressions and Recommendations:

The IEP Record Review completed by Bryant, Gemza, Keenoy and Kozlik consisted of the review of IEPs and records for students with disabilities to determine compliance and trends within the special education department. The fact that some areas reviewed have been flagged as areas of concern suggests a need for a comprehensive school district plan to provide training and monitoring around identified procedural issues, IEP development and implementation.

The Bound Brook School District is encouraged to develop a Special Education Programs and Procedures document that delineates pre-referral, referral, evaluation, eligibility determination, placement, and exiting procedures for students with disabilities. A particular area of focus should be developing procedures for proper file maintenance for both hard copy and electronic files.

Child Study Team members should receive comprehensive training on determining eligibility for special education and related services. The district should also develop procedures for determining a child eligible for services under the classification category of Specific Learning Disability (SLD). Per NJ code, a specific learning disability can be determined when a severe discrepancy is found between the student's current achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of the following areas: basic reading skills; reading comprehension; oral expression; listening comprehension; mathematical calculation; mathematical problem solving; written expression; and reading fluency. Classification under this category may be determined by utilizing a response to scientifically based interventions or by adopting procedures should the district decide to utilize a statistical formula and criteria for determining severe discrepancy. The method for determining specific learning disability should be consistent throughout the district.

A well-developed Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statement is the backbone of a defensible IEP. A PLAAFP is only complete when it describes both the academic achievement and functional performance of the student; it describes the student's disability related needs in an observable and measurable way; and describes how the disability affects the student's involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. The goal is to describe the disability related problems that interfere with the student's education so that annual goals can be developed. The district should think of creating a "baseline" for developing programming and measuring future progress. Teachers and Child Study Team members would benefit from comprehensive training on writing PLAAFP statements that accurately describe the student.

A well written IEP goal should allow a person unfamiliar with the IEP to implement the goal, implement the assessment of the student's progress toward the goal, and determine whether the student's progress was satisfactory (Mason City Community Sch. Dist., 46 IDELR 1 48 (SEA IA 2006). The ability to create individualized IEP goals should be encouraged as the existing goal bank may not address the unique needs of all students. The district software program, IEP Direct permits the use of customized goals. Professional development on writing measurable goals and objectives is imperative, avoiding the perceived "boiler plate" IEPs.

The Bound Brook School District has made some progress toward addressing special education mandates but would benefit from comprehensive professional development in all of the areas identified in this report.

X. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The Bound Brook School District should be congratulated for conducting a second audit five years after the first audit. This demonstrates a commitment on behalf of the district to develop best practices in special education. Throughout the process of the audit, Reviewers were impressed with the openness and dedication of the Bound Brook administrators and staff with whom they interacted.

The Reviewers completed school site visits and interviewed special education providers, administrators and staff. Staff, Administration, and parents were surveyed. The IEP Audit encompassed a broad range of questions not only about compliance but also about the quality of services provided to students with disabilities in Bound Brook. Additionally, the Reviewers reviewed special education programs, administrative structure, and procedures.

Following the last audit, the district created a CST Manual. The Reviewers recommend that the manual be reviewed and maintained so that consistent policies and procedures are followed. The Bound Brook School District should study this report as well as the confidential IEP data provided and take appropriate action to rectify non-compliance and/or IEP service delivery issues at the school and classroom levels. This may be in the form of providing professional development, leadership development, technical assistance, or closer monitoring.

As the field of special education continues to become increasingly litigious, a greater knowledge and support is needed in the area of special education code and implementation. A consistent and accurate procedure for special education processes and implementation is essential as non-compliance issues continue to exist in many of the IEPs reviewed. Remediation will require a period of intense monitoring by administrators to assure change. The district should develop a comprehensive school district plan to provide training and monitoring around identified procedural issues, IEP development and implementation. Professional development should be provided at all levels. Staff and parents need to understand the requirements of each section of the IEP and that the goal of special education is the student's independence and full participation in society.

As stated earlier, the Bound Brook School District has an abundance of teachers, administrators, and parents who are committed to having their community's children and youth succeed. They want the school district to be high performing and inclusive. Positive and sustained leadership; leading with passion for students and the community; continued hard work, resolve and dedication; high expectations for student achievement; a continued focus on improving student growth objectives and outcomes; and, a system of accountability with a monitoring component are required to assure success for the delivery of special education and related services.

XI. APPENDICES

- A. Mission of Bryant, Gemza, Keenoy & Kozlik, LLP
- B. Biographies
- C. Operational Performance Standards
- D. Preschool Referral Process
- E. Initial IEP Process Chart
- F. Reevaluation Process Chart
- G. Compliance Review Checklist
- H. ELLS and Special Education Q&A
- I. Parent Survey and Staff Survey

APPENDIX A - MISSION STATEMENT

Bryant, Gemza, Keenoy and Kozlik, LLP is the premier organization for alternative options for Student Services. In a field where there are only a few knowledgeable and experienced individuals, BGKK provides school districts with access to a group of professionals with over 100 years of experience in all aspects of student services. Our consultants are skilled administrators who are able to provide a full-scope of special education services to school districts. BGKK consists of former assistant superintendents and special education directors who understand special education and its impact upon school districts. Our consultants have first-hand experience balancing the needs of students, parents and teachers while maintaining compliance with the myriad of local, state and federal regulations.

APPENDIX B - BIOGRAPHIES

Charles Bryant served as Director of Special Services for twenty years in Glen Ridge Public Schools, Livingston Public Schools and retired from Princeton Regional School District. Over the past fifteen years he has been an Interim Director in seventeen districts across Hunterdon, Somerset, Essex, Union, Morris and Bergen counties. He has provided services to suburban, urban and rural districts. His tenure as an Interim has been as brief as a few months and as long as two years.

Mr. Bryant has been called upon to evaluate special services departments, recruit and mentor new directors, rehabilitate special services personnel who have not been functioning effectively. He has trained staff to be consistently compliant with State regulations. He has related successfully with the Department of Education in completing Corrective Action Plans for struggling districts.

As a Director, he has maintained a positive and productive relationship with parents and staff. He has consistently resolved conflicts within the districts where he has served. Mr. Bryant was educated at Queens College and St John's University. He holds a Master of Science and Professional Diploma in School Psychology. He provided psychological services to children and families within schools and the Staten Island Children's Community Mental Health Clinic. He was the 2002 precipitant of the NJAPSA Distinguished Director Award.

Barbara Gemza has more than 30 years of experience in special education as a speech therapist, special education teacher, administrator and consultant in Clifton, Totowa, Little Falls, Glen Ridge, Wyckoff and Westwood. She is the former Director of Student Services in Glen Ridge and Little Falls. As an educational consultant, Mrs. Gemza served as the Interim Director of Student Personnel Services in Wyckoff, Midland Park, and Westwood Regional School District. She also conducted speech compliance reviews for the Westwood school system.

Mrs. Gemza has been recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children for her accomplishments in Special Education Administration. She is a proven leader who is detail oriented, highly organized, and a problem-solver. During her tenure as Director

of Student Services, she determined pupil needs and applied current research to instruction while maintaining fiscal responsibility. Major duties and performance responsibilities have included evaluating existing programs and making recommendations for improvements, maintaining compliance with regulations regarding special education and school health programs, and facilitating liaison with community agencies and other resources to meet students' special needs. Additional areas of expertise include the development, submittal and administration of district grants and reports. She has served as District Test Coordinator K-12; Section 504 Coordinator, Basic Skills Coordinator, Gifted & Talented Program Coordinator and Supervisor of Nursing Services.

Mrs. Gemza served terms as President-Elect, Treasurer, and Secretary of the New Jersey Association of Pupil Service Administrators. She co-authored the Child Study team and Speech procedural manual utilized throughout the state and was a contributing member of the NJDOE Special Education Manual Committee. Mrs. Gemza has served as lecturer and mentor for new special education directors. She served as Vice-President of the Passaic County Association of Special Service Administrators and is a former member of New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, the Council for Exceptional Children and NJCASE. Mrs. Gemza received extensive training in Re-Directional Thinking and Brain Based Learning and is a trainer of Dimensions of Learning (ASCD). She is certified as a School Administrator, Principal, Supervisor, LDT-C, Speech Correctionist, Teacher of the Handicapped, and Teacher of Speech Arts and Dramatics.

Patrick Keenoy served as Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Director of Special Services, Supervisor of Special Services, Child Study Team member, and teacher over a thirty-four-year career in public education. Mr. Keenoy served the Livingston, East Brunswick, Orange, Roselle Park and Elizabeth Public School districts before his retirement. After his retirement, he served as Interim Assistant Superintendent of the Morris Union Jointure Commission and Interim Director of Special Education in the Mountainside and South Plainfield Public Schools. He sat on the National Board of Directors for the Council for Administrators in Special Education and has been recognized by the Council for Exceptional Children for his accomplishments in special education administration.

Mr. Keenoy has served in state level positions as vice president of the New Jersey Council for Administrators of Special Education and the former president, president-elect, and treasurer of the New Jersey Association of Pupil Service Administrators. He co-authored a parent guide to the special education process utilized in Union, Essex and Morris counties and participated on a committee that developed a Child Study team and Speech procedural manual utilized throughout the state. Mr. Keenoy is a member of New Jersey Association of Pupil Service Administrators, Council for Exceptional Children, Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development, American Association of School Administrators, New Jersey School Boards, National Association of Pupil Services Administrators, National Association for College Admission Counseling. Mr. Keenoy has performed program audits and recommended best practices in these areas.

Mr. Keenoy has supervised special education programs and services, guidance and counseling, speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, school nursing services and child study teams. He has written district code of conduct and written and revised board of education policies in these areas as well as attendance and discipline. Mr. Keenoy has also worked extensively in the area of grading and reporting. He has served on numerous state and national committees in the area of special education and intervention.

Associate:

Candida Hengemuhle has more than 35 years of experience in Special Education and Counseling services. Prior to her recent retirement from Warren Township School as Director of Special Services, she held a central office position as the Director of Educational Services in Highland Park Public Schools. Ms. Hengemuhle also served in the capacity of School Psychologist in several school districts in New Jersey including Bridgewater, Livingston, Glen Ridge and Nutley Public Schools. Ms. Hengemuhle has effectively developed programs to meet the needs of students through a strong collaborative approach, including a needs assessment and analysis of programs. She is vision-oriented while maintaining compliance and fiscal responsibility. In addition to oversight of Special Education, Related Services and Counseling Services, other responsibilities have included HIB and 504 Coordinator, Affirmative Action Officer,

District Crisis Coordinator, professional development for staff, budget development, and oversight of relevant Federal and State reporting and grants. Ms. Hengemuhle has served a board member on the Somerset County Directors of Special Services and is a Board Trustee for the NJ Association of Pupil Service Administrators. Currently, Ms. Hengemuhle is a Consultant for NJ Association of Principal and Supervisors where she serves on NJ Leadership Academy Development Team, the Special Education Committee and conducts a variety of professional development workshops.

APPENDIX C – OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Child Study Team Specialists and Speech and Language Specialists

Function	Operational Performance Standards
Identification & Referral	An Evaluation Meeting is convened within 20 calendar days of receipt of the written request for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education and related services.
Evaluation	After parental consent has been received, the evaluation, determination of eligibility for services, and, if eligible, development and implementation of the IEP is completed within 90 calendar days.
Written Reports	A written report of the results of each assessment is prepared either collaboratively by the evaluators or each evaluator may prepare an individually written report of the results of his/her assessments. Each report is dated and signed by the individual who conducted the assessment. The written report shall be consistent with the requirements enumerated in 6A:14-3(f)1-5.
	A copy of the evaluation report(s) and documentation and information that will be used for a determination of eligibility is given to the parent not less than 10 calendar days prior to the eligibility determination meeting.
Eligibility Determination	When an initial evaluation is completed, the Evaluation Team convenes a meeting to review and discuss assessment findings; determine whether the student is eligible for special education and related services; and, if eligible, a determination is made as to the disability category, whether or not the disability adversely affects the student's educational performance, and whether the student is in need of special education and related services.
Individualized Education Program	A meeting to develop the IEP is held within 30 calendar days of a determination that the student is eligible for special education and related services. The content of the IEP conforms to the requirements set forth in the NJAC 6A:14-3.7 (c) 1-14.
Placement Decision	Placement decisions are based on the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Decisions to place a student in a special class, separate school, or other removal from a regular class occurs only when the nature and severity of the educational disability is such that education in the student's regular class with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. Documentation of the decision-making process is required.

Related Services	Related services are delivered by appropriately certified and/or licensed professionals as specified in the student's IEP.
Annual Reviews	Annually, or more often if necessary, the IEP team meets to review and revise the IEP and determine placement.
Reevaluation	Triennial reevaluations are completed on or before the expiration date of the current classification.
Notification of Meetings	Parents are given written notice of a meeting early enough to ensure that they will have the opportunity to attend. Written notice is consistent with the requirements set-forth in 6A:14-2.3(i) 4 and 5
Notice of Meeting Outcomes	Parents are provided written notice no later than 15 calendar days after making a determination and/or 15 calendar days prior to the implementation of a proposed action. Written notice of meeting outcomes is consistent with 6A:14-2.3(e)1-7.
Parental Requests	Parental requests to initiate or change the referral, identification, classification, evaluation, educational placement or the provision of FAPE are responded to within 20 calendar days with written notice that meets the requirements of 6A:14-2.3(e)1-7.
Preventive and Support Services to Nondisabled Students	Intervention and/or pre-referral services are provided to nondisabled students.
Support for School Personnel	Child study team specialists provide services to the general education staff regarding techniques, materials, and programs for students experiencing difficulties in learning.
Case Management	Child study team members serve as the case manager for each student with a disability. Responsibilities include but are not limited to those enumerated in 6A:14-3.2 (b) (c).
Pre-Referral Intervention Services	Child study team members provide preventive and support services to nondisabled students.

APPENDIX D - PRESCHOOL REFERRAL PROCESS (Effective Nov. 2012)

TRANSITION PLANNING (district not a participant)

- Discussion begins at the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) meeting closest to the child's 2nd birthday

REFERRAL

- NJ Early Intervention Services (NJEIS) notifies District no fewer than 90 days prior to child's 3rd birthday
- District will receive notification form - this is the referral
- District must request Battelle test results from Early Intervention
 - With parental consent, district can accept Battelle results given within 6 months of preschool
 - BDI - DQ scores:
 - 33% = 70%
 - 25% = 79%

NOTIFICATION to DISTRICT

- Must occur for all potentially disabled children approaching age 3 unless parent "opts out" of the disclosure
 - Notification is limited to child's name, date of birth, and parent's name, address, and phone number.
- Transition Planning Conference and ID meeting may be combined

NJEIS DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY (more than 45 days but less than 90 days before 3rd birthday)

- NJEIS must notify the district as soon as child determined eligible except when family opts out
- If child referred to NJEIS less than 45 days prior to turning 3
 - no evaluation, assessment or IFSP required through early intervention
 - child referred to district
 - letter may be from parent or form letter from EI

TRANSITION PLANNING CONFERENCE

- NJEIS Service Coordinator invites participants and convenes meeting

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENTS (District)

- Timeline – evaluation, eligibility determination and IEP implementation must be completed no later than age 3

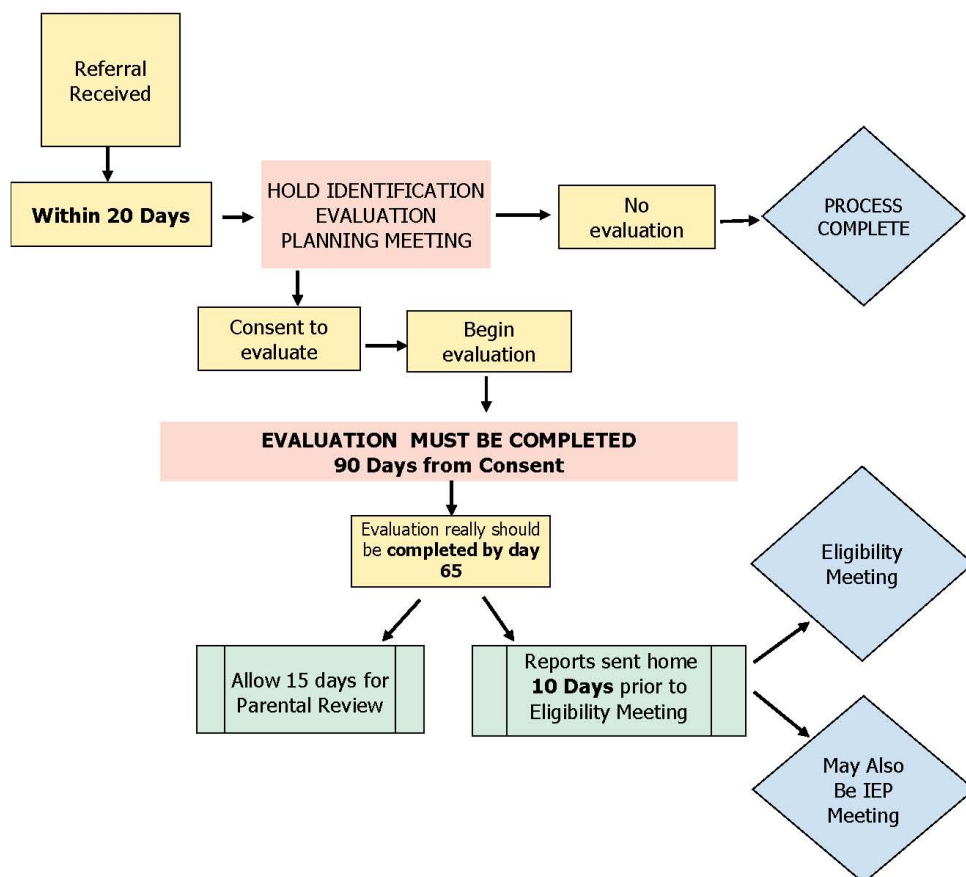
- Transition Activities
 - Conduct multidisciplinary assessment in all areas of disability
 - Complete functional assessment (home or early childhood setting)
- Team Members
 - At least 2 members of the child study team
 - Parent

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (District)

- Timeline – By third birthday
- Transition Activities
 - Review preschool day (templates on NJDOE early childhood site)
 - Registration
 - May ask parents to register but MUST go on with the process. The only thing that can be halted is implementation of the IEP
- Team Members
 - Case manager
 - At least 1 member of the child study team who can interpret instructional implications of evaluation results
 - Parent
 - General Education Teacher
 - Special Education Teacher
 - NJEIS Coordinator – if parent requests
 - EI does not support practitioners attending meetings

