

Report for the

Hudson School District

Subject:

Special Education Study Parent, Staff and Student Program Satisfaction Analysis

Prepared by:

**Judith A. King
Educational Consultant**

August 15, 2005

Table of Contents

Section	Topic	Page
	Executive Summary	1
I.	Introduction	4
	A. Purpose of Study	
	B. Timeline and Scope of Work	
II.	Consultant's Background	6
III.	Parent Surveys	7
IV.	Parent Focus Groups	8
V.	Parent Results	9
VI.	Staff Surveys	19
VII.	Staff Focus Groups	20
VIII.	Staff Results	21
IX.	Student Interviews/Focus Groups	32
X.	Appendixes	see separate volume

Index of Tables

	Page
Table 1: Summary of parent survey responses	7
Table 2: Sample of Survey Calculation	10
Table 3: Parent Survey Results-All Schools	11
Table 4: Summary of staff survey responses	19
Table 5: Leadership Survey Results	21
Table 6: Regular Teachers Survey Results	22
Table 7: Special Education Teachers Survey Results	23
Table 8: Paraprofessional Survey Results	24

This report is intended for the exclusive use of the Hudson School District. The quantitative survey results are available to the Hudson School District in electronic format. No other part of this study may be reproduced or transmitted in any form, without permission in writing from the consultant.

The contents of this report represent the consultant's best professional assessment. Any questions, contact Judy King, Educational Consultant at (603)577-5454.

Hudson School District Special Education Program Study

Executive Summary

In mid-March 2005, Judy King, Educational Consultant was contracted by the Hudson School District to provide an independent analysis of the special education program with the goal of determining customer satisfaction with the program. Parents, administrators, special education teachers, regular classroom teachers, and paraprofessionals were surveyed and participated in focus groups. Middle school students participated in focus groups. High school students were individually interviewed.

A team of individuals worked on the development of the surveys: Judy King, Educational Consultant; Richard Nolan, Hudson School Board Member; Dr. Irene Sousa, Special Education Director; Randy Bell, Superintendent; and Mary Ellen Ormond, Assistant Superintendent. Prior to distribution, the surveys were approved by the school board. Throughout the process, survey and focus group results were not shared with this group.

The New Hampshire School Administrators Association (NHSAA) was also contracted to complete a statistical comparative analysis of other districts. Judy King and NHSAA have met to discuss their preliminary findings in preparation for the final report and presentation.

This report represents the perceptions and opinions of parents, staff and students about the special education program. The perceptions and opinions are not the consultant's perceptions and opinions. Volumes of qualitative and quantitative data have been summarized and it is from here that outcomes were determined.

When a particular group's perception was supported by substantive data (survey and focus group data), the consultant has analyzed this information and made a recommendation. Please note that data on the elementary level is for all elementary schools.

The detailed analysis shows what the district is doing well and where there are opportunities for improvement. Certain areas are of sufficient concern to warrant

follow-up.

In addition, written survey comments and focus groups provided a venue for staff, parents and students to convey their views and give ideas on how to improve the program. Parents show a high level of satisfaction with the program. It is clear at all levels that there is a caring and dedicated staff working with the children.

Several themes clearly emerged from the study. The body of the report will give you a more detailed analysis.

Emerging themes and recommendations:

- Encourage parent participation in the special education program. Many parents expressed the willingness to partner with educators and have good ideas on how to improve parent communication.
- Analyze what is working on one school level and not at another school level. For example, if the high school special education department is strongly perceived as a resource to classroom teachers, learn why that is the case and how it may be helpful in strengthening other school levels.
- Analyze professional development opportunities for administrators, teachers and paraprofessionals, i.e. orientation, workshop days, training on specific disabilities. Assess needs and strengthen special education training and orientation. Review NHSAA professional development analysis.
- Improve staff communication/collaboration at all levels -regular classroom teachers, special education teachers and paraprofessionals strongly expressed a need for program input. Suggest a team develop a plan to improve communication among staff and administrators.
- Analyze program resources, space needs and staffing needs. Review NHSAA comparative analysis.

- Increase the number of regular classroom teachers who follow IEPs. IEP meetings were highly rated by parents. Middle and high school parents see

inconsistencies with regular classroom teachers following the IEP. Several areas of concerns were noted by classroom teachers: high volume of IEPs to review and implement; training on handling specific disabilities; communicating student progress/needs with other school staff and parents.

- Review staff concerns at the middle school, particularly as it relates to communication and building administration. Study the more in depth analysis in this report.
- Many parents and staff inquired about learning about the results of the study. Communicate with the community how the results will be used and their role in the process.
- Clarify school board role--all parent and staff focus groups (with the exception of the paraprofessionals) were concerned about the role of the school board in terms of parent advocacy, placement decisions and treatment of special education staff. The consultant strongly advises that the district seek legal advice on the school board's role in the special education process, i.e. advocacy issues and placement decisions.

A special education program is a complex and challenging one to administer in a district. This report and the NHSAA report provide the Hudson School District with a comprehensive in-depth analysis of the special education program. It is essential that the Hudson School District staff and school board work together to build an atmosphere of trust and collaboration to service the students for real systemic change to take place. This study gives the district the opportunity to set goals and outcomes that will result in an even better program.

I. Introduction

A. Purpose Of The Study

Judy King, an independent educational consultant was contracted by the Hudson