

Shrewsbury Public Schools

Office of Special Education

Pupil Personnel Services

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Results of the Special Education Parent Survey November 2010

The Shrewsbury Special Education Department was interested in parents' feedback regarding their experiences with the processes related to special education. A survey was sent out to all families in the spring of 2010 using the District listserv as well as the Special Education listserv. All families received this survey so the report could also reflect those students who have been through the evaluation process and may not have become eligible for special education services.

The purpose of the survey is to determine satisfaction with the types of processes used across the district in four areas: referral process, evaluation and eligibility process, I.E.P. (Individual Education Program) process, and transition process. We are looking to ensure best practices are used across the district and will use this feedback to streamline these processes.

This report displays the data from all the questions that were asked, as well as comments that were made. Comments are not being published verbatim as some could compromise the anonymity of respondents and their children.

The data from the survey are broken into five sections:

- Key findings of parent responses;
- questions asked and responses in percentages;
- a summary of parent comments;
- result data in graph format
- action plan outline.

An action plan will be developed as a result of this survey and will be shared with parents and stakeholders.

A team of parents, administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals made up the committee that formulated this survey. Thank you to all the members for volunteering their time and commitment on this project.

Section 1: Key Findings of Parent Responses

Referral Process:

There was an overall satisfaction with the referral process, with 87% of respondents agreeing there were ample opportunities to communicate concerns regarding their child. 75% of respondents indicated the information they received was adequate to help them understand the evaluation process for special education services. However, 52% of survey respondents were not aware of supports provided to their child prior to a referral for evaluation.

Evaluation and Eligibility Process:

The majority of respondents (82-88%) reported they understood the process of having their child evaluated, and 86% found the information presented at TEAM meetings was easily understood. However, only 53% of respondents understood their rights if their child was not found eligible for special education services.

Individual Education program (IEP) Process:

While 84-85% of respondents stated the IEP team clearly discussed the process for continued special education eligibility and service delivery, better communication is needed in the areas of transportation and the purposes of extended year services, as 39% and 33% of respondents, respectively, stated this was not discussed clearly. Additionally, 84% of parents feel strongly, agree or are neutral that progress towards IEP goals is communicated clearly. 79% of parents report feeling strongly satisfied, satisfied or neutral with the overall IEP process.

Transition Process:

While 60% of respondents reported the transition from one grade level to the next was smooth and effective, only 49% agreed that building-to-building transitions were smooth and effective. Approximately 20-23% of parents did not feel adequately informed regarding new routines, procedures and policies. Many parents (67%) did not understand what services are available to their student post-graduation.

Section 2: Survey Questions

I. Demographic information:

The survey was designed to answer for only one school, but we were also interested in knowing if there was more than one child receiving services, or who had been through the evaluation process. Please refer to data in the first section of the graphs.

Respondents:

Total number of parents that started the survey: 96 (11% of special education population)
 Total number of parents that completed the survey: 75 (78%)

The number of parents who completed the survey may represent the number of parents who also continue to receive special education services, versus those who completed the survey and only went through the evaluation process and their child was not eligible for special education services.

II. Referral Process:

The following reflect the questions and responses in this section:

How was your child referred for an evaluation? Early Intervention Parent Referral Teacher Referral Other:	Responses predominantly came from Early Intervention and parent referrals. 42% 45% 36% Physician, transferred in from a different school system, the evaluation was through EI in the prior school system, initially out of state IEP, Medical Professionals, EI referral for speech; teacher referral for academics, referred for services in grade 2, IEP reevaluation year, one child parent/one teacher, private school at the time of the initial eval, referred in preschool, 3 year re-evaluation, on IEP since 2001
Were there opportunities to communicate concerns regarding your child that led up to the referral for an evaluation? Yes No	87% 13%
If your child was referred by a teacher, were you aware of this referral? Yes No Not Clear	66% 16% 18
Were you aware of the supports provided to your child prior to a referral for an evaluation? Yes No Not Clear Not applicable	52% 18% 11% 19%

III. Evaluation and Eligibility Process:

The following reflect the questions and responses in this section:

Do you understand the process of having your child evaluated?	Yes	No	
Referral	88%	12%	
Time Lines	82%	18%	
Contact Person	77%	23%	
Was the information provided to you adequate to help you understand the evaluation process?			
Yes	75%		
No	25%		
Please respond to the following related to Evaluations/reports:	Yes	No	
Evaluation/reports were received prior to the meeting.	71%	29%	
Evaluation/reports were written in a manner easily understood.	75%	25%	
The information presented at the TEAM meeting was easily understood.	86%	14%	
I was able to ask questions and discuss the information presented.	90%	10%	
Please respond to the following related to the eligibility process:	Yes	No	NA
Do you understand the eligibility process?	91%	8%	1%
If your child was not found eligible for special education services, do you understand your rights?	53%	4%	43%
Have you been provided with the "Parents Notice of Procedural Safeguards"?	96%	3%	1%

IV. I.E.P. (Individual Education Program) Process:

The following reflect the questions and responses in this section:

My child's IEP team clearly discussed the following:	Yes	No
Process for continued special education eligibility	84%	16%
Service delivery	85%	15%
Transportation	61%	39%
Purpose of Extended Year (summer services)	69%	33%
Do you understand the specific documents that you should receive as a result of the IEP process?		
Yes	77%	
No	11%	
Unsure	12%	
During the IEP meeting, the participants clearly communicated on my child's progress so that I understood if he/she is making effective progress towards the goals set forth in the IEP.	Strongly agree	24%
	Agree	44%
	Neutral	15%
	Disagree	10%
	Strongly disagree	7%

I am considered a valuable contributor and equal partner at IEP meetings; my recommendations and concerns are valued.	Strongly agree	39%			
	Agree	26%			
	Neutral	19%			
	Disagree	3%			
	Strongly disagree	13%			
Once I receive my child's IEP, I feel my questions are addressed in a timely manner.	Strongly agree	31%			
	Agree	42%			
	Neutral	12%			
	Disagree	4%			
	Strongly disagree	11%			
I understand the language/terms used in written documents including:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
IEP	37%	41%	15%	6%	0%
Evaluation	19%	41%	16%	16%	9%
Progress reports	16%	36%	36%	8%	4%
Communication logs	29%	25%	12%	17%	17%
I understand the process for termination of special education services.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	12%	32%	25%	21%	8%
Overall, I feel satisfied with the IEP process in the Shrewsbury Public Schools.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	25%	36%	18%	7%	14%

V. Transition Process:

The following reflect the questions and responses in this section:

The transition from one grade level to the next was smooth and effective.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	16%	44%	18%	12%	10%
The transition from one building to another building was smooth and effective (e.g., Elementary to Sherwood).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	23%	26%	18%	20%	13%
I and/or my child felt adequately informed when transitioning regarding:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
New Routines	23%	35%	20%	14%	9%
Procedures	21%	34%	23%	11%	11%
Policies	20%	30%	30%	12%	8%
I felt my child was prepared to make the transition to the next grade/level.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	12%	43%	26%	9%	10%
I and/or my child understand what services are available post-graduation?					
Yes	33%				
No	67%				

Section 2: Parent Comments

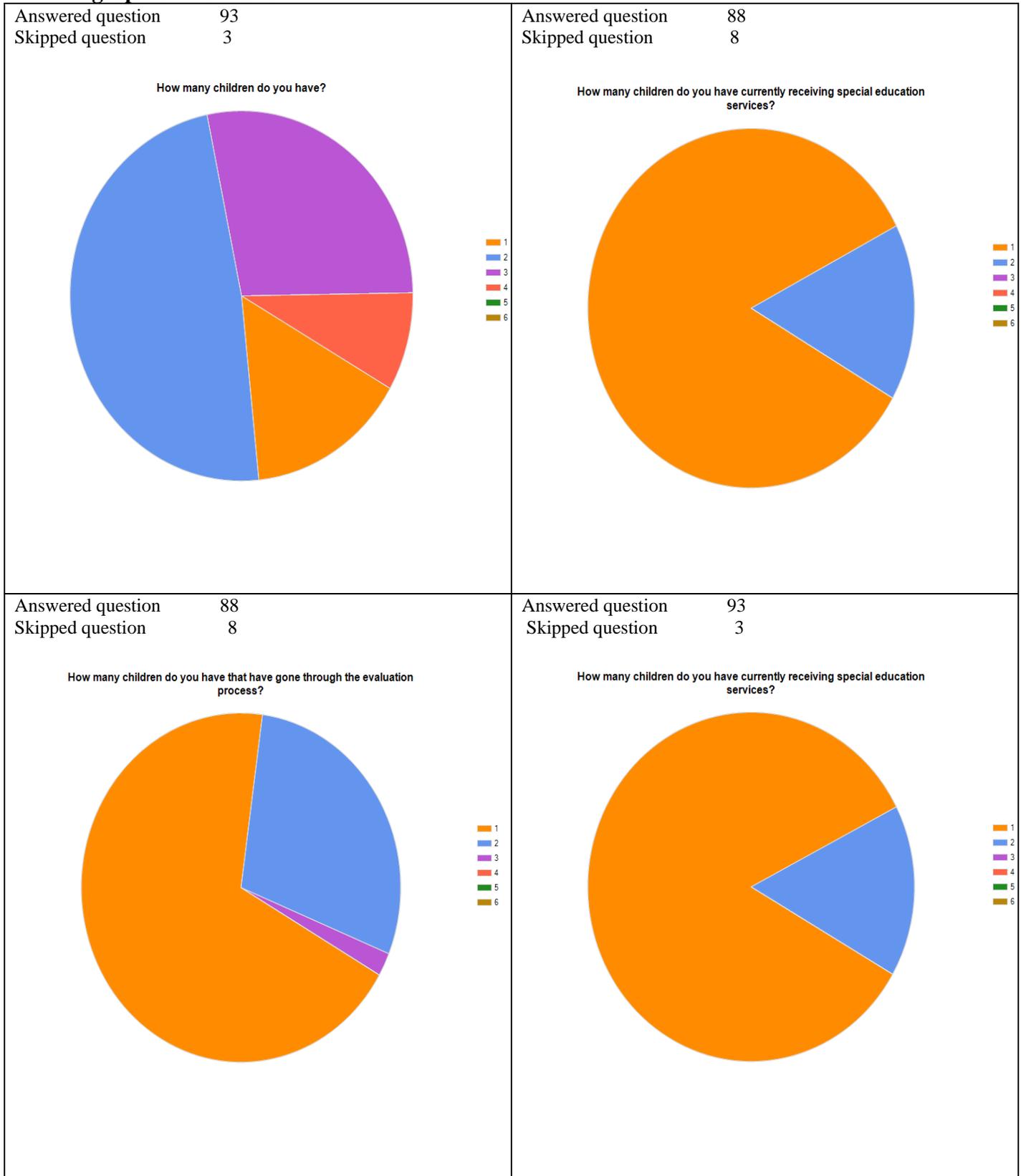
The survey provided an opportunity for parents to make open ended comments. 45 parents provided additional comments. The comments were grouped into categories with a summary of the comments. Comments are not being published verbatim as some could compromise the anonymity of respondents and their children.