APPENDIX E – INITIAL IEP PROCESS CHART

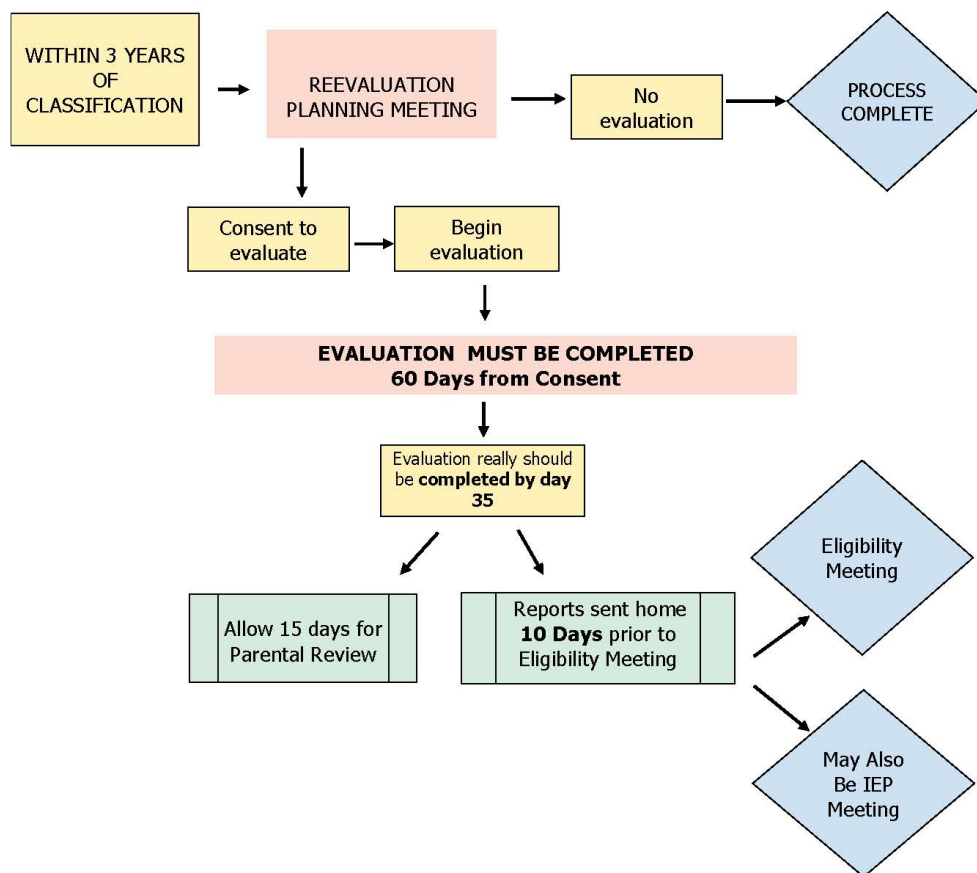
INITIAL IEP PROCESS TIMELINE



Bryant, Gemza, Keenoy Kozlik, LLP 2013

APPENDIX F – REEVALUATION PROCESS CHART

REEVALUATION TIMELINE



Bryant, Gemza, Keenoy Kozlik, LLP 2013

APPENDIX G – COMPLIANCE REVIEW CHECKLIST

INDICATORS	COMPLIANT	
	YES	NO
REFERRAL		
Referral letter dated and stamped		
Meeting held within 20 days of initial referral to determine if evaluating		
Documentation of interventions attempted in general education		
If evaluating, consent received from parents to evaluate		
INITIAL EVALUATION		
Includes at least two assessments		
Written Report prepared, dated and signed		
Completed within 90 days		
Reports sent to parent 10 days prior to IEP meetings		
If eligible, parent consents to initial IEP		
REEVALUATION		
Conducted when change of eligibility is considered		
Consent received from parents to waive evaluation OR		
Consent received from parents to conduct evaluation		
Written reports prepared, dated and signed		
Completed within 60 days		
Reports sent to parent 10 days prior to IEP meetings		
ANNUAL IEP		
IEP meeting held within 12 months of previous meeting		
Contains beginning and ending dates		
Placement is selected (including school attended)		
Procedural Safeguards		
Conference participants		
Parental consent (required for initial implementation only)		
IEP		
Meeting to develop IEP held within 30 calendar days of eligibility determination		
IEP SHALL INCLUDE		
1. Statement of student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance		
PLAAFP - describes present levels of performance including but not limited to:		
Statement of how disability affects involvement and progress in the general ed curriculum		
Statement for Preschooler as to how disability affects participation in appropriate activities		

When developing IEP, IEP team shall:		
Consider strengths of child		
Consider concerns of parent		
Consideration of the results of initial evaluations or most recent evaluation		
Consideration of student's performance on statewide or district-wide assessments		
Consideration of behavioral needs (strategies, interventions, support that address behavior)		
In case of student with limited English proficiency, consideration of language needs		
For student who is blind or visually impaired, consideration of Braille unless not appropriate		
Consideration of communication needs of student		
For student who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider language and communication needs		
Consideration of the need for assistive technology devices and services		
For speech IEPs - description of speech/language performance		
Beginning at age 14, consider need for DVR or other agencies for consultation		
Review preschool day to determine accommodations for child to participate in general ed activities		
Statement of measurable goals related to common core curriculum		
Benchmarks/short-term objectives related to meeting student needs that result from disability		
Objectives enable student to be involved in and progress in general ed curriculum		
Objectives related to meeting student's other educational needs		
How progress toward annual goals will be measured		
How parents will be regularly informed of student's progress toward goals		
Statement of special ed and related services and supplementary aids and services		
Statement of program modifications/supports provided to school personnel on behalf of student		
Statement indicating participation in extracurricular and nonacademic areas		
Consideration of length of school day		
Consideration for extended school year		
Least Restrictive Environment statement documenting decision making process		
Justification for removal from general education program		
Comparison of benefits of general ed class and benefits of special education		
Potential beneficial or harmful effects that placement may have on student or class		
Extent student will not participate with non-disabled peers in general ed curriculum		
ASSESSMENT:		
Exemptions from general ed options (testing, graduation)		
Statement of modifications in administration of state and district testing		
If student will not participate, include rationale and statement of how student will be assessed		
GRADUATION:		
Statement of state and local graduation requirements student is expected to meet		
Statement of transition from elementary		

APPENDIX H– ELLS and Special Education Q&A Document



Governor Chris Christie • Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno

New Jersey Department of Education Offices of Special Education and Title I English Language Learners (ELLs) and Special Education Question and Answer Document

1. Can students be referred and/or evaluated for special education services while receiving bilingual/ESL services?

Yes, neither federal nor state regulations prohibit a student who is receiving ESL services from being evaluated. According to New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) 6A:14-3.4(f), "An initial evaluation shall consist of a multi-disciplinary assessment in all areas of suspected disability. Such evaluation shall include at least two assessments and shall be conducted by at least two members of the child study team in those areas in which they have appropriate training or are qualified through their professional licensure or educational certification and other specialists in the area of disability as required or as determined necessary.

For further information on referral and evaluation please refer to N.J.A.C. 6A:14.3.4(f).

2. Can students receiving special education services receive bilingual/ESL services?

Yes, a student who is determined eligible for special education and related services or eligible for speech-language services can continue to receive bilingual/ESL services. Districts should consider embedding special education services in the existing bilingual/ESL classes in order to provide the services in the general education setting.

3. Can bilingual/ESL students receive speech-language services?

Yes, according to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.6, "eligible for speech-language services" means a speech and/or language disorder as follows: A speech disorder in articulation, phonology, fluency, voice, or any combination, **unrelated to dialect, cultural differences or the influence of a foreign language**, which adversely affects a student's educational performance.

4. What should a school district do if they can't find a bilingual child study team member to complete a child study team evaluation?

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.4(f)1 requires that evaluations be conducted in the language or form most likely to yield accurate information...unless it is not feasible to do so. Therefore, a school district should make extensive efforts to locate a bilingual child study team member. The school district may contract for services from another local school district or an approved clinic or agency. A

list of bilingual child study team professionals is available on the following website: <http://www.nj.gov/njded/bilingual/resources/cst/>. Additional resources that should be considered by the school district include the recruitment of bilingual paraprofessionals and the use of bilingual community professionals and bilingual professionals in the district. In all instances, the school district must train personnel in the assessment process and the role of interpreters at meetings.

5. If a bilingual/ESL student is referred for special education, how should the parent be notified?

Before a Meeting:

Parental involvement through the referral and evaluation process is important and districts should make every effort to ensure parental participation at meetings.

After a Meeting:

Written notice must be provided to the parents within 15 days following a meeting of the IEP team. According to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-2.4:

a) Written notice to the parent shall be provided and parent conferences required by this chapter shall be conducted in the language used for communication by the parent and student unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

1. Foreign language interpreters or translators and sign language interpreters for the deaf shall be provided, when necessary, by the district board of education at no cost to the parent.

b) If the native language is not a written language, the district board of education shall take steps to ensure that:

1. The notice is translated orally or by other means to the parent in his or her native language or other mode of communication;
2. That the parent understands the content of the notice; and
3. There is written documentation that the requirements of (b)1 and 2 above have been met.

6. How should special education eligibility be determined for limited English proficient students?

First, determine the dominant language of the child. While the NJDOE does not mandate or endorse any particular assessment, examples include the Brigance Screening, Language Assessment Scale, IDEA Proficiency Test, Bilingual Verbal Abilities Test, or Woodcock-Munoz Test. For additional resources you may consult the Center for Applied Linguistics Foreign Language Assessment Directory at www.cal.org/calwebdb/flad.

Once the dominant language is determined, evaluations should be conducted in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:3.4(f). If it is determined that the native language is dominant, then testing should

be in the native language. If tests are unavailable in student's native language, then use informal assessment measures (language sample, oral story retelling).

According to N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.5(b), "In making a determination of eligibility for special education and related services, **a student shall not be determined eligible if the determinant factor is due to a lack of instruction in reading, including the essential components of reading instruction, or math or due to limited English proficiency.**"

Additionally, according to N.J.A.C. 6A:15-1.4(g), "...additional programs and services shall be designed to meet the special needs of eligible LEP students and include, but are not limited to, remedial instruction through Title 1 programs; special education; school-to-work programs; computer training and talented education services."

7. If a limited English proficient student is determined eligible for special education services, what should the child study team consider when developing the individualized education program (IEP)?

N.J.A.C. 6A:14-3.7(c)5 requires that when developing an IEP for a student with limited English proficiency, the IEP team consider the language needs of the student as related to the IEP. The IEP team shall determine the language needs of the student.

8. What are some other areas to consider when providing instruction to students who have limited English proficiency and are either classified or referred for an evaluation?

- Consider including bilingual or ESL professionals as part of the IEP team and solicit their input when considering the language needs of students with limited English proficiency.
- Contact your district's parent advisory group to better understand the needs of parents whose children have limited English proficiency and are receiving special education services.
- Utilize the district's pre-referral intervention system such as the Intervention and Referral Services committee (I&RS), Response to Intervention (RTI) or multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS). For more information on providing interventions to ELL can be found at <http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/diversity/englishlanguagelearners> or <http://www.wida.us/resources>

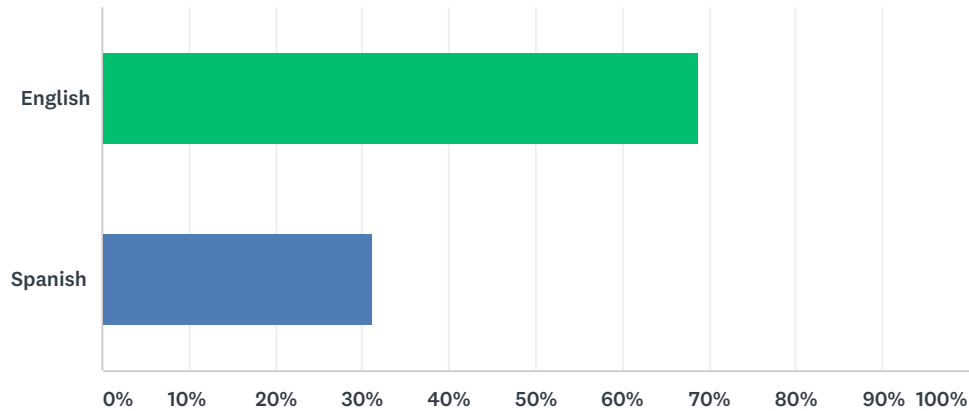
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NJ Department of Education, PO Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500, (877)900-6960

APPENDIX I – Parent and Staff Surveys

Q1 In what language would you like to take this survey?

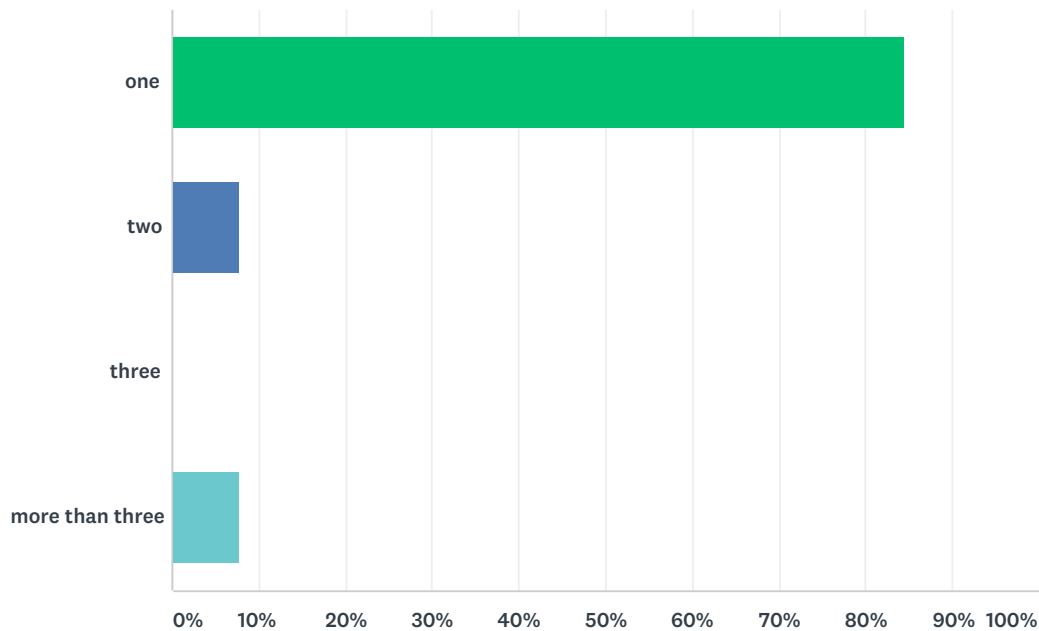
Answered: 32 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
English	68.75%	22
Spanish	31.25%	10
TOTAL		32

Q2 How many of your children currently receive special education services?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19



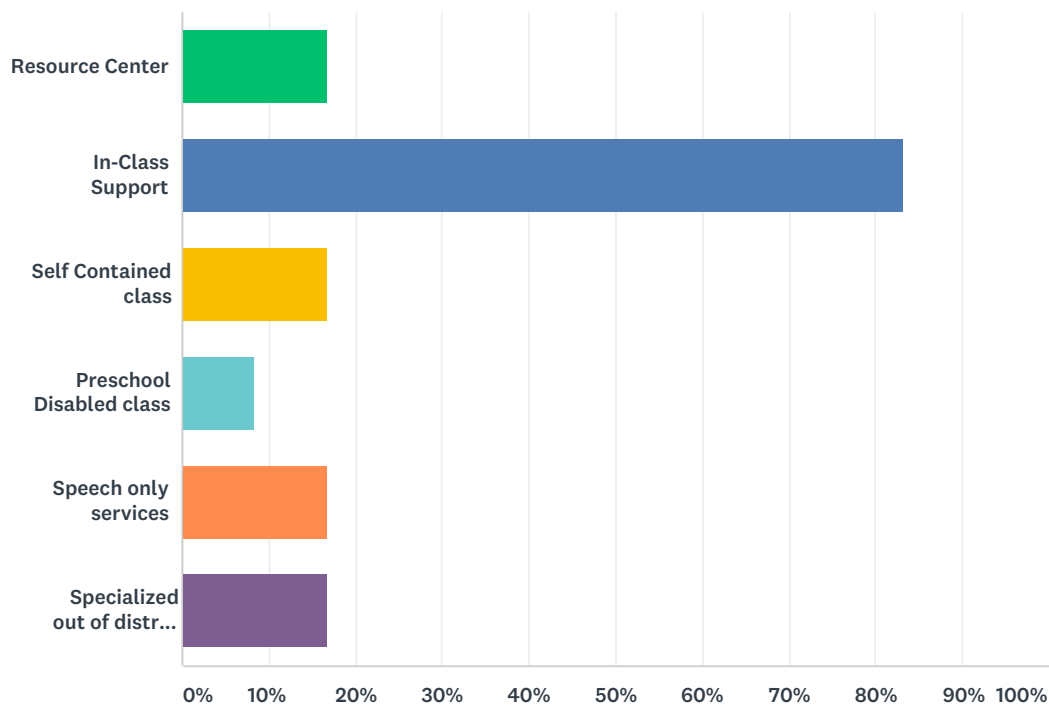
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
one	84.62%	11

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

two	7.69%	1
three	0.00%	0
more than three	7.69%	1
TOTAL		13

Q3 What type of program/service does your child attend? If you have multiple children receiving services please answer for one child.

