



Mesa Special Education Alliance

TEACHER & SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEY RESULTS

2022



MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

- Background and Introduction
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MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Background and Introduction

Mesa Special Education Alliance represents a community of parents, teachers and service providers working collaboratively for positive change.

Teacher recruitment and retention is the most pressing issue facing K-12 education.

Data indicates teachers want their voices heard.

Governing Board has expressed desire to hear more in-depth input from classroom teachers.

Teachers express existing avenues for candid teacher feedback are not effective.

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Exploring the Motivation

- Student and employee safety
- Student achievement and well-being
- Students receiving necessary services
- Staff well-being and retention

We all agree *successful teachers lead to successful students.*

We want to retain our hard-working teachers and service providers in MPS.

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Survey Purpose and Design

Purpose: to elevate the voices of teachers and service providers and better understand if they have the support and resources needed to perform their work.

Questions written collaboratively by teachers, service providers, principals and parents.

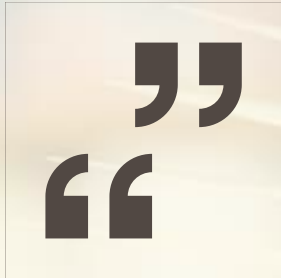
Question themes:

- Empowerment
- Support from Special Education Department
- Resources
- Workplace Resilience
- Family Involvement

Anonymity determined to be very important.

Participation was voluntary; no incentives offered.

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022



There are not enough teachers at the table during discussions about education practice and policy, especially in the area of school funding priorities.

Many teachers desire opportunities and structures to contribute to conversations and decisions that impact their work.

Office of Maricopa County
School Superintendent Steve Watson

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Survey Response Rate

We used two distribution channels:

- Peer to peer sharing
- Email

497 surveys emailed (special education teachers, SLP's, school psychologists)

151 respondents

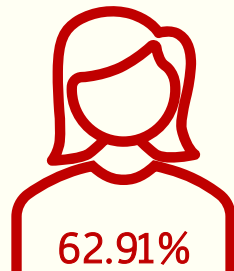
Response rate: 30%

We want the survey results to evoke frank conversation between all stakeholders on the needs of educators.

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Overview of Respondent Data: Current roles

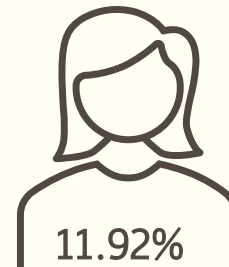
63% of respondents were Special Education teachers



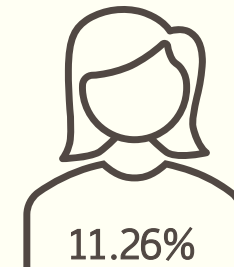
**Special
Education
Teachers**



Service
Providers
(OT, PT, HI, SLP, VI, etc.)



Other
(Instructional
Coaches, School
Psychologists, etc.)



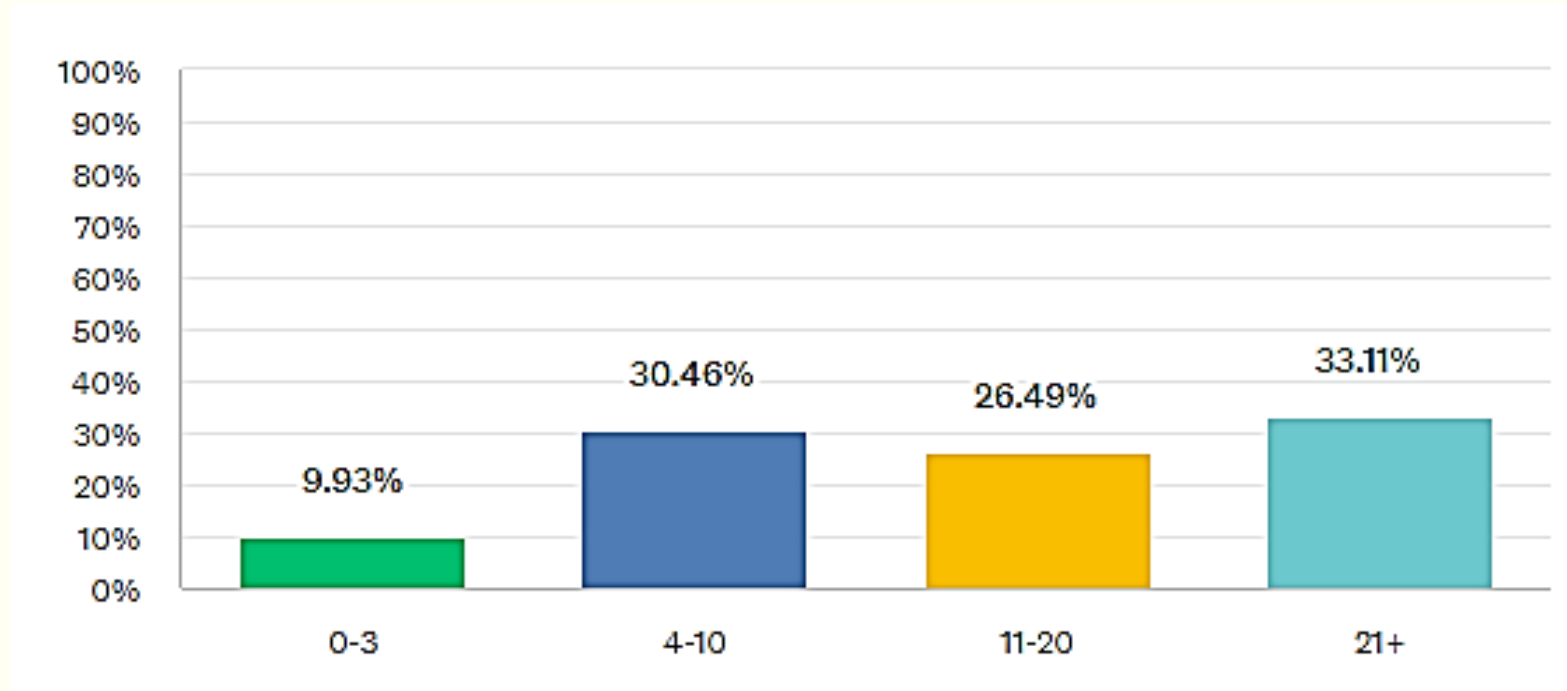
General
Education
Teachers

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Overview of Respondent Data: Years experience

61% of respondents had over 11 years experience;

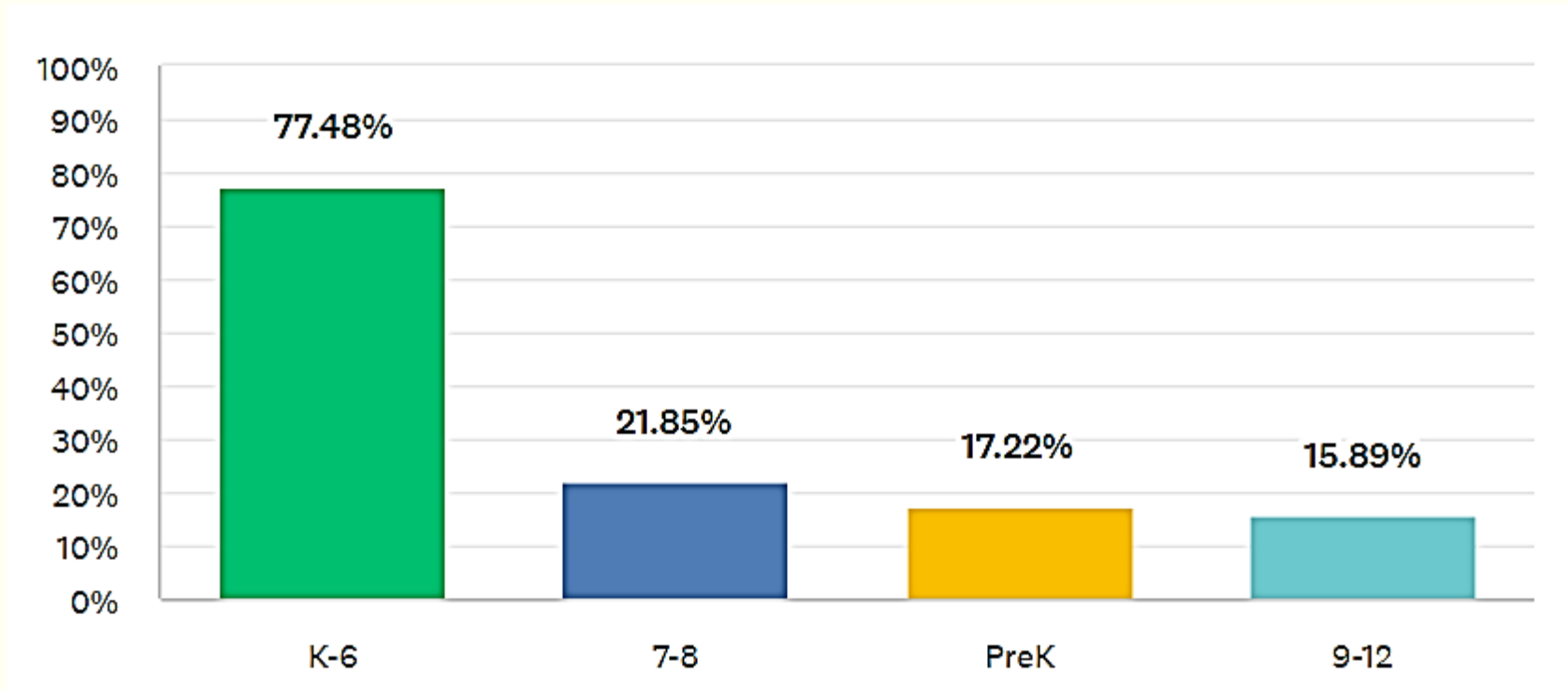
33% were veteran teachers/service providers with over 21 years of experience



MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

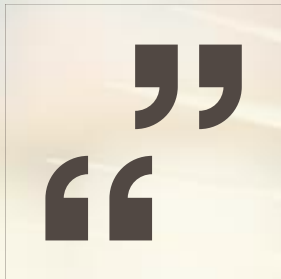
Overview of Respondent Data: Grade Range Taught

77% of respondents teach K-6th grades



Note: Response percentages exceed 100 due to staff teaching multiple grade levels

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022



We also have to make sure our people are well, and taken care of. It's actually a drilling down, to how do we maximize the health and welfare of the caring individuals, from classified to support staff. All are supporting our children.

MPS Governing Board Member Kiana Sears
Governing Board Meeting, October 26, 2021

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Key Takeaways:

1. 75% of all respondents stated their number one area of need to help them be more successful in their roles was *adequate IA staffing*

Respondent comments:

“Special Education Instructional Assistants should make more than what they can make at the local fast food or retail store. I cannot do my job without them. Our students deserve to have a team that is adequately staffed.”

“...sub aides should be available when aides are out. Running a self-contained classroom is not safe for students when we are short staffed.”

“My concern is the amount of support preschool teachers receive. Student numbers are often high with zero IA’s hired so the classroom is not safe.”

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Key Takeaways:

2. Respondents reported there is a strong sense of support and workplace resilience at their campus level.

72% of respondents reported their peers and fellow colleagues are the professionals at their school sites that best listen, encourage, respect and support them, followed by their principal at 50%.

Respondent comment:

“I am very THANKFUL to be at my school. The Principal, Title 1 Specialist, Counselor and Psychologist have come running at a moments notice to help me and my students. If not for them, I would not currently be a teacher. They are the ONLY reason I am not leaving MPS this year!”

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Key Takeaways:

3. Several respondents reported Instructional Coaches have provided a high level of support and value

Respondent comments:

“District SPED coaches are amazing.”

“Instructional Coach for Special Education has been very helpful.”

“The instructional coach - and she was supposed to be working with general ed teachers but she was the one and only support for the whole year. She was awesome.”

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Key Takeaways:

4. Special Education teachers & service providers want increased communication with Special Education Administration and an avenue to have their input heard and validated

Respondent comments:

“There is a huge lack of communication between directors and teachers....How about a monthly/bi-weekly email sent from directors about how things are going. Positives and negatives! Relay the information teachers need to the TEACHERS.”

“I do not feel that there is a safe place for me to voice my concerns. Thank you for putting this survey out.”

“It would be nice instead of seeing the instructional coach all the time if the area director and special education assistant superintendent would be present and visit our classrooms. Support us being in the trenches.”

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Key Takeaways:

We found ample evidence of MPS personnel's need to have a safe avenue to share their candid input in response to our last question, which was open-ended and gave teachers and service providers the opportunity to share any additional thoughts and concerns. Ninety-six responses were received. The following twenty-two slides provide valuable insight into educators' perceptions and touch upon a variety of topics, including the love for teaching, future outlook of the profession, mental health concerns, peer support, inclusionary practices and District support.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- In supporting 23+ sped teachers this year, there is a general feeling of being overwhelmed with all that is expected of them and many are burned out. I have found that my part of my position this year has been one of supporting the emotional well-being of the teacher. No, I am not a licensed counselor but I offer my ear to actively listen, and make suggestions to assist them in the class. (Three teachers mentioned to me that the EAP is not effective) It is said that the best counselor is one that acts like a mirror and I feel that much of my time has been spent doing this. Being in the field of education for almost 30 years, I fear that we will continue to have a mass exodus of many good teachers. Schools are a microcosm of our society and we are all aware of how our culture has changed. There are growing mental health issues now (with teachers and students) since the pandemic that have not been addressed. There is also our economy and the crazy inflation. A few teachers I personally know are leaving the profession to make more money elsewhere. They insist that the stress is not worth the pay.

I'm not sure of a solution but we must do something that improves the emotional well-being of our teachers if we want them to continue and be effective. Teaching tends to be an isolating profession to begin with, and there needs to be more positive contacts rather than the scheduled meeting with the faculty to discuss the next project with looming deadlines.

I'm glad this survey has been sent out to teachers. I hope they will be honest.

- I feel that our district is struggling to maintain special education teachers due to pay. I have teachers leaving Mesa to go to surrounding districts due to lack of pay in our district. Teachers are being offered \$6,000+ more for the same position which to most people, \$6,000 is extremely enticing. The least our district can do is be competitive in pay with surrounding districts, otherwise we will continue to lose teachers at record pace. We need to pay a wage that teachers and staff can live off of (especially with inflation) for the work they are doing. Otherwise, I foresee the teacher and sub shortage that happened in January 2022 to continue annually.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- Looking at my contract, where did our sped stipend go? We worked really hard to earn it!
- We don't have enough aide support.
- Special ed teachers need aides, they need more support with behaviors, they need an extra prep to be in compliance with IEP/progress monitoring/paperwork demands
- Special Ed director is out of touch. Sped department has become top heavy while students struggle with limited resources.
- I think it would be helpful if the lines of communication were open. Teacher burnout is real and when a concern is expressed it should not be ignored. We should be allowed to express our thoughts and concerns, not silenced by being yelled at or dismissed.

Furthermore, the instructional coach assigned to our school was basically useless. She frequently came into the classroom and spent a lot of her time sitting and looking at her computer. This was observed by several individuals.

There are other concerns that I may address at a later time.

- My work would be more meaningful if I felt respected and supported by my principal and area directors. Instead I feel micromanaged and disrespected much of the time.
- Stop trusting others to give you input in matters they don't know much about. If you want to know about what goes on inside a classroom, admin should not be your first and best source for information.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- The district needs to provide more support for inclusion for our students with disabilities - going to a homeroom for the pledge or going to lunch at the same time as peers but at a different table is NOT inclusion. there will be a new psychologist at this campus. I hope that there is better communication with the IEP teams. There was a student who I did 3 PBIPS for this year and the psych did NOT do a FBA
- General Education teachers at my site lack tools that would help them be successful in the area of behavior management.
- Teaching is tough, especially special ed. I have not been able to get resources such as curriculum, both academic (math) and SEL. We have so many coaches, yet we have classroom positions that are unfilled. It would be more beneficial for teachers to have coaches be in the classroom so that classroom teachers don't have to worry about doing their own job plus the job of an unfilled position. Don't get me wrong, I love my coach and she is extremely helpful, but I can't understand how they keep adding coaching positions, which are always filled, when there are so many open classroom positions! Coaches get a bigger stipend than teachers and they don't have to do any of the extras that teachers do (parent teacher conferences, curriculum night, school carnival, reading night, etc). Elementary classrooms are sorely lacking in educational materials and furniture, yet the SPED preschool classroom on my campus (and I'm told ALL of them in the district) get brand new furniture and materials. I have had to pay for everything out of my own pocket! Oh, and then there is all of the new desks and the "lounge" in the SSC for SPED staff. They all have expensive new desks that have a motor to move them to standing, a couch with Jenga. I wish I had time to play games during my work day.

Leadership also continues to close and move programs. This hurts students! Information isn't shared with staff until the last minute. There is no behavior support. When asked for, you are told to write a behavior plan (with no support).

- N/A

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- No one, like the people who are supposedly sent here to "help" are helping with problems. All we ever hear is things like "I can't help but reach out to your principal" (but the principal says to ask the sped department) or "That's not what I'm here to support you with" or "I haven't seen anything like that going on" or "Well, just get along" or "Work it out". It makes all of us feel disrespected as a professional.
- Our aides need to be treated with more respect. They need higher compensation, benefits and flexibility with serving student needs. For example, I had one aide out with long-term Covid. Her aide hours went mostly unused. Meanwhile, the remaining aides had to work extra hard to cover for her but they could not go over their allotted hours. They worked off the clock to ensure student safety. We were given a talk and an email that reprimanded us for this practice. That has to be noted, MPS does not support employees "working off the clock." But in reality, we look the other way and hope that students are covered. I want to work for a district that has a clear mission/commitment, "In order to serve students well, we have to have excellent employees. We take care of our employees so that they can take care of the students." Retention, recruitment, and compensation are three key components. I know you don't have the money to pay much more. There needs to be a campaign based on integrity to speak plainly to our state legislators and community. School choice takes funds away from public education. We are in crises. We need to change how we do things.
- I am leaving MPS special education for a general education position. District Special education administration has such unrealistic expectations that Special Teachers are burned out and miserable. This is unsustainable.
- While all school District have thier faults, this is the first school districst that I feel I can go to anyone for support without judgement. I feel wanted and valued at my job and have a great support system.
- Overall I don't feel the district administration is supportive of the special education teachers. There is a lot expected of us with very little time or resources.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- There is a lot of information that is not provided to case managers and service providers. For example, I found out on May 17th, 2022 that 2nd + 3rd grade IEPs need a MOWR statement. Had I been notified of that in the beginning of the year, then I would have had compliance with all IEPs. Yet, I was notified 2 days before the end of the year? That is ridiculous. There is a huge lack of communication between directors and teachers. All I am ever told is what my district chair reports from meetings, and honestly that is rare information being relayed. How about a monthly/bi-weekly email sent from directors about how things are going! Positives and negatives! Relay the information teachers need to the TEACHERS!

Also, caseloads are extremely high. In my professional expertise, this isn't specially designed instruction when I am providing it to groups of 10+. There is no time in the day for individual instruction to students who need the small group setting to learn and apply skills. Not ethically correct and not in the students' best interest. Hire more teachers. Make caseloads more manageable. You'll see far more growth amongst staff (and retention of staff) and student growth.

I've also heard from admin that "do the student right, it would have been done in a different state..." on initial METs. If the data shows a student does not have a SLD, then it is NOT ethically right to pull for services. It is embarrassing to have this discussion in front of guardians. I have had 2 students this year (1 inherited with academic goals when he only qualified for SLP; 1 initial that the psych had to argue with to admin about). What's right by the student is maybe not advancing them to the next grade when they've missed half a year of school because ????. Not their LRE.

Attendance - students in this district miss WEEKS of school before something is done at the district level. Let's make a plan that we do something before we hit weeks. 3 days, 10 days...way better than WEEKS. Attendance contracts? Parent court? Again, not ethically right to keep students in SPED when they are missing weeks of school. That isn't a disability. That is neglect.

- I love Mesa Public Schools! So happy with my job as an SLP! We just need IAs in Preschool!!!

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- Mesa has come a long way in the negative direction from where we used to be when I started as an SLP. SLP's are disregarded and undervalued by psychologists and the special education director. When in meetings and discussing student needs with district admin they are not listening, are placing students incorrectly in programs, and are not consistent with the criteria they require for student placement in specific programs. The morale is extremely low across the board in Mesa. Feeling replaceable and unimportant are frequently felt here in Mesa. I will be looking for another district in the next 1-2 years if Mesa does not turn it around. It's embarrassing and sad. There is no feeling of professional respect and understanding. It really feels like I am just a warm body filling a position. I am phenomenal at my job but treated like I am unimportant. [REDACTED] has deconstructed the SPED department and has treated all SLP's like we do not make a difference.
- there will be a new psychologist at this campus. I hope that there is better communication with the IEP teams. There was a student who I did 3 PBIPS for this year and the psych did NOT do a FBA
- I love what I do and teaching special education is a privilege. I sincerely wish we were paid more. The cost of gasoline is constantly going up and the cost of my commute is a problem. I really wish I could afford to just come to work and not worry about how I'm going to put gas in the car to get here.
- As a first year teacher, I have felt a lack of support and a lot of frustration this year. When asking for input/advice, asking 5 people will give me 5 answers. I understand that in some things there can be different opinions, but it's frustrating because I can go off of what one person said, and then another person will tell me it's wrong. I'm trying to figure out if the lack of support that I am feeling is from my school, from the district, or just the profession of teaching. At this point I am considering changing districts to see if I find more support elsewhere.
- More paperwork time to do case management part of job

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- The district keeps cutting aide support for special education which makes the job impossible to do. I do not have enough time in my day or enough staff to meet the individual needs of the students. I have talked to other special education teachers and we are all struggling with the special education administration. They are dismissive and show no respect for the special education teachers and have the attitude of leave if you don't like it. Several of my experienced colleagues have quit because they just didn't want to deal with it anymore. I feel like I am totally unsupported by the district and that I can not go to them for help with students that need another placement. My two experienced coaches quit because they couldn't work with the district administration. The new coach I have is totally inexperienced and no help whatsoever. Its sad because 10 years ago the special education district administration in Mesa was so supportive and caring towards the teachers. Now its the opposite and all the experienced teachers are just leaving for the opportunity to work in a better district. District personnel in Special Education to observe and be aware of classroom needs and support, not dictate what needs to be done when they do not know the students or situation.
- Based on what I have heard from various colleagues, I will seek other positions other than Special Education because my colleagues do not feel adequately supported, they are overwhelmed with high caseloads, not enough prep time for lesson planning and writing IEPs as well as having to deal with extreme behavioral issues and are leaving special education department, the district or teaching altogether (whether it be to find other job prospects and/or retiring).
- We are treated very poorly, under compensated and devalued. As soon as my student loans are paid, I will quit. We have lost over more than half of our sped staff this year. My principal is awesome.
- My principal visits classrooms to evaluate teachers. She never pops into classrooms to show support for staff or check in! I feel like the administration is unaware of our students and teachers needs and strengths.
- More visits from area director and communication would be beneficial. More support

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- I am a new teacher (4th year of teaching) from a different state working as a Resource Algebra teacher. My onboarding experience was pretty awful - little to no communication was had on what my expectations were. There is little to no guidance and support. would like to add that my site lead was very helpful and kind - there just seemed to be little resources that could be given to me outside of the little time available in a day - she was stretched thin with responsibilities (all at school) outside of being a department head. Even PD's seem to mostly focus on instructional practices (which IS helpful), but not one was about SPED law and practices that could be refreshed - I hope to see the compliance team more involved in PD's. Accessibility for those in wheelchairs is minimal in my specific school. Students depend on other students to access buildings and have to go long distances between buildings, which causes those who have muscle disabilities unable to get through their whole day independently. Some frequently used buildings do not have any wheelchair accessible doors, most buildings do not have desks that can accommodate electric wheelchairs. Emergency evac chairs are refused to be funded, and instead we are encouraged to have 2 teachers who are close to the classroom carry the student in their wheelchair down 2 flights of stairs and hope they don't lose track of any students in their own rooms as they evacuate.
- - make sure that PD/ training is meaningful/ helpful
 - worry more about what goes on in the classrooms rather than appearances
 - be willing to listen to feedback rather than dismiss it or worse, squelch it
 - realize that when colleagues are collaborating, it is a good thing - sharing ideas is what makes great teachers
 - micro-managing is not a good thing...trust your staff to make decisions, and be supportive instead of controlling - just because it is not the way you would do it does not mean it is wrong

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- I often felt over looked. The other 2 on my team were often acknowledged. The also had the number up the support coach. I often felt pushed back.
- As a self contained teacher for past 11 years I am exhausted from late nights and 12 hours on the weekend to work on IEPs paperwork, and lesson plans that span 3 grade levels. I am also exhausted by the push back of trying to incorporate 6 Sped students into specials that already have FULL classes.
- The way the Applied graduation credits were handled was not adequate. Lack of communication/moving target. In addition I feel like when a change in placement needs to be made for a student, the direct makes the final decision, not the team.
- For years, I have heard members of the community say schools don't need additional funding because funding always goes to district administration. I have always said, "Not in Mesa." I don't know if I can say that with confidence anymore. It seems like that has been the trend the past few years. We have taken good teachers out of the classroom to become 'coaches', we have cut clerical hours to create secretary positions at the district. We have created more leadership roles in special Ed. I just don't understand the thinking. More demands on compliance and larger caseloads and resource classes and we have cuts while more positions are created up top. There is only so much teachers can do and this is a slap in the face. Seventy-five coaches and additional admin support positions is a true slap in the face. It is also pointing to the voters being correct that MPS is admin heavy. I hope district is ready to handle the fall out from their one sided decision making.
- na
- none

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- Having a planning time sub would be beneficial considering I do not have a prep time. Also sub aides should be available when aides are out. Running a self-contained classroom is not safe for students when we are short staffed.
- I'm so tired of the MOID classroom being a dumping ground for a "HodgePodge" of disabilities. MD students (with lots of ADL's, blind students, and severely Autistic students are all placed in MOID classrooms- but, yet, I am only given IA allocations based on numbers. MD students require a lot of an IA's time- leaving the teacher to deal with the other 10 students with an IQ of about 40-55- many with behaviors. When given 2 - 29 hour IA's (58 hours a week)- who hours need to be staggered so I'm not left to get them all in to school by myself or out to the buses by myself, is difficult. When one IA is across campus helping a MD student with their toileting needs and another is at lunch- I'm left with the other 10. Yet, SID classrooms with 5 students have 93 hours of IA assistance. It's exhausting and a constant uphill battle to get adequate help.
- I do not feel like general education staff (including my administrator) understands my job, how I do my job, or the amount of knowledge base goes into each decision that is made in the best interest of my students. I am constantly battling teachers and my principal to understand how to treat and accommodate students with individualized needs.
- I would say just be present. It is great to listen and offer suggestions but to give full support you need to be present. Many times we are just pacified as teachers or told where we are wrong. It would be nice instead of seeing the instructional coach all the time if the area director and special education assistant superintendent would be present and visit our classrooms. Support us being in the trenches.
- They need to listen to teachers, not blow smoke, and be transparent.
- More IA time is needed with the SLD aides getting paid more.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- It would be easier to just have a meeting--too many to list. But then again---I am not sure if my suggestions would be value or even entertained----because so far the answer has been "this is the way we have always done it and we are not changing now" or even entertaining the thought of doing things differently.