Category	# of Responses	Summary of Open Ended Comments
Positive experiences	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thank you for all that has been done for my son ➤ Everyone has been professional and kept our sons needs in the forefront ➤ Thanks for making my daughter’s experience wonderful ➤ Commend the evaluation team for the reports that were written and easy to understand ➤ Communication has been responsive and productive – whole child has been considered ➤ Shrewsbury has done a wonderful job giving my son all the tools he needs to succeed ➤ Thank you for what you have done for my child ➤ Staff at the high school has been doing a wonderful job. It shows in my child’s grades and confidence ➤ Transitioning was challenging, but staff went above and beyond at Floral and Sherwood
Information	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need more informative meetings on a variety of subjects (i.e., transition, vocational, etc.) ➤ Need more information on services that are available ➤ Parents need strategies for reading, writing, spelling, and basic math
Communication	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need more information regarding changes in procedures and daily experiences ➤ Need better communication regarding progress, modifications, and general info.
Transition	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Transitions from building to building is problematic ➤ Need to better communicate effective strategies from year to year for the receiving staff ➤ Changes in team members is difficult from grade to grade ➤ Transferring from another school district is difficult ➤ Communication from building to building is problematic

Transportation	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disappointed with the lack of door to door services ➤ Need to better understand Pre-school transportation
Parental Input	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parent input needs to be equal ➤ Need to value parent input
Team Meetings and Process	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Meetings need to be more organized, IEP goals need to be measurable, progress reports need to be more detailed ➤ My experience was not good ➤ There are miscommunications regarding the purpose of the meeting ➤ Need more open and meaningful collaboration between teachers, providers, and parents
Student Progress	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need to have a clear and better understanding of the child and their progress ➤ Progress needs to be quantified and qualified
Program Options and Services	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Decisions regarding services should be based on parental concerns and outside provider information ➤ Need for non-inclusive programs ➤ No disruptive children in the special education classrooms ➤ Lack of services for child with hearing loss
Evaluation Process	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need to be informed earlier regarding need for evaluation ➤ There needs to be a better understanding of the evaluation process and school district's responsibility (3)
Regular Education	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Greater acceptance is needed from regular education teachers
Survey	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Survey was biased, did not provided enough open ended questions, did not use research standards
Miscellaneous	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Couldn't answer line 6 ➤ Parents need to be educated in the process and advocate for their child ➤ Impression that services terminated upon graduation ➤ Some issues have not come up so I left them blank ➤ Remove the Sped Director ➤ DOE needs to change regulations regarding independent evaluations, force schools to follow medically necessary requirements

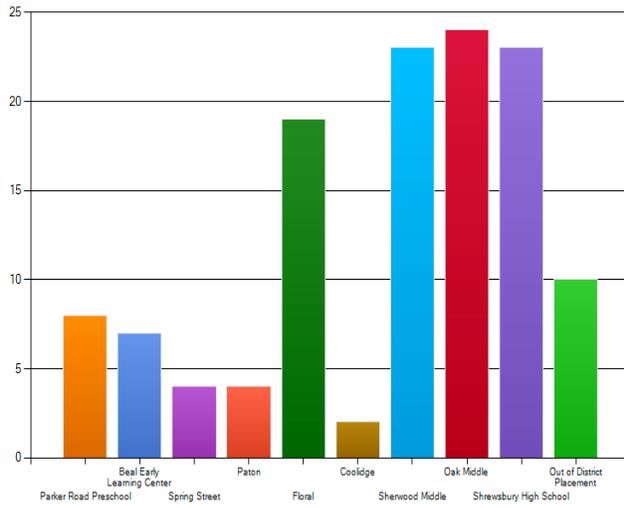
Section 4: Survey Responses in Graph Format

I. Demographic Information:



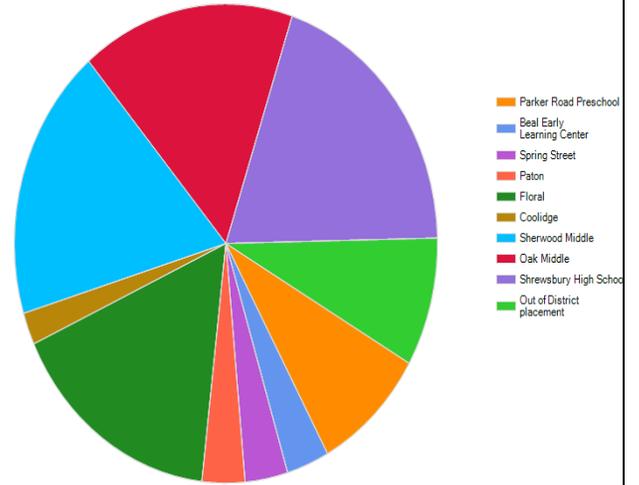
Answered question 92
 Skipped question 4

What school(s) does your child(ren) attend?