Answered: 12 Skipped: 20

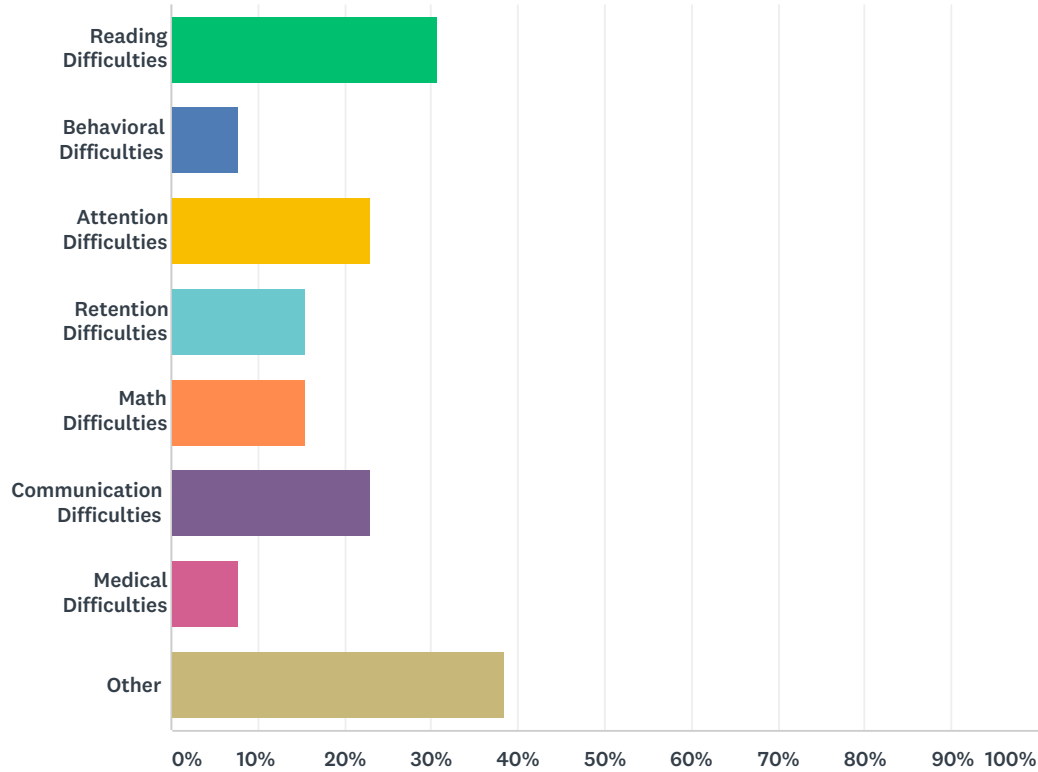


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Resource Center	16.67%	2
In-Class Support	83.33%	10
Self Contained class	16.67%	2
Preschool Disabled class	8.33%	1
Speech only services	16.67%	2
Specialized out of district program	16.67%	2
Total Respondents: 12		

Q4 Why was your child referred to special education?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

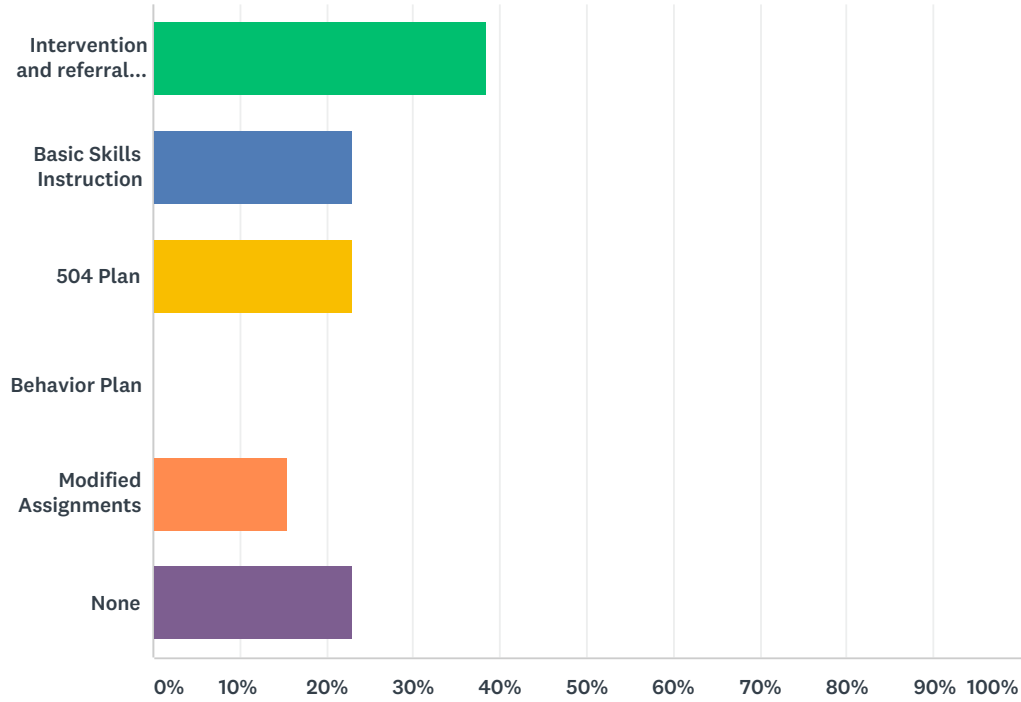


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Reading Difficulties	30.77%	4
Behavioral Difficulties	7.69%	1
Attention Difficulties	23.08%	3
Retention Difficulties	15.38%	2
Math Difficulties	15.38%	2
Communication Difficulties	23.08%	3
Medical Difficulties	7.69%	1
Other	38.46%	5
Total Respondents: 13		

Q5 What steps were taken to assist your child prior to being referred to the Child Study Team for evaluation?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

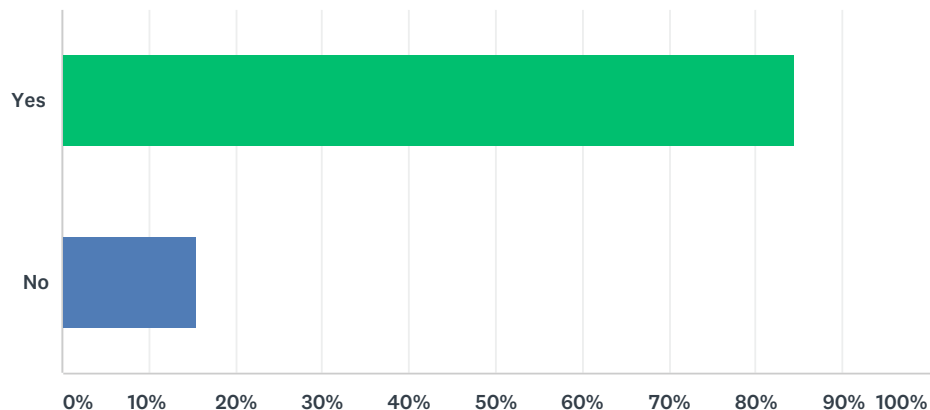
2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Intervention and referral Services	38.46%	5
Basic Skills Instruction	23.08%	3
504 Plan	23.08%	3
Behavior Plan	0.00%	0
Modified Assignments	15.38%	2
None	23.08%	3
Total Respondents: 13		

Q6 Do you feel that you were an equal partner in the development of your child's IEP?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

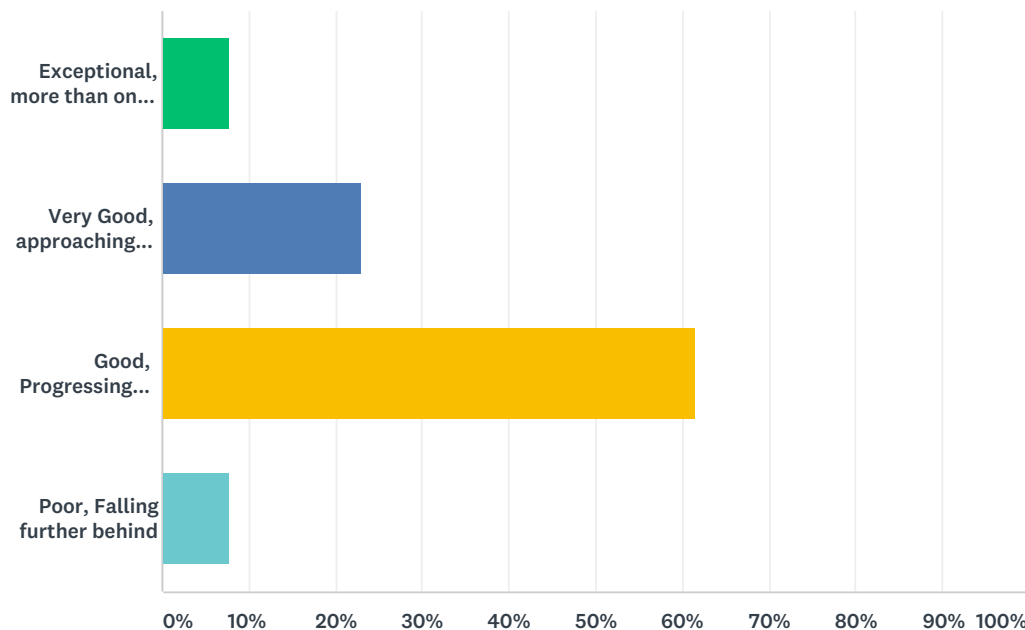


2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	84.62%	11
No	15.38%	2
TOTAL		13

Q7 Describe the progress your child has made since receiving special education services

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

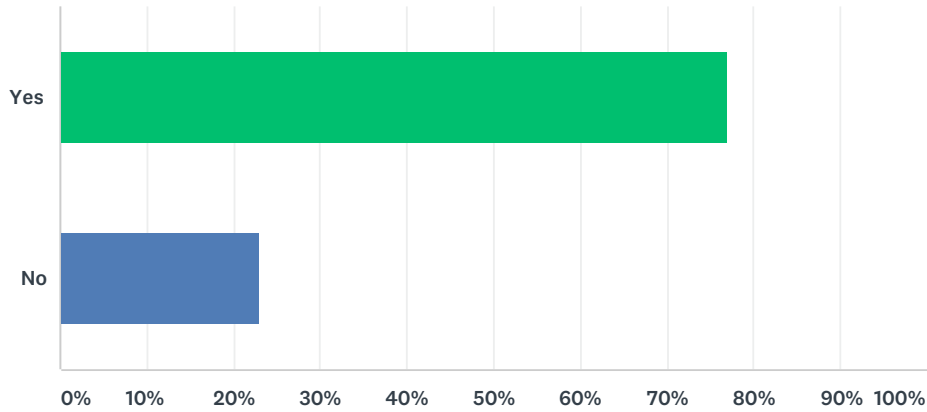


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Exceptional, more than one year gain in one years time	7.69%	1
Very Good, approaching grade level	23.08%	3
Good, Progressing steadily	61.54%	8
Poor, Falling further behind	7.69%	1
TOTAL		13

Q8 Do you feel that your child is receiving the interventions and services he/she requires?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

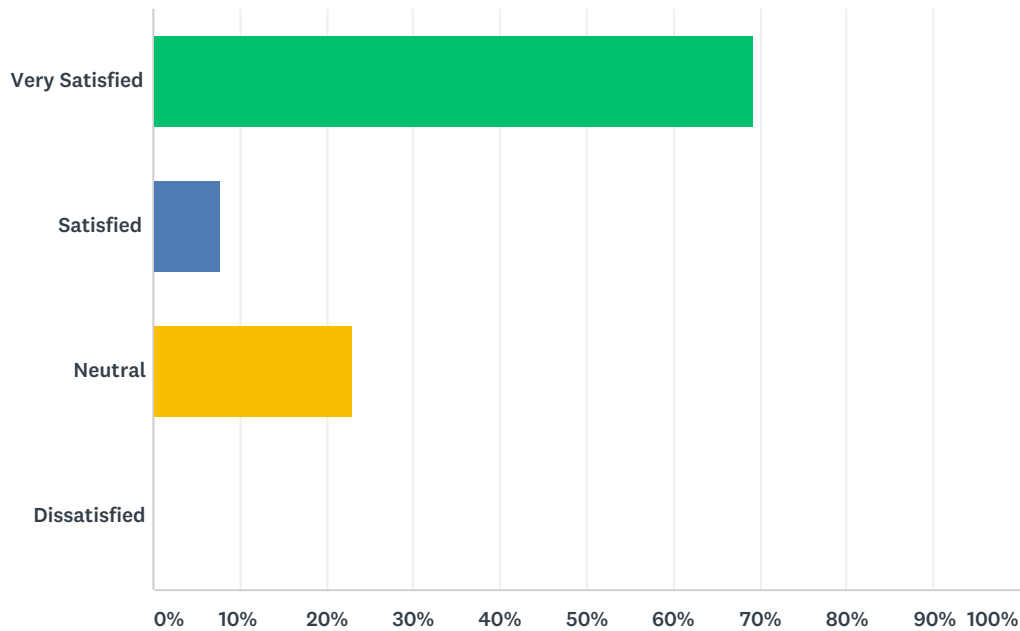
2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	76.92%	10
No	23.08%	3
TOTAL		13

Q9 How would you describe your overall satisfaction with your child's special education teacher?

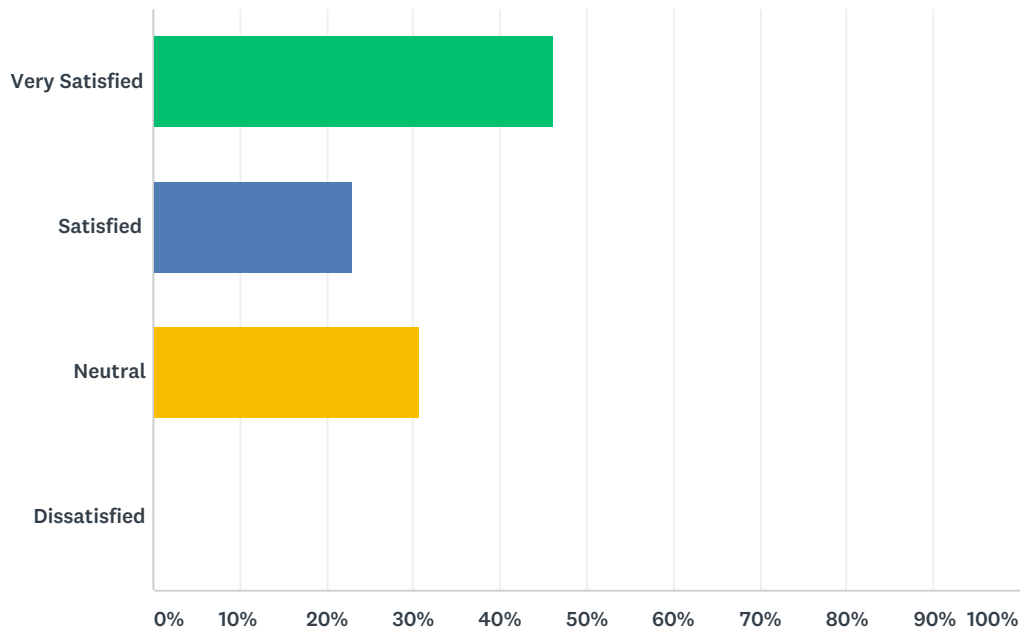
Answered: 13 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Satisfied	69.23%	9
Satisfied	7.69%	1
Neutral	23.08%	3
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

Q10 How would you describe your overall satisfaction with your child's case manager?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

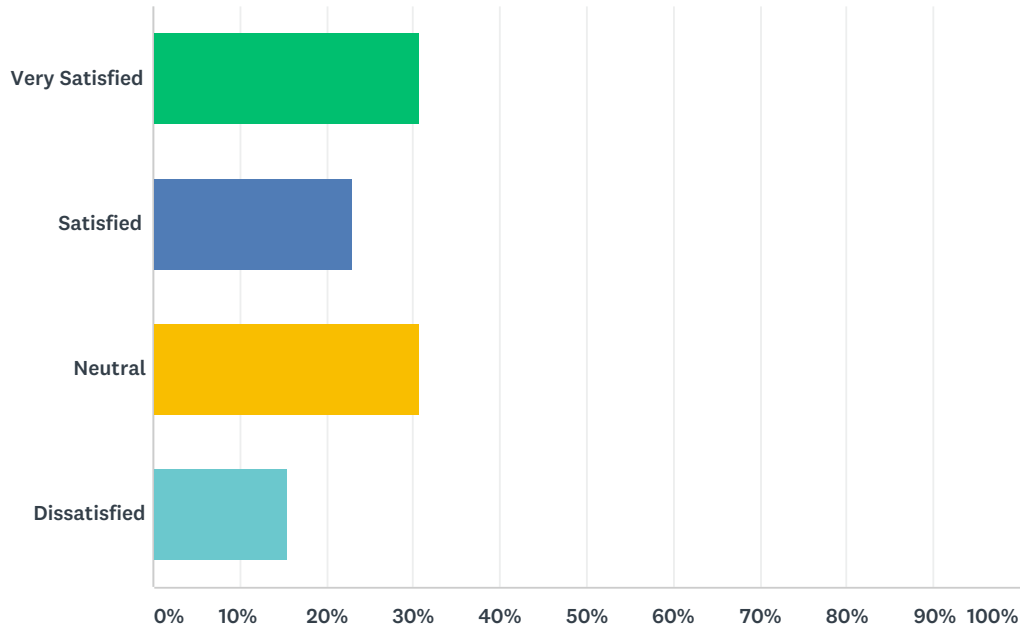


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Satisfied	46.15%	6
Satisfied	23.08%	3
Neutral	30.77%	4
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

Q11 How would you describe your overall satisfaction with the leadership in the Special Education Department?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

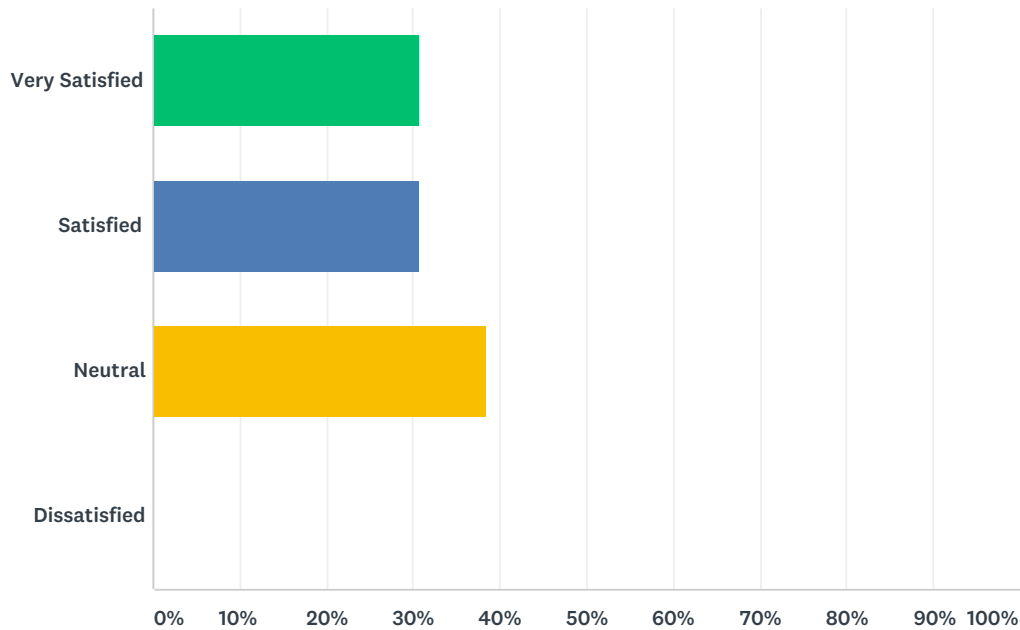


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Satisfied	30.77%	4
Satisfied	23.08%	3
Neutral	30.77%	4
Dissatisfied	15.38%	2
TOTAL		13

Q12 How would you describe your overall satisfaction with your child's related services providers?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 19

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Satisfied	30.77%	4
Satisfied	30.77%	4
Neutral	38.46%	5
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

Q13 What criteria is used to determine mainstreaming for special education children? Is your child mainstreamed?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 24

Q14 What do you view as the strengths of the special education department?