How is it the IEP meetings are set and completed OUTSIDE of contract hours? Paid for 8hour days but required 10 hour days because of IEP meetings? It seems to be a violation of the contract offered.

- Again, I feel the area directors are spread too thin and too difficult to get a hold of. I also feel the coaches are spread too thin; fortunately I have enough experience that I didn't need mine too much this year but the number of newer teachers and schools they oversee is crazy and I feel bad for them!
- More even work load. I believe it would be best if the Behavior Coach taught all the Teen Skills classes. Another suggestion is to have the counselors each teach one lesson per week (of their choosing). I was told that counselors were too busy, or that a special ed teacher MUST provide the lessons. I do not agree with this statement because the SPED teachers have their hands full enough and to have to write more lessons out of their subject area seems to be asking too much. Counselors do have time to give up one or two 45 minutes lessons per week and share in the load while using their expertise in this SEL area. To divide the lessons among 4 different counselors would not be asking too much.
- It would be helpful to be briefed on how I can help a student with special needs in my classroom. For example, students that are autistic. It would be nice to know how I can help the child (classroom management/behavior management).
- No prep time. Change of placement is never a team decision, and rarely happens. Special education teachers are treated like they have no experience and don't know what they're doing, especially when it comes to placing students where they need to be.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- At my current school for the 2021-2022 school year, administration's level of involvement and recognition of the special education department is zero. When they attended a special education department meeting, they asked the department how they could support them. 5 separate teachers spoke up and said we need more time to complete our work (as our campus duties increased in time, our caseloads and re-evals were heavy, and we were having multiple meetings for the same students). Admin returned to the meeting and chastised the members of the team for asking for support. He made the department chair the sole decision maker of issues regarding students, the team, the other sped teachers, and other gen ed. teachers. It has become more of a dictatorship with subjects, than a leader of a team and team that works together to make decisions. Decisions are made in the interest of what is convenient for the department chair or gen ed teachers, rather than what is in the best interest of the students and the sped team of teachers. Administration then appointed a school psychologist intern to have complete dictatorship over the department beyond the duties of a psychologist intern. This created an uncomfortable and hostile environment for the special education teachers and other related staff. Employees are spoken to condescendingly, and humiliation and intimidation tactics are used to control the special education teachers--who are seasoned veteran teachers and very thorough case managers who have been an asset to the district. The school psych intern then spent most of her days visiting the office to character assassinate teachers or staff in the special education department who tried to speak up against her, or visit various departments to "back bite" the special education teachers and other staff and "poison the wells" so to speak to other departments, against the special education teachers and special education staff. This has been allowed to take place, and the special education staff attempted multiple communications with administration to notify them this was taken place. However, nothing was done, the humiliation, intimidation, and character assassination of employees increased, and the environment became more hostile. Administration does not demonstrate an interest to be knowledgeable or involved with the special education department and field, and have given total authority and decision making to the school psychologist intern.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

(cont.) Additionally, the school psychologist intern, rather than speaking to staff directly (such as needing IEP input), has chosen to go above special education staff, above their direct supervisors, and to their district supervisors to register complaints against said staff, who are then left confused and blind-sighted because she never attempted to speak directly with staff. She creates toxic environments not only within the school and departments against people, but character assassins people to their supervisors' supervisors. Due to all of the aforementioned, most of the department, which includes seasoned veteran teachers with over 20+ years of experience, or itinerates at the school within the special education department, to leave this particular school. Some staff have decided to leave the district completely because of how they have been treated, some staff have chosen to retire early to get away from this environment and take a huge loss of money, some staff have transferred to other schools after spending multiple years at the school and providing service to the school. This is unacceptable for any MPS staff to feel this way because of a department chair and a school psych intern who have unethical practices and treatment of their colleagues and employees.

- We just need more staff. Smaller caseloads. Having 36-39 students it is not realistic when there are students that are a level B or have behavior management needs. It feels the district does not care of how we manage to get everything done. They just cut one IA from us. It is very frustrating, there is no way we can provide adequate services for the students. This year I've had large groups of up to 12-13 students. This is definitely not meeting the needs the students require.
- I enjoy working for MPS.
- Our special education team often have difficulty getting return calls/texts from our area director in a timely manner.
- Communication is lacking. Lack of support and respect. Administration is not supportive or even seen at the school.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- As stated above, the IA allocation and class size recommendations that were adopted are not adequate. Teachers expressed this when it was introduced and that input was acknowledged but ignored. Just because it went through Meet and Confer does not mean it's good. There is a fundamental lack of understanding by some of the area directors (not all) and the executive director about what teaching in these suggested ratios looks like. They also become defensive when asked to provide the support for this decision.
- Workload and paperwork demands, behaviors, and complete lack of IA support have made the job an untenable or sustainable situation as the hours required to be quality work are more than 60 to 70 hours each week.
- My only concern with SPED at my school (I am Gen Ed) is the number of times when SPED classes get cancelled at the end of the year because the SPED teachers have so much testing to do. They need more support with testing and paperwork so the kids don't miss class.
- My dept chair doesn't seem to know what he's doing or he's not concerned. He seems to push his difficult students onto general ed teachers because he doesn't want to deal with them. Also he has the special ed teachers completing the paperwork that he should be doing. Special Ed District leaders should be aware of the number of special ed students in an inclusion class to make sure it is truly an inclusion classroom. That information should be coming from the teachers themselves because admin of that school can tend to be creative with the numbers.
- I am highly supported as an instructional coach. Lindsay Massey is amazing and always respond and supports promptly!

My concern is the amount of support preschool teachers receive. Student Numbers are often high with zero IA's hired so the classroom is not safe.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- Recognize that sped instructional coaches have a wealth of knowledge and are rarely asked for their opinions or solution ideas.
- None
- Most SPED staff have opinions and want to voice concerns but also do not want to be viewed in a negative manner from district leadership. Many teachers have stated the only reason they work in Mesa is purely for their site support, and that they would leave Mesa if they had to leave their school.
- Nothing to add
- These are great people that work very hard
- Very pleased with the support they offer
- We have been understaffed all year. We know that pay is an issue. We have had open positions that have gotten not one applicant, despite us frequently re-posting the position. The special education department has done nothing to support us. I'm doing more crowd control than teaching, and they keep making excuses that it's a district-wide problem. It's their job to fix the problem, not to make excuses. In response to the substitute teacher shortage, they raised the sub pay. But when it comes to special ed, they flat out refuse to do anything to help us get staffed.
- The district and Administration is so out of touch with what is actually happening in classrooms. No one is getting the best support to be successful. Decisions keep being made by district that make zero sense for a day to day teacher and IAs. It's sad. So many people are leaving education because of the lack of support

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- N/A
- We need help motivating junior high boys to do their personal best. Some give up and fail several if not all classes. We need help getting people to apply for instructional aide positions to support these kids in general ed classes.
- Our site sped admin is incredibly unprofessional, unethical, and is borderline abusive to female staff. He does not provide support to staff when needed, even with students who are on his case load. I have requested support with accommodations for students on his case load and have been told things like, "I don't know that kid very well so I can't help." There have been times that I have had such a high number of sped students in one class that I should have had an IA but was just told there weren't enough available and no other supports were offered. This year, nearly every member of the sped team is leaving our school as a result of the actions of the sped admin.
- n/a
- We need more special education teachers.
- Area director does not support staff and disregard teams input and the experience
- We are over loading teachers with training and paperwork just to say we are doing it. It doesn't seem to matter if it is appropriate for the program or students.
- Na
- GenEd classes, aside from not math and ELA, are not provided with any help finding materials that differentiated for student needs or ability. This is a huge problem.

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- My biggest concern are the cuts made to IA staffing in our severe needs/SID programs. Our caseloads have increased while our IAs have been cut to 2 per class. Our students have many physical needs that need to be met throughout the day and less hands to help mean less needs we can meet. All our time will be spent bathrooming and feeding, leaving little time for academics and OT/PT exercises. Every year I have taught SID a piece of our program has been cut. The burden on teachers and remaining staff is huge. It breaks my heart that I spend more time on all the paperwork required of me than working with my students these days. Sped Admin is so stingy with providing needed services like 1:1 aides, nurses, IAs, inclusion opportunities to students that I am embarrassed to be part of MPS Sped at times. District SPED does not not listen to its teachers. Our thoughts and input is not valued. Parents have to fight so hard to be heard too.
- With multiple grade levels in one class it is impossible to have prep time or lunch. There is never a time during the day I don't have students. When I have an IA I might get a lunch. This is not a new issue. But still. An IA could have students for 15 minutes. The instructions at given to me was leave the room and take lunch. Leaving in IA in charge! Prep time I was told to have my IA run an activity and sit at my desk and prep each day for 30 min. Neither of theses are reasonable options.

How is education appropriate when on done class you have a students who has zero personal care skills, unable to toilet, dress, form letters sounds or not adaptive skills, non speaking in with a students who reads and another who multiplies. How are we appropriately servicing either level. Cross Category classes do not appropriately educate and it reduces the intensity of what sped is about for MI/MO.

- It's unfortunate that sepac has been dissolved and is turning into more of a vehicle for parent university/trainings. Support staffing is a major concern and IA pay needs to be addressed.
- This year has been a challenge. In all of my past years I have been respected as a team member. I won't work with these people again!

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- Our area director has not even met with our staff (Special Educators) this school year. Our directors are supportive when we ask for help. Our team has dwindled over years due to changes made by the new administration (of 3 years) and these changes have provided a more mediocre service model and a more challenging one for Special Educators. I should not have to travel and use my money to pay for car/gas to travel the entire district (largest in the state) and get reimbursed with .44 per mile while our legislators grift off of the funds meant for our schools but are being given away (wrongfully) to state vouchers (paying companies (i.e. Ubers, businesses) \$4.00 per mile to get their children to charter or choice schools. This is not necessarily an MPS issue (it's legislative), but we have a real move to the schools that are the HAVES and the HAVE NOTS in the same district. It's infuriating.
- Retaliation is alive and well in Mesa Public Schools. I have been personally retaliated against more than once for speaking up about our lack of support, and for trying to advocate for my students. There is nobody to hold our special education administrators accountable for their actions, and our department is run by a group of adults comparable to playground bullies. Mesa Public Schools has a policy against bullying for students. It has no such policy for adults. When I tried to get assistance after the first time my area director retaliated against me, our own union wouldn't even assist because it was harassment, and not discrimination as defined under the law.

We currently have no way to give anonymous feedback or evaluate our area directors and director of special education. We no longer receive annual surveys to evaluate them. Our SPED department actually told MEA we received surveys concerning our needs twice this year. The survey they referenced was about SPIRE! IT had nothing to do with our needs.

Behavior support is another issue that must be addressed. We have a behavior department, but teachers must jump through hoops to get assistance. My colleagues and I have all had experiences where it has taken MONTHS to get someone out to our classrooms. There are teachers who need training in behavior strategies, and the behavior department does not assist in training them. For those of us who have significant behavior experience and training, we

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

(cont.) only reach out if we do not have the staffing to implement the behavior plans with fidelity, or to ensure student safety and be able to provide instruction. We are told to write a behavior plan, as though if we write down the strategies we are already providing with fidelity as competent and experienced educators, the plan will magically work. (It WILL NOT work if we don't have sufficient staffing!!! If our behavior department staff are qualified and experienced, they should know that! We have students with significant behavior needs, and not only are their needs not being addressed due to lack of appropriate support, but the needs of our other students are being neglected as a result

Our coaches went from being a valuable resource, providing support to new teachers or struggling teachers, or behavioral support to being SPIRE trainers. We do not need that many SPIRE trainers. We need classroom support. So much money is being poured into where it isn't needed, and very little goes toward supporting the students. We have an obvious need to pay instructional assistants more so that we can fill the dozens of open positions across the district. MPS should be horrified at the number of open positions and the impact on students!

- Please make a decision on who DD Preschool SpEd teachers report to. We currently report to our school principal but also Kim Freehan and Kathy Eustace. Between Kathy and Kim, we receive conflicting information, in-services, etc. It should be Kathy OR Kim plus our principal. Thank you. We end up having to attend meetings for both of them whereas the Gen Ed inclusion teachers only go to Kim's meetings and PDs. We end up with less planning and IEP time. We're already teaching until 4pm each day.
- It is very frustrating that they can't fill classroom positions and some caseloads are extremely high, but there are so many coaches who have no duties outside of their contract day and get a larger stipend.
- Send out a survey to Principals
- N/A

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

- I have worked with MPS for 22 years. In the last 4-5 years, the support from the Special Education Administration has decreased significantly. This year I moved into a new position (I previously taught the same program for 20 years) teaching a new grade level. Due to overwhelming lack of support from the special education administration, I almost walked away from a career that I love twice this year. I asked for assistance for 3 students with significant behavior concerns at the beginning of the year and 2 area directors came out and observed my classroom once for less than an hour. I met with one of them after the observation. No help or assistance was provided. Neither of them have checked on me since the observation in September. The behavior specialist came out to observe and again did not stay long enough to see any of the behaviors I had concerns with. When I asked questions about behavior management and for help writing a behavior plan, she told me neither my coach or herself could help me write the plan. She told me only my psychologist could help (I trained teachers in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention for over 10 years). I needed help!!! She also has never followed up with me about how I am managing.

My coach has only been in my room to observe or provide me with materials a handful of times in the last year. Still trying to figure out a new program and new standards, I'm a bit overwhelmed and feel that a coach should be in the classroom more. I do not reach out to her much as I'm really unsure of what it is I really need. I feel if she were in my room more, she could make materials or provide resources that I may not even know I need. I have been told that I am a "great teacher," but that does not mean I don't need or deserve support.

I am very THANKFUL to be at my school. The Principal, Title I Specialist, Counselor and Psychologist have come running at a moments notice to help me and my students. If not for them, I would not currently be a teacher! They are the ONLY reason that I am not leaving MPS this year!

Special Education Instructional Assistants should make more than what they can make at the local fast food or retail store. I could not do my job without them. Our students deserve to have a team that is adequately staffed. We cannot

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

(cont.) do this if we are asking IAs to work that they are not getting paid for. My IAs make SPED I pay for a SPED II pay workload.

I feel that if teachers should be evaluated on his/her ability to teach, then administrators should be evaluated on his/her ability to lead, direct and support those they serve. Years past there have been surveys and evaluations that teachers could complete on administration. I believe those need to come back.

The fear of retaliation is real. I have personally experienced this when I voiced concerns about administration. I do not feel that there is a safe place for me to voice my concerns.

Thank you so much for putting this survey out.

- I have not had a phone call or visit from any administrator in special education in 3 years. We are required to do PKBs for preschool student transitioning to kindergarten. The area directors never come out to see the student we are discussing yet make the placement decisions (which at times do not align with the team including parents thoughts for this child).

Preschool also has many issues that need to be addressed. Hours being number 1! Our hours do not align with our comprehensive campuses meaning the older students are dismissed at 2, nurse and office staff leave by 3, and our 3/4 year olds are there until 4. This is not safe for students and staff! Our IAs in inclusion classrooms bill Medicaid/change diapers/handle behaviors/etc yet make minimum wage. We have lost many IAs to other grade levels for the same pay/hours that align to their child's school hours/less training and paperwork. This year they pulled the preschool itinerant teachers who provided SDI to students in classrooms with gen Ed only certified teachers. Because of this, all students with SLI only eligibilities have been moved to gen Ed certified teachers and those with DD or PSD have been

Q20: Please share any additional thoughts or concerns you have that would make our work more meaningful and helpful to you as a teacher/service provider.

93 Responses

(cont.) moved to a special Ed certified teacher. This means many students have been moved from their neighborhood campuses (even though there is a preschool program on that campus) increasing the amount of transportation needed for our students to get to and from this other campus and pulling them from a campus their siblings may already be going to.

Preschool administration does NOT work as a team and are very divided with one focusing only on the gen Ed inclusion rooms and one focusing more on self contained rooms. Those of us with special education certifications teaching an inclusion room are stuck in the middle and have both sets of responsibilities (additional curriculum because we are sped certified, DHS because we are inclusion, and many of us are also part of the Quality First Program which involves different planning and meetings).

Finally, it would be great if preschool was recognized in the district. We are always called a k-12 district which is not true. We provide the foundation for so many students. We are a Pre-K-12 district.

- District personnel in Special Education to observe and be aware of classroom needs and support, not dictate what needs to be done when they do not know the students or situation.
- I am moving on into general education next year in another school district. The chance to teach both special and general education at the same time has been a unique experience.
- I would like my general education teachers to understand that special education is not for students who are a little behind grade level.
- n/a
- We need help finding people to apply for IA positions

Q20: Word Cloud

Top 20 most often mentioned words/phrases highlighted in yellow

A word cloud visualization of survey responses. The words are arranged in a roughly rectangular shape, with larger words indicating higher frequency. The background is light blue. The words are in various shades of blue and green. The highlighted words in yellow are: special education, classroom, team, support, staff, district, work, SPED, school, students, year, also, need, feel, teachers, time, pay, and departments.

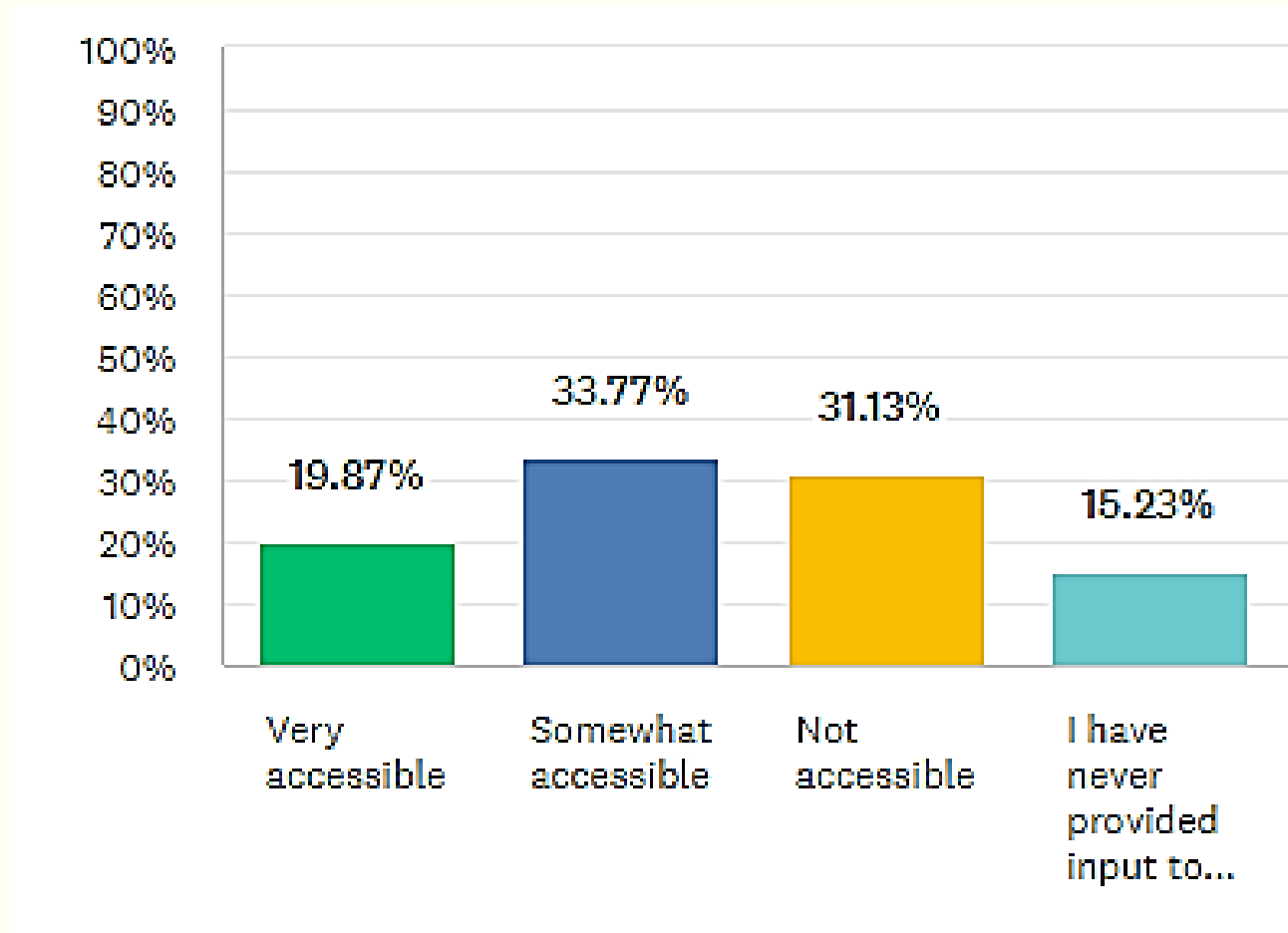
planning changing caseloads training issue sped teachers
special education department want people cut experienced mean Mesa
director leaving concern understand special education teachers best counselors
always campus come make coaches us classroom team hours another heard
lunch respect know SPED support staff district work principal speak
paperwork will given school students special education lack support
IEPs meetings way go need feel teachers IA also days see special
program enough help one provide class many pay asked N teaching
admin told behaviors aides Preschool new area directors resources
listen great treated things complete Special Ed yet required communication
departments

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

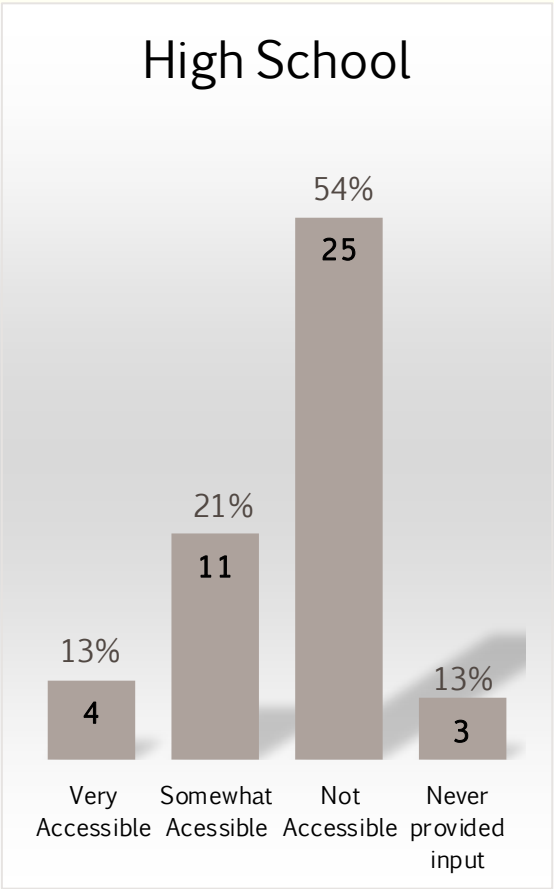
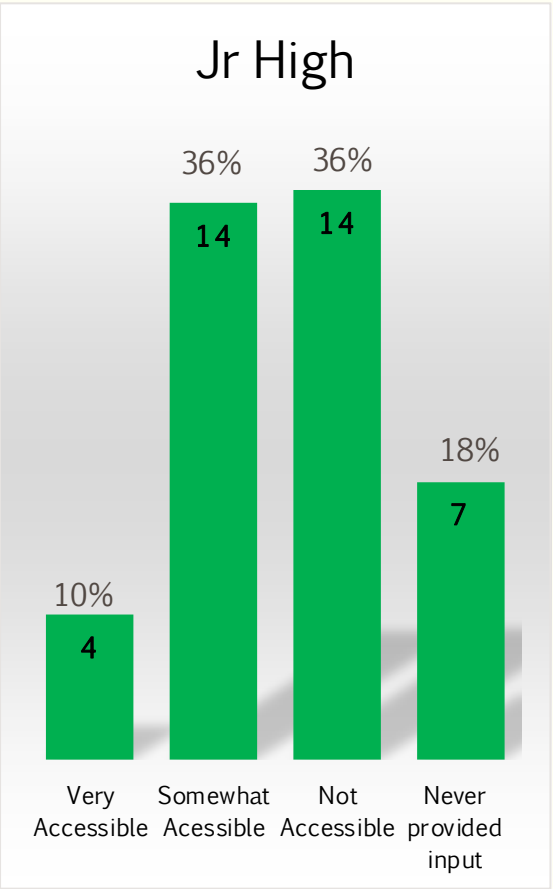
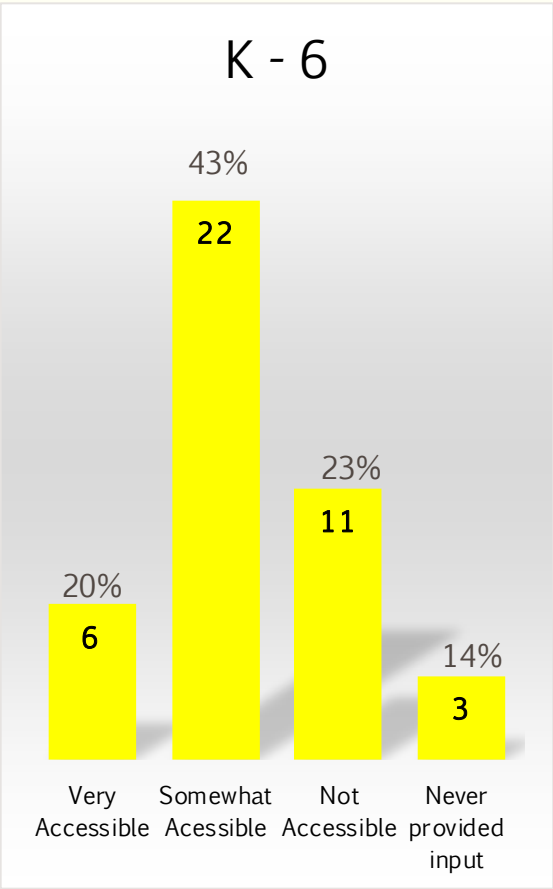
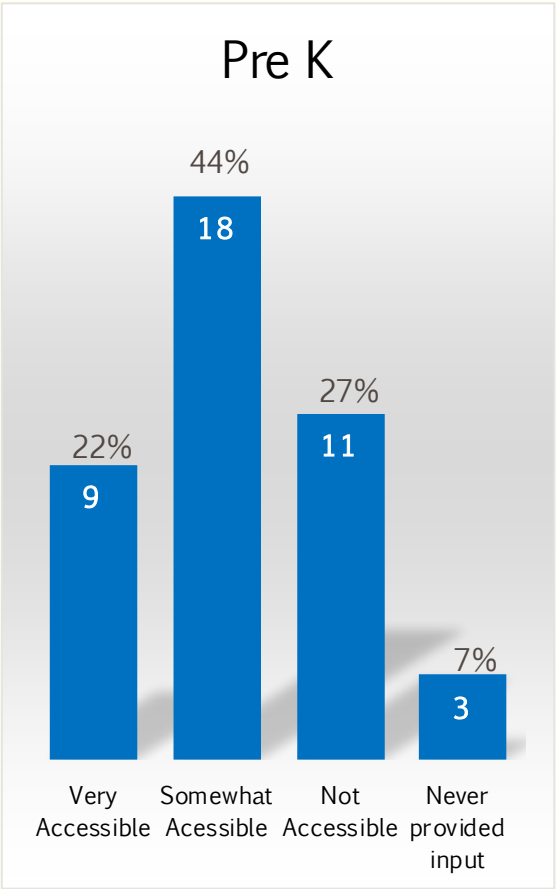
The following slides contain data for questions 4-19 in the survey.