Answered question 92
 Skipped question 4

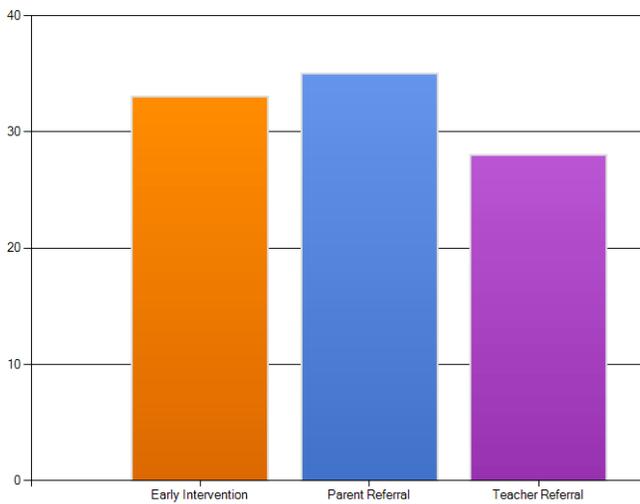
Which school will you be filling out this survey for? There will be a comment section at the end if there is any information you would like to provide us about another experience.



II. Referral Process

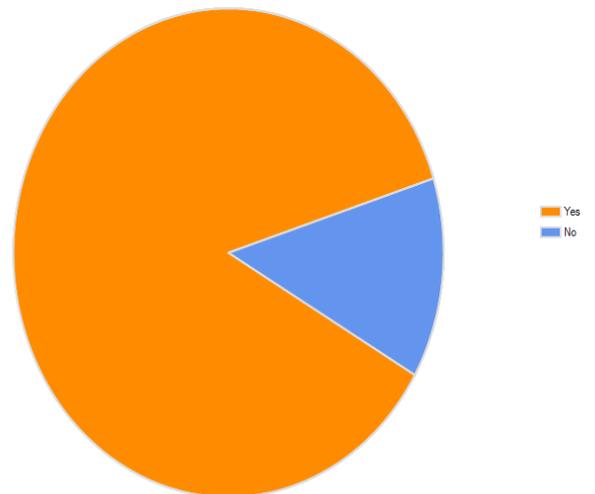
Answered question 78
 Skipped question 18

How was your child referred for an evaluation?



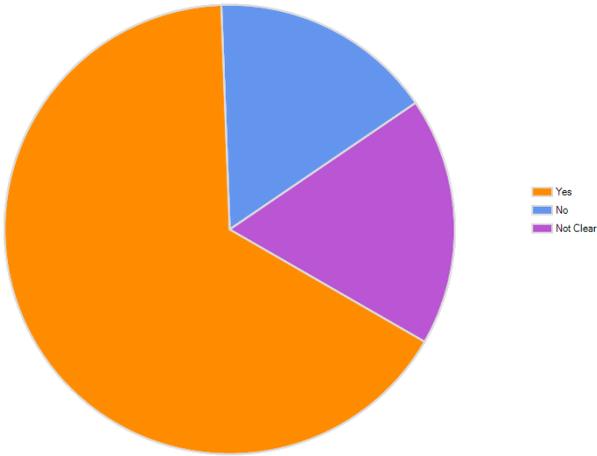
Answered question 83
 Skipped question 13

Were there opportunities to communicate concerns regarding your child that led up to a referral for an evaluation?



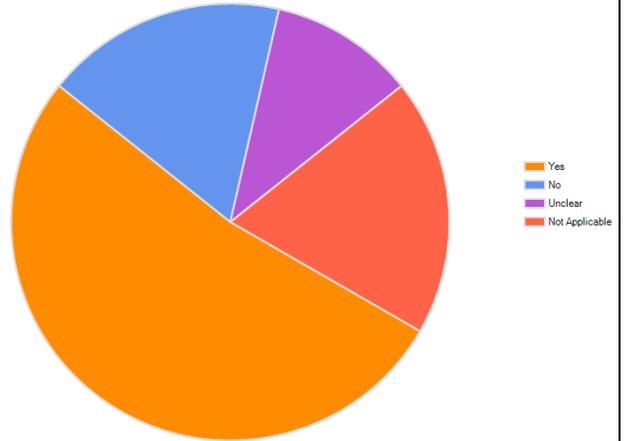
Answered question 56
 Skipped question 40

If your child was referred by a teacher, were you aware of this referral?