Answered: 5 Skipped: 27

Q15 Where do you feel improvements are needed in the special education department?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 23

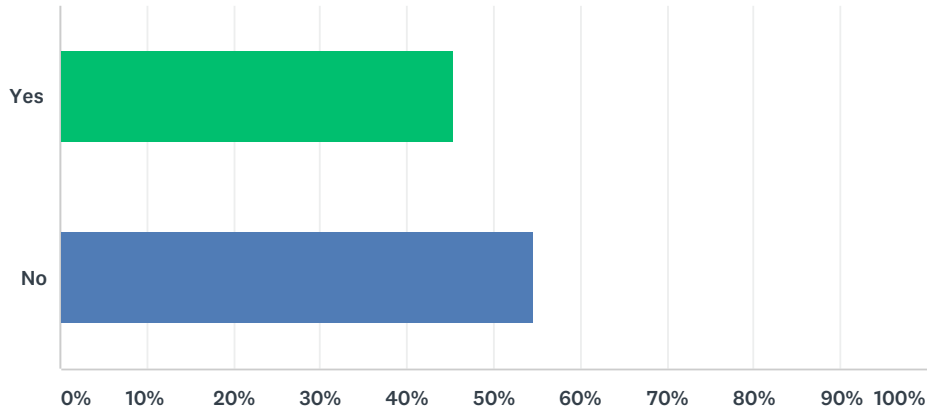
Q16 Do you have any suggestions as to how the district might improve the management and operation of special education services?

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

Answered: 6 Skipped: 26

Q17 Some parents may be interviewed to gather further information.
Would you like to be considered for a personal interview?

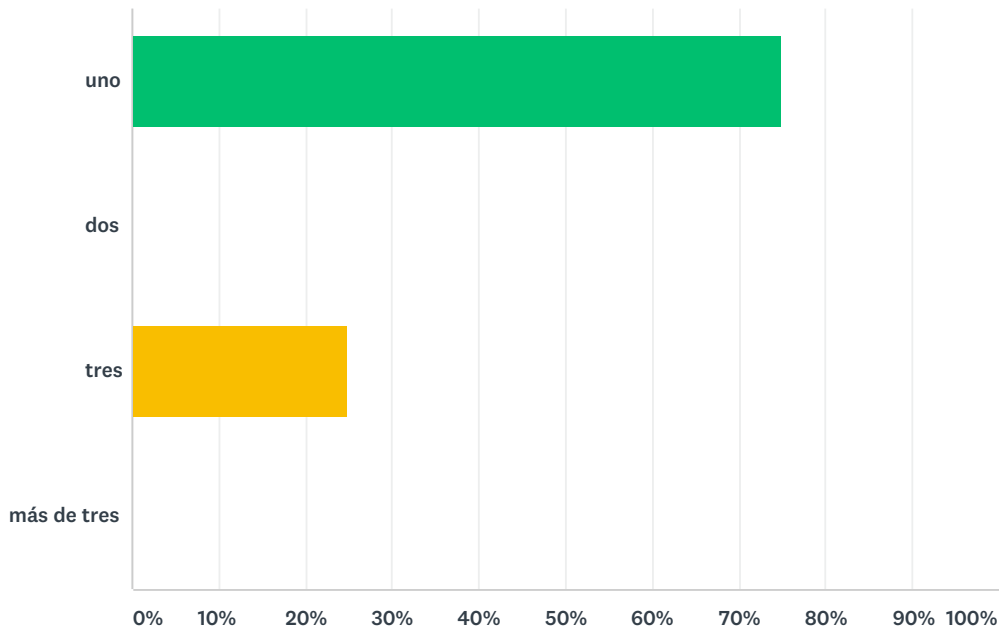
Answered: 11 Skipped: 21



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	45.45%	5
No	54.55%	6
TOTAL		11

Q18 ¿Cuántos de sus niños reciben servicios de educación especial?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 28



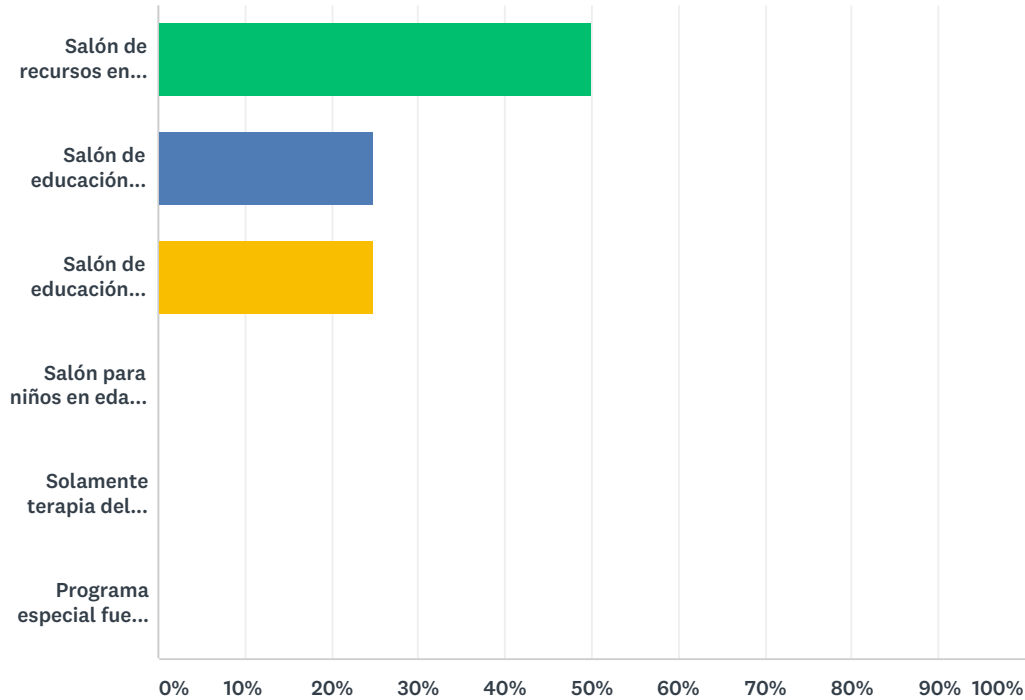
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
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2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

uno	75.00%	3
dos	0.00%	0
tres	25.00%	1
más de tres	0.00%	0
TOTAL		4

Q19 ¿Qué tipo de programa/servicios asiste a su hijo?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 28

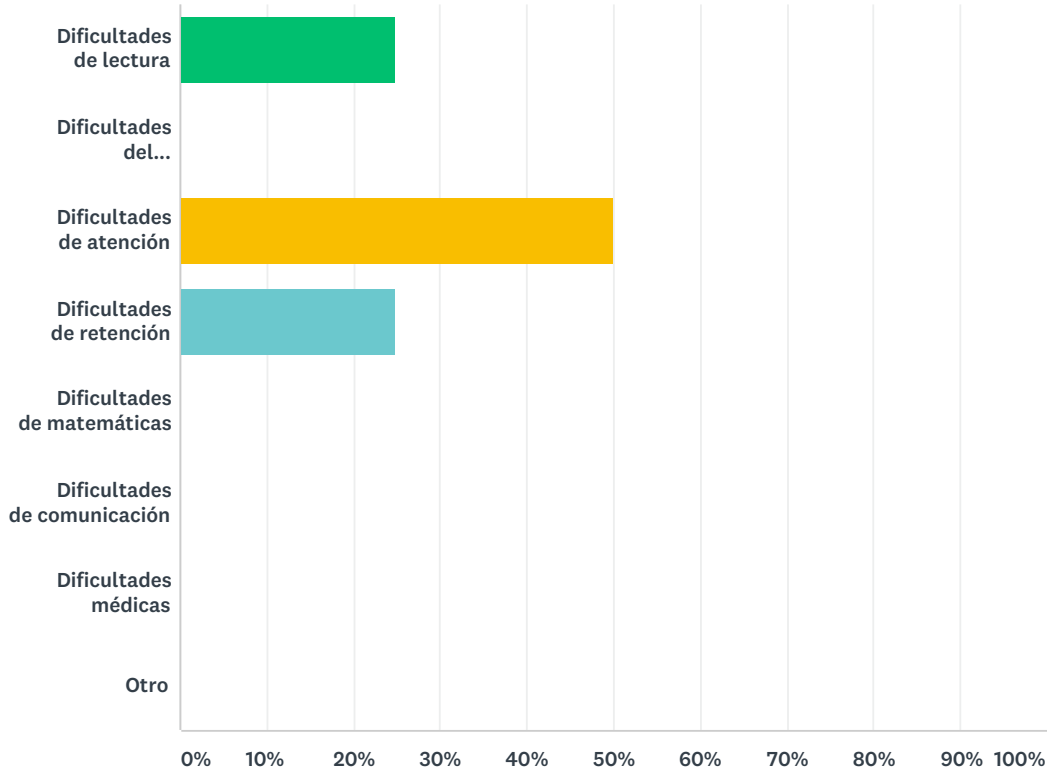


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Salón de recursos en educación especial	50.00%	2
Salón de educación general con apoyo especial	25.00%	1
Salón de educación especial a tiempo completo	25.00%	1
Salón para niños en edad preescolar con una discapacidad	0.00%	0
Solamente terapia del habla	0.00%	0
Programa especial fuera del distrito escolar	0.00%	0
TOTAL		4

Q20 ¿Por qué su hijo fue referido a educación especial?

Answered: 4 Skipped: 28

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

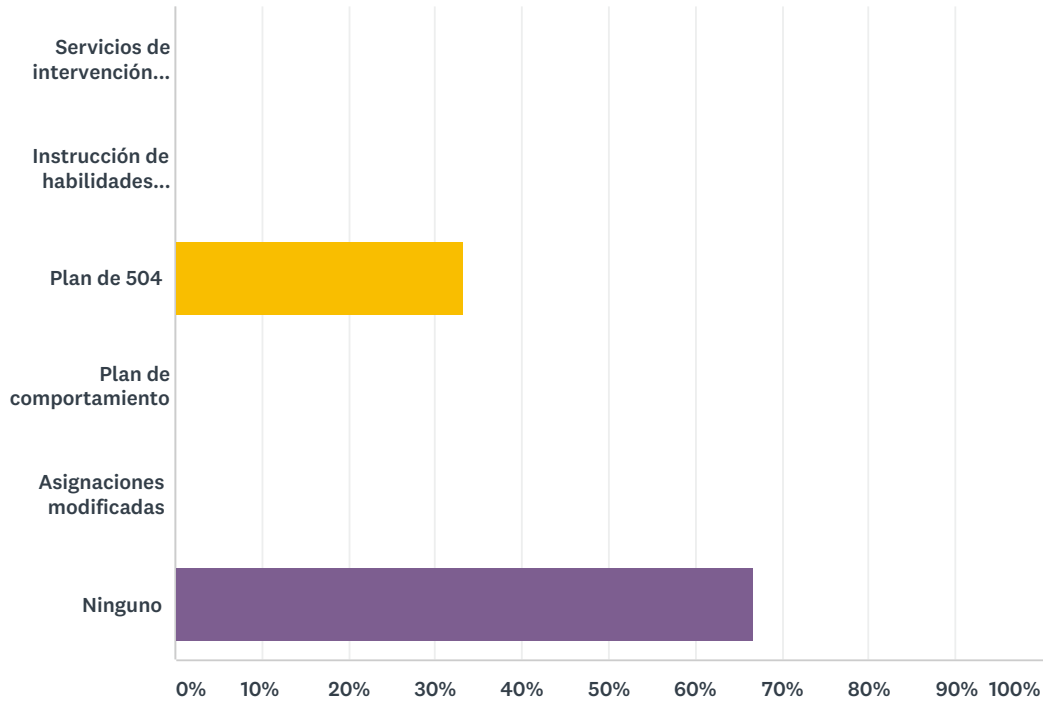


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Dificultades de lectura	25.00%	1
Dificultades del comportamiento	0.00%	0
Dificultades de atención	50.00%	2
Dificultades de retención	25.00%	1
Dificultades de matemáticas	0.00%	0
Dificultades de comunicación	0.00%	0
Dificultades médicas	0.00%	0
Otro	0.00%	0
TOTAL		4

Q21 ¿Qué medidas se tomaron para ayudar a su hijo antes de hacer referencia al Equipo de Estudio del Niño, para la evaluación?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

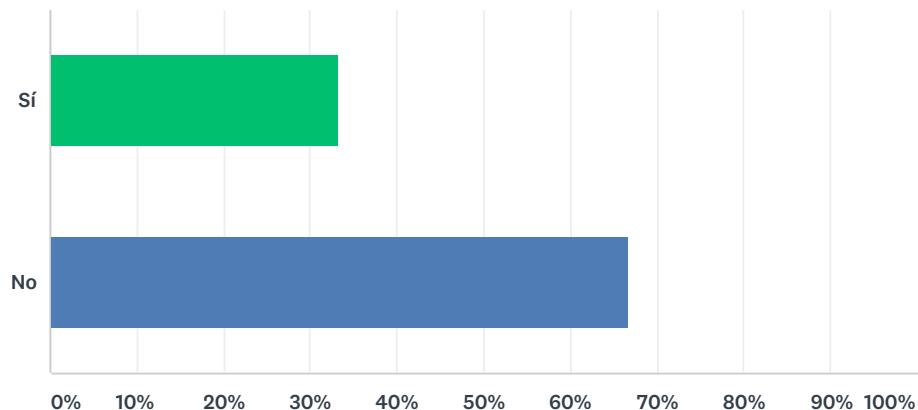
2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Servicios de intervención y remisión	0.00%	0
Instrucción de habilidades básicas	0.00%	0
Plan de 504	33.33%	1
Plan de comportamiento	0.00%	0
Asignaciones modificadas	0.00%	0
Ninguno	66.67%	2
TOTAL		3

Q22 ¿Siente que era un compañero igual en el desarrollo del IEP de su hijo?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

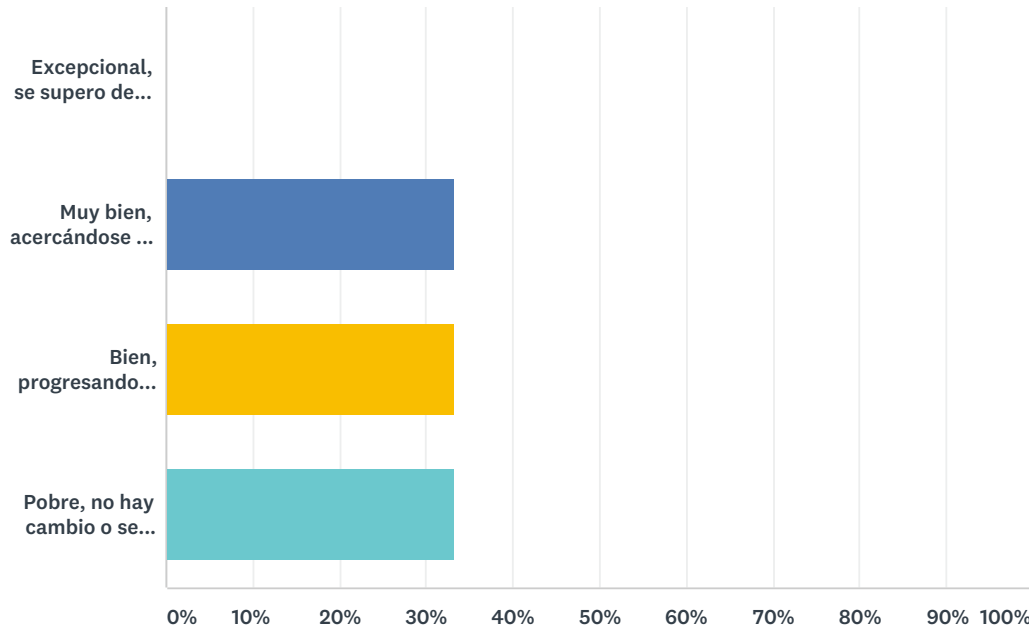


2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sí	33.33%	1
No	66.67%	2
TOTAL		3

Q23 Describa el progreso que su hijo ha hecho desde la recepción de servicios de educación especial.