For each question, a takeaway summary statement and the overall respondent data graph is first shown, followed by disaggregated data by *grade band level*, followed by any comments received.

Q4: 31% of respondents reported their Special Education Area Director and Assistant Superintendent were not accessible when they had concerns and desired to provide input.

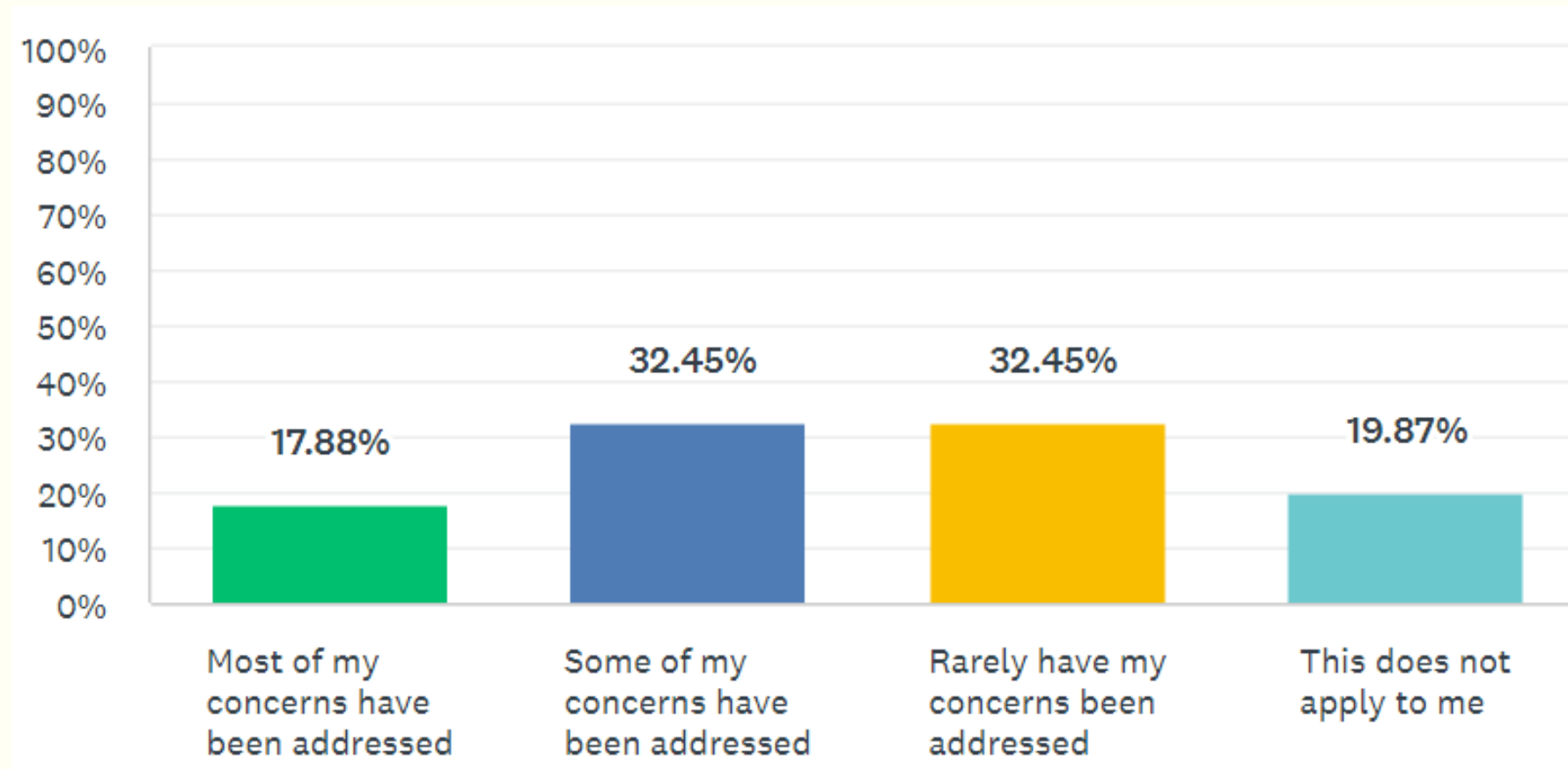


Q4: How accessible do you feel your Special Education Area Director and Assistant Superintendent are when you have concerns and would like to provide input?
(Data by grade level band)

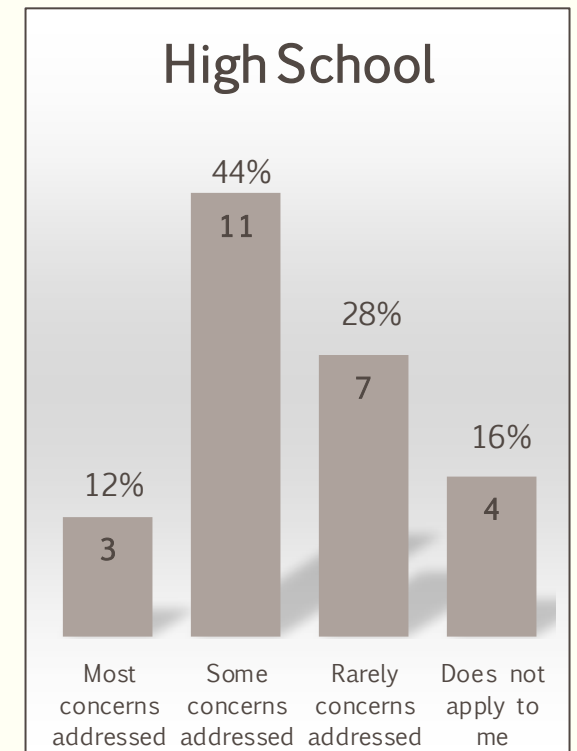
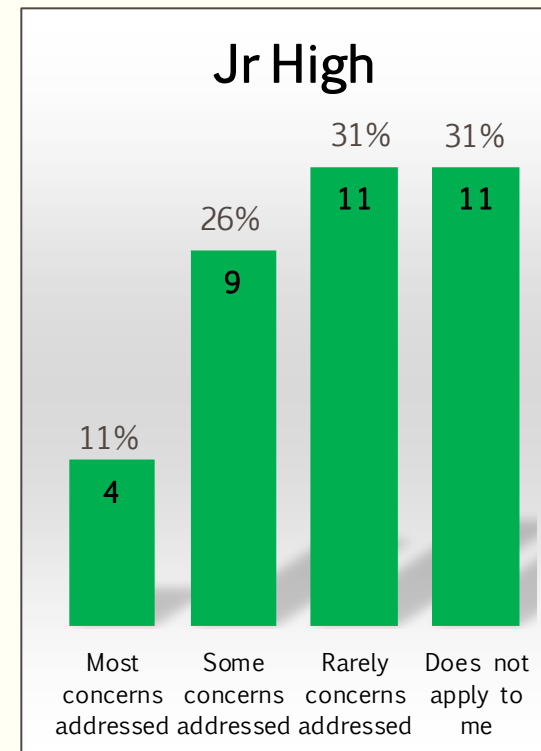
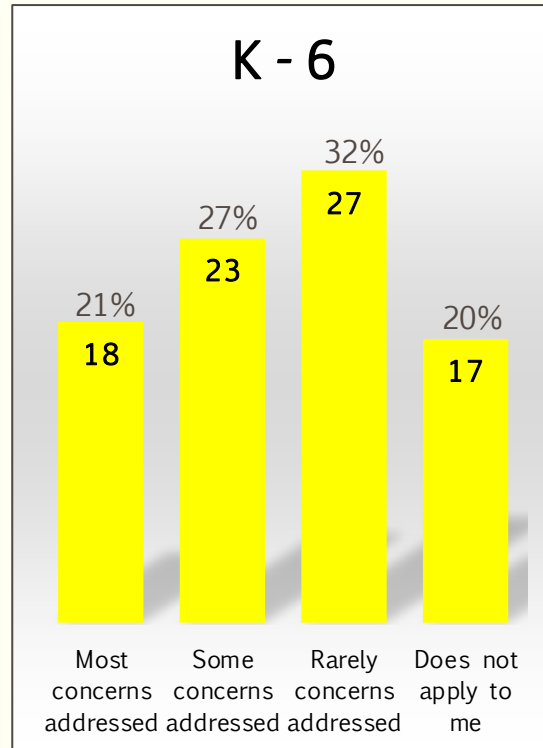
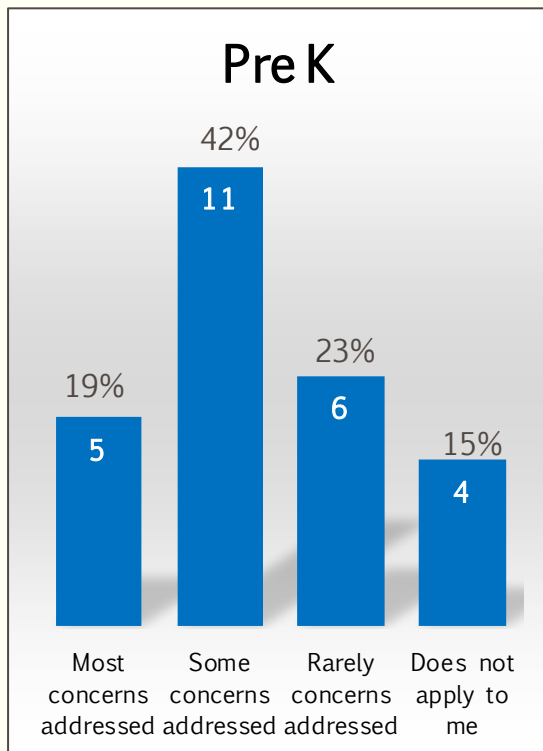


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q5: 32% of respondents reported *some* of their expressed concerns have been addressed by Special Education Leadership; an equal percentage reported their concerns have *rarely* been addressed.

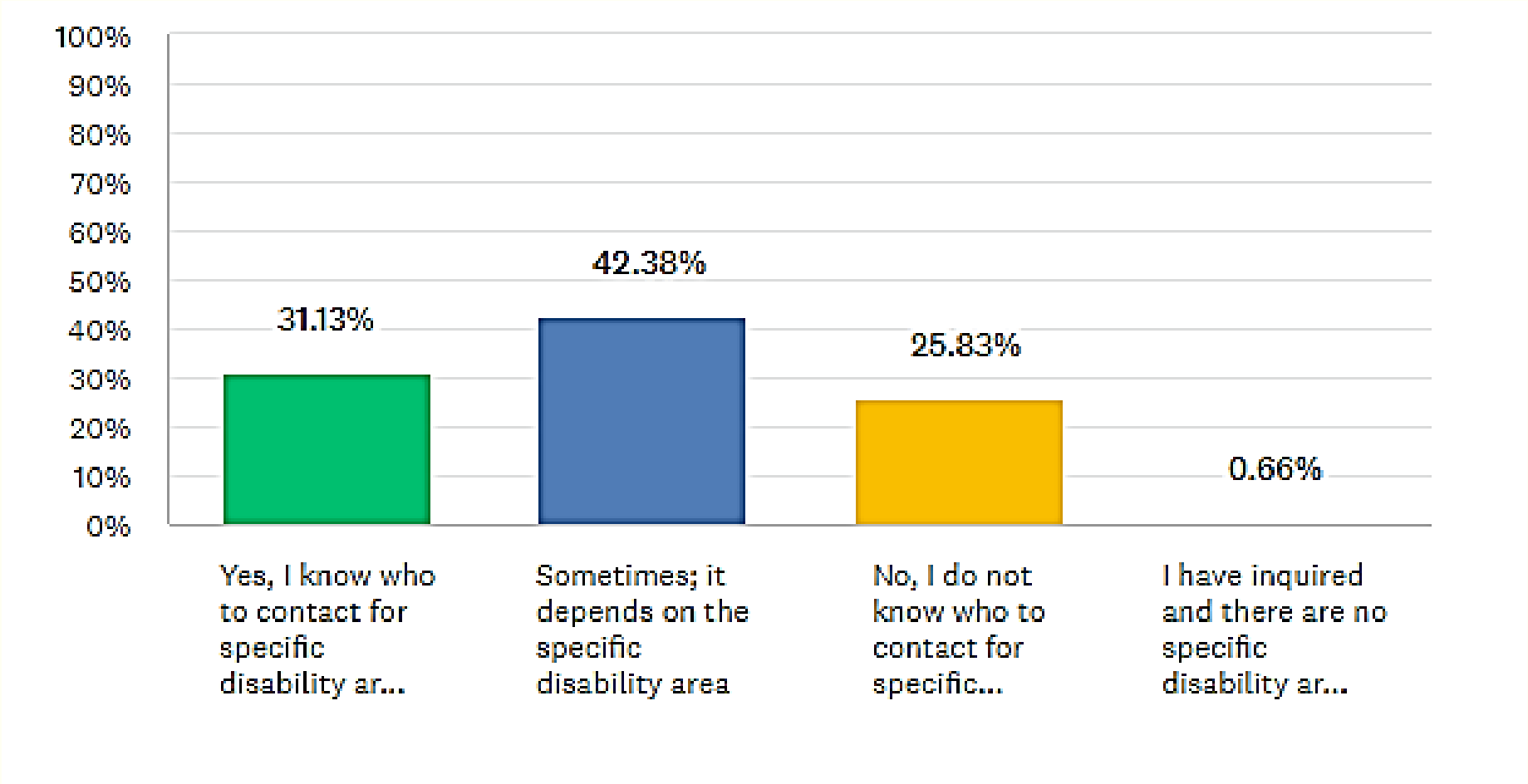


Q5: After providing input to Special Education Leadership, how adequately were your concerns addressed?
(Data by grade level band)

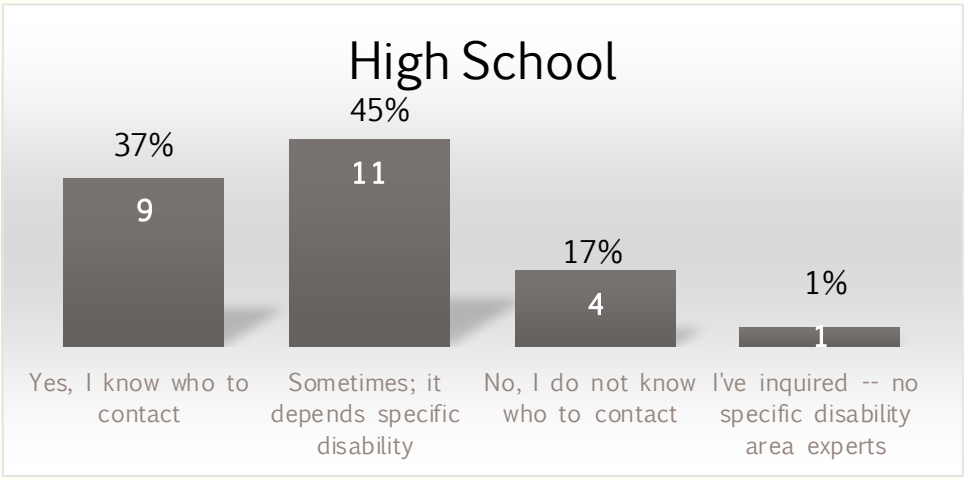
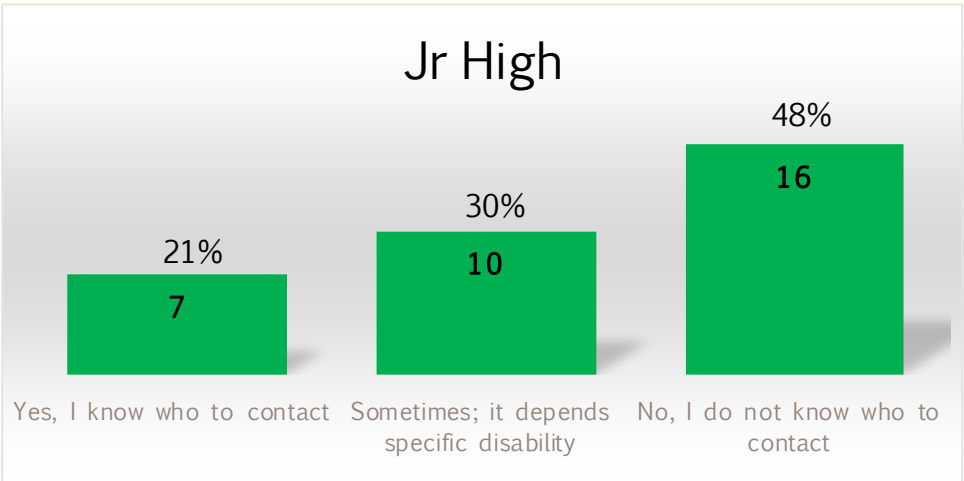
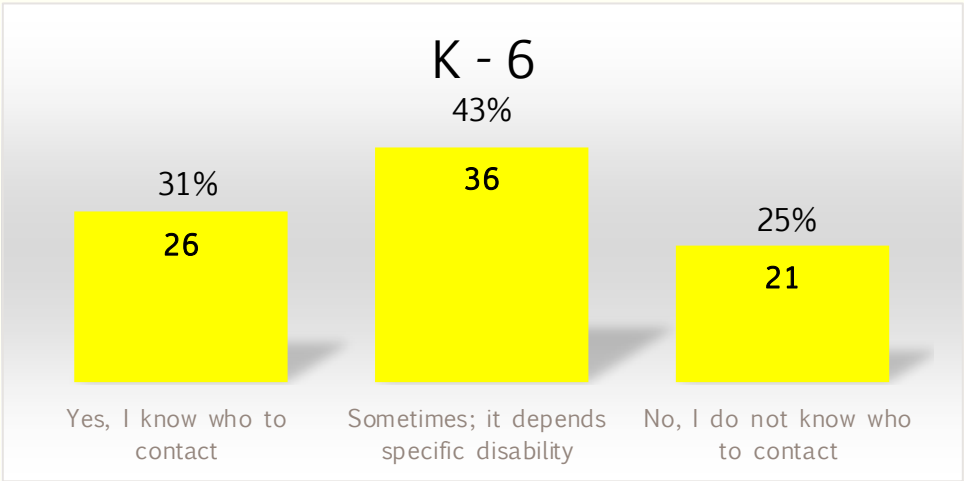
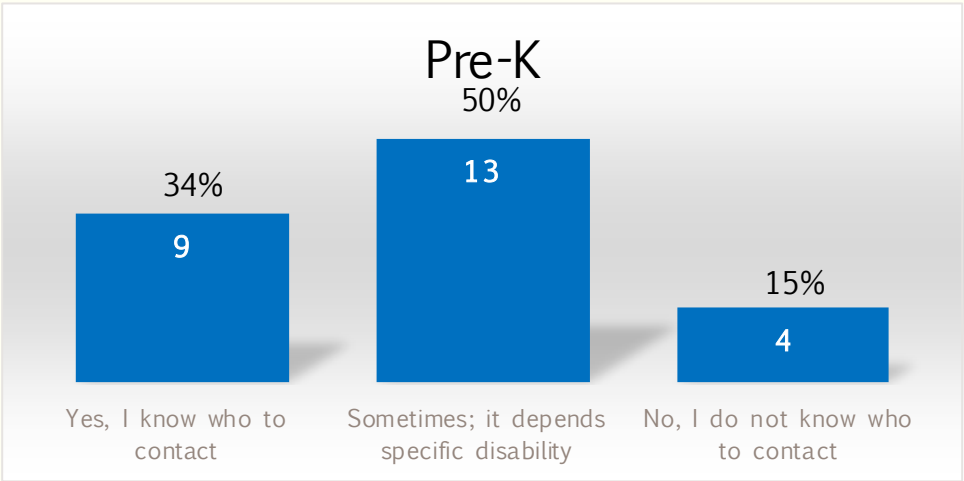


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q6: 42% of respondents *sometimes* knew who to contact for training if they needed to seek out expertise and resources on a *specific disability area*.

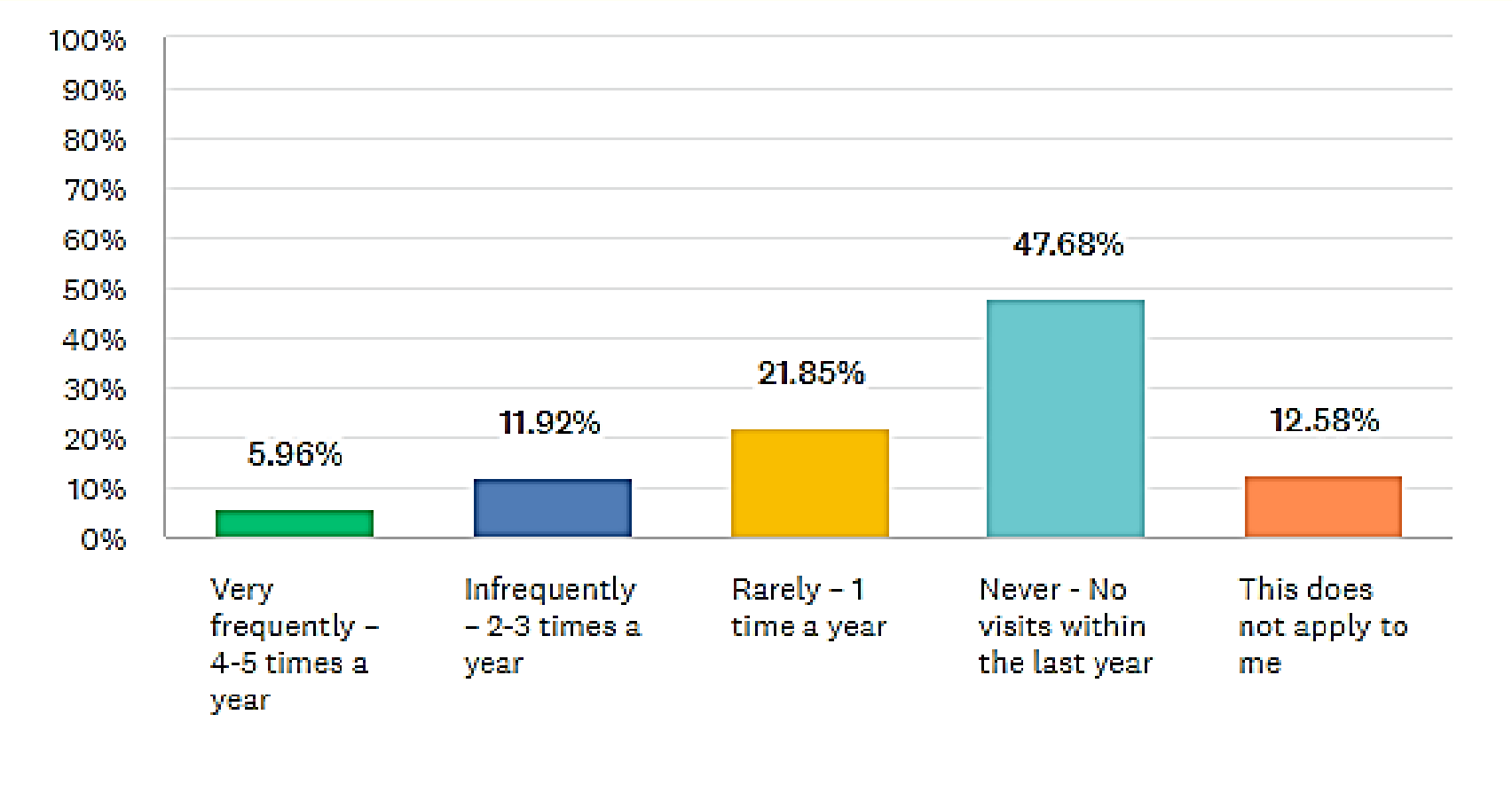


Q6: If you need to seek expertise and resources on a specific disability area to aid you in your classroom, do you know who to contact within the MPS Special Education Department to receive such training? (Data by grade level band)