Answered question 84
 Skipped question 12

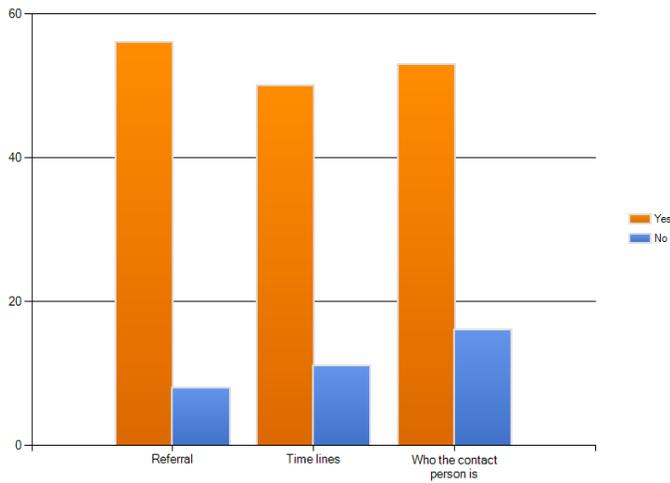
Were you aware of the supports provided to your child prior to a referral for an evaluation?



III. Evaluation and Eligibility Process

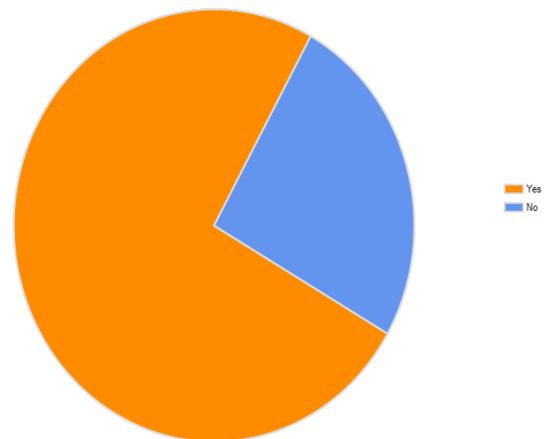
Answered question 81
 Skipped question 15

Do you understand the process of having your child evaluated?



Answered question 79
 Skipped question 17

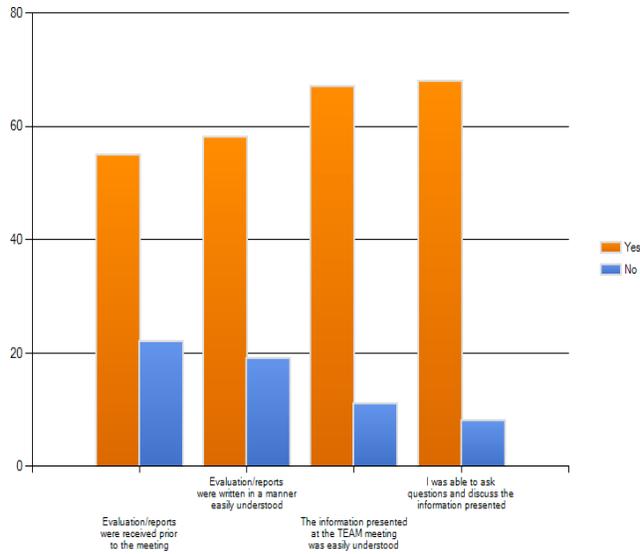
Was the information provided to you adequate to help you understand the evaluation process?



Evaluation and Eligibility Process Continued

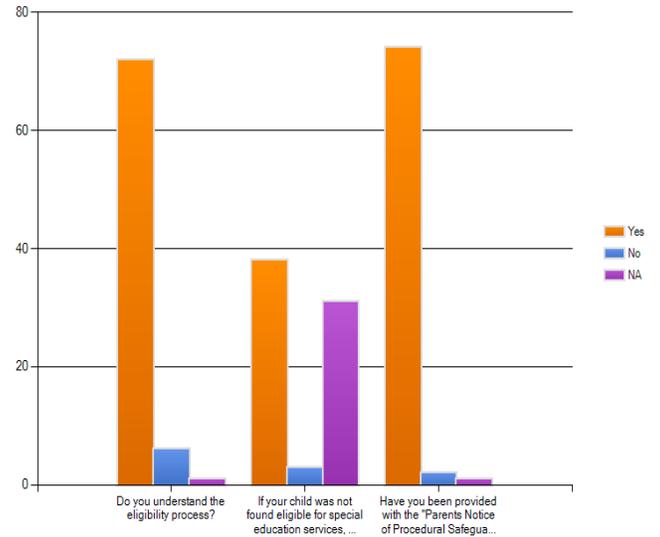
Answered question 78
Skipped question 18

Please respond to the following related to Evaluations/reports:



Answered question 79
Skipped question 17

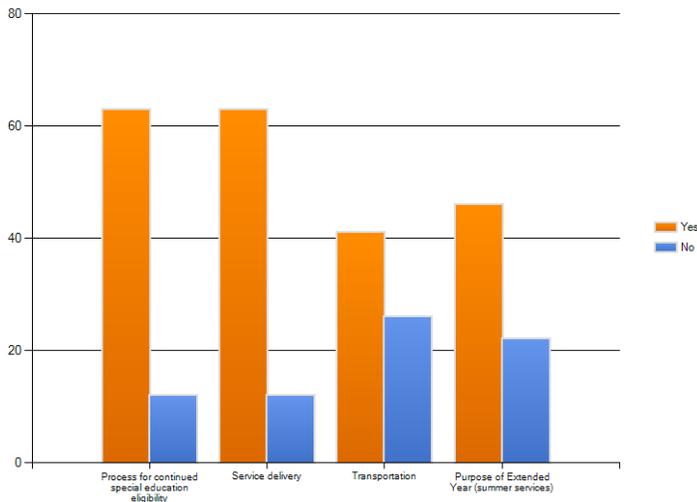
Please respond to the following related to the eligibility process:



IV. I.E.P. (Individual Education Program) Process

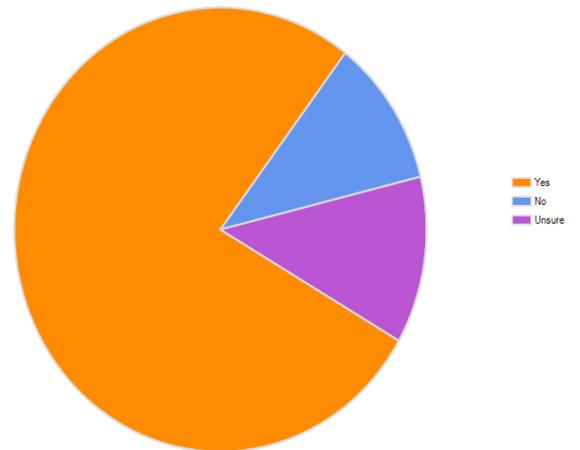
Answered question 75
Skipped question 21

My child's IEP team clearly discussed the following:



Answered question 74
Skipped question 22

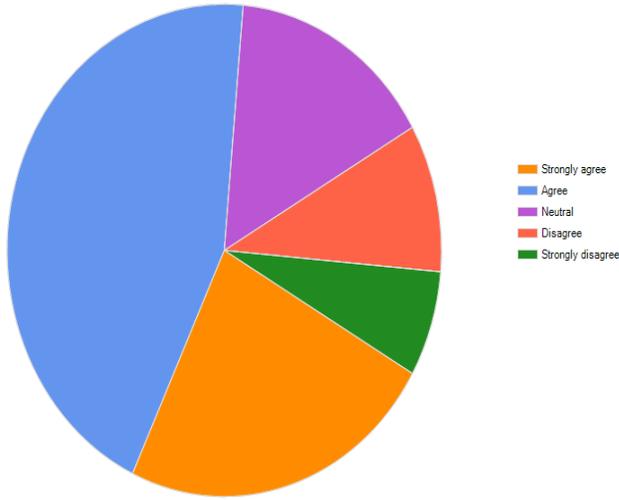
Do you understand the specific documents that you should receive as a result of the IEP process?



I.E.P. (Individual Education Program) Process Continued

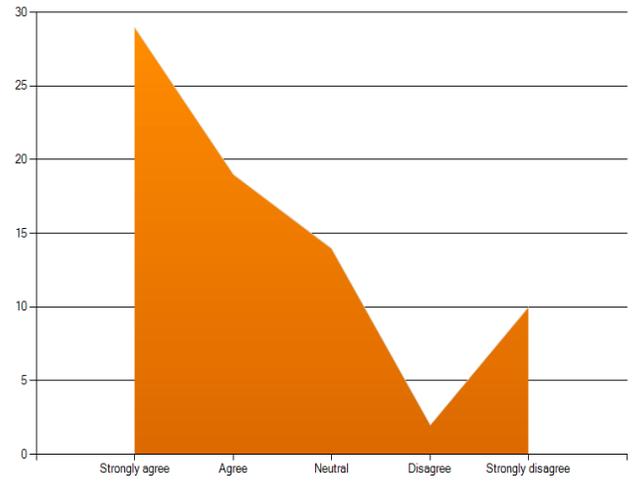
Answered question 72
Skipped question 24

During the IEP meeting, the participants clearly communicated on my child's progress so that I understood if he/she is making effective progress towards the goals set forth in the IEP.



Answered question 74
Skipped question 22

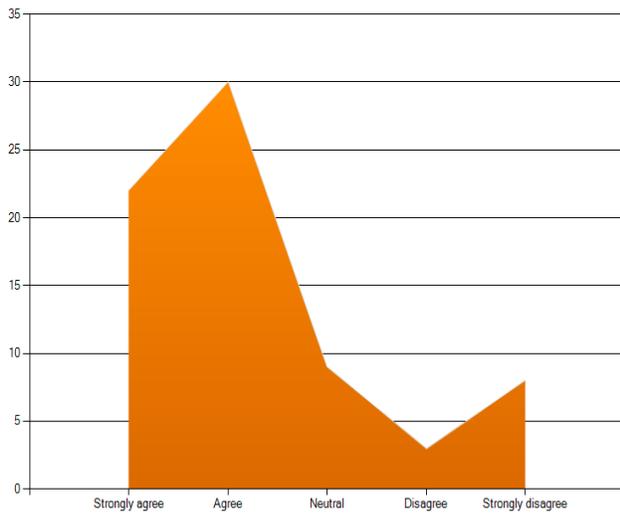
I am considered a valuable contributor and equal partner at IEP meetings; my recommendations and concerns are valued.