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

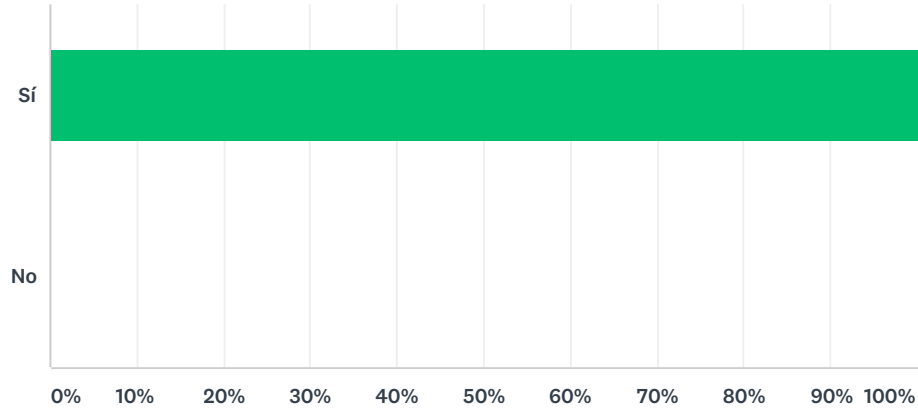


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excepcional, se supero del grado presente	0.00%	0
Muy bien, acercándose a nivel de grado	33.33%	1
Bien, progresando constantemente	33.33%	1
Pobre, no hay cambio o se atraso	33.33%	1
TOTAL		3

Q24 ¿Siente que su hijo está recibiendo las intervenciones y servicios que requiere?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

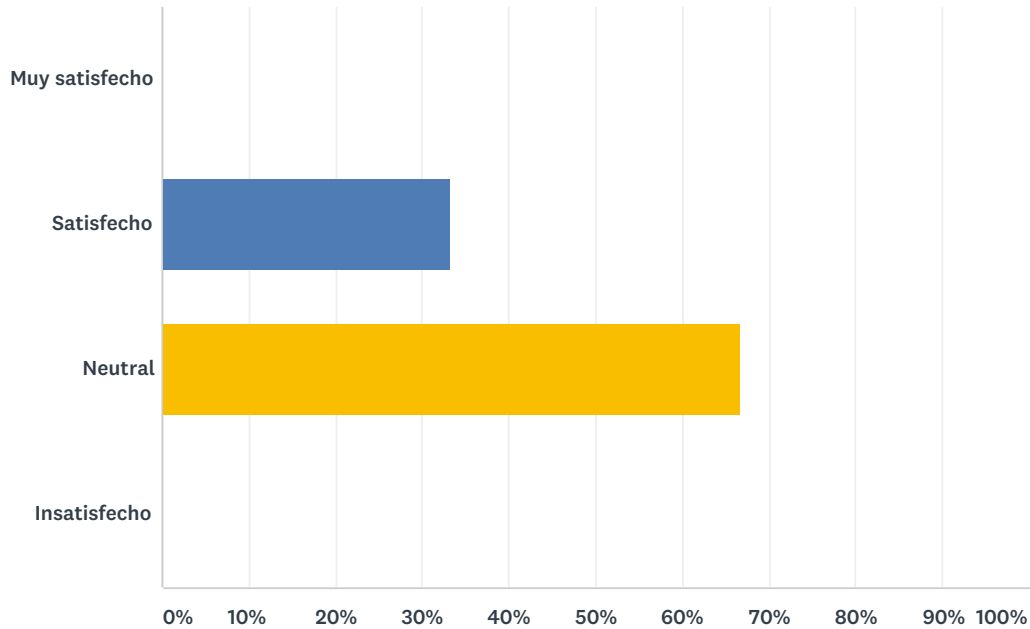
2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Sí	100.00%	3
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		3

Q25 ¿Cómo describiría su satisfacción general con el maestro de educación especial de su hijo?

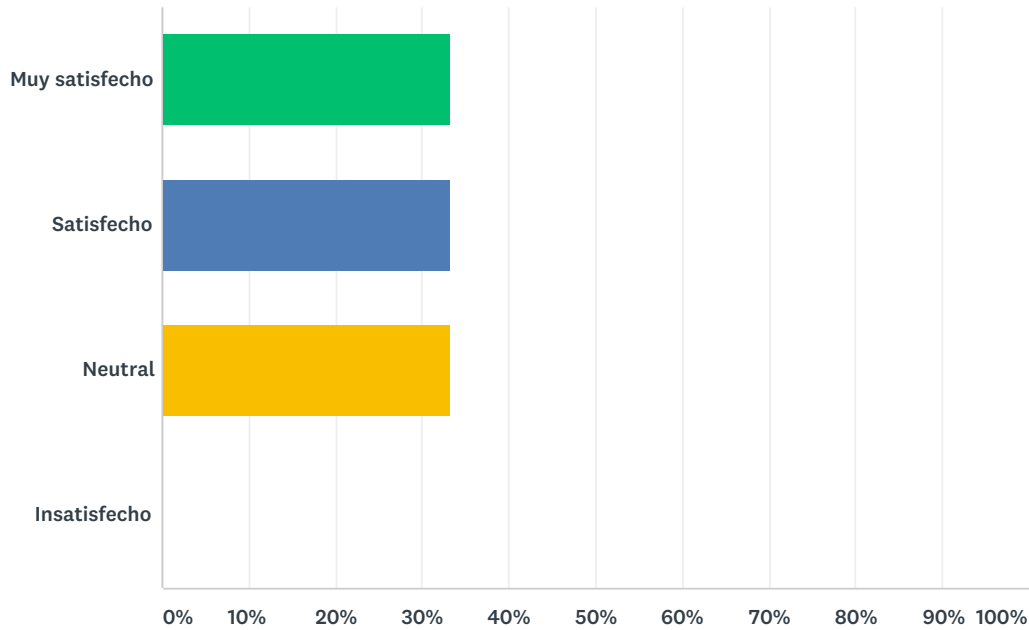
Answered: 3 Skipped: 29



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Muy satisfecho	0.00%	0
Satisfecho	33.33%	1
Neutral	66.67%	2
Insatisfecho	0.00%	0
TOTAL		3

Q26 ¿Cómo describiría su satisfacción general con el manejo del caso de su hijo?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

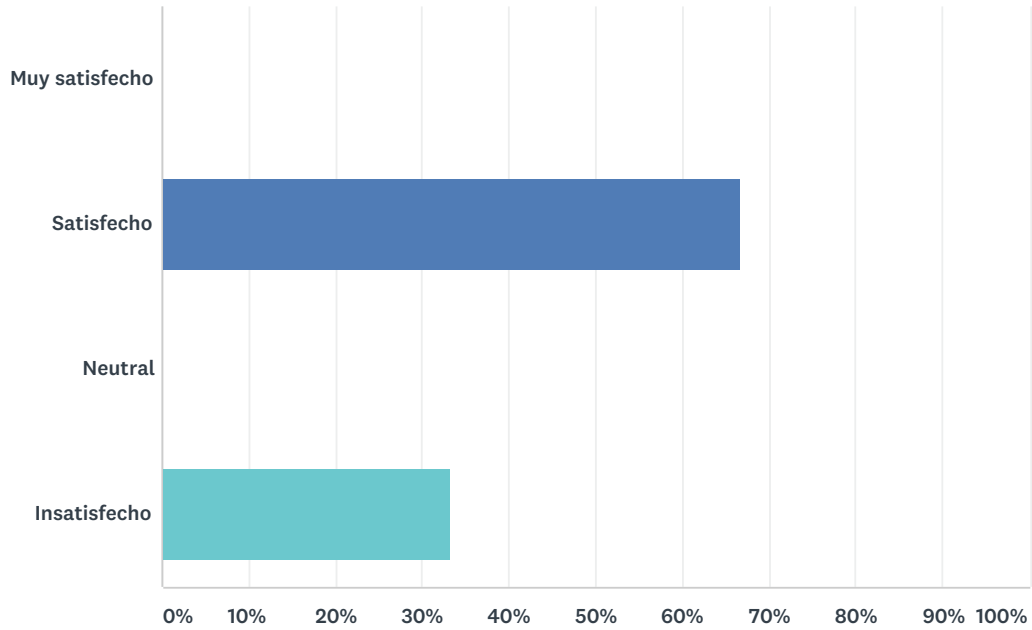


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Muy satisfecho	33.33%	1
Satisfecho	33.33%	1
Neutral	33.33%	1
Insatisfecho	0.00%	0
TOTAL		3

Q27 ¿Cómo describiría su satisfacción general con el manejo del caso de su hijo?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

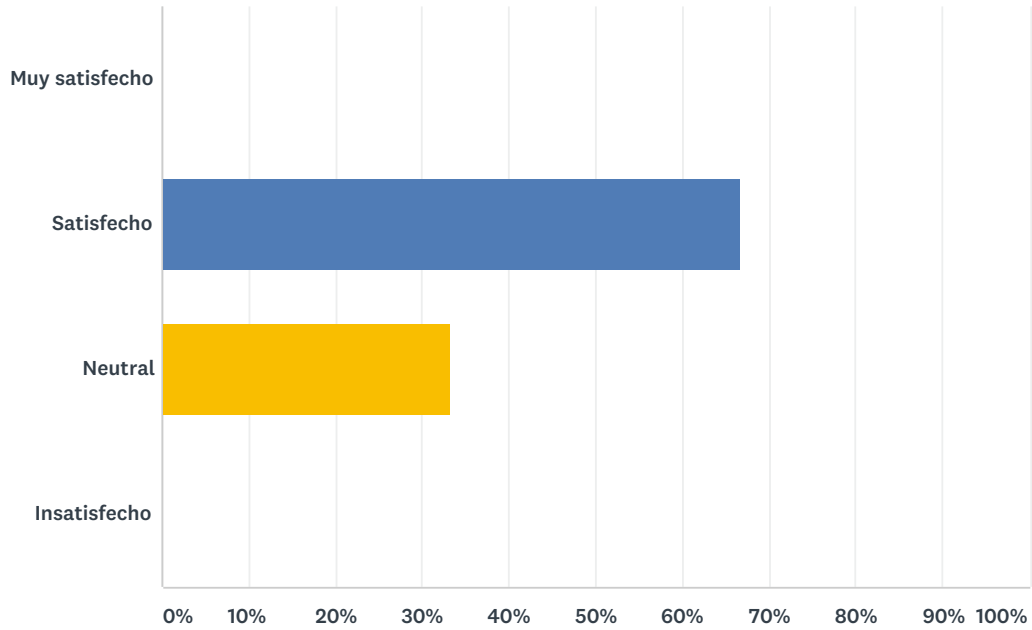


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Muy satisfecho	0.00%	0
Satisfecho	66.67%	2
Neutral	0.00%	0
Insatisfecho	33.33%	1
TOTAL		3

Q28 ¿Cómo describiría su satisfacción general con la dirección del departamento de educación especial?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey

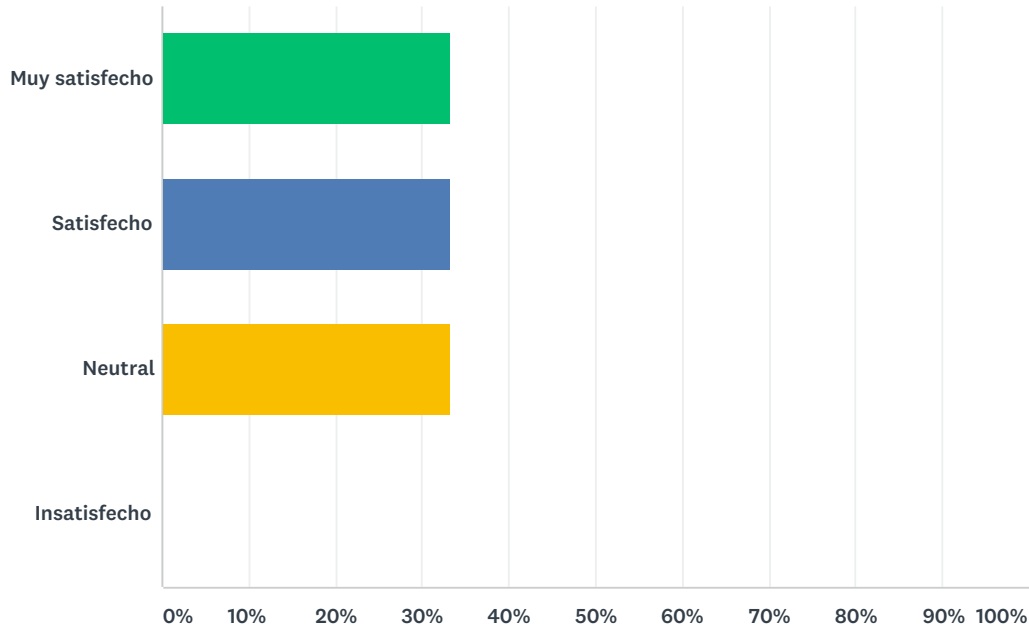


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Muy satisfecho	0.00%	0
Satisfecho	66.67%	2
Neutral	33.33%	1
Insatisfecho	0.00%	0
TOTAL		3

Q29 ¿Cómo describiría su satisfacción general con los proveedores de servicios relacionados de su hijo?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 29

2019 Bound Brook Parent Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Muy satisfecho	33.33%	1
Satisfecho	33.33%	1
Neutral	33.33%	1
Insatisfecho	0.00%	0
TOTAL		3

Q30 ¿Qué criterios se utiliza para determinar la incorporación de los niños de educación especial? Esta incorporado su hijo?

Answered: 1 Skipped: 31

Q31 ¿Cómo ve los esfuerzos del departamento de educación especial?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 30

Q32 ¿Donde usted cree que tenemos que mejorar los servicios del departamento educación especial?

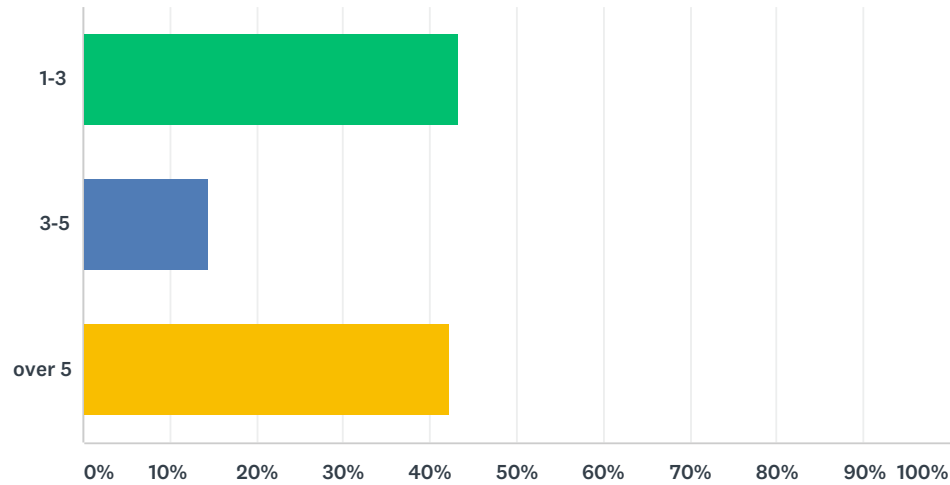
Answered: 2 Skipped: 30

Q33 ¿Tiene alguna sugerencia de cómo el distrito podría mejorar la dirección y operación de servicios de la educación especial?

Answered: 1 Skipped: 31

Q1 How many years have you worked for the Bound Brook school district?

Answered: 111 Skipped: 0

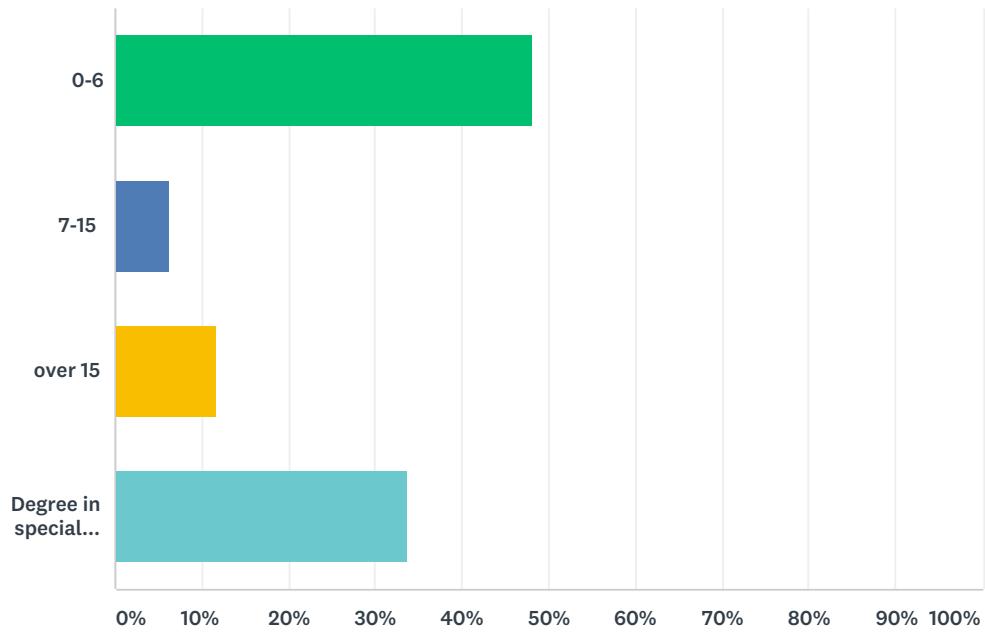


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-3	43.24%	48
3-5	14.41%	16
over 5	42.34%	47
TOTAL		111

Q2 How many college credits do you have in special education courses?

Answered: 110 Skipped: 1

2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

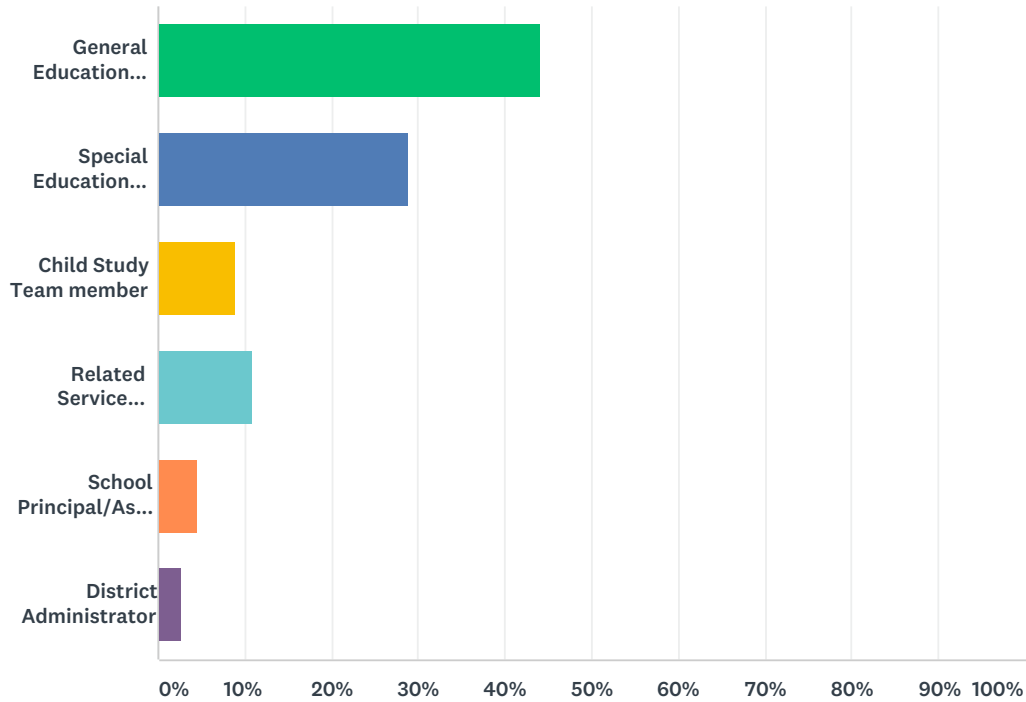


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-6	48.18%	53
7-15	6.36%	7
over 15	11.82%	13
Degree in special education	33.64%	37
TOTAL		110

Q3 What is your position in the Bound Brook school system?

