

Needham Special Education SEPAC Presentation

September 15, 2008







Special Education Program Parent Survey Results


Completed April, 2008



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- Survey sent to 675 families, Preschool-Grade 12
 - 26% return rate - 175 parent responses
 - 9 in 10 parents (92%) indicated a positive level of satisfaction with their child's special education services
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CATEGORIES OF RESPONSES

- Responsiveness to my child's needs
 - Communication
 - Compliance with procedures and process
 - Overall satisfaction with special education
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Responsiveness

Level	% Satisfied
• Preschool	96.4
• Elementary	94.5
• Pollard	92.6
• High School	93.9
• District-wide	94.5


Communication

Level	% Satisfied
• Preschool	85.7
• Elementary	86
• Pollard	82.4
• High School	91.8
• District-wide	84.7




Compliance

Level	% Satisfied
• Preschool	90.1
• Elementary	90.6
• Pollard	90.8
• High School	90.5
• District-wide	89.8





% Satisfied with Special Education Services

- Specialized Instruction 93.6
 - Speech and Language 88.0
 - Occupational Therapy 84.7
 - Preschool 92.3
 - Counseling 71.6
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3 items for further focus

- 19% of parents would like more help in understanding how to support their child's program at home
- 18% indicated they would like more information on their child's progress
- 28% indicated they were not satisfied with counseling services

Recommendations

- Discuss results with special education staff
- Discuss how to support parents' home efforts
- Special Ed. Staff meeting focused on effective written progress reporting
- Share counseling results with guidance director for further inspection of the results



Specific Learning Disability



Specific Learning Disability (SLD)

- What is a Specific Learning Disability?
- How are classroom practices and SLD eligibility related?
- What is the process of determining eligibility with a SLD?

IDEA 2004 and SLD

- The passage of IDEA 2004 brought about some changes in determining Specific Learning Disabilities as compared to IDEA '97
but
- Much of the process has stayed the same
- 34 CFR 300.307 – 300.311

SLD Definition

- “ a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations...”
300.8(c)(10)(i)

SLD Definition continued

- Includes:
 - Perceptual disabilities
 - Brain injury
 - Minimal brain dysfunction
 - Dyslexia, and
 - Developmental aphasia

SLD Definition continued

- Does **not** include learning problems that are primarily the result of:
 - Visual, hearing, or motor disabilities
 - Mental retardation
 - Emotional disturbance, or
 - Of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage

MA Comprehensive Process

4 Components

- Historical Review and Educational Assessment
- Area of Concern and Evaluation Method
- Exclusionary Factors
- Observation

Historical Review

- Purpose: to determine that poor or lack of instruction is not the reason for the student's low achievement in reading or math.

The Team must be prepared to consider if:

- A. the student has been provided **appropriate instruction in general education settings** and that instruction has been **delivered by qualified personnel**; and
- B. there is **data-based documentation of repeated assessments** of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of the student's progress and this documentation was **provided to the student's parents**.

3 possible responses

- **YES, we can confirm both statements.**
 - Proceed with the evaluation.
- **We can confirm SOME, but NOT ALL of both statements.**
 - Gather additional information during the evaluation timeline in order to answer each of the questions (See SLD TA 3).
- **NO, we can not confirm either of these statements.** (very rare!) Eligibility for SLD cannot proceed until the school district has sufficient information to confirm both statements. (See SLD TA 4).

Participation Skills

- Assessments of the student's
 - attention skills,
 - participation behaviors,
 - communication skills,
 - memory, and
 - social relations with groups, peers, and adults

Performance History

- Supporting evidence shows that the student has:
 - consistently performed **within the range** of performance of same-age peers; or
 - consistently performed **better** than same-age peers; or
 - consistently performed **less well** than same-age peers; or
 - demonstrated **inconsistent** performance throughout his/her educational history.

Medical Information

- Educationally relevant medical findings

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Area(s) of Concern

The student is not achieving adequately because of the inability to process (understand and use) spoken or written language in one or more of the following areas:

- Oral Expression
- Written Expression
- Basic Reading Skills
- Reading Comprehension
- Reading Fluency Skills
- Listening Comprehension
- Mathematics Problem Solving
- Mathematics Calculation



Evaluation Method

- Response to Scientific, Research-Based Intervention
 - and / or
- IQ / Achievement Discrepancy



Response to scientific, research-based intervention

Has many names:

- Response-to-intervention
- Response-to-instruction
- Three-tiered instruction
- Recognition and response (generally used in early childhood education)

Any kind of instructional support program that is based on research and provides assistance to students who are struggling.

Not really new!

- MA requires Instructional support
 - adequate instructional practices responsive to student needs
 - instructional support for students and teachers;
 - remedial instruction for students
 - consultative services for teachers
 - reading instruction
 - documentation of these support services;




Needham Schools Special Education Programs





Integrated Preschool

Provides a special education preschool program for children requiring intensive education in order to progress.



INTENSIVE PROGRAMS

Provides opportunity for intensive instruction and effective inclusion with grade-level peers at elementary, middle and high school.

- Eliot 2nd Grade Program
- ELC-I (Newman), ELC-II (Hillside)
- ELC (Pollard)
- S.T.R.I.V.E. (Needham High School)



Language Based Programs

Provides specialized teaching for students with significant learning and language disabilities.

Programs are at all three levels:

Eliot, Pollard, and High School



Therapeutic Class

Provides intensive support for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities


- Specialized Learning Center (grades K-4)
- Partnership Program (grades 6-8)
- Connections Academic Program (grades 9-12)
- Connections Transition Program (grades 9-12)



Classroom Based Services

Students at all levels requiring specially designed instruction within the classroom setting.

Services provided by: classroom teachers, SPED teaching assistants, special educators and related service providers





Pull Out Services

Students at all levels requiring specially designed instruction outside of a classroom setting

Services provided by: special educators, related services providers, SPED teaching assistants