I.E.P. (Individual Education Program) Process Continued

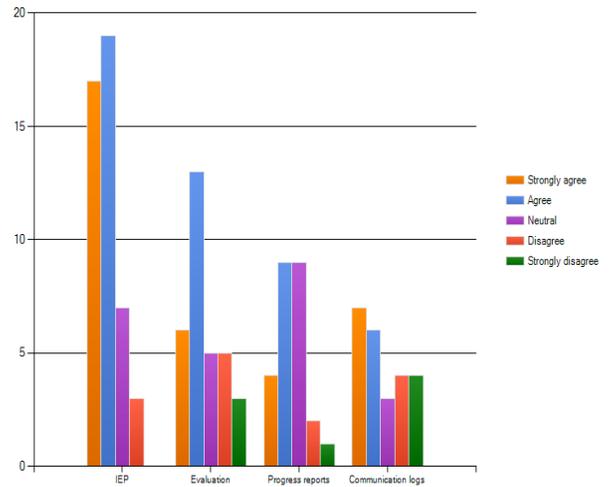
Answered question 72
Skipped question 24

Once I receive my child's IEP, I feel my questions are addressed in a timely manner.



Answered question 72
Skipped question 24

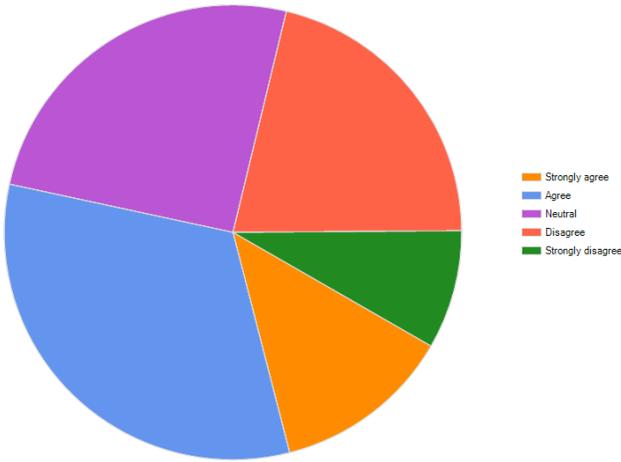
I understand the language/terms used in written documents including:



I.E.P. (Individual Education Program) Process Continued

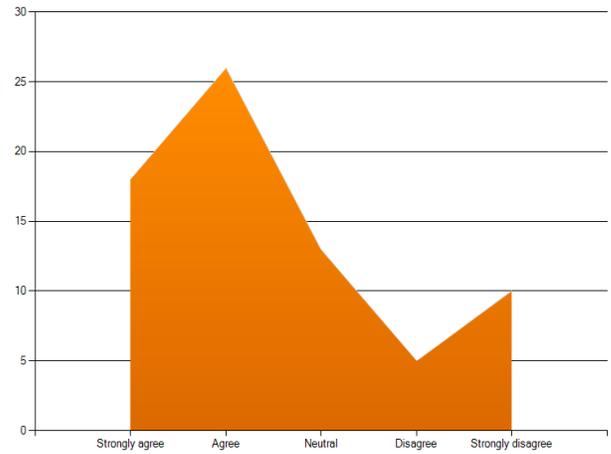
Answered question 71
Skipped question 25

I understand the process for termination of special education services.



Answered question 72
Skipped question 24

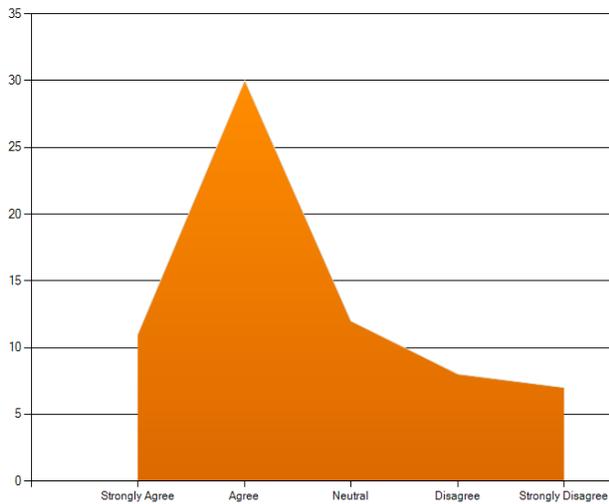
Overall, I feel satisfied with the IEP process in the Shrewsbury Public Schools.



V. Transition process

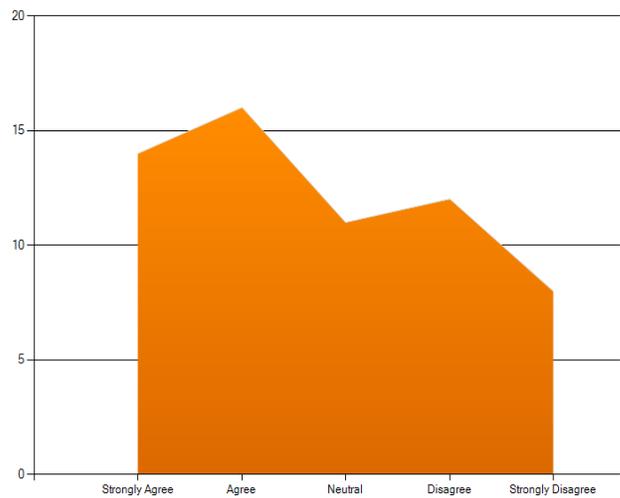
Answered question 68
Skipped question 28

The transition from one grade level to the next was smooth and effective.