Answered: 111 Skipped: 0

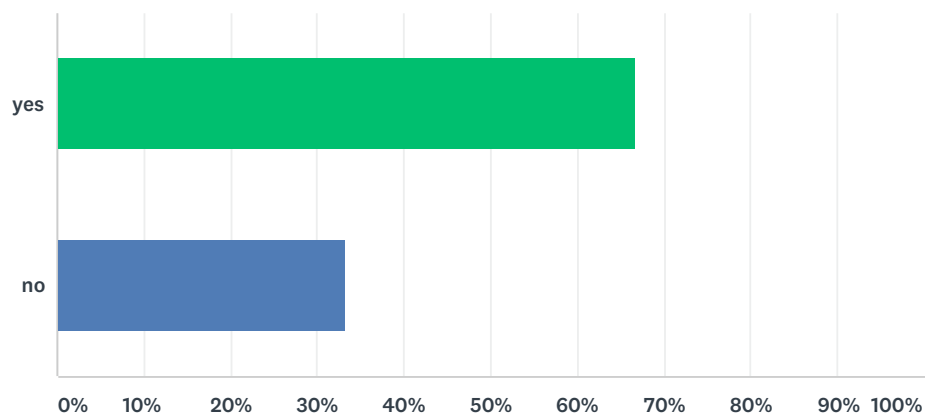
2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
General Education Teacher	44.14%	49
Special Education Teacher	28.83%	32
Child Study Team member	9.01%	10
Related Service Provider	10.81%	12
School Principal/Assistant Principal	4.50%	5
District Administrator	2.70%	3
TOTAL		111

Q4 Have you ever referred a student for special education evaluation

Answered: 39 Skipped: 72



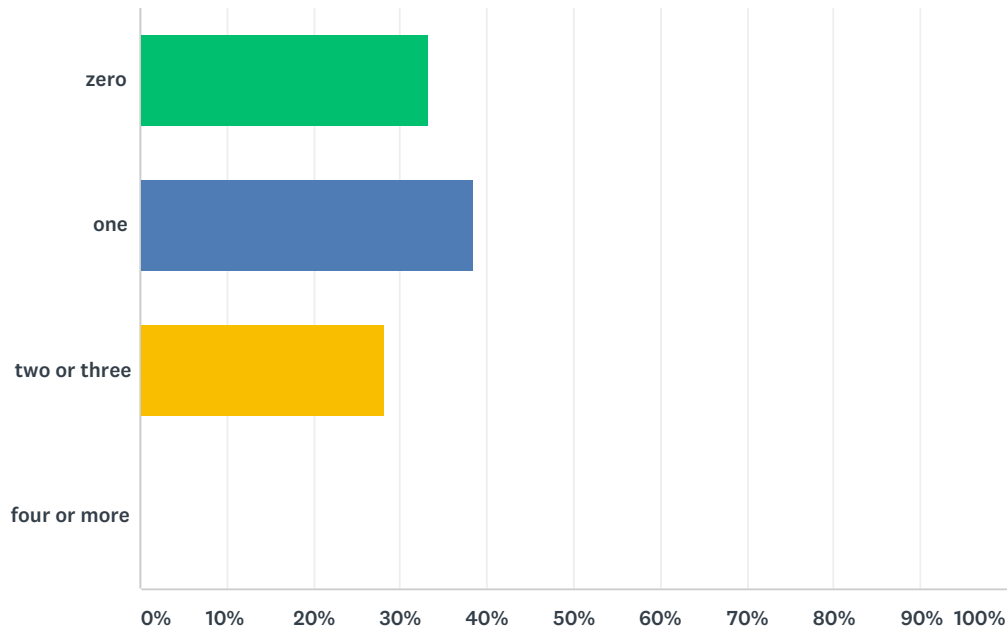
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
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2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

yes	66.67%	26
no	33.33%	13
TOTAL		39

Q5 In an average year, how many students do you refer for special education evaluation?

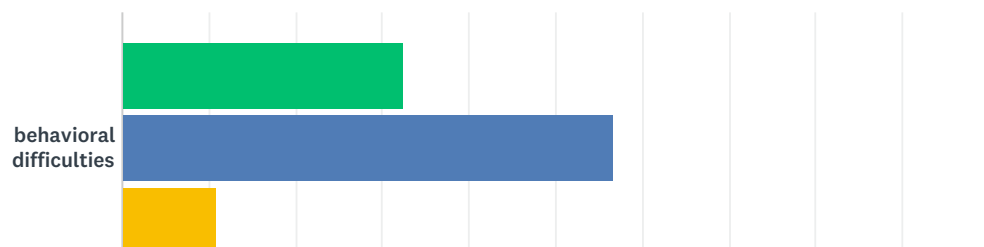
Answered: 39 Skipped: 72



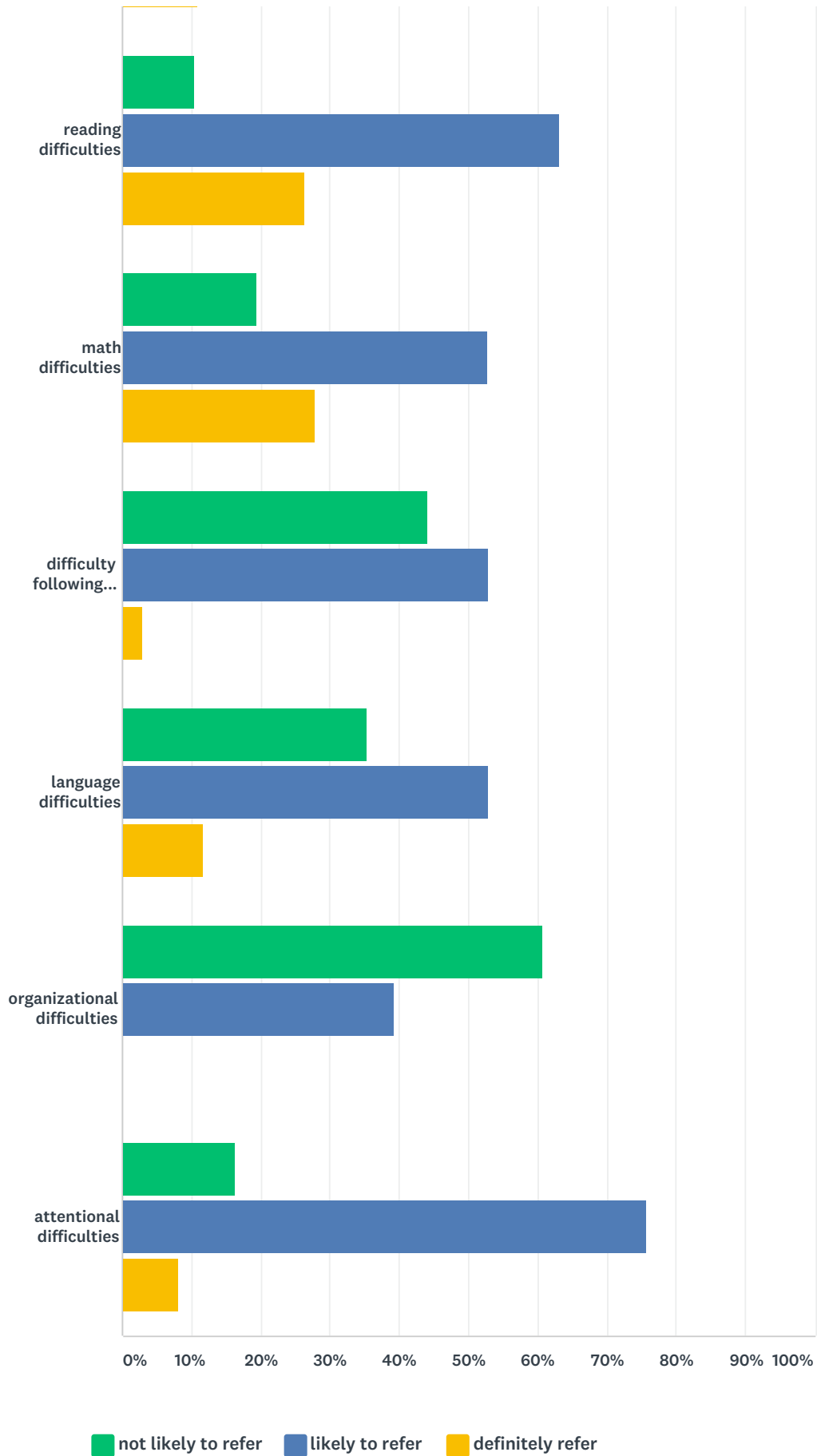
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
zero	33.33%	13
one	38.46%	15
two or three	28.21%	11
four or more	0.00%	0
TOTAL		39

Q6 Please rate the type of difficulties/problems students have that would trigger a referral for special education evaluation?

Answered: 39 Skipped: 72



2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

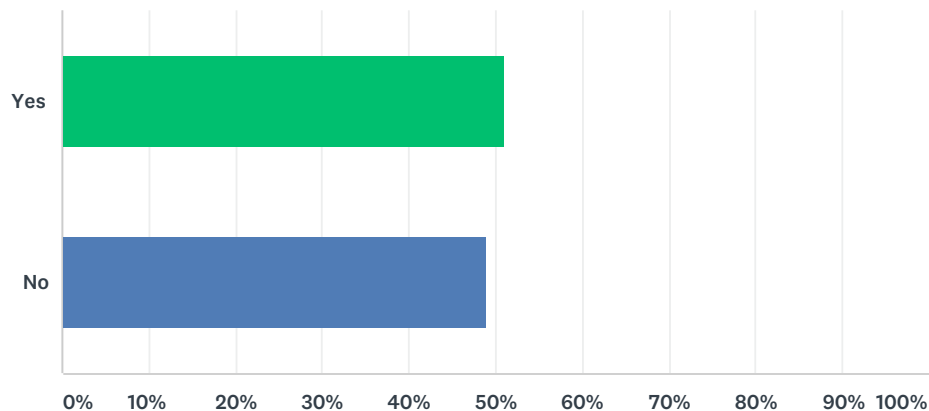


2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

	NOT LIKELY TO REFER	LIKELY TO REFER	DEFINITELY REFER	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
behavioral difficulties	32.43% 12	56.76% 21	10.81% 4	37	1.78
reading difficulties	10.53% 4	63.16% 24	26.32% 10	38	2.16
math difficulties	19.44% 7	52.78% 19	27.78% 10	36	2.08
difficulty following directions	44.12% 15	52.94% 18	2.94% 1	34	1.59
language difficulties	35.29% 12	52.94% 18	11.76% 4	34	1.76
organizational difficulties	60.61% 20	39.39% 13	0.00% 0	33	1.39
attentional difficulties	16.22% 6	75.68% 28	8.11% 3	37	1.92

Q7 Do you know the legal/district criteria for special education eligibility?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 62



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	51.02% 25
No	48.98% 24
TOTAL	49

Q8 What is the district criteria for special education eligibility?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 103

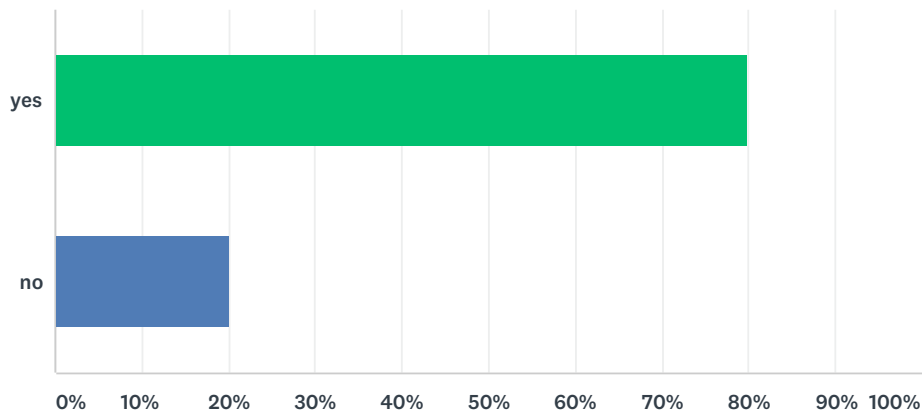
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	A student is eligible for special education services if they are unable to learn in the general education environment as a result of a documented disability under one of the special education classifications	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	to follow the NJ SPED code and use a discrepancy model for SLD	10/9/2019 4:41 PM

2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

3	The criteria is established in the NJAC-6A:14 of the Special Education code	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	Chapter 14 Special Education New Jersey code Title 6A	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
5	Letter of recommendation to CST followed by a meeting of eligibility to determine if an evaluation is warranted.	10/7/2019 8:44 PM
6	To be at least 2 years below level or have a 22 point discrepancy between IQ and ability to work	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
7	Kindergarten	10/7/2019 3:28 PM
8	Initial identification and evaluation planning meetings held no more than 20 days from the D the referral was received if it is determined that evaluations are warranted the consented for valuations will take place within 90 days within 80 days of that 90 days the students parents will receive an invitation as well as the completed a evaluations to review prior to the meeting At the initial eligibility determination meeting the #DATA will be reviewed to determine if the student meets state requirements within any of the 14 special education and related services criteria	10/7/2019 2:25 PM

Q9 Does the district have written criteria for student placement in special education?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 101



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
yes	80.00% 8
no	20.00% 2
TOTAL	10

Q10 If so, what is the written criteria for:

Answered: 7 Skipped: 104

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
SLD	100.00% 7
ED	71.43% 5
OHI	100.00% 7
PSD	71.43% 5
Autistic	100.00% 7

2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

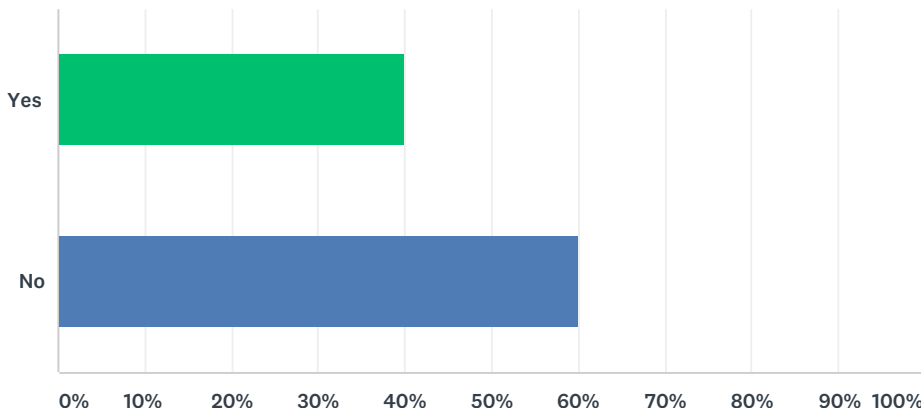
#	SLD	DATE
1	21 point discrepancy in 1 or more areas occurring between educational and cognitive standardized test scores test	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	a discrepancy of a least 1.5 standard deviations between a child's ability as measured by a psychological evaluation and their performance, as measured by an educational evaluation	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	The district established a 21 point or more discrepancy between cognitive and achievement	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	22 pt discrepancy	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
5	22 point discrepancy between IQ and performance ability	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
6	21 point Discrepancy Between the students for sale I Q and any of the specific learning disability categories	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
7	21 point discrepancy	10/7/2019 1:30 PM
#	ED	DATE
1	evidence that emotional difficulties are impeding upon a student's ability to perform within the general education classroom	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	a condition over a long period of time that adversely affects a student's performance maintaining relationships, inappropriate behaviors not due to other reasons, depression and emotional strain that manifests into physical symptoms	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	Psychological or Psychiatric assessment establishing or diagnosis of depression, unhappiness, anxiety or other general pervasive mood, inappropriate types of behaviors.	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	6a:14-3.5	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
5	Documented maladjustment in relations with others that is not contributed to a documented learning or behavioral disability	10/7/2019 1:30 PM
#	OHI	DATE
1	a documented medical condition that impedes upon one's ability to learn in the general education setting	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	a medical diagnosis that adversely effects a students ability to perform in school	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	Medical note establishing a medical condition that adversely affects the students academic performance in school	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	medical diagnosis	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
5	Dr diagnosis	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
6	A doctors Diagnosis is required	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
7	Doctors Diagnosis	10/7/2019 1:30 PM
#	PSD	DATE
1	any child between age 3-5 who is experiencing a physical/social/cognitive delay as evidenced by standardized scores	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	a 33% delay in one of the five areas of development or a 25% delay in two or more areas	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	Based on the Battelle Assessment of establishing a 33 percent developmental delays or 25 percent delays in two or more developmental areas, such as physical/ motor skills, Cognitive, Communication, Social/ Emotional, Adaptive or a severe disabling condition that adversely affects learning or development	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	33 below in 1 area	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
5	Student age three -five	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
#	AUTISTIC	DATE
1	a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder from a medical doctor	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	a medical diagnosis of autism that adversely effects a student's performance in school	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	Medical Assessment from a Specialized Physician with a diagnosis of Autism	10/8/2019 1:13 PM

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4	6a:14-3.5	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
5	Diagnosis from dr	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
6	Student must have a diagnosis from a doctor	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
7	Doctors Diagnosis	10/7/2019 1:30 PM

Q11 Do you know of a specific criteria utilized in determining the need for speech, physical, or occupational therapy services?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 91



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	40.00% 8
No	60.00% 12
TOTAL	20

Q12 What is the criteria utilized to find a student eligible for related services?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 100

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	each related service professional uses standardized testing to determine related services eligibility based on normed scores	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	related service providers review evaluations and make recommendations	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	The therapist will conduct their own assessment to determine if the student meets criteria for services.	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	Functional assessment (other than tests); below the 10th percentile on two standardized language assessments- one must be comprehensive looking at both expressive and receptive language	10/8/2019 9:30 AM
5	Below 10th percentile on 2 language standardized tests	10/8/2019 9:16 AM
6	Student must fall under at least one disability category and has a certain discrepancies between scores.	10/8/2019 8:29 AM
7	Unsure	10/8/2019 6:51 AM