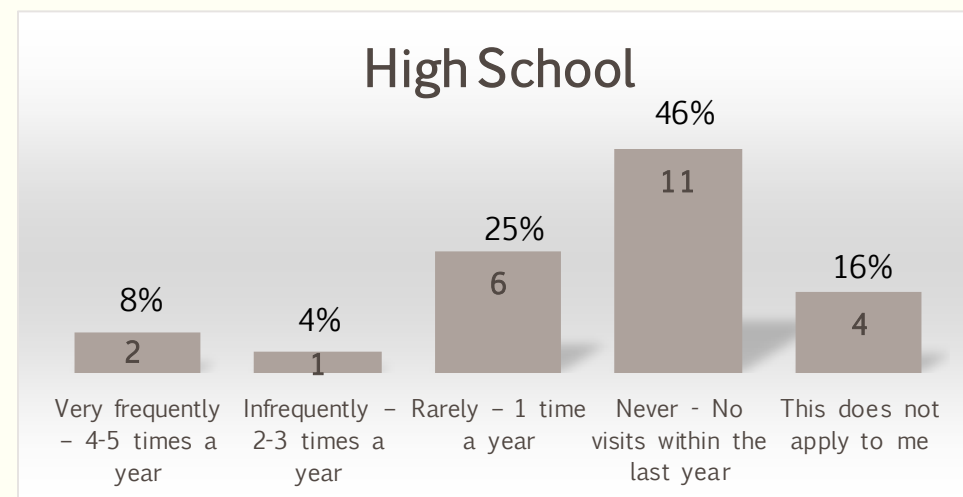
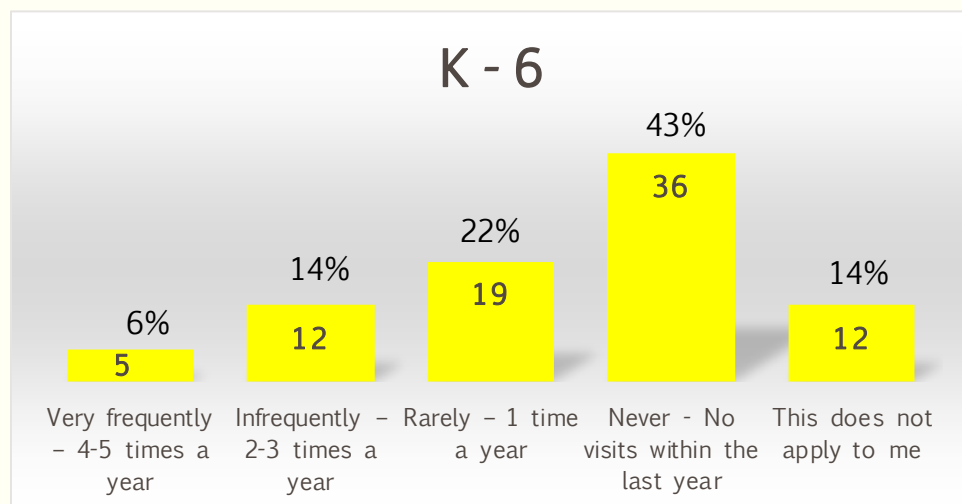
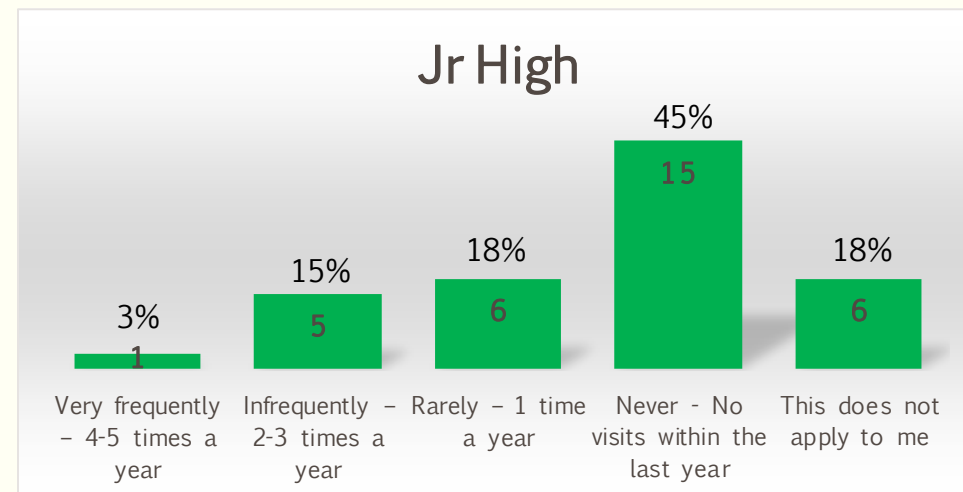
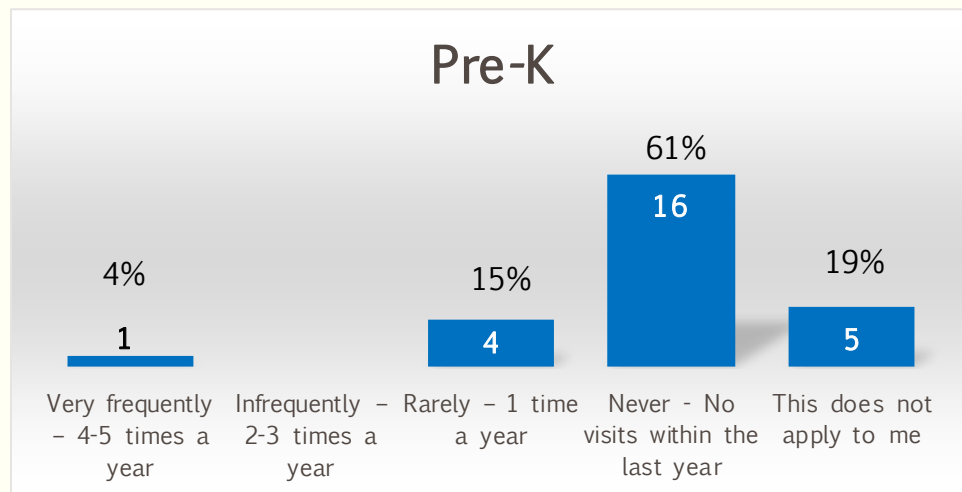


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q7: 48% of respondents reported they had not received a visit to their classroom by Special Education Area Directors in the last year

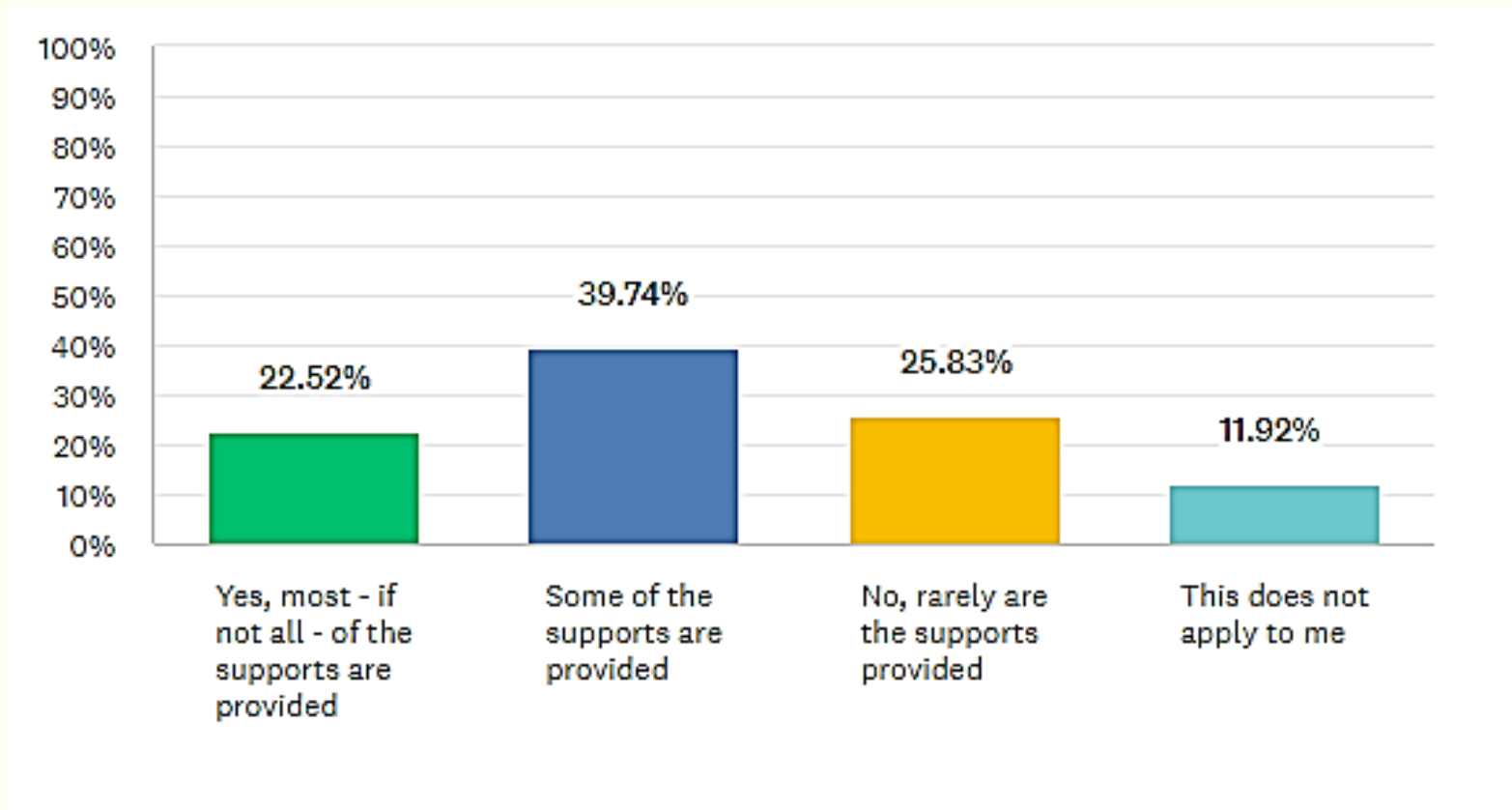


Q7: How frequently do the Special Education Area Directors visit your classroom? (Data by grade level band)

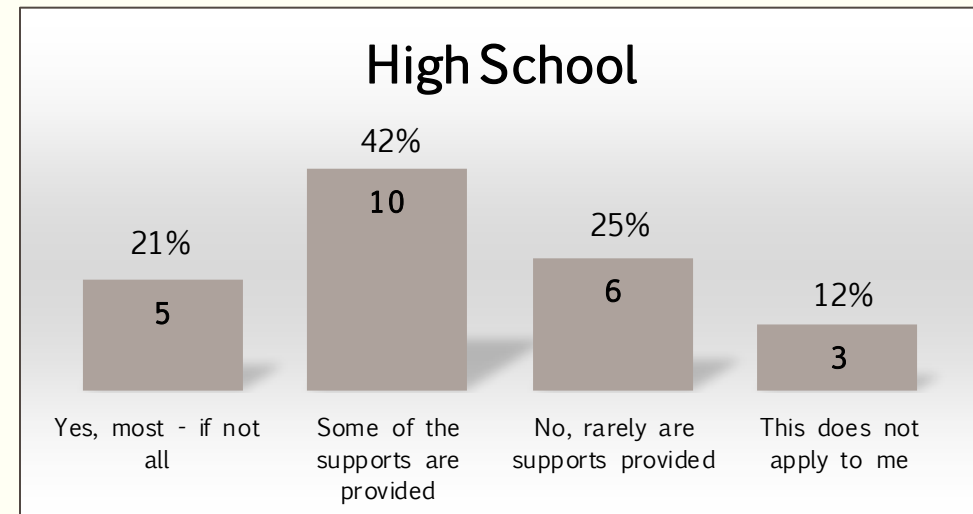
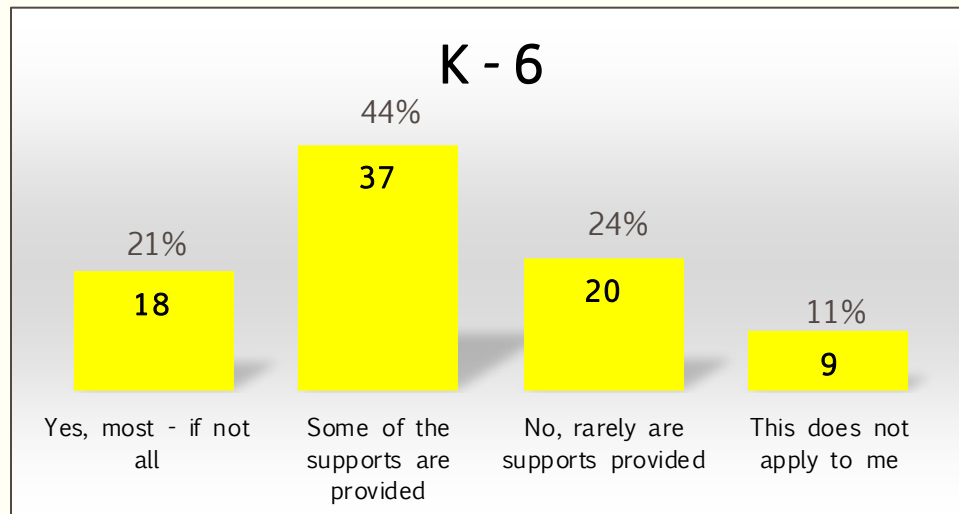
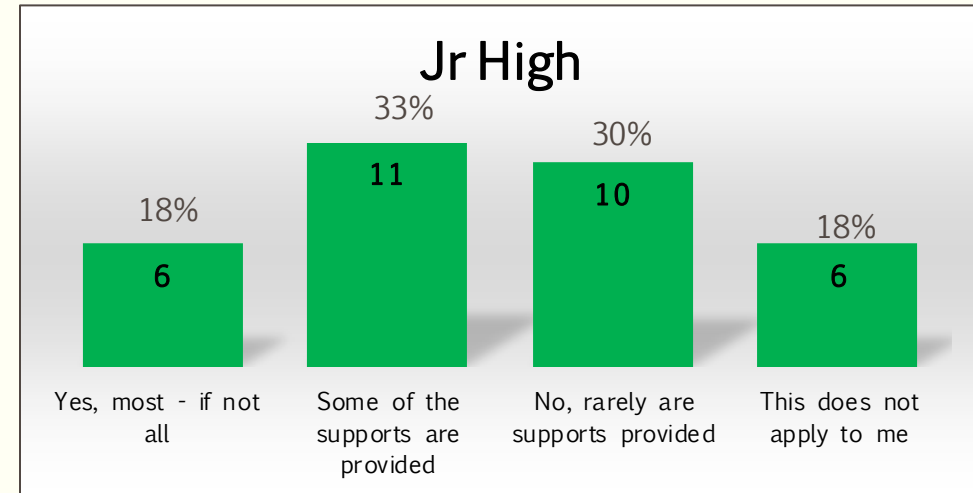
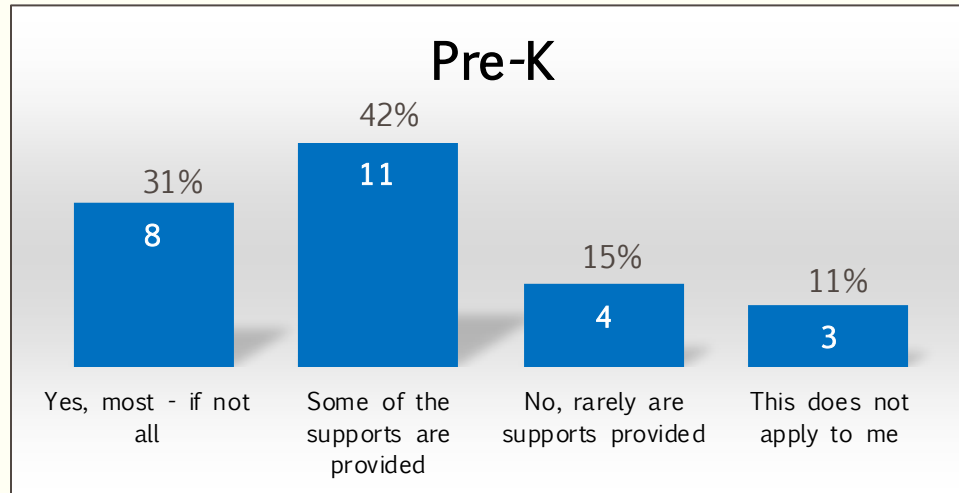


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q8: 40% of respondents reported the Special Education Area Director provides some of the supports needed to meet the services outlined in students' IEP's/504's

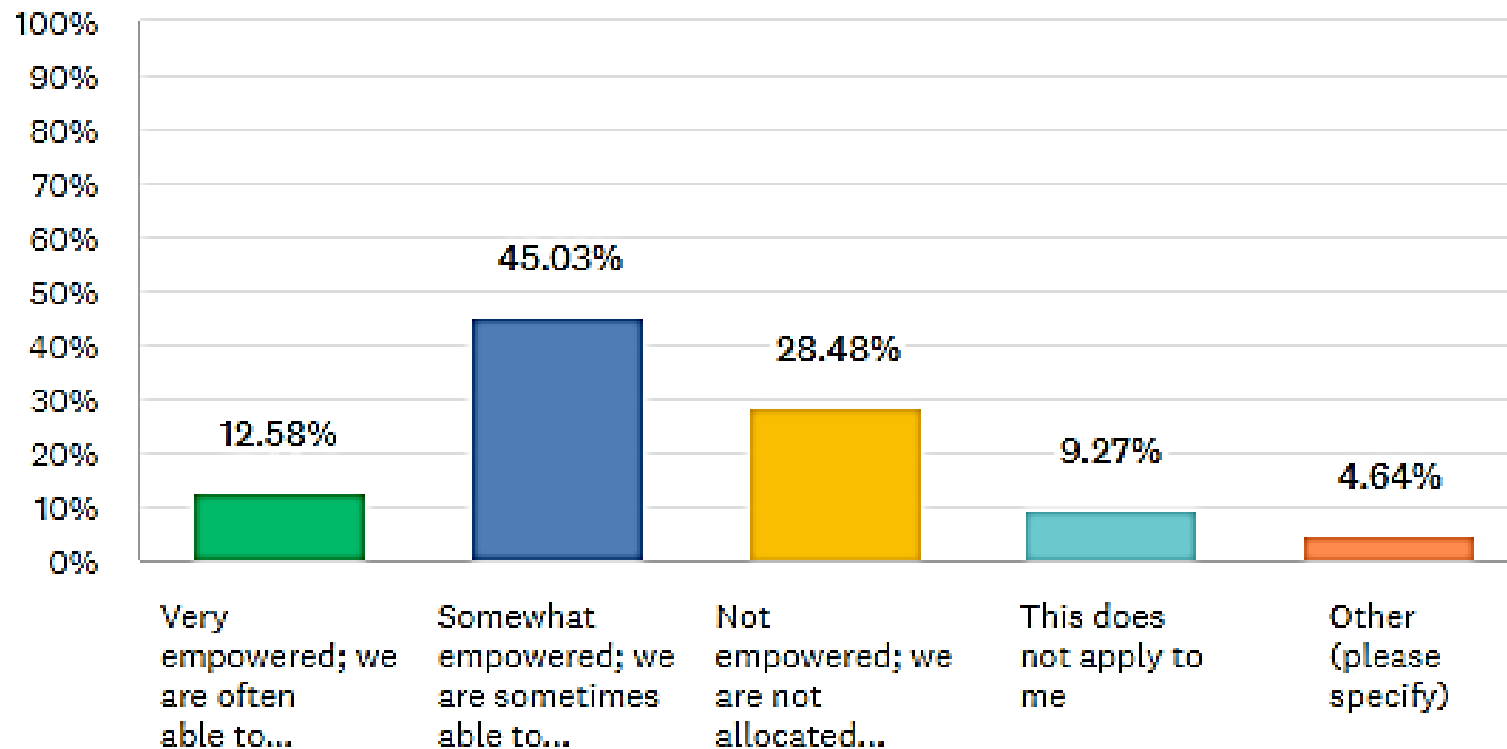


Q8: Does your Special Education Area Director provide the supports needed to meet the services outlined in student's IEP's/504's? (Data by grade level band)

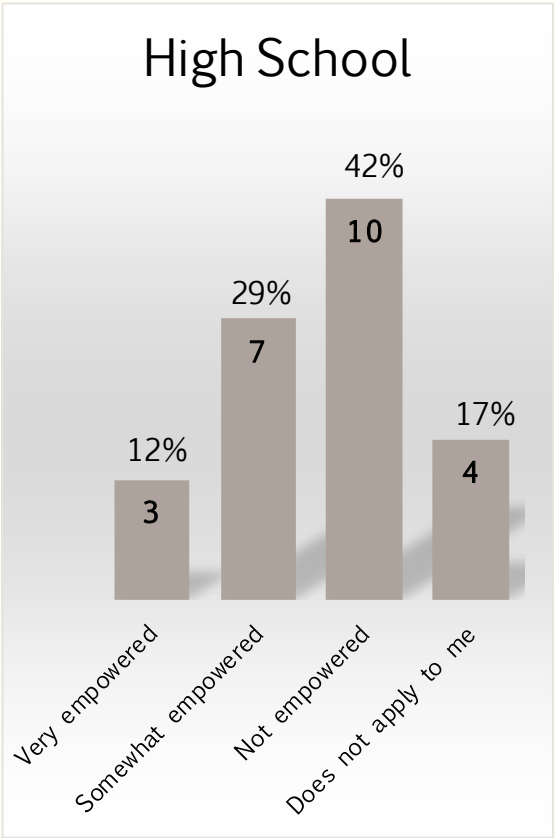
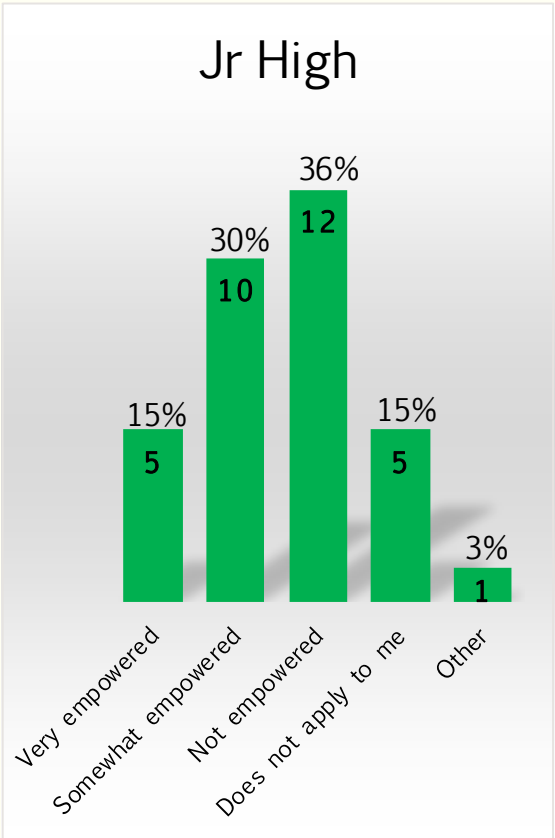
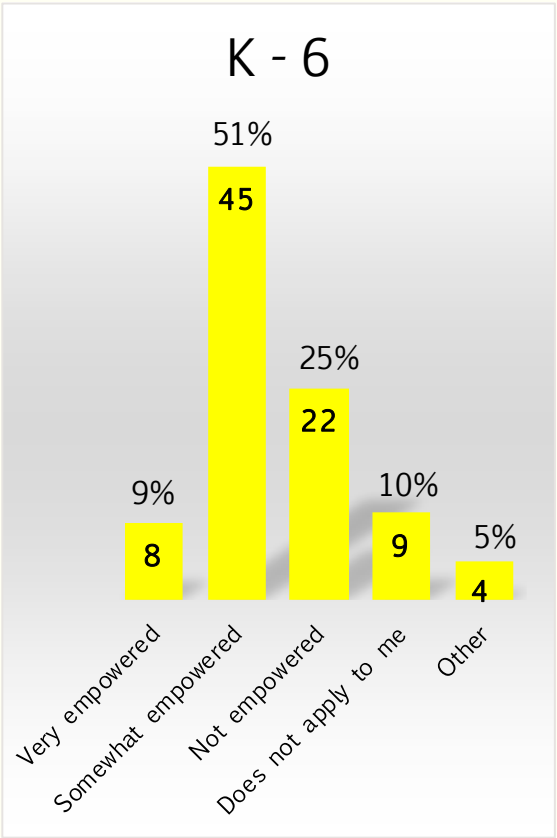
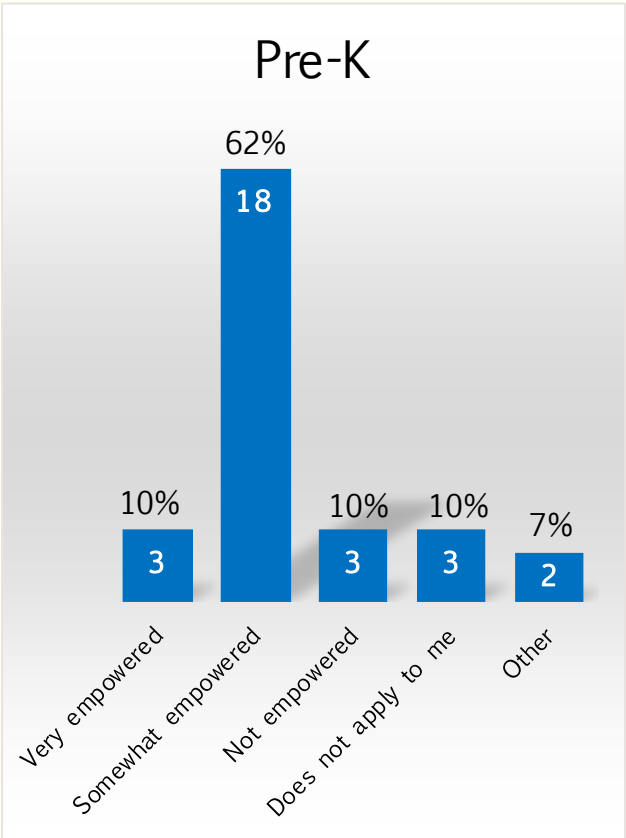


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q9: 45% of respondents felt their school's campus were *somewhat empowered* to resolve issues that arise in their Special Education practices and programs



Q9: How empowered do you feel your school’s campus is to resolve issues that arise in their Special Education practices and programs
(Data by grade level band)