Answered question 61
Skipped question 35

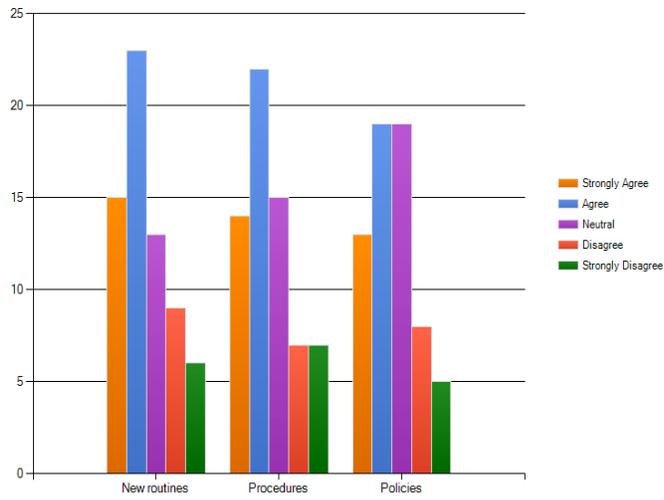
The transition from one building to another building was smooth and effective (e.g., Elementary to Sherwood).



Transition process Continued

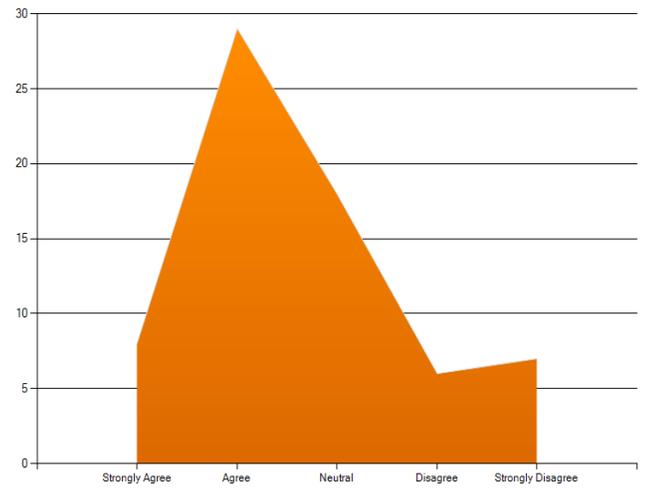
Answered question 66
 Skipped question 30

I and/or my child felt adequately informed when transitioning regarding:



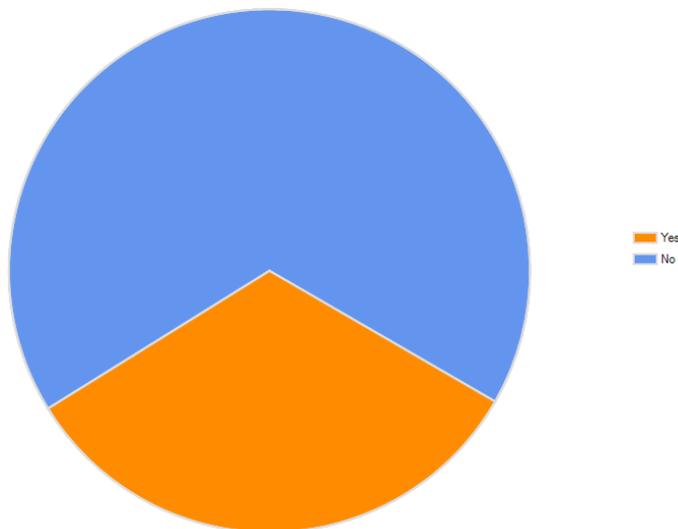
Answered question 68
 Skipped question 28

I felt my child was prepared to make the transition to the next grade/level.



Answered question 67
 Skipped question 29

I and/or my child understands what services are available post graduation?



Section 5: Action Plan

The following action plan is not exhaustive. The Special Education Department will continue to develop and monitor the plan to ensure best practices are in place and parent feedback is incorporated into the processes.

I. Referral Process

- Post a more comprehensive pre-referral process on the website including the EIT (Early Intervening Team) process
- Ensure immediate contact with parents regarding their child's performance if there is an Issue, as well as follow-up as the child goes through the EIT or referral process
- Provide parents with the specific supports provided once they have been identified in the EIT process
- Provide information to parents through the district listserv on how to access information regarding the referral process
- Ensure each building has referral information available to all parents
- Parents will be informed of the types of services pre-and post-eligibility that are available to support students

II. Evaluation and Eligibility Process

- Once a child has been referred for an evaluation, provide parents with an outline of the expectations including the process, timelines, and contact person
- Complete evaluation tracking forms to ensure parents receive reports 2-days prior to meeting
- Provide an opportunity for parents to give feedback following an evaluation

III. I.E.P (Individual Education Program) Process

- Provide parents with a clear explanation of eligibility for transportation
- Provide parents with a clear explanation of eligibility for extended year services
- Provide data for progress reports specific to the benchmarks versus anecdotal data
- Reports will provide a summary that is easy to understand and specific to a students needs
- When termination is considered, the process and how the termination was determined will be discussed at the TEAM meeting

IV. Transition Process

- A service delivery manual will be developed for parents that explains all services and expectations throughout a child's educational career by September 2011
- A plan for comprehensive transitional services will be developed and available for parents by September 2011
- A description of the expectations from grade to grade and building to building will be outlined and presented to parents minimally at the annual IEP meeting or by mid-year

