Survey of Special Education Services

Monroe County Community School Corporation
2007-2008 School Year
Survey Overview

Goals of the Survey included:

- Provide new Director of Special Education data regarding services in the district
- Provide a voice for stakeholders in the district
- Uncover stakeholder perceptions in key areas of service delivery.
Survey Overview

• Survey responses collected from:
  – Parents of students receiving special education services
  – Special educators
  – General educators
  – Building and district administrators

• School personnel completed survey online using Survey Monkey

• All parents received paper survey in mail (with return envelope enclosed)
Survey Overview

• All surveys based on 5-point Likert Scale regarding IEP process, transition needs, inclusive philosophy, quality of services.

• All surveys provided option to leave self-generated, written responses to specific questions and/or general concerns.
Survey Limitations

• Survey questions were not identical—we sought to obtain group-specific responses from each target group. This limits the ability to compare attitudes across groups.

• Response rate was inconsistent:
  – Parents:
  – Special educators:
  – General educators:
  – Administrators:
Survey Limitations

- No student input
- Choice of “Undecided” on rating scale resulted in unclear findings.
- “Undecided” was eliminated from calculations.
Full Survey Results

• Will be available online at:
  www.mccsc.edu/sped/

• Self-generated, written responses will not be released in order to protect privacy of respondents and identified individuals.
Recurring Themes

• Inclusive Belief
• Training and Professional Development
• IEP Process
• Parent Voice
Inclusive Belief

Special educators and parents tend to see a district in which students are treated as valued members of the school community...

- Special Educators 91% agree/strongly agree
- Parents 81% agree/strongly agree

Students with disabilities have opportunities for developing and enhancing meaningful social relationships...

- Special Educators 93% agree/strongly agree
- Parents 83% agree/strongly agree
Inclusive Belief

Majority of respondents tend to view students with disabilities as included in general education classes, with supports, to the maximum extent possible:

• Special education teachers: 84% agree/strongly agree
• Parents: 75% agree/strongly agree
• Although 25 % of parents also disagree/strongly disagree
Training and Professional Development: Special Educators

The majority of special educators (90%) feel comfortable with their level of training for Learning Disabilities, ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Significant Disabilities, Speech/Language and others disorders

• 49% agree/41% strongly agree
Training and Professional Development: *General Educators*

General educators are mixed as to whether they are trained overall to fully include students with Learning Disabilities, ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Significant Disabilities, Speech/Language and others disorders:

- 49% Agree/ 10% strongly agree
- 32% Disagree /9% strongly disagree

...and in specific areas...:

- 64% A/SA in Learning Disabilities
- 59% A/SA in ASD
- 35% A/SA in Significant Disabilities

*Implication: More training in specific areas of need*
Training and Professional Development: Parents

How do parents view teachers’ knowledge about their child’s support needs?

- 65% agree/strongly agree that Special Education teachers are knowledgeable in their child’s support needs.
- 43% agree/strongly agree that General Education teachers are knowledgeable in their child’s support needs.

Implication: Additional training for teachers, specifically general education teachers.
Parents as Contributors

Special educators displayed a sense that parents are “valued contributors” in this district:

• 94% agree/strongly agree

However...
IEP Process: Parent Voice

While a significant number of parents indicated understanding & satisfaction with the IEP and evaluation process (63%), some parents feel devalued or dissatisfied.

- 63% felt their concerns were valued; 37% did not
- 66% felt the IEP addresses all identified areas of disabilities; 34% didn’t.

*Implication: Further discussion with stakeholders to fully address this issue....*
Comments: *Parents*

Themes from *Parent* comments:

- Building/staff specific positive comments (!)
- Overall frustration with perceived lack of sufficient services (e.g., time), particularly related services
- Lack of regular communication with special education staff
Themes from *General Educator* comments:

- Need for additional training in accommodations, strategies
- Concern that special education teachers are “spread too thin”
Comments: Special Educators

Themes from Special Educator comments:

- Case loads are too high
- Need for more time (e.g., time to consult with other staff, particularly related service providers)
What we have done so far....

- Increased SLP staffing and realigned assignments
- Increased OT staffing
- Reassigned special education staffing to reflect increased support for schools with greatest need
- Added paraeducators
Some activities to date:

- Special Education Information Forums for parents/staff
- Hosted IU Family Conference for students with ASD
- Co-sponsored CHADD/MCCSC on ADHD, ASD
- Summer Academy training initiative preschoolers & students with substantial needs
- Co-teaching/collaboration training with IU
- Co-sponsored statewide TEACCH training w/ IU
- New ISTART 7 IEP process
- Article 7 training, including case conference procedures
Activities to date, continued

- Crisis Prevention & Intervention training
- Statewide Collaboration on Roundtable: Evidence-Based Practices for Children & Youth with ASD
- Boys Town training
- Transition IEP training
- Monthly special education discussion sessions for teachers
- And other building-based training specific to student needs (e.g., autism spectrum disorders; bipolar disorder)
Next steps..

• Develop a system to determine general ed staff training needs
• Assess staffing levels at all schools
• Continue training in areas of disability; strategies to address deficits, and case conference procedures
• Follow up on Parent Voice concerns