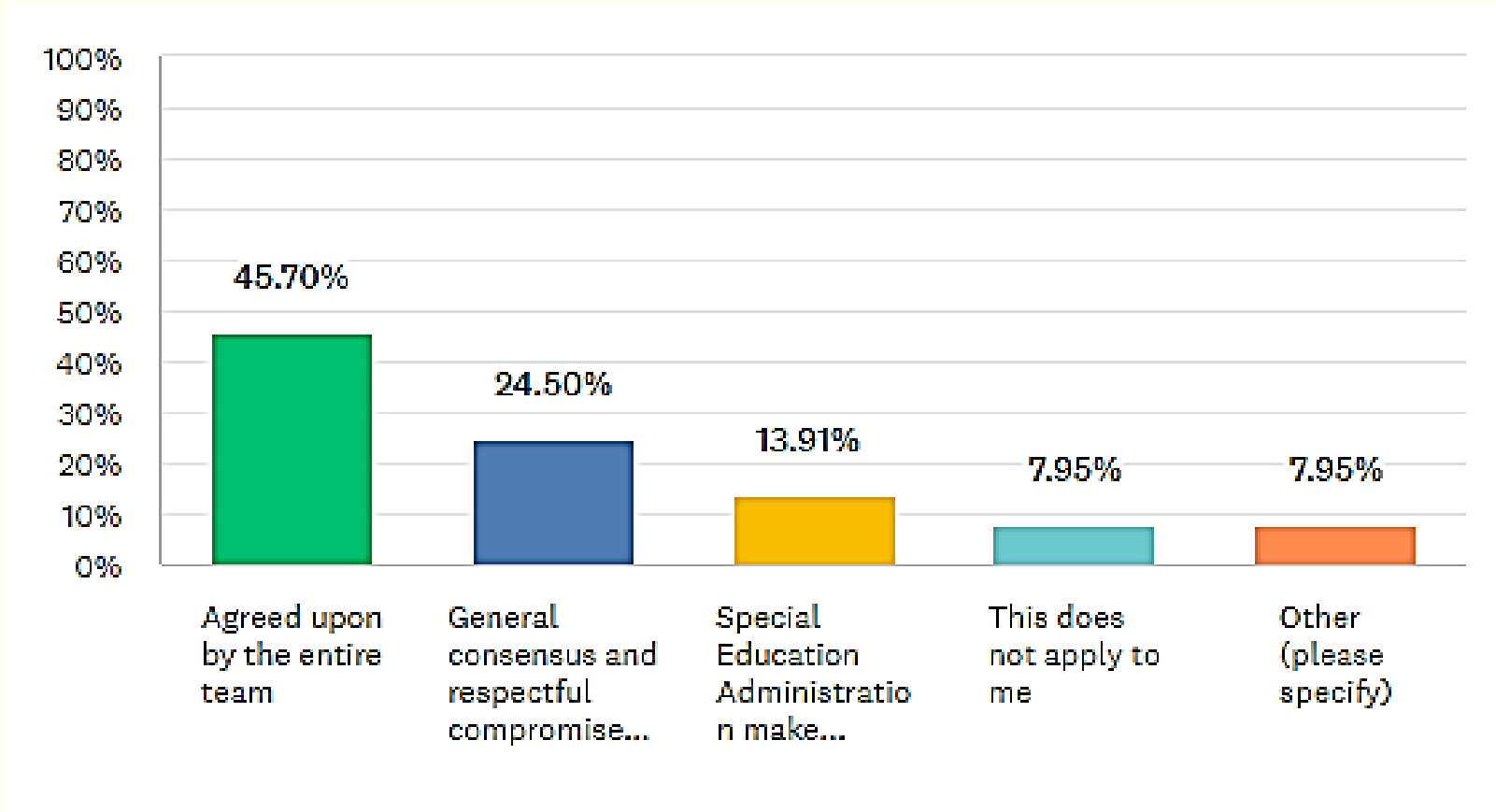


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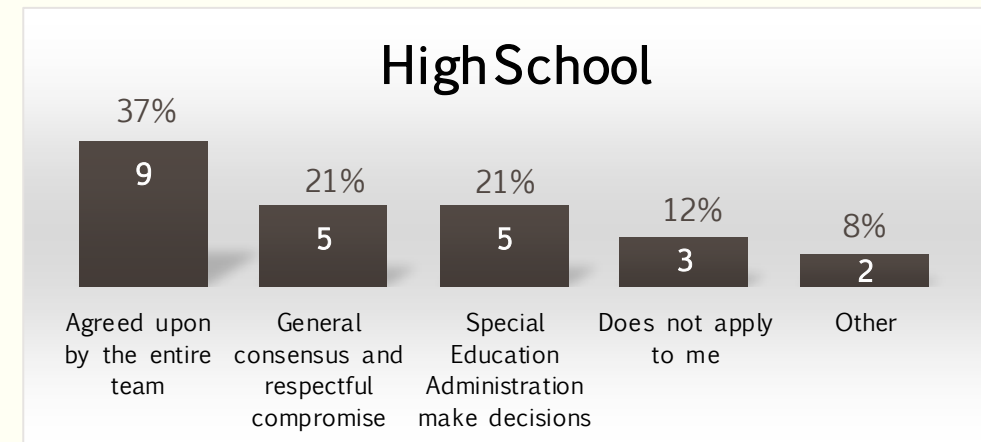
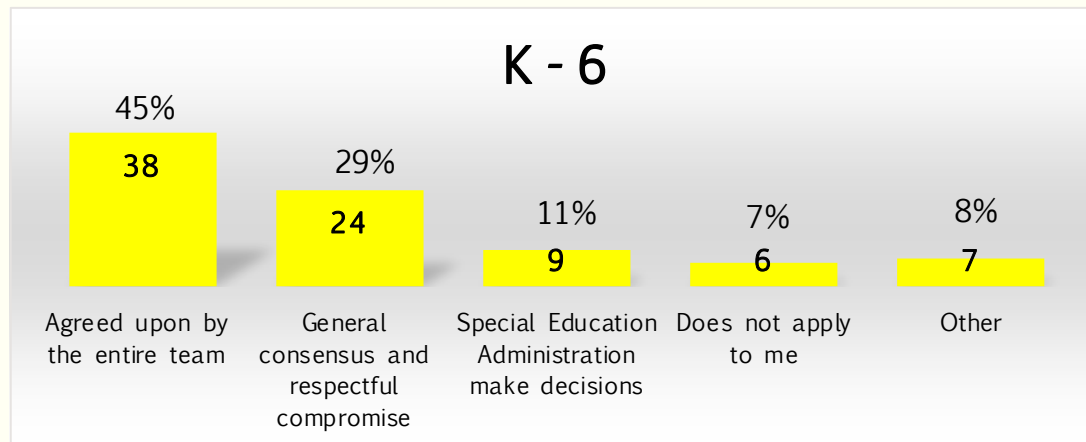
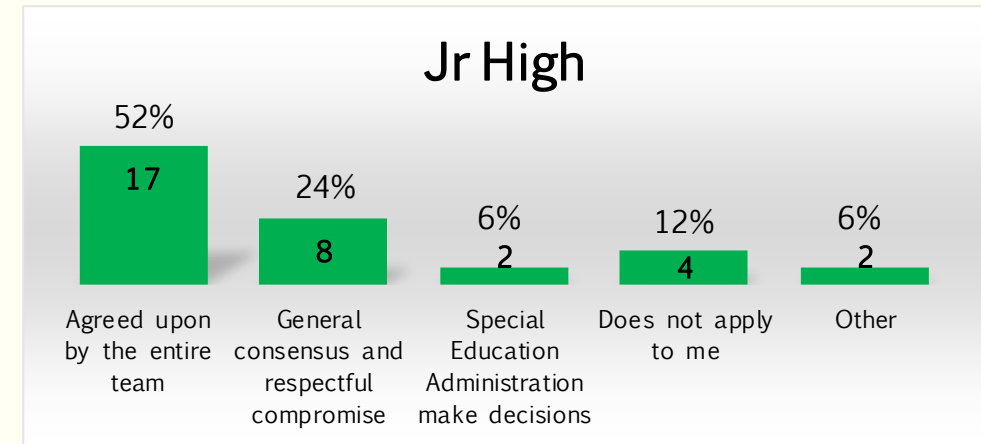
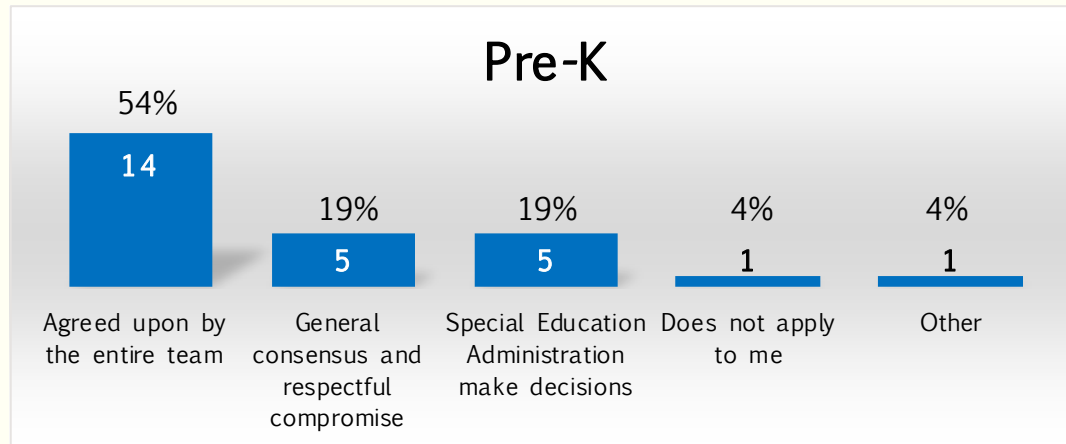
Q9: “Other” Comments (7 responses)

- Not empowered. Passing the buck seems to be the thing to do.
- Somewhat empowered, there are a few students on my caseload that needed more support including an autistic student and a student who came out of state from a behavior class
- Not empowered. Scheduling issues
- I currently work part time so I do not feel I can provide an adequate response to this question.
- Preschool classes on comprehensive campuses are not supported enough.
- Unsure
- Our classes have run with limited IAs and we have had to share all year.

Q10: 46% of respondents reported decisions regarding writing & implementing IEP's/504's are agreed upon by the entire team



Q10: How are decisions made when writing & implementing IEP's/504's? (Data by grade level band)



Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q10: “Other” Comments (12 responses)

- No consequence for no show/input, so most gen.ed. teachers do not provide info, and seldom do other sped teachers attend my meetings.
- decisions made by the most dominating person in the meeting.
- For specific things like program placements, more IA support, etc, decisions are made by special education administration regardless of team input.
- Decisions are agreed upon by the team of parents, teachers, and service providers. Sped admin isn't involved.
- Depends on what the decision is about. If it is regarding instructional placement then the decision is district without teacher input
- There is consensus after extensive legwork.
- Changes to placement and aid services as well as lowering a students cognitive description MO to Sever.
- The IEP team may make the decision but it is over ruled by administration.
- I would select the first box but director's are never involved in my meetings.

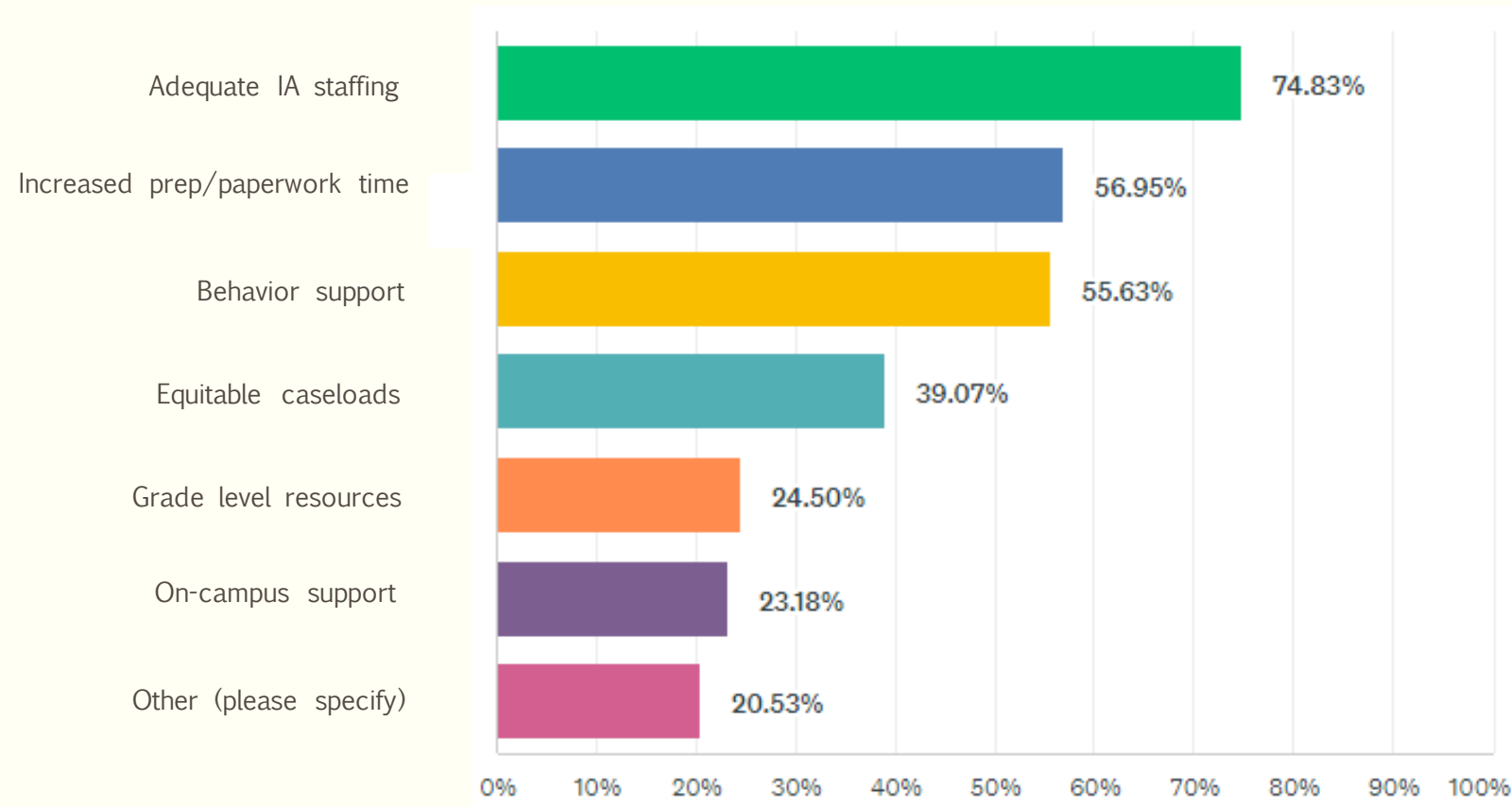
Q10: “Other” Comments (12 responses)

- Decisions often made by IEP team (parents, teachers, service providers, itinerates) then the department chair ignores and places students where she deems they are appropriate (executive decision). IEPs are not always followed after team agreement.
- Decisions are often agreed upon by the team including parents, teachers and service providers.
- If we are not asking additional support for a student, then we make the decisions. However, when a student needs extra support, our area directors hijack our IEP's and deny the students the services that they require. According to Wrightslaw, “The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act states that all decisions about a child's special education program and placement are made by the IEP team. Period. The law does not provide for another individual, including a supervisor or superintendent, to overrule decisions made by the IEP team.” However, our elementary area directors manipulate the law requiring us to invite them IEP meetings as district representatives if the team feels that a student requires aide support. In most cases they have little knowledge of the students, and in fact, have not even met the students in person or observed them in their educational environments. They have flat out stated they will NOT approve IA support if they are not invited to the IEP meeting. This is illegal. In Arizona, Special Education teachers, SLP's, and principals serve as district representatives. The fact that special education teachers fill the role of district representative, except when aide support is being considered goes to show that their agenda is not to meet the students' needs, but to save money. The message they're sending is that we have the authority to make decisions in all other matters, but we can't be trusted to make decisions that may cost the district money. According to IDEA, if IEP Team members cannot reach consensus about a particular part of the IEP, the district representative makes the final decision. There have been several situations where entire IEP team, including ed and general ed teachers, service providers, and parents have agreed that a student requires 1:1 support. Our elementary area directors, who have often never even met the students

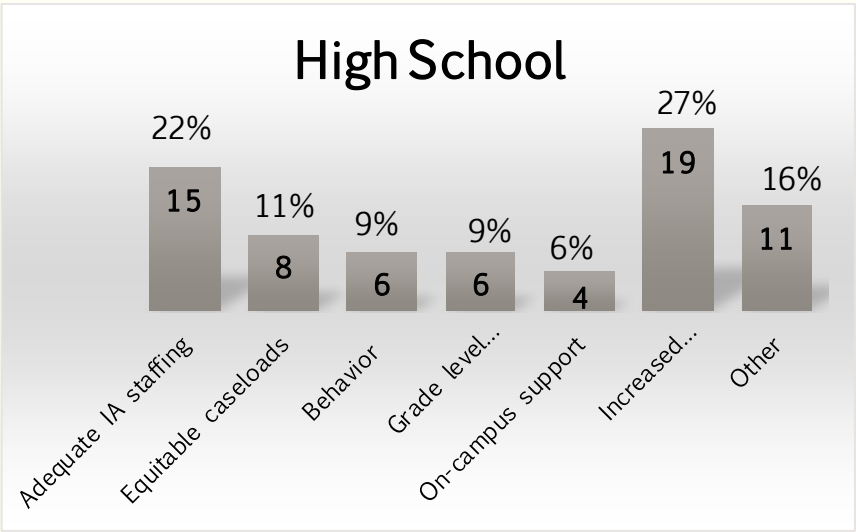
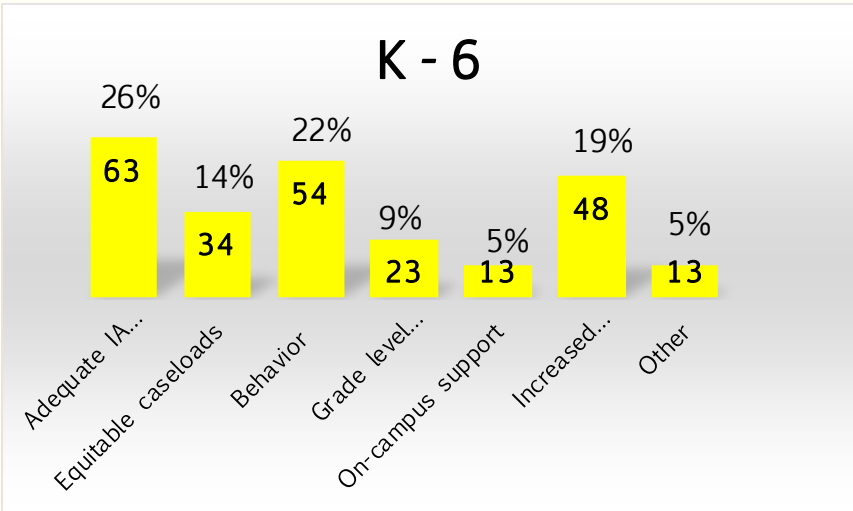
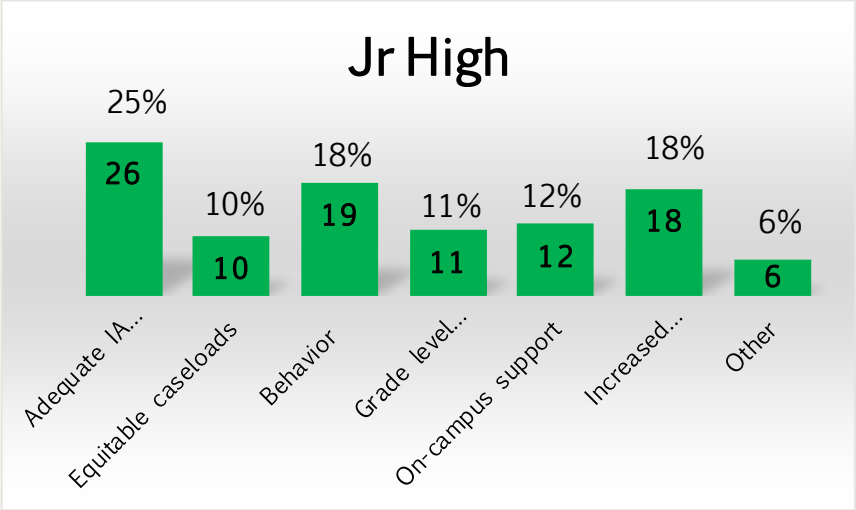
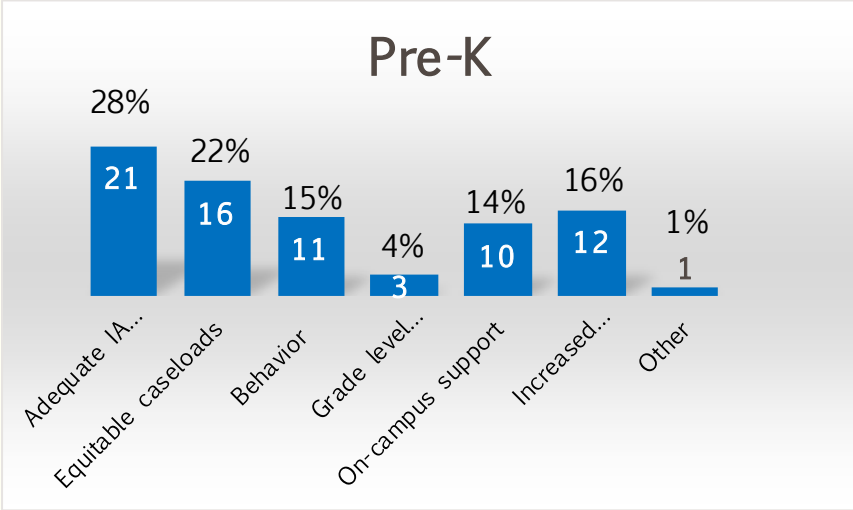
Q10: “Other” Comments (12 responses)

- (cont.) disagree no matter what, and as district reps they have the final say, despite the fact by law, IEP decisions should be made by team members knowledgeable about the student and their needs. Every single person who is an expert about a child can speak to the need for IA support, and provide the data to back it, and our directors deny the support. Furthermore, when parents escalate the situation, our director of special education belittles and alienates parents, and still refuses to provide the support. Teachers are being forced by our elementary area directors to re-write IEP's after the fact, to exclude aide support, and to change the PWNs. Many of us have witnessed this first-hand. It's blatantly against the law, but the fear of retaliation is so big in our district that we are forced to keep quiet. We've seen the extreme levels of retaliation that our director and director of special education will go to to keep teachers from speaking up.

Q11: 75% of all respondents stated *adequate Instructional Aide* staffing was the top area of need that would help them be more successful in their role working with students with IEP's/504's.



Q11: Please check the top 3 areas that would help you be more successful in your role working with students with IEP's/504's. (Data by grade level band)



Q11: “Other” Comments (31 responses)

- Teachers that provide information/attend meetings and actually use accommodations. No training for gen.ed. at my school at all.
- support from administration/education for administration on the special education department, roles, placements, etc.
- We often have our IA's taken to be used in self contained rooms, and resource teachers have had classes canceled so resource teachers can sub in self contained classrooms.
- Respect as an educator who knows what they are doing.
- There is time in the week to complete IEP paperwork to the degree that the district expects.
- Sensory room
- more support for the psychologist, next year there will be a full time psych, the one this year took up to 5 months to finalize paperwork
- Supplies like notebooks and pencils
- Professional development training specific to my area
- Sped directors are spread too thin and very difficult, if not impossible, to get ahold of.

Q11: “Other” Comments (31 responses)

- More access to training in special areas
- Appropriate scheduling
- More compensation
- Different on-campus administrative support
- Support integrating student in general education spaces
- Curriculum that is up to date and benefits the students.
- Not cutting clerk hours from high schools.
- Pay us more
- More programs need to be opened to accommodate students who are MD and students who are blind. Such students take the majority of the classroom IA's time leaving less assistance in the classroom for all the other students.
- Balanced Caseloads among team. Set a maximum number per caseload manager at 23 students. One caseload manager has 32 and another has 15--no rhyme or reason given --no rational--just unbalanced and the caseload manager with 32 is consistently monitored and harassed about timelines and service. No wonder there is such a high burn out rate.
- District admin trusting our judgement as professionals who are knowledgeable about our students and their needs, and the provision of supports required to meet those needs.
- access to the training and resources for assessment for our special populations (HI services)

Q11: “Other” Comments (31 responses)

- The IA allocations that were adopted by the board through the Meet and Confer process are not adequate.
- This is according to the teachers whom I support
- Smaller Class size
- More Inclusion for kids
- We are doing great -love my support system at MPS
- Smaller caseload so that I can provide more of the support my students need that is not the direct face to face service time. Sometimes this is prep, but there's also observation to better understand the needs. Time to collaborate with gen Ed teachers to adequately discuss how to support the student in the gen Ed classroom.
- Gen Ed inclusion teachers need more time to plan and prepare differentiated materials so all students can be successful and progress with their learning. On campus's with high SPED populations, these same teachers need more time to input data for IEP/RED meetings that come up.
- Professional Development
- This does not apply to me

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022



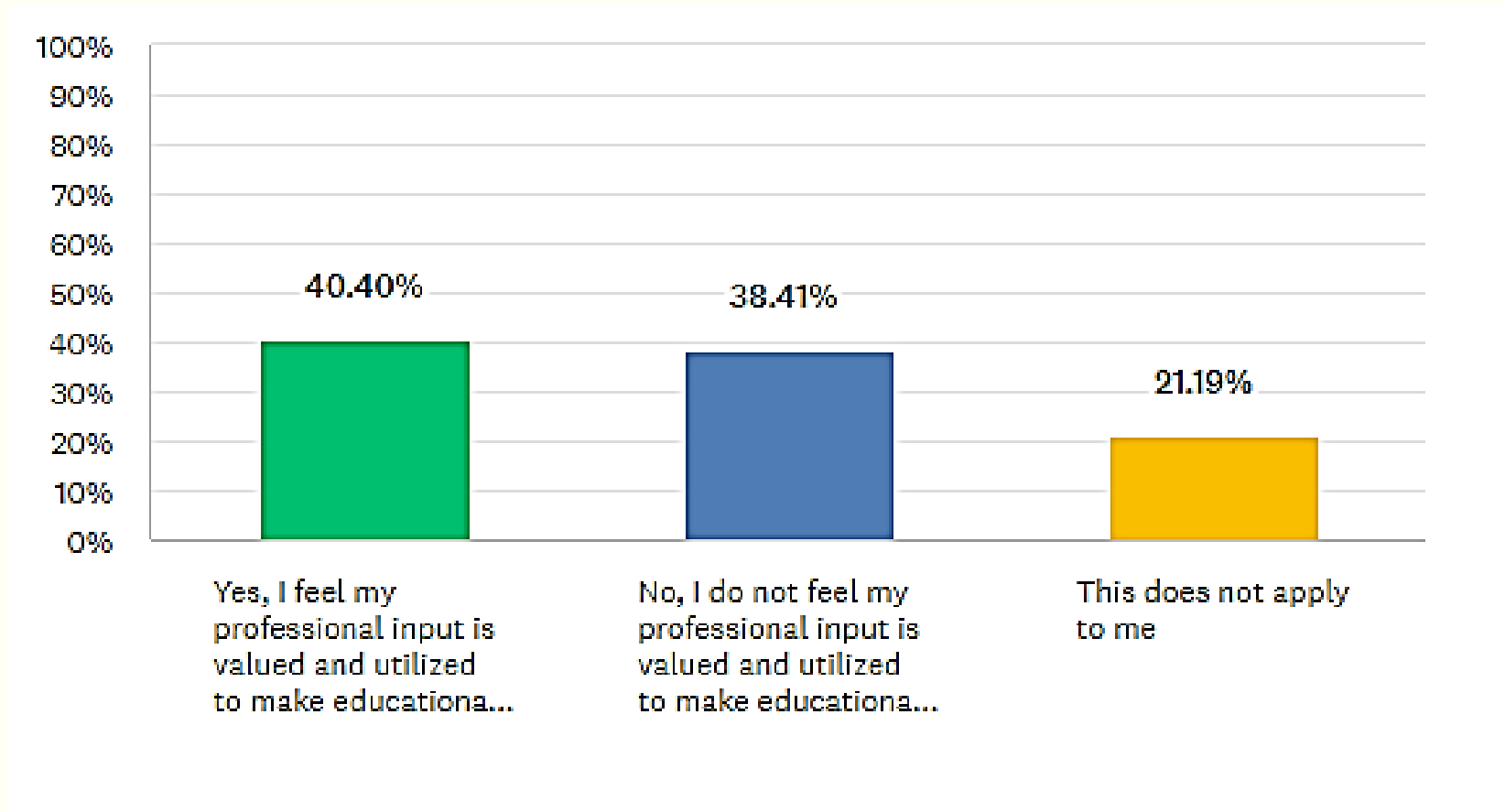
We have all these expectations – and high expectations are essential – but we also need to have the time to accomplish what we’re asked to do and have the support that we need to accomplish those tasks.