2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

8	Student has a disability, this disability impedes their academics, and they need additionally supports to succeed.	10/7/2019 7:12 PM
9	Must be classified except for speech which can have a speech only IEP	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
10	Each related services has their own set assessments that guide Eligibility	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
11	below the 10th percentile on both the expressive and receptive assesment	10/7/2019 1:30 PM

Q13 What criteria is utilized to mainstream students?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 101

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	keeping in mind that the students should be in the least restrictive environment; if the disability allows them to function in a mainstreamed setting with supports, including them with general ed peers is preferable	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	data collected on behavior, academic standards, and IEP goals and objectives	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	Standardized assessment, goals/objectives that will determine or establish student has met their goals.	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	Educational, speech/language, and psychological testing all of which must be comprehensive	10/8/2019 9:30 AM
5	Comprehensive educational, speech/language, and psychological testing	10/8/2019 9:16 AM
6	If the child is making significant increases and their re-test results show they no longer qualify based off of the difference in their scores.	10/8/2019 8:29 AM
7	Unsure	10/8/2019 6:51 AM
8	Results from evaluations and input from CSE team.	10/7/2019 7:12 PM
9	Social emotional, how far below grade level they are...	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
10	Reevalaution	10/7/2019 2:25 PM

Q14 Describe the criteria utilized to determine the need for a teacher assistant/personal aide

Answered: 9 Skipped: 102

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	student to teacher ratio of various settings or personal/behavioral needs of the student. Keeping least restrictive environment in mind	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	data collected on behavior, related services, academic standards and IEP goals and objectives	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	Behaviorist provides data, such as ABC charts, behavioral plan, discipline /conduct history teacher input/data, counselor input and data	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	Filling out a justification packet with data collection attached from various professionals who work with the student.	10/8/2019 9:30 AM
5	Filling out a justification packet with data attached by multidisciplinary team	10/8/2019 9:16 AM
6	If the child is severely handicap, requires assistance with mobility, has a specific eating or breathing disorder that can be damaging to the health, or if the child is an extreme danger to themselves or others within the classroom.	10/8/2019 8:29 AM
7	Unsure	10/8/2019 6:51 AM
8	A student who cannot function independently physically or mentally.	10/7/2019 7:12 PM

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9	The need for further assistance to support a student Within the least restrictive learning environment	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
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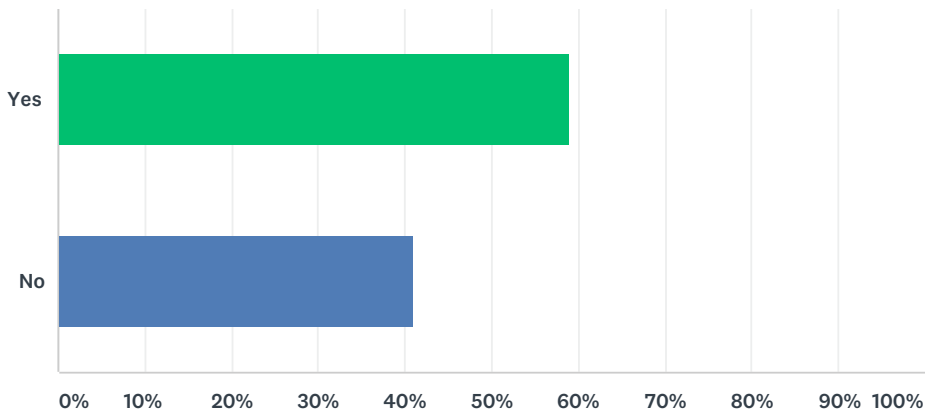
Q15 What criteria is utilized to declassify students?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 98

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	observation, teacher/parent report, progress of goals, standardized testing to determine if a disability continues to be present	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	data from evaluations, progress reports, teacher reports and family reports	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
3	Re-evaluation assessments, teacher input/ data, classroom observation, performance and grades.	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
4	Comprehensive assessments in the areas of speech/language, Ed, and psychological.	10/8/2019 9:30 AM
5	Comprehensive assessments from educational, speech/language, and psychological	10/8/2019 9:16 AM
6	i am not fully sure of the entire process.	10/8/2019 8:29 AM
7	re evaluation testing, and performance	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
8	Unsure	10/8/2019 6:51 AM
9	The child is re-evaluated by different members of the CST team to make that determination.	10/7/2019 7:12 PM
10	Depends -recently because they are too smart... years ago it was said it's just because we have exhausted all possibilities and that is a direct quote	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
11	Reevaluation is needed to determine if the student continues to meet eligibility for special education and related services as well as consultation with teachers and related services providers	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
12	Meeting IEP goals regularly. Lowering the amount of supports and still being successful. Teacher recommendations	10/7/2019 2:11 PM
13	reevaluation	10/7/2019 1:30 PM

Q16 Do you play an active role in the development of IEP goals and objectives for students in your class or school?

Answered: 66 Skipped: 45

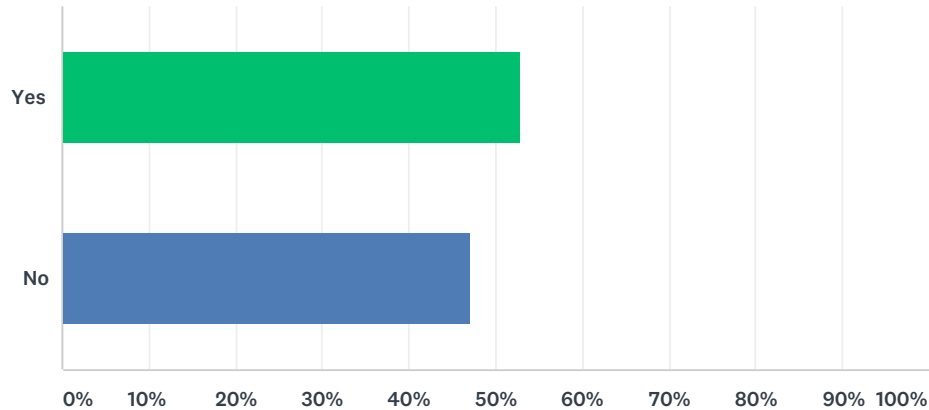


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	59.09%	39

No	40.91%	27
TOTAL		66

Q17 Does a member of the child study team meet with you each year to review and explain the IEPs of students in your class

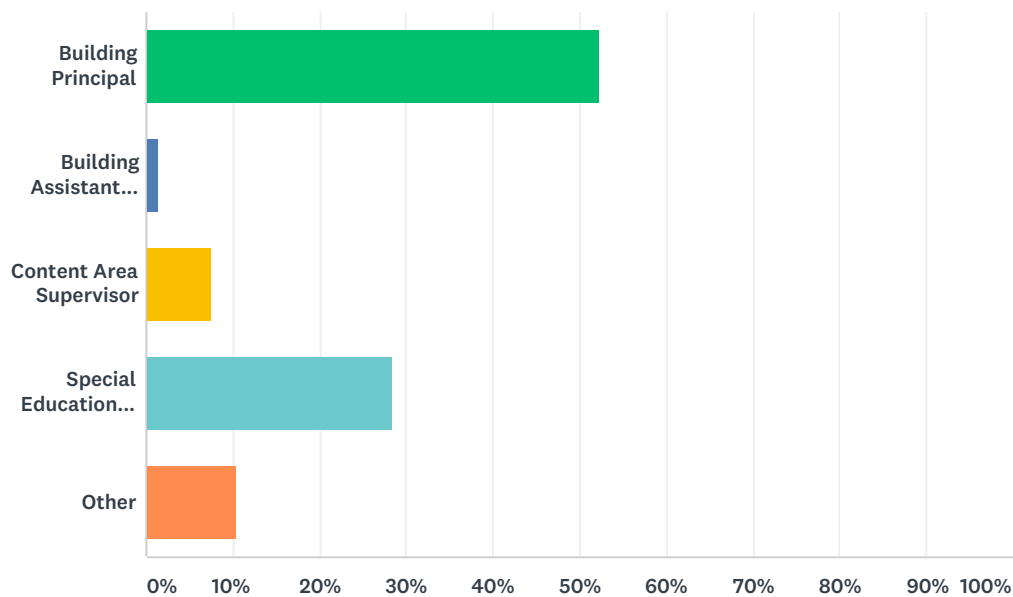
Answered: 66 Skipped: 45



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.03%	35
No	46.97%	31
TOTAL		66

Q18 Who is your primary evaluator?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 44

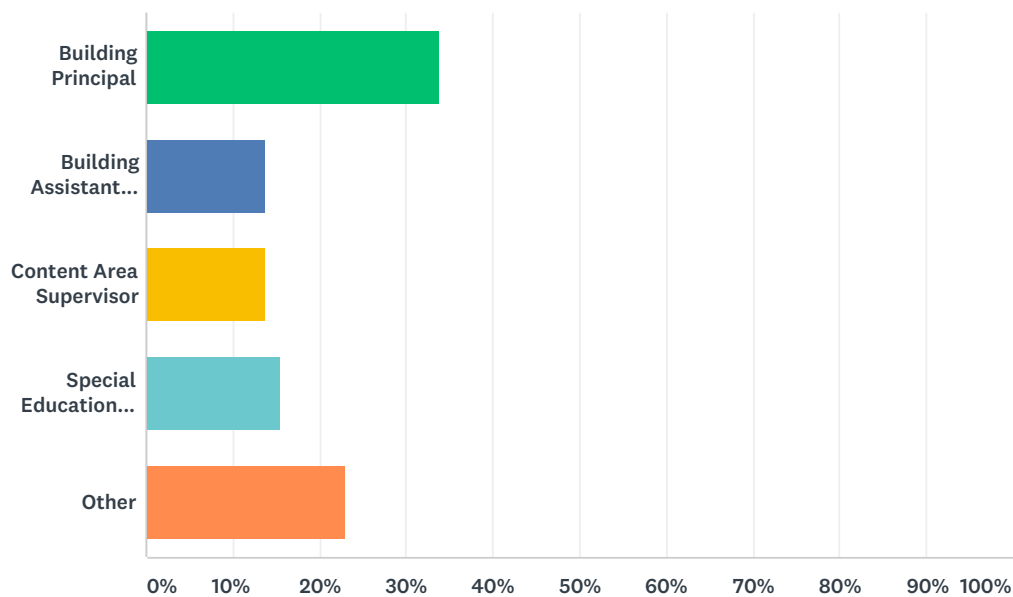


2019 Bound Brook Staff Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Building Principal	52.24%	35
Building Assistant Principal	1.49%	1
Content Area Supervisor	7.46%	5
Special Education Administrator	28.36%	19
Other	10.45%	7
TOTAL		67

Q19 Who is your secondary evaluator?

Answered: 65 Skipped: 46

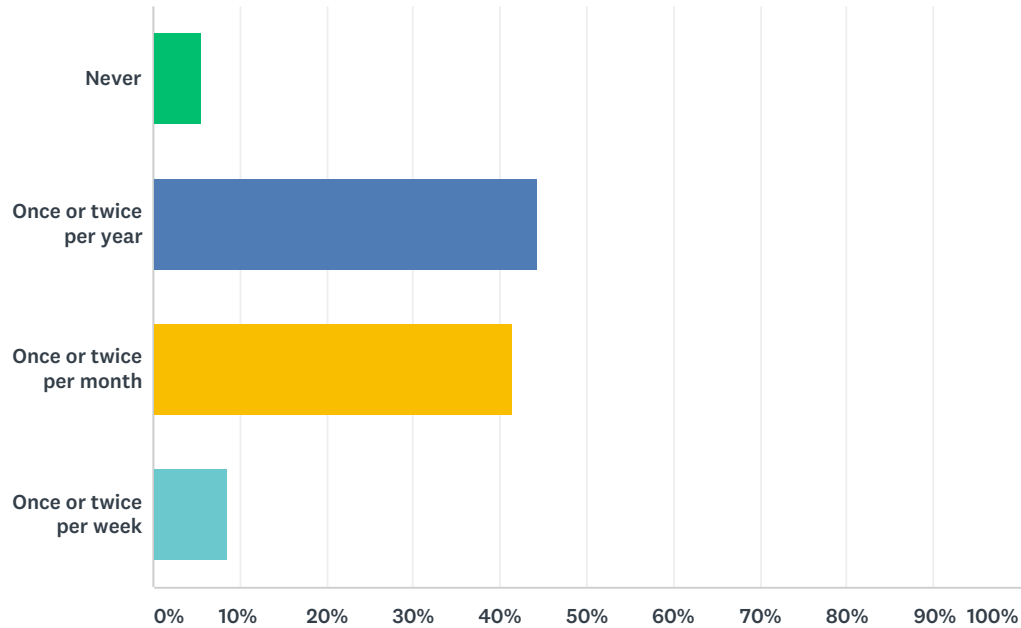


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Building Principal	33.85%	22
Building Assistant Principal	13.85%	9
Content Area Supervisor	13.85%	9
Special Education Administrator	15.38%	10
Other	23.08%	15
TOTAL		65

Q20 How often, on average, do you attend a Child Study Team/IEP meeting?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 41

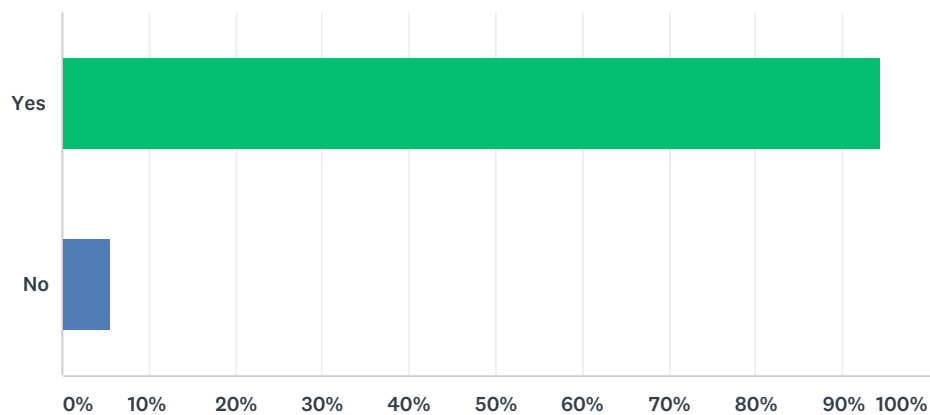
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Never	5.71%	4
Once or twice per year	44.29%	31
Once or twice per month	41.43%	29
Once or twice per week	8.57%	6
TOTAL		70

Q21 Does the district provide intervention services for students and teachers prior to referral to special education?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 39



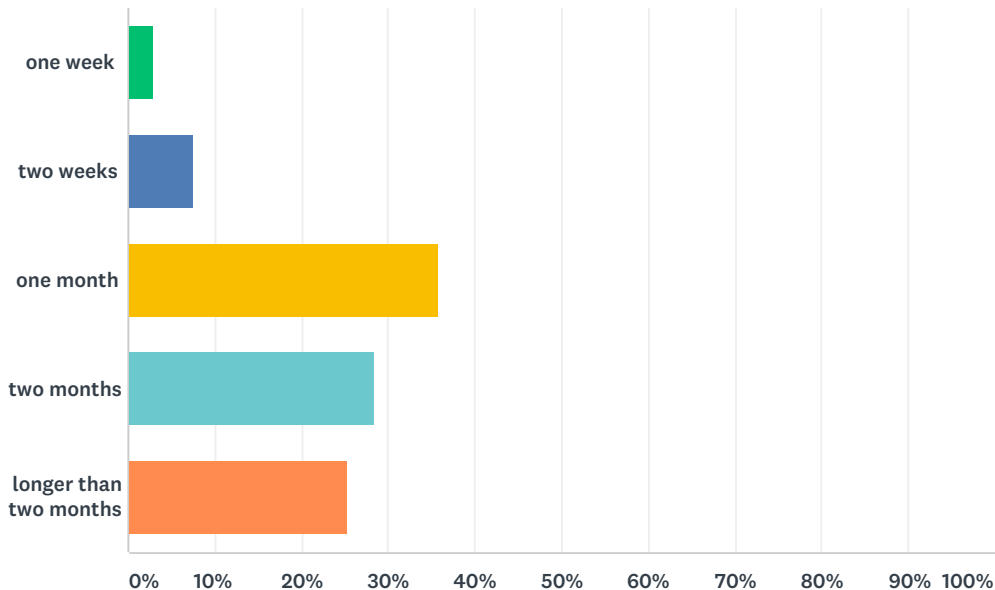
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.44%	68
No	5.56%	4

TOTAL

72

Q22 How long are the suggested interventions attempted before reporting back to the committee for possible CST referral

Answered: 67 Skipped: 44

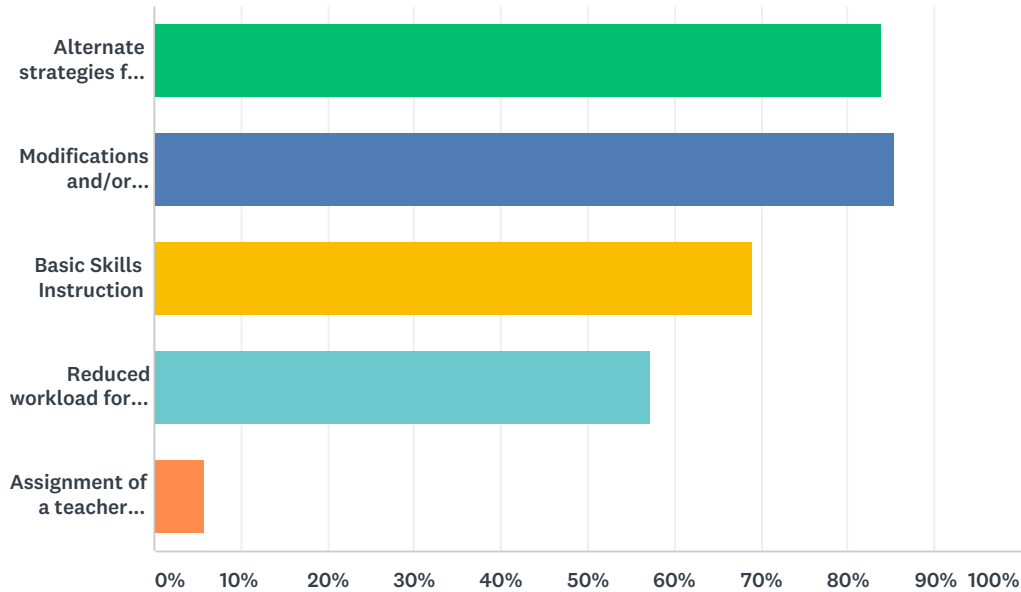


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
one week	2.99%	2
two weeks	7.46%	5
one month	35.82%	24
two months	28.36%	19
longer than two months	25.37%	17
TOTAL		67