MPS Teacher

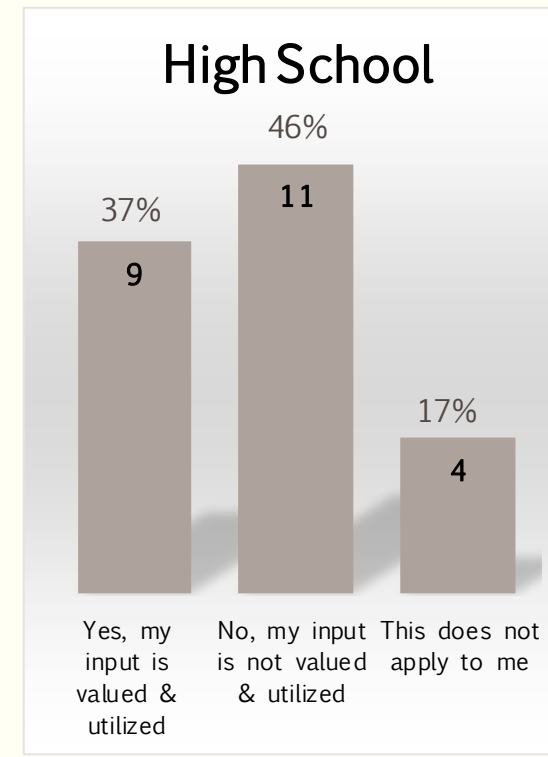
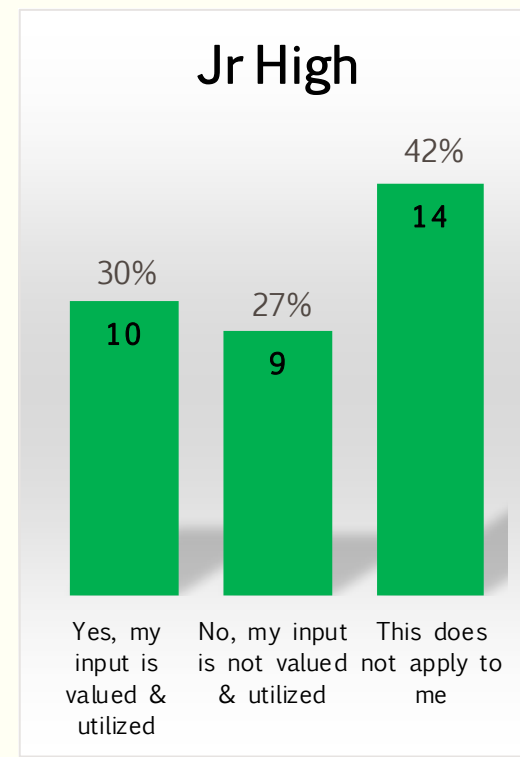
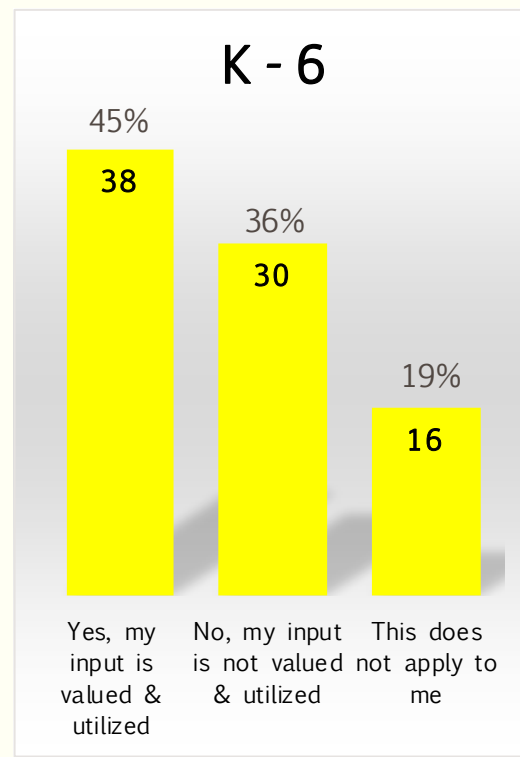
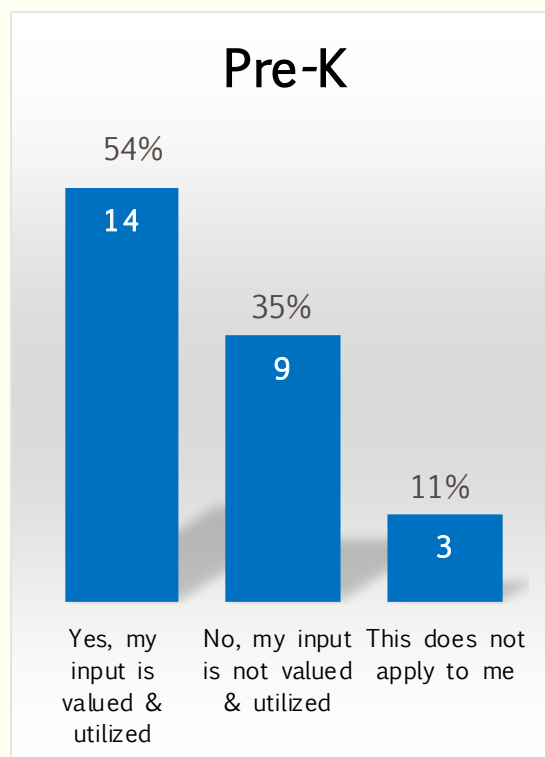
Recruitment and Retention Certified Design Team

Governing Board Meeting, October 26, 2021

Q12: 40% of all *Case Managers* felt their professional input such as data and in-person classroom observations are valued and utilized when making educational, staffing or health and safety decisions.

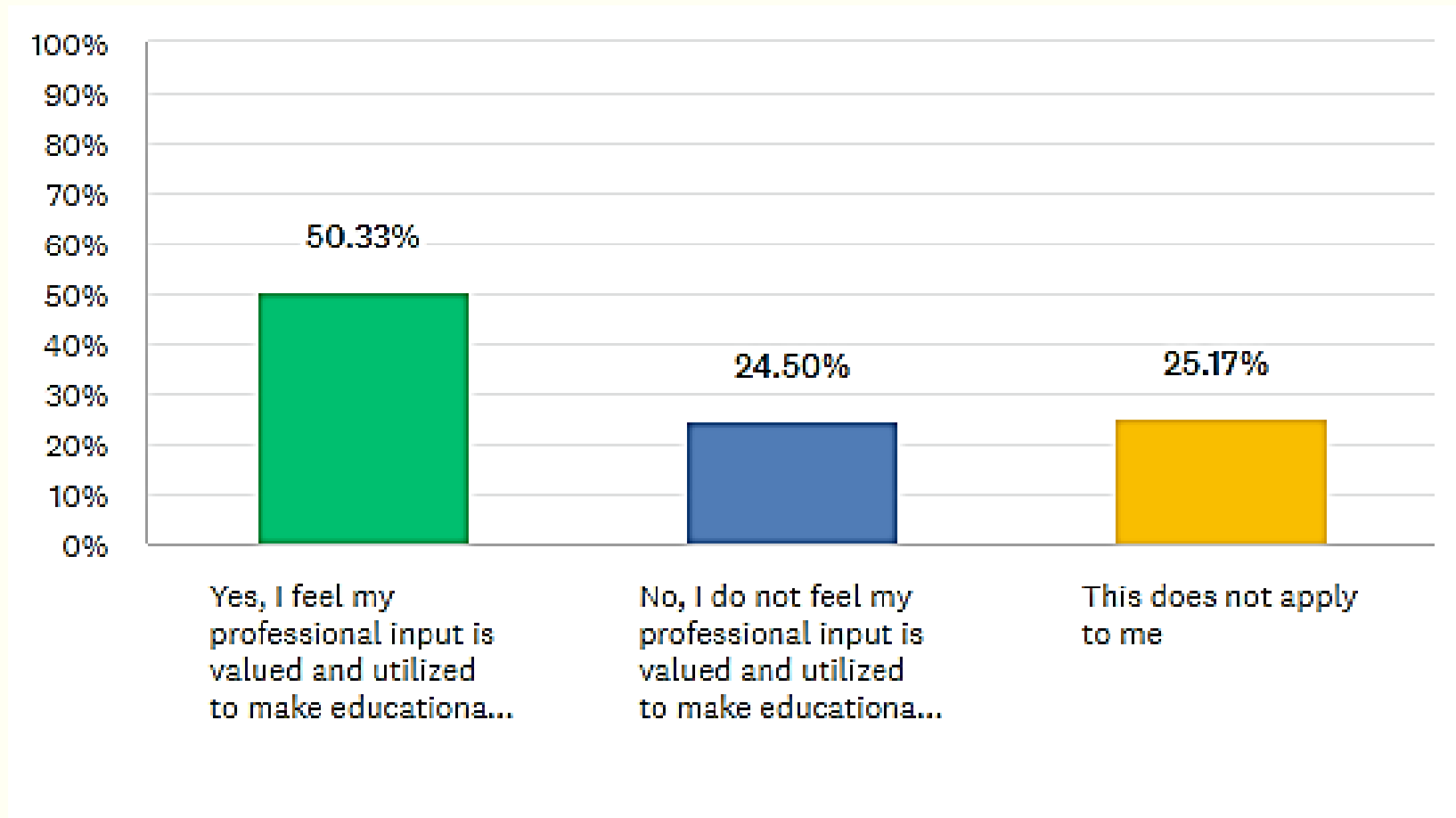


Q12: As a Case Manager, do you feel your professional input such as data and in-person classroom observations are valued and utilized when making educational, staffing or health and safety decisions? (Data by grade level band)

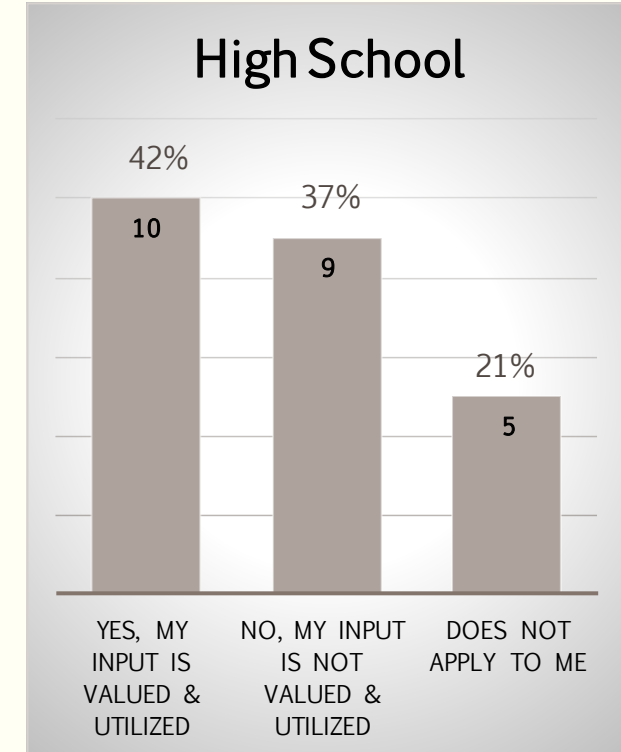
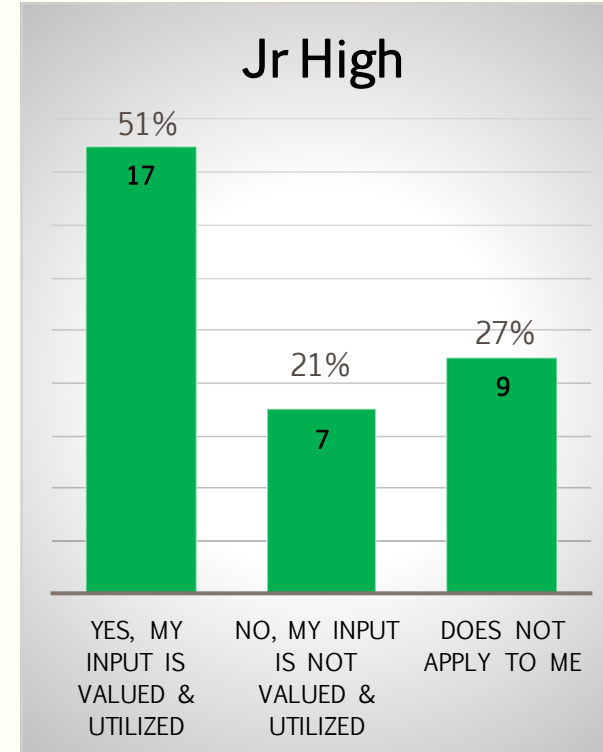
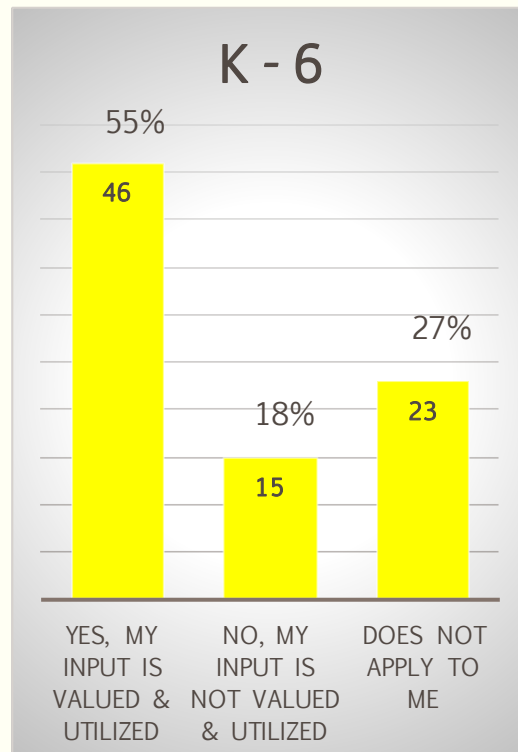
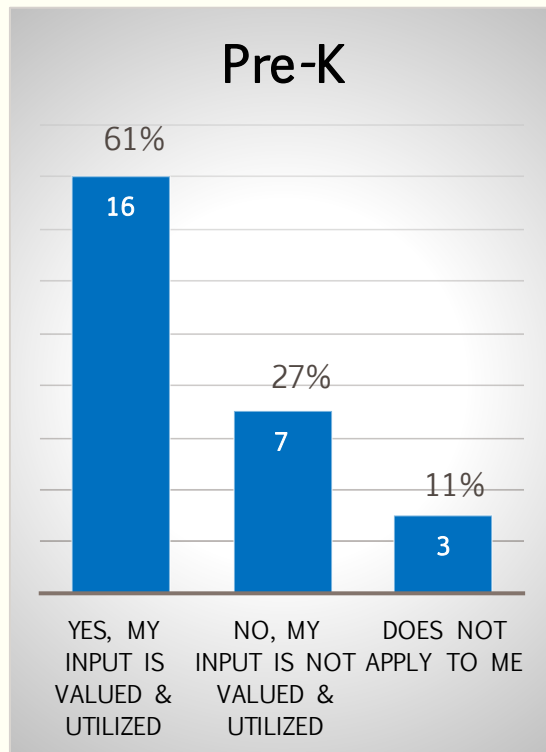


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q13: 50% of all *IEP Team members* felt their professional input such as data and in-person classroom observations are valued and utilized when making educational, staffing or health and safety decisions.

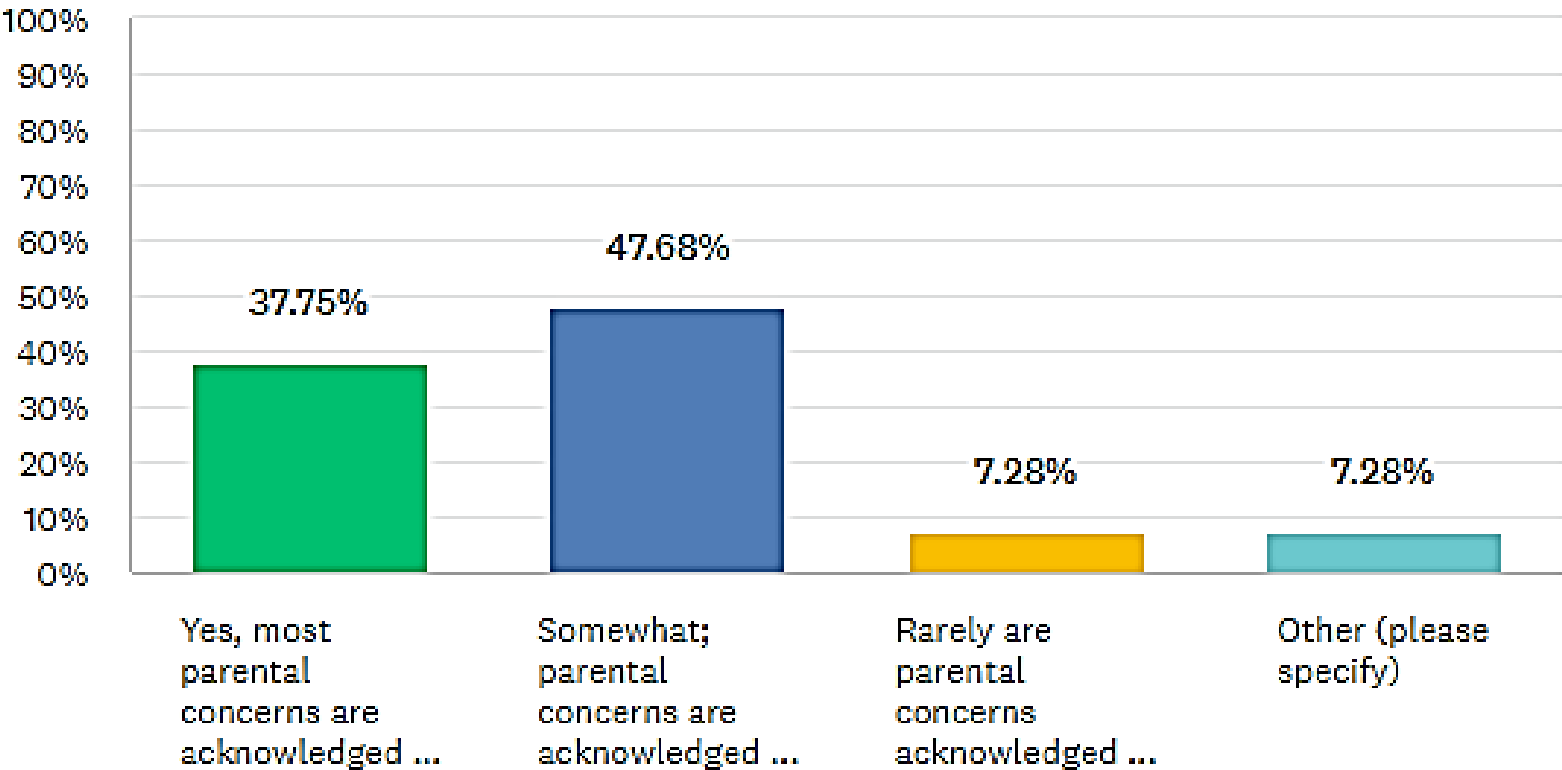


Q13: As an IEP team member (such as a General Education teacher or service provider), do you feel your professional input such as data and in-person classroom observations are valued and utilized when making educational, staffing or health and safety decisions? (Data by grade level band)

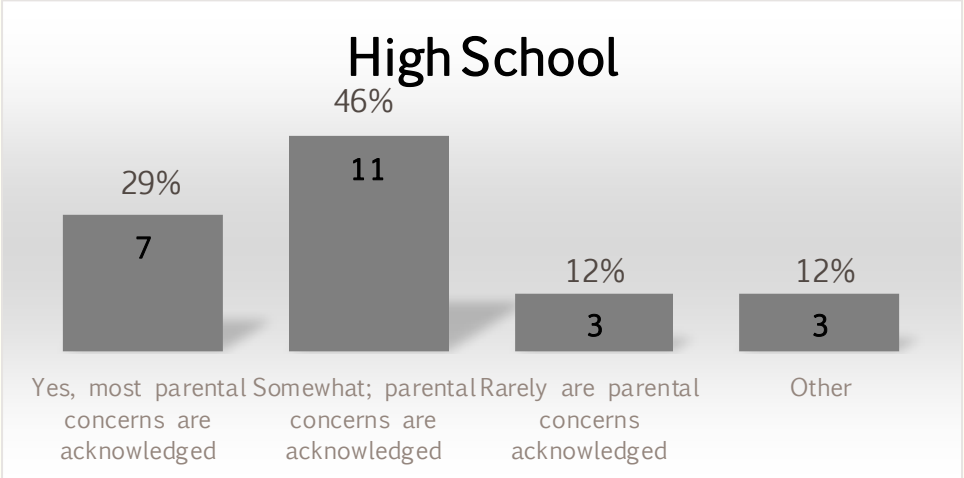
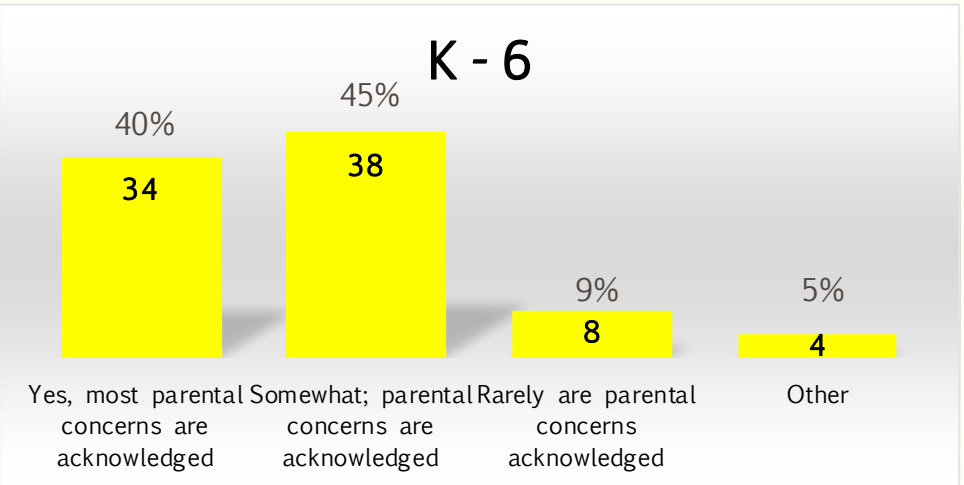
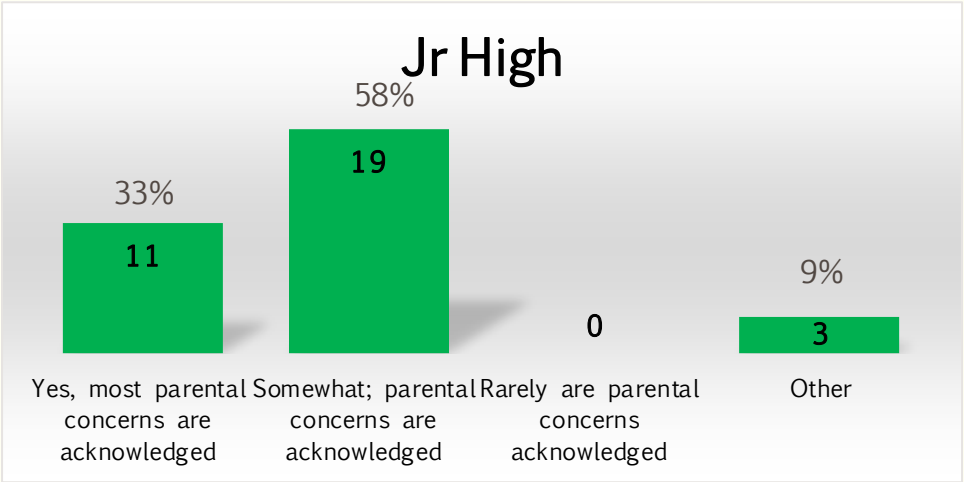
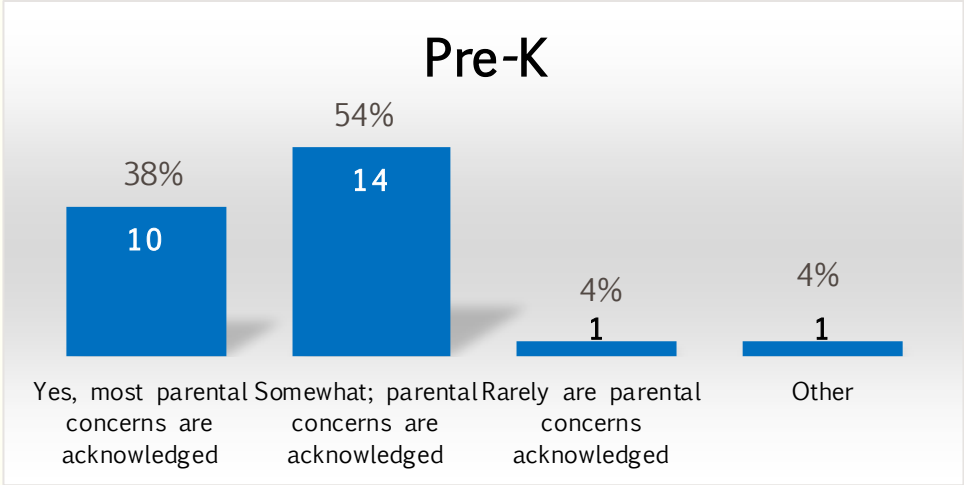


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q14: 48% of respondents reported parents' concerns are acknowledged and adequately addressed by the Special Education administration, but it varies from case to case.



Q14: In your professional assessment, if a parent has concerns, are the concerns acknowledged and adequately addressed by the Special Education administration?
(Data by grade level band)



Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

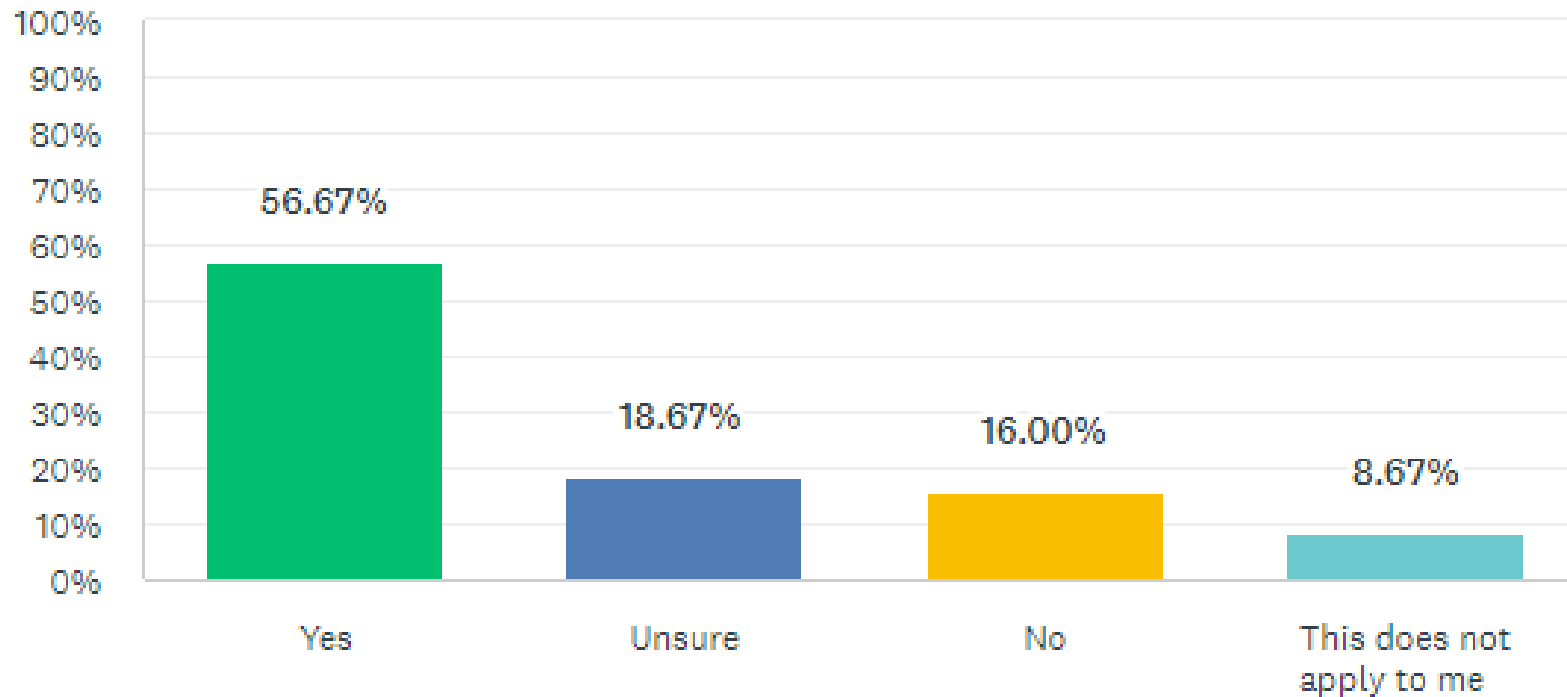
Q14: “Other” Comments (11 responses)

- We continue to cut services, despite serving students that need them (ie: VI/HI)
- No need for special education admin to get involved with parent concern
- When parents or the ADE complain it is the only time that Special Education administration tries to fix anything.
- Being my first year and a part time employee from what I have experienced so far efforts are made to address concerns parents at my site may have.
- I don't know. Special Ed Admin has never discussed concerns with me.
- I have not had parent concerns in my role
- It seems very biased. If parents have legal representation their needs are much more likely to be addressed. If they don't, then it seems parents are ignored. Some parents have expressed frustration about their emails being ignored or their concerns brushed off.
- This does not apply to me

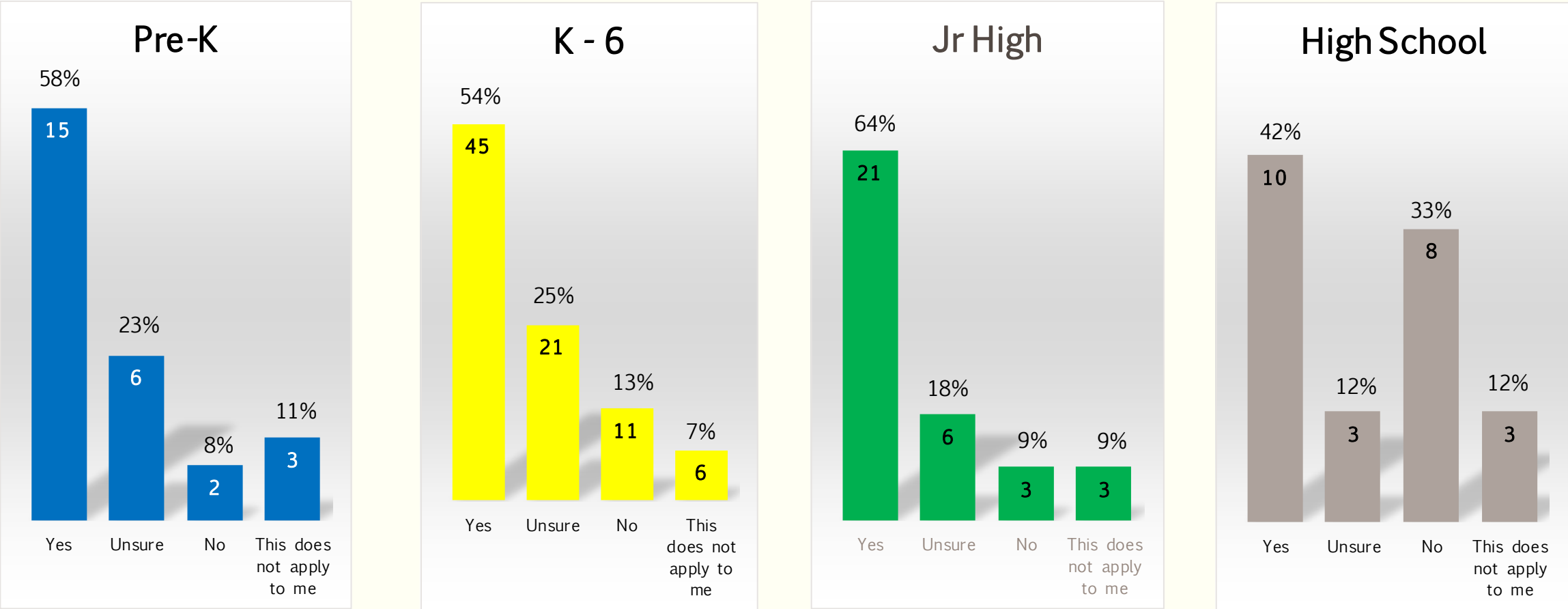
Q14: “Other” Comments (11 responses)

- Parents are being alienated by our special education administration. I've had parents who have pulled their students from MPS because of our current administration. We provide a public service. We are here to meet the needs of our students, however, our administration has created a huge divide between parents and the school district. The families that we serve should not feel like they must prepare for battle when walking into an IEP meeting. They should not have to get advocates or lawyers to ensure that their children receive the services and supports that they need in order to be safe in their school environment and receive an appropriate education. Our administration has told blatant lies to parents that put teachers in the middle. For instance, our special education team had a situation where a parent asked about aide support for specific parts of their child's school day. Our area director flat out lied and said that we had it covered, when we had already requested and been denied additional support. This area director had never even come to observe the situation. This is a common occurrence throughout the district.
- I don't have direct experience with this to know
- Unsure

Q15: 57% of respondents felt all team members' input are equally considered when making IEP decisions that directly impact a student's social and emotional needs.

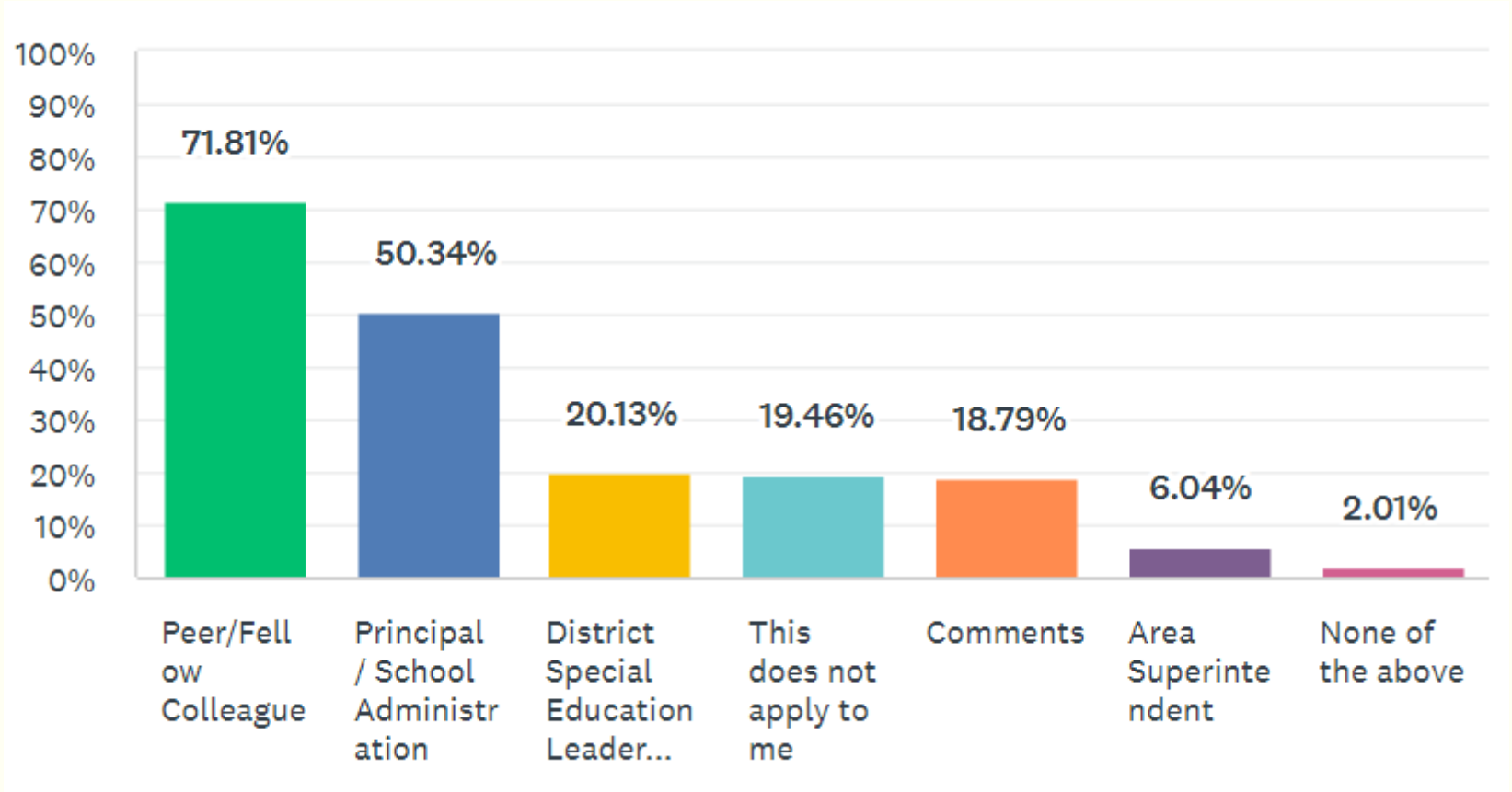


Q15: When making IEP decisions that directly impact a student’s social and emotional needs, in your assessment are all team members’ input equally considered? (Data by grade level band)

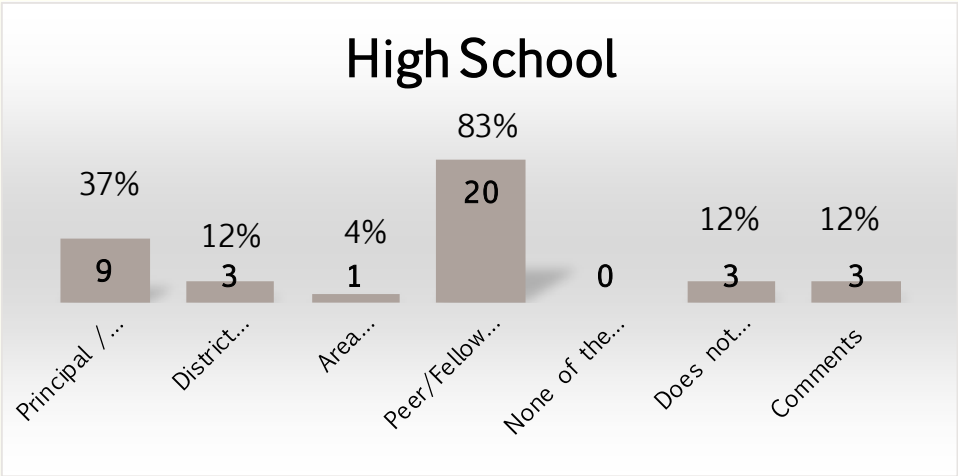
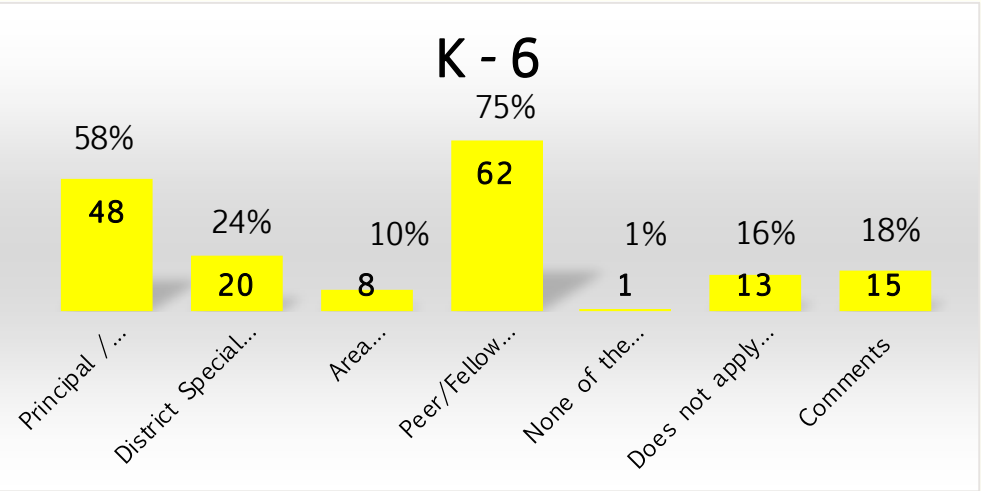
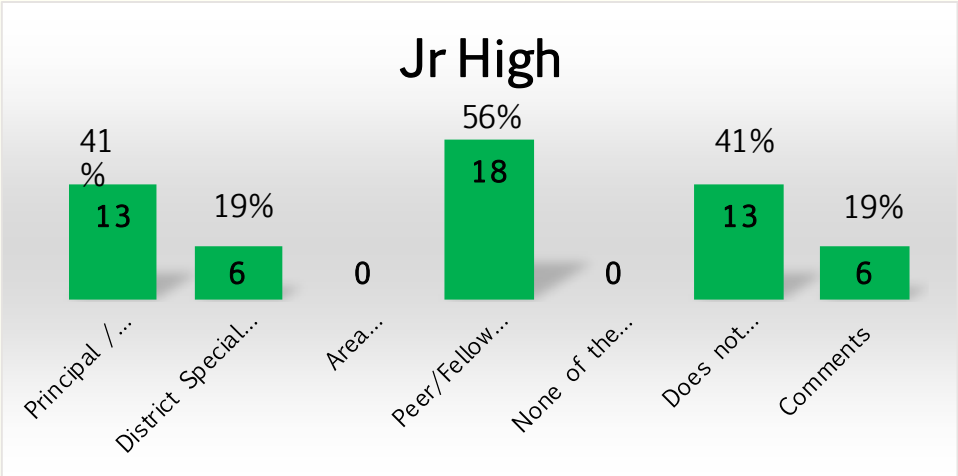
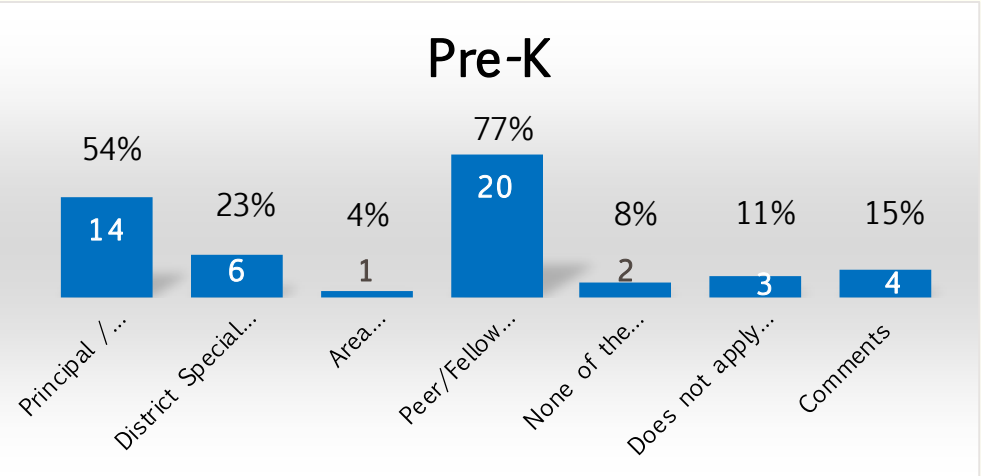


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q16: 72% of special education teachers and service providers reported their peers and fellow colleagues at their school site are the professionals that best listen, encourage, respect and support them, followed by their principal.



Q16: If you are currently a Special Education teacher or service provider, which of the following listen to, encourage, respect and support you in your role of serving the needs of students with disabilities: (check all that apply) (Data by grade level band)



Q16: Open Comments (By grade band level)

Comments from Pre-K teachers/service providers:

- I do not feel respected by my principal or the Area Directors
- Service Providers
- My school administration is "selectively" supportive depending on the situation
- As an Instructional Coach I observe preschool teachers that consistently talk about how they are not supported when on an elementary campus.

Comments from K-6 teachers/service providers:

- The Area Directors are hit or miss on supporting our decisions
- instructional Coach for Special Education has been very helpful. The principal listens to me but has talked about me to other teachers.
- Teachers (SPED/General Education)

Q16: Open Comments (By grade band level)

Comments from K-6 teachers/service providers, cont.:

- It seems like the principal is afraid of these students and won't come in the rooms. The area director and area superintendent don't come. My fellow colleagues are like high school gossips, and a few are so deceitful and vindictive but yet the admin only sees the fake act they portray. When anything is reported, it's brushed off and nothing is done. It's an awful working condition with no support.
- Our principal feels her input is more valuable than those who work directly with the student even though she does not work with them academically or on an ongoing basis.
- I'm confident that the Area Directors and Area Superintendent are indirectly supporting my role of serving the needs of my students. I feel they are accessible should I need their direct support.
- Mostly peers but not this past year. Everyone is tired and on edge
- The psychologist. I did not feel appropriately supported by the others.

Q16: Open Comments (By grade band level)

Comments from Junior High teachers/service providers:

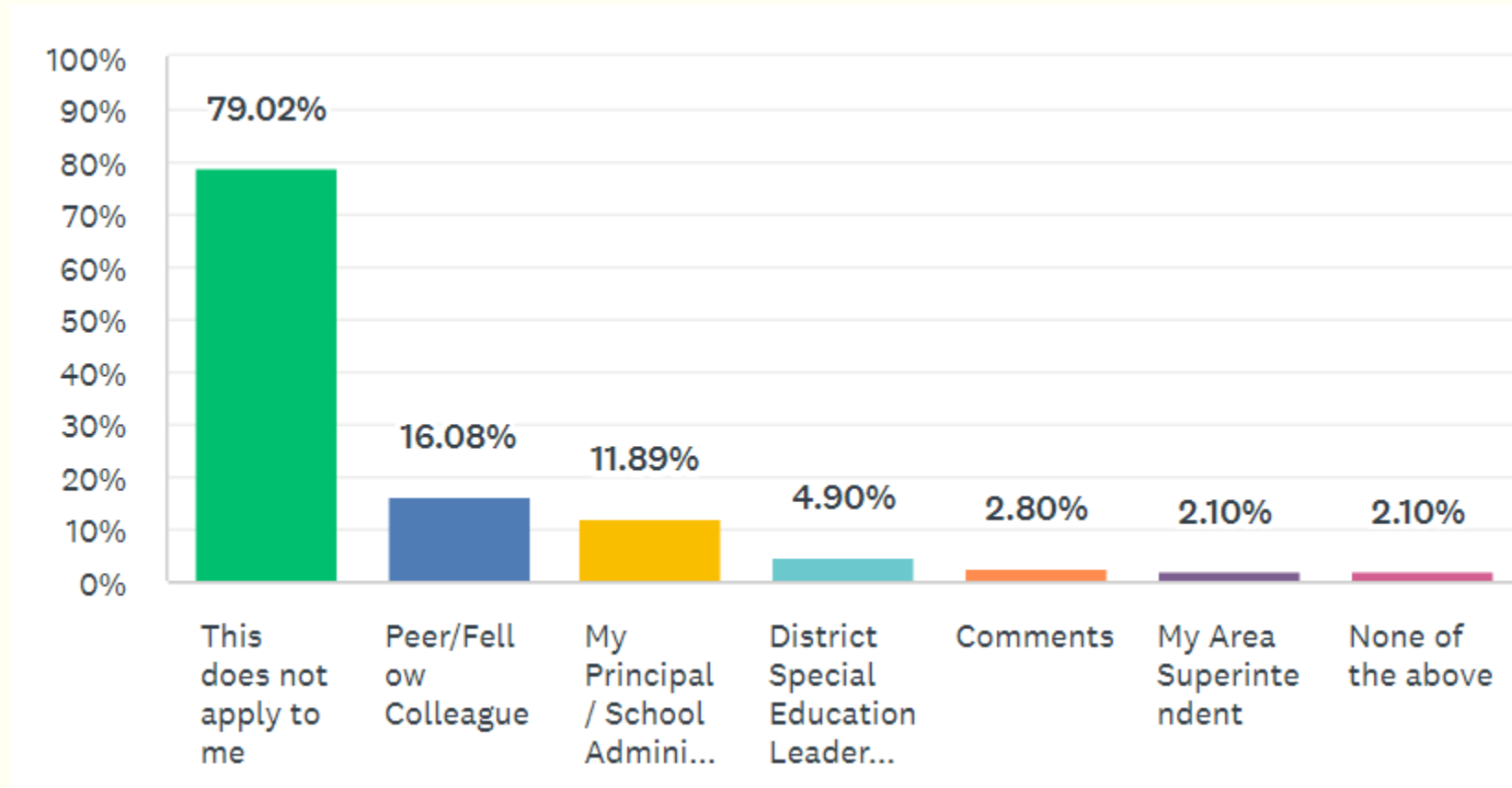
- SPED is rarely considered when making school wide decisions. Everything goes through leadership and leadership doesn't do much.
- school psychologist
- The instructional coach---and she was supposed to be working with general ed teachers but she was the one and only support for the whole year. She was awesome. Wish the school and personnel i.e. SE chair would have been as helpful or at least offered to help rather than writing people up for administration.--That is not helpful.
- Some peers, many do not
- Special Education Coach
- District SPED coaches are amazing. Also Carrie Carstens taking over Jr High made a huge difference.

Q16: Open Comments (By grade band level)

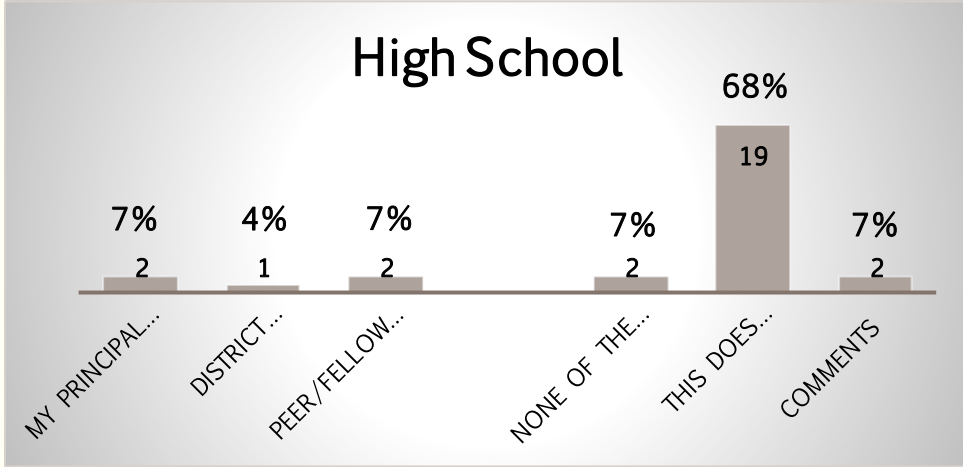
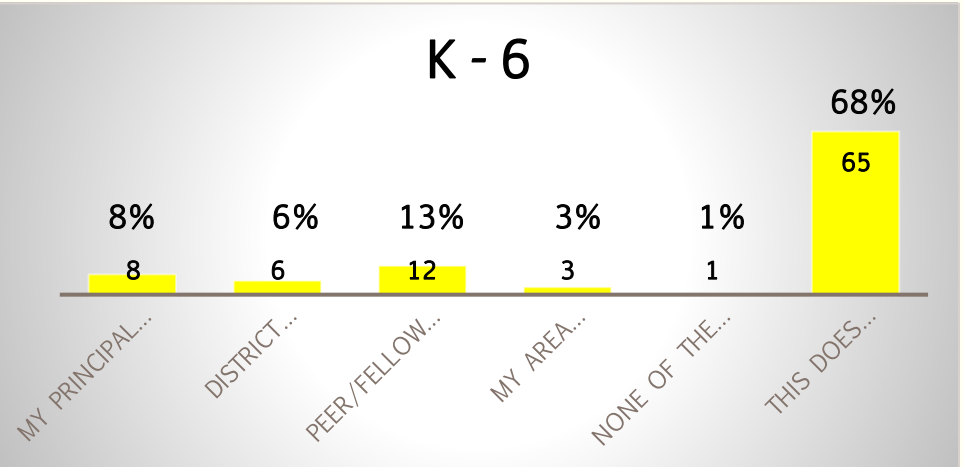
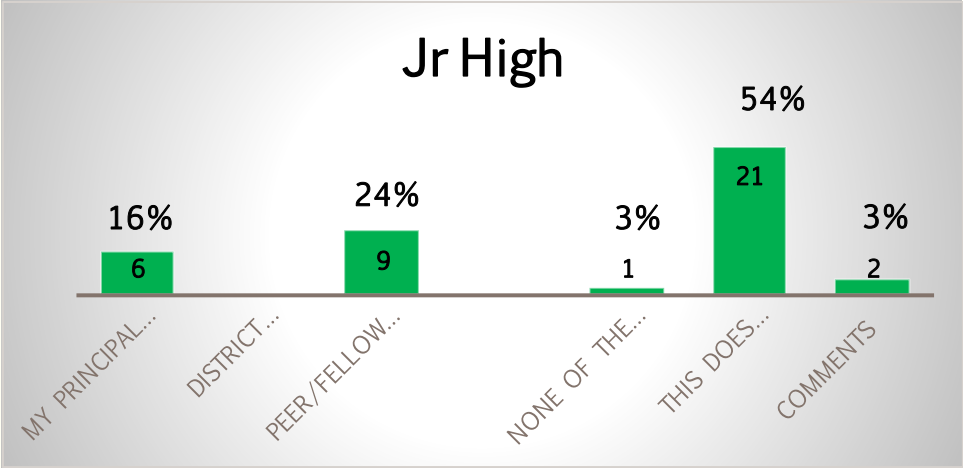
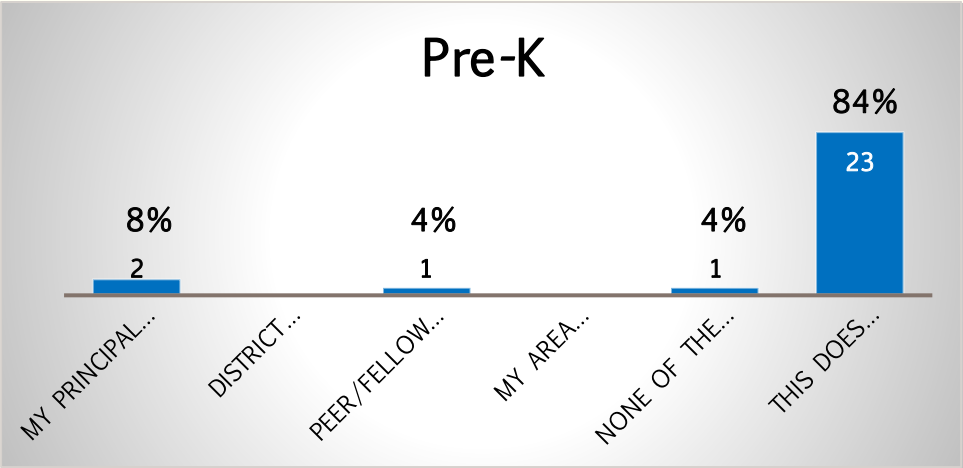
Comments from High School teachers/service providers:

- Counselor assigned by district to program
- Site Leader
- School Psychologists, SLPs, OTs, PTs too. Since I'm in 7 different High Schools, and my colleagues serve more than 10 schools, we rarely get to have a school administration that knows who we are, or have a real active role (unless disciplinary) of our work

Q17: Overall, General Education teachers reported their peers and fellow colleagues at their school site are the professionals that best listen, encourage, respect and support them, followed by their principal.



Q17: If you are currently a General Education teacher, which of the following listen to, encourage, respect and support you in your role of serving the needs of students with disabilities: (check all that apply) (Data by grade level band)



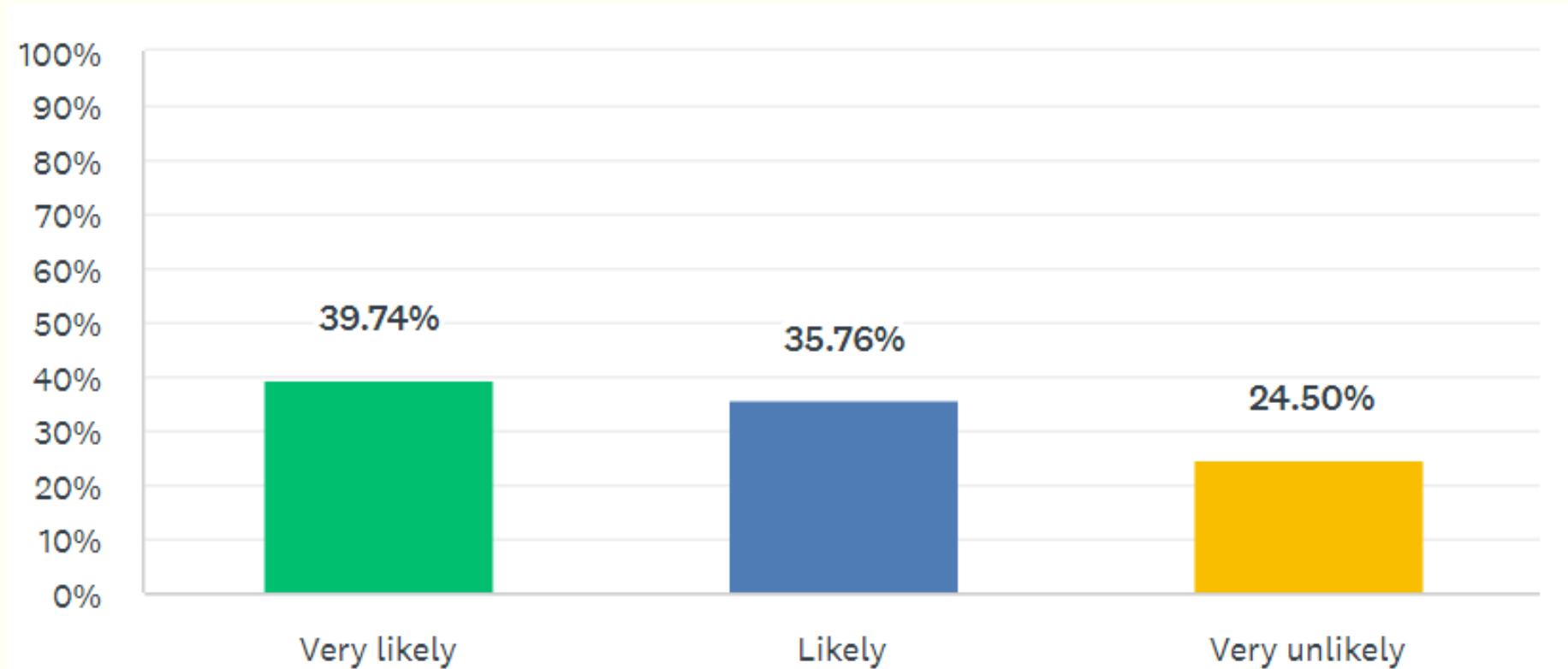
Q17: Open Comments (4 responses)

- Counselor assigned by district
- School counselor
- My co-teacher and other colleagues are wonderful. Admin doesn't understand what inclusion classes need, how they should run, and they overload the classes so they aren't true inclusion classes

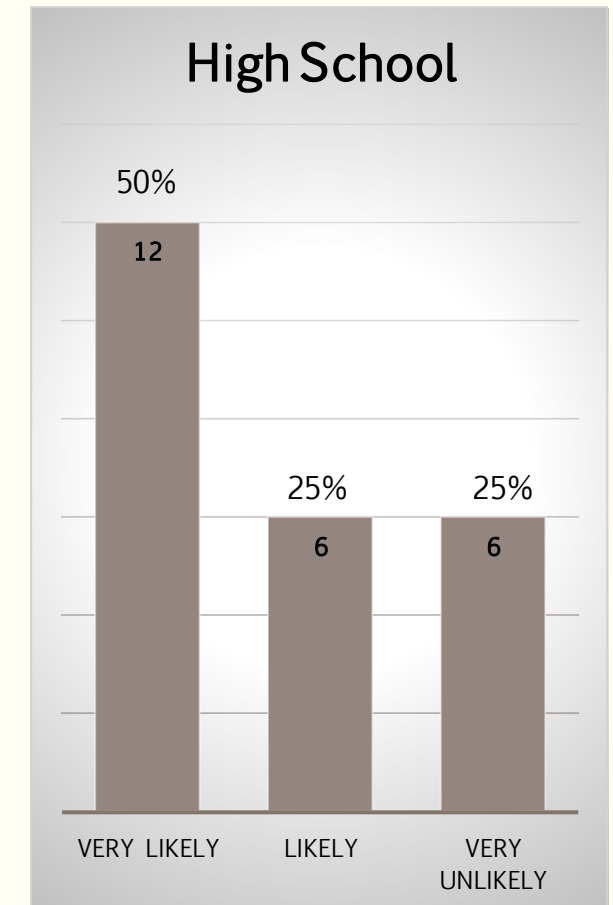
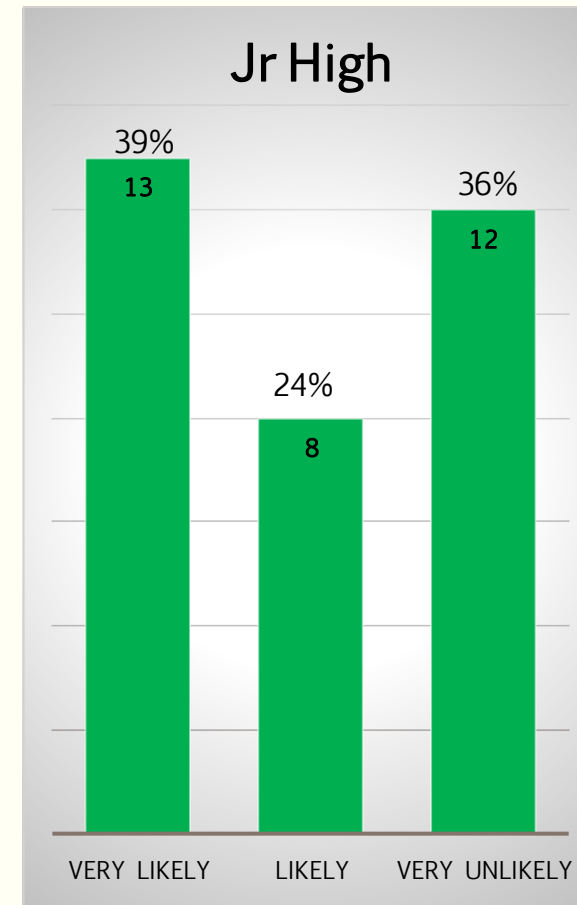
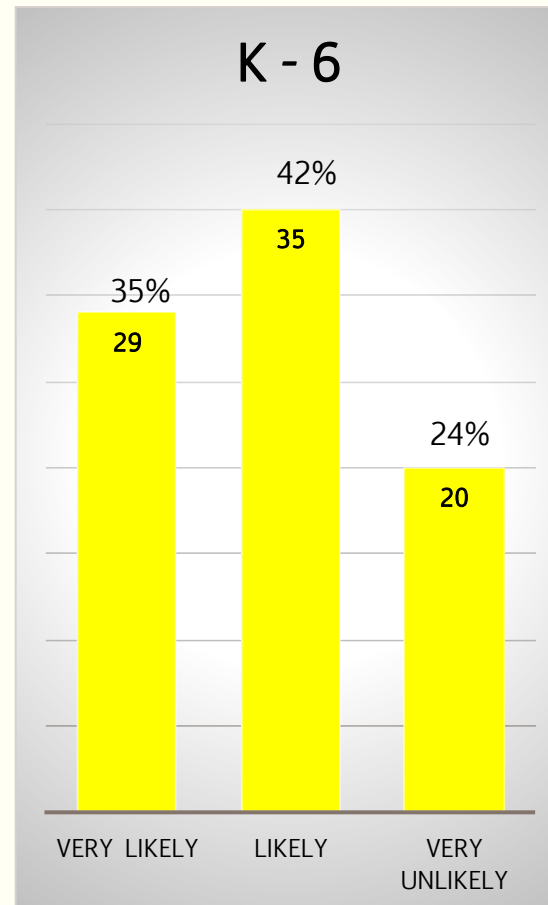
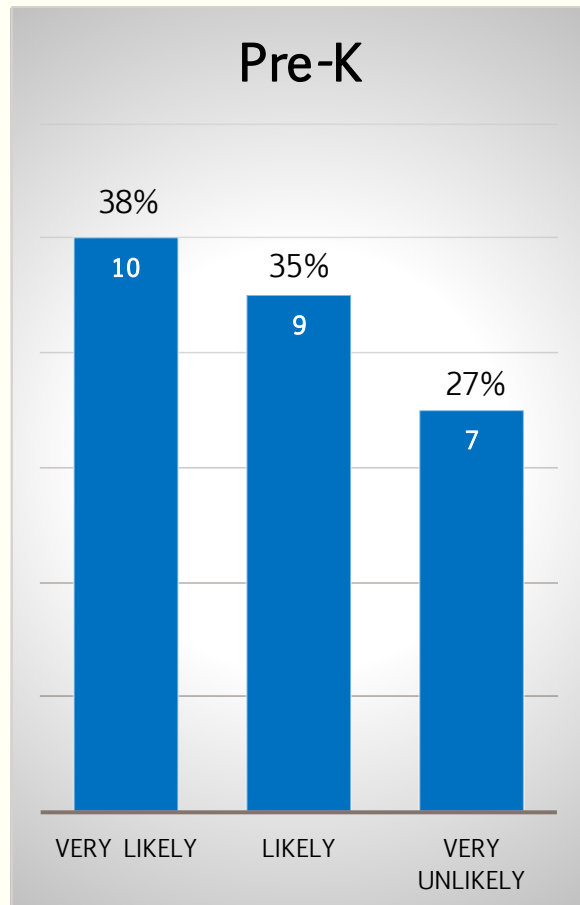
One special education teacher responded to this question:

- Instructional coach

Q18: If given the opportunity, 76% of respondents reported they would likely/very likely provide feedback regarding the District Special Education Administration's level of support.

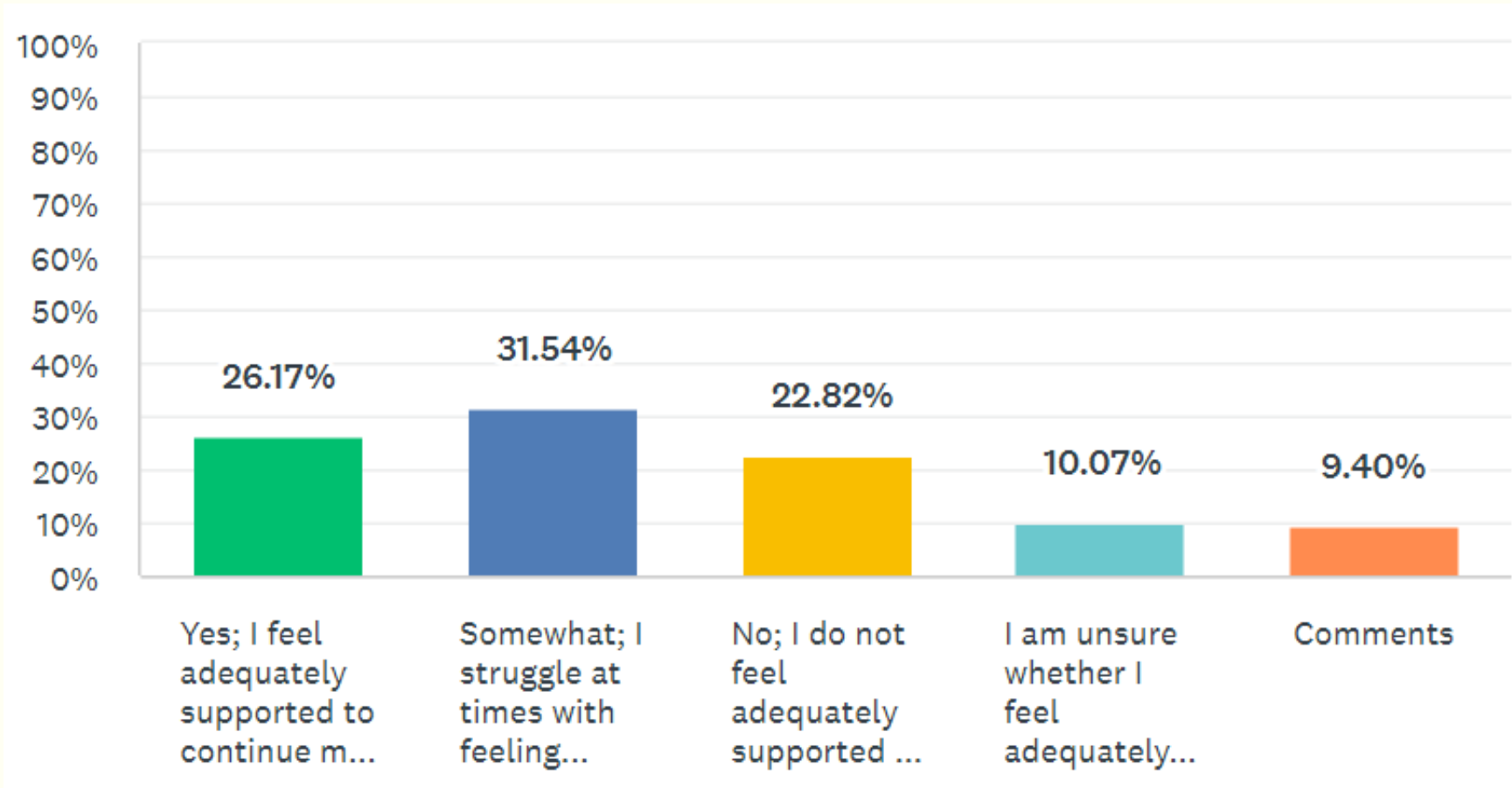


Q18: If given the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the District Special Education Administration's level of support, how likely would you be willing to do so? (Data by grade level band)

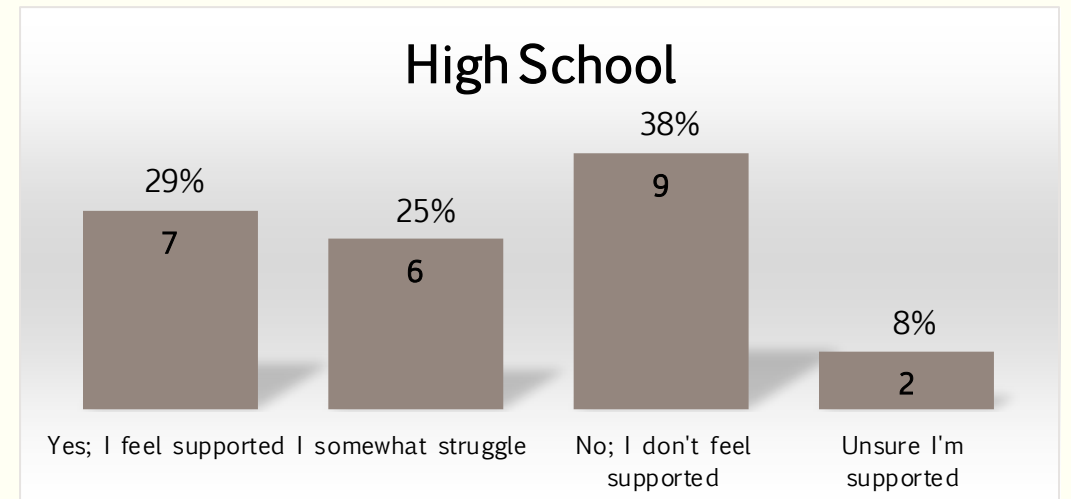
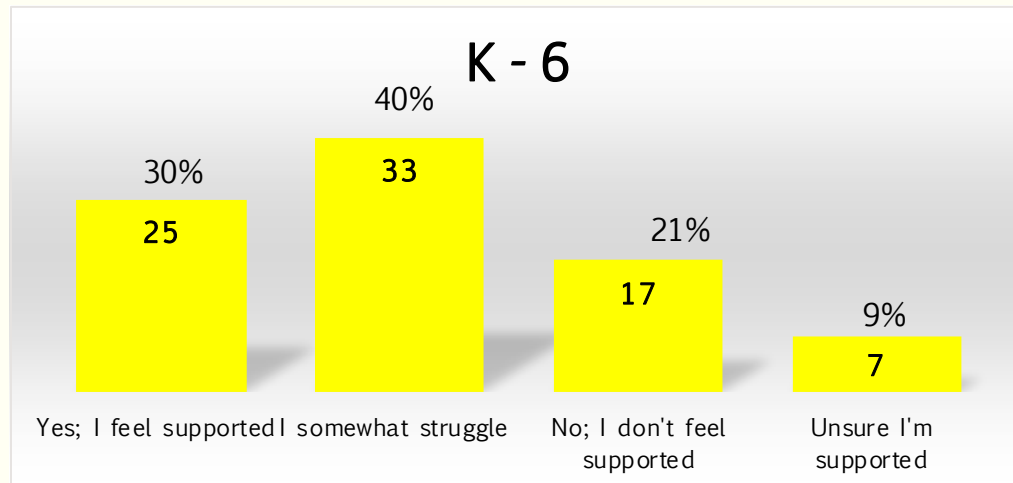
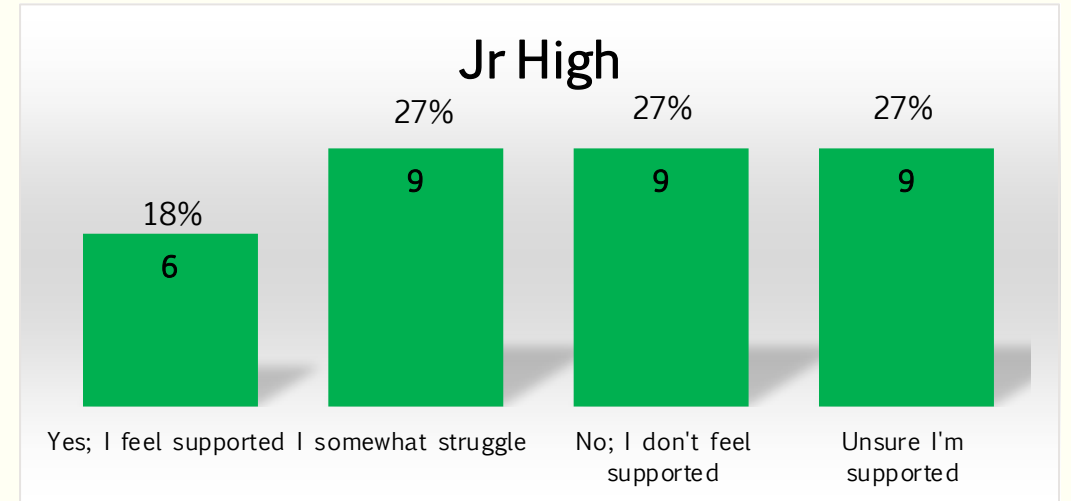
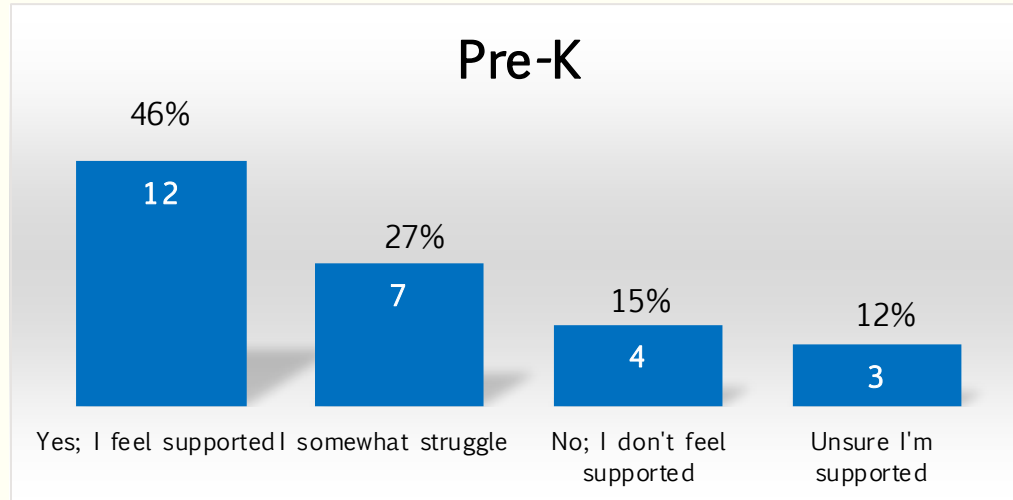


Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q19: 54% of respondents reported they *struggle* with, or do not feel adequately supported to continue their career in Special Education in MPS.



Q19: Do you feel adequately supported to continue your career in Special Education in MPS? (Data by grand band level)



Note: Total respondent count exceeds 151 due to staff working across multiple grade levels

Q19: Open Comments (14 responses)

- I decided to leave MPS.
- I feel supported what I don't feel is adequately compensated. Our raise wasn't even enough to keep up with inflation. I nearly lost my home this year. I spend a lot on supplies for my classroom that I wish were provided. I can't keep draining my own finances to go into my classroom. I may not be able to afford to keep teaching long-term. It's a shame because I love what I do.
- I am a veteran teacher so I am able to handle things - I have concerns about the new teachers not getting enough support
- I feel supported by instructional coach, but at times her hands were tied by district mandates.
- I love what I do and the kids that I serve. That is the only reason I stay. I keep telling myself that things will get better, but district decisions keep making my job more difficult. I'm giving it another year in hopes that concerns regarding compliance, personnel NEEDED to do my job well and small resource classes.
- No, I am leaving MPS
- I believe I have gifts and talents for students who attend MPS and wish to continue in some role in the future, even if it is not in my current role. I believe I have personally gone above and beyond in this position, but very much struggled with how much of my personal time and life that I gave up in order to accomplish the tasks.
- I am not a Special Ed teacher
- The biggest struggle we have right now is staffing - we cannot provide adequate services when there are classrooms without staff

Q19: Open Comments (14 responses)

- I feel adequately supported however, after 30 years of services I am retiring
- n/a
- As the gen ed teacher I don't feel we get the supports needed from our SPED department chair at our school. He is very unprofessional and makes jokes about some of the kids and their behaviors. He isn't available when needed and things end up escalating. He is unprofessional with his department and doesn't place students in the a place where they can be successful. Gen Ed teachers are often told to "just figure it out" and left at that.
- No, I do not feel adequately supported over many years of disregard. I have already put in my request to retire at the end of the school year after 35 years as a special educator (10 at MPS)
- I do not feel adequately supported. In the past three years, NOT ONCE has our current special education administration provided support at my school. I have said many times that it's pointless to reach out for help when the result is always the same- I end up feeling discouraged and hopeless, and completely unsupported. I stopped asking for assistance a long time ago. Sadly, it's an inside joke among special education teachers across the district that our Special Education Department Slogan is "Figure it out on your campus! (Also, "IA Mapping is the answer for everything!" and "██████████? Does she still even work here?") We say these things to lighten the mood, but they're more depressing than funny. Our current special education admin have broken us. Our admin lie to our faces and tells us the problems that we are experiencing are unique to our campus. They literally tell that to teachers at every campus that reaches out for support. I don't know if they actually don't realize that teachers across the district talk to each other, are friends, and are each other's supports, or if they are just such pathological liars that they cannot control the lies that come out of their mouths

MSEA Teacher & Service Provider Survey Results, Spring 2022

Mesa Special Education Alliance would like to express sincere appreciation for the teachers, service providers, and principals who helped create this survey.

We would also like to thank all the teachers, service providers, instructional coaches, psychologists and others who took the survey and shared their thoughts and experiences.

Please email comments, questions and ideas for future surveys to: mesaspedalliance@gmail.com