Q23 What interventions are performed/recommended prior to referral for special education evaluation?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 43

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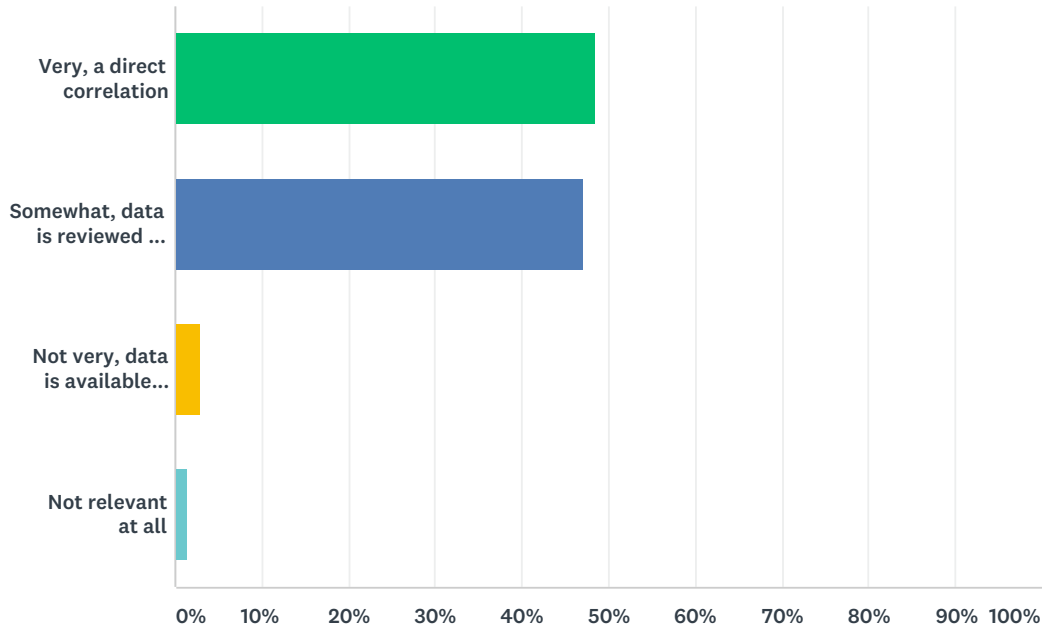


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Alternate strategies for the classroom teacher	83.82%	57
Modifications and/or accommodations for the student	85.29%	58
Basic Skills Instruction	69.12%	47
Reduced workload for the student	57.35%	39
Assignment of a teacher assistant	5.88%	4
Total Respondents: 68		

Q24 How relevant is assessment data to the decision making process for eligibility and placement of students?

Answered: 68 Skipped: 43

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very, a direct correlation	48.53%	33
Somewhat, data is reviewed and utilized	47.06%	32
Not very, data is available but not essential in decisions	2.94%	2
Not relevant at all	1.47%	1
TOTAL		68

Q25 Describe the tasks of a teacher assistant/personal aide

Answered: 44 Skipped: 67

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	provide redirection, repeat directions, keep student on task, assist in providing modifications to students	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	Provides support for the lead teacher, they reinforce lessons by helping individual students in small groups, help prepare classroom for lesson, collaborate with teachers to monitor development of each child. Understands the teachers routine, work with the children in the classroom to promote their learning and development	10/11/2019 3:44 PM
3	Ensure the student's IEP is being met.	10/11/2019 7:33 AM
4	Make sure student accommodations are implemented, give additional support to students.	10/9/2019 8:37 PM
5	maintain safety for student, deliver individualized accommodations as determined by related service providers (sensory diet, oral motor activities, speech device)	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
6	passing out supplies, assisting students with work, keeping students on task	10/9/2019 10:00 AM
7	They work with the teacher to help students succeed in the classroom environment. Some of their responsibilities include helping with standard tasks such as grading, taking attendance, recording grades, making copies, and collecting homework.	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
8	To help the student stay on task during the various phases of the lesson. To help the students complete their work in a timely manner in the classroom. Assist the classroom teacher in supporting the students in their learning in a positive and productive manner	10/8/2019 11:05 AM

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9	Provide modifications and accommodations for students. These modifications and accommodations should be monitored by certified staff. Personal aides should also be collecting data.	10/8/2019 9:30 AM
10	To provide modifications and accommodations which are being monitored by certified staff and to collect data on the effectiveness.	10/8/2019 9:16 AM
11	To assist the teacher with the student in the classroom. The assistant or personal aide should be focusing on what the needs of the teacher are. Some teachers like to handle their "difficult" students on their own and have the aide continue to run the classroom with the other students to try and have the least interrupted educational experience. Some teachers would reverse the roles and have the aide handle the more challenge behaviors or emotions to provide consistency to the child.	10/8/2019 8:29 AM
12	To assist with tasks and organizational skills	10/8/2019 8:13 AM
13	ensure their IEP's are followed, accommodations are made, and communicate with student about their needs and performance.	10/8/2019 7:56 AM
14	assistance with modifications/access to FAPE	10/8/2019 7:43 AM
15	They should be privy to the accommodations students need but unfortunately it does not seem that they are. I was told by an administrator to delegate responsibilities to my aides, something that is, in my opinion, not my job to do.	10/8/2019 7:32 AM
16	To assist the student	10/8/2019 6:51 AM
17	To help with the daily routines of the child.	10/7/2019 7:12 PM
18	Depends on whether it is a physical or academic need or a behavioral need	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
19	A teacher assistant/personal aide should be an image of the special education teacher and follow all detail directions. Role playing with the teacher, know codes among each other so that nothing would escalate and it can run smooth. Making sure that when a special education teacher is multitasking the aide is on task without being told what to do with each individual goals and objectives.	10/7/2019 6:18 PM
20	An aide works with small groups of students or 1:1, providing guidance to students on an already teacher-taught skill	10/7/2019 3:37 PM
21	help	10/7/2019 3:11 PM
22	To assist /aide me with my students	10/7/2019 3:01 PM
23	Helps provide assistance/modification for students, keeps students focused	10/7/2019 2:53 PM
24	Aide can help students with organizational tasks, transitions, and redirect when off task. They can also retell and reword directions and answer student questions.	10/7/2019 2:53 PM
25	assist per iep	10/7/2019 2:38 PM
26	Escort students to class	10/7/2019 2:38 PM
27	To work collaboratively with the general education teacher to support the special education students in the classroom and all students in the classroom.	10/7/2019 2:31 PM
28	I have not had a personal aide in my classroom. I am assuming to assist the student with their daily schedule, work, and following directions.	10/7/2019 2:28 PM
29	Support a students individualized education program and progress towards goals	10/7/2019 2:25 PM
30	support teacher in any way, support student one on one, help student focus and attend, attend all specials with student	10/7/2019 2:22 PM
31	follow the directions of the teacher, keep students on target, instruct the curriculum provided by the teacher, keep the classroom clean	10/7/2019 2:19 PM
32	They are there to assist the teacher and help with the students.	10/7/2019 2:16 PM
33	redirects student when needed	10/7/2019 2:16 PM
34	Depends on what the students needs are	10/7/2019 2:11 PM

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35	The teacher assistant assists the teacher in the day to day runnings of the classroom. They might take small groups of students to complete activities and assist in making materials, as well as classroom management. They also accompany students to specials. A personal aide is assigned to a specific student and assists them in completing their daily assignments and manage social situations as needed.	10/7/2019 2:08 PM
36	help students one-on-one with behavior and staying on task	10/7/2019 2:05 PM
37	A teacher assistant is to monitor classroom procedures and assist where needed/necessary. A personal aide is to assist primarily with a specific student and then assist where needed.	10/7/2019 2:05 PM
38	NA	10/7/2019 2:04 PM
39	assisting the students in the class throughout the day.	10/7/2019 2:01 PM
40	As a teacher assistant, the tasks are to support the students by providing extra assistance and to reinforce skills taught by the special education teacher.	10/7/2019 1:37 PM
41	Assisting supporting a students individualized education program	10/7/2019 1:30 PM
42	Aids in the classroom help keep students on task throughout the lesson, as well as working one on one with struggling students	10/7/2019 1:27 PM
43	assists depending on students' IEPs	10/7/2019 1:26 PM
44	Teacher's assistants are involved with helping keep students focused on tasks/lessons	10/7/2019 1:22 PM

Q26 Do you have any suggestions as to how the district might improve the quality of education for students receiving special education services?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 74

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	offering a more complete variety of placement options to expand services we are able to provide (in-class support options, ABA classes across grades with students who need the services, etc.) having behavioral services available for students who aren't classified, secretaries for scheduling so that CST members have more available time to use their expertise for consultation, education for staff and direct services	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	no	10/11/2019 3:44 PM
3	No	10/9/2019 8:37 PM
4	plan in advance of needed support instead of only supporting reactively	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
5	Identify and place students in elementary school to take advantage of early intervention /have In Class Support for LA and Math	10/9/2019 10:00 AM
6	offer in class support for MATH and ELA at the MS level	10/8/2019 1:47 PM
7	They need to stop scaling back on services for the special education students. The inconsistency and lack of personal aide also hinders the students ability to be successful in class. Hire administrative staff that are actually invested in providing the best services for all students and that possess the qualification required under the special education law	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
8	Don't know	10/8/2019 11:36 AM
9	None	10/8/2019 11:05 AM
10	Programs to support students emotional needs.	10/8/2019 9:30 AM
11	Programs specifically designed for a variety of academic intervention programs; emotional support for the students	10/8/2019 9:16 AM
12	To provide more options for the children in special education, especially at the lower levels. We would benefit from a behavior room at the elementary level as well as additional in class support rooms. Also, more classroom aides for our ICS classrooms to help manage our students with difficult behaviors as to not disrupt the entire classroom.	10/8/2019 8:29 AM

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13	None	10/8/2019 8:13 AM
14	More communication. My emails to administration in special ed often go unreturned.	10/8/2019 7:32 AM
15	Students in Resource or ICS settings for their academic classes do not get this same support in their electives, which are often just as rigorous as the academic courses. Certain electives should be treated as academic, for the purposes of assigning ICS.	10/8/2019 7:26 AM
16	None	10/8/2019 6:51 AM
17	Programs offered throughout the district should be identical for special education students.	10/7/2019 7:12 PM
18	Stop trying to put round pegs in square holes... give them what they need rather than what we have	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
19	Special Education teachers need to be reminded that when dealing with any student with special needs, it is constant repetition for as long as it takes (until the goal and objective is met). It can take a few days, weeks, months, or more. Students can regress and we should not limit our teaching just because their classified. We need to let them know that we must always keep the students minds in movement and active constantly by teaching and communicating. Most students take time to process things and you can not rush them. Definitely, we need a professional to talk in great detail about what a special education teacher is entitled to. In my opinion, if you want a great school year to run smoothly for you, you must take care of social, emotional, and behavioral before you begin the academic part. This requires discipline and consistency in all areas. You can not let anything go by. PD is priority in a small group setting or one on one. Sometimes teachers need one on one or small group to have a better understanding. Positive attitude, empathy, and passion is huge in this particular field.	10/7/2019 6:18 PM
20	More case managers and staff, smaller amounts of special education students per class, more room for adequate resource rooms	10/7/2019 3:37 PM
21	no	10/7/2019 3:11 PM
22	No	10/7/2019 3:01 PM
23	More staff so lower ratio of students to teacher; curriculum that actually fits students' ability levels; more support for gen ed teachers who work with special ed students; testing done at appropriate time for students so they don't start the year in improper placements	10/7/2019 2:53 PM
24	Do not put students with behavior problems in the same homerooms as students with IEPs.	10/7/2019 2:53 PM
25	none	10/7/2019 2:38 PM
26	More co-teaching PD... There has been great co-teaching professional development done, and I would suggest the district continues with more of the same.	10/7/2019 2:31 PM
27	come to observe students who are in the I&RS process; attend I&RS meetings; observe the students who currently have IEPs in the gen ed classroom; meet with the teachers (special ed and gen ed teachers)who have students with IEPs	10/7/2019 2:28 PM
28	protocol for students who are aggressive and disruptive needs to improve	10/7/2019 2:22 PM
29	Teacher aides for students requiring services	10/7/2019 2:19 PM
30	more communication to the students that need assistance	10/7/2019 2:16 PM
31	Keeping the students in special Ed and not declassifying too early	10/7/2019 2:11 PM
32	The district should be providing the teachers with any relevant tools or curriculum to meet the student at their functional levels. They should also be providing any equipment needed to make the classroom environment a safe place for the students if they have mobility needs. In addition, consideration for co-teaching pairings should be communicated and evaluated; often teachers who work well together are split apart. Student placements are often based on "numbers" rather than data, leaving the students to struggle in what should be their LRE. Students in SE are given a general education report card, which can be defeating to them if they are not achieving according to the state standards.	10/7/2019 2:08 PM
33	more guidelines about the process	10/7/2019 2:05 PM
34	Looking more into the placement of teachers - not separating co-teaching models that work, placing students/teachers in placements where they will flourish instead of placements that will cause frustration for all involved. Providing more materials for the students to learn with and improve their learning (hands on materials, flexible seating, etc.)	10/7/2019 2:05 PM

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35	No	10/7/2019 2:04 PM
36	By having teacher aides/assistance appropriately trained in strategies to support students and staff.	10/7/2019 1:37 PM
37	Smaller pull out groups, less than 12 in a classroom	10/7/2019 1:27 PM

Q27 Do you have any suggestions as to how the district might improve the management and operation of special education programs?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 75

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	more departmental secretaries to assist with scheduling/mailling/documenting, centralized forms, more communication across buildings, more consistent CST meetings/collaboration to discuss services available and specific students, new filing system so that files are more readily accessible to each case manager, consistent guidelines for offering various services/supports	10/15/2019 7:21 PM
2	no	10/11/2019 3:44 PM
3	No	10/9/2019 8:37 PM
4	-training for staff, (CST) within the areas they need within their discipline also opportunities to discuss specific cases and needs on a regular basis with supervisors,	10/9/2019 4:41 PM
5	more support staff:building based behaviorist/counselor/case manager; offer ICS for Math & LA	10/9/2019 10:00 AM
6	Need budgetary management, stop using special education funds for other items or in other areas. Hire qualified staff that have knowledge of the special education law.	10/8/2019 1:13 PM
7	Don't know	10/8/2019 11:36 AM
8	None	10/8/2019 11:05 AM
9	Additional supervisors to meet with different departments within special services to develop plans, strategies, and answer questions in order to best meet students needs in that particular area (e.g., scheduling, legal matters, referrals, I&RS).	10/8/2019 9:30 AM
10	Supervisor of special education to assist CST members on IEPs, attend IEP meetings on a regular basis, and hold meetings on a regular basis to answer specific questions as cases arise.	10/8/2019 9:16 AM
11	clear and consistent communication between CST and Admin, especially in regards to students tested over the summer.	10/8/2019 8:32 AM
12	To hire people in the positions of leadership that are competent and lead their employees. There is a distinct divide in how different teams in different buildings for special education operate, and not all of them are the most friendly or efficient. I also believe that hiring a supervisor for the department who is familiar with ALL of the grade level protocols and curriculum, not just one level, would have been beneficial in order for that person to help provide guidance to those teachers in that department. I also think that stricter consequences for people who are 'not doing their jobs' would set the example of the expectations within the department.	10/8/2019 8:29 AM
13	None	10/8/2019 8:13 AM
14	Communicate with teachers more. We are in the dark until the first day of school then surprise!	10/8/2019 7:32 AM
15	None	10/8/2019 6:51 AM
16	We need an additionaly employee, a spanish speaking liason. As of right now we only have a handful of people who speak spanish in this department.	10/7/2019 7:12 PM
17	Again stop putting round pegs in square holes and take seriously the aggressive behaviors of kids that can harm staff and other children	10/7/2019 6:31 PM
18	See number 11	10/7/2019 6:18 PM
19	Administrators knowledgeable of special education and special education law.	10/7/2019 3:37 PM

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20	EXPLAIN IEP's and ACTUALLY receive services intended/needed	10/7/2019 3:28 PM
21	no	10/7/2019 3:11 PM
22	No	10/7/2019 3:01 PM
23	see above	10/7/2019 2:53 PM
24	Have a beginning of the year meeting to go over IEPs and any special circumstances before the school year begins.	10/7/2019 2:53 PM
25	None	10/7/2019 2:38 PM
26	See answer to question number 6.	10/7/2019 2:31 PM
27	make sure the programs are suited to the students' needs; make sure the special ed teacher has appropriate space and materials to provide adequate learning environment for their students; do not simply "declassify" students leaving them with no support for the following year-the child should automatically move into the I&RS system for the following year to allow for the child to be monitored	10/7/2019 2:28 PM
28	Increase the special education classrooms and teacher assistants for students	10/7/2019 2:19 PM
29	checking in with their special education teachers	10/7/2019 2:16 PM
30	Having ICS for math and ela. Our tested subject areas have no ICS at the middle school. They children struggle in math but get no services that could benefit besides asi. Asi isn't the same benefit	10/7/2019 2:11 PM
31	There needs to be better communication about expectations and resources available to utilize to meet the students' needs.	10/7/2019 2:08 PM
32	confer with all the teams so everyone is working together	10/7/2019 2:05 PM
33	Communicate better, have teachers part of the entire IEP meeting rather than just sign and 5 minutes of talking and allowing people who have minimum interaction with the children make the most academic decisions for them. Getting coverage for meetings so students/teachers are not rushed.	10/7/2019 2:05 PM
34	No	10/7/2019 2:04 PM
35	Continue to retrain new teachers how to write appropriate and measurable goals and present levels.	10/7/2019 1:37 PM
36	Continuous check ins with members of the Child Study Team (not necessarily IEP review meetings)	10/7/2019 1:27 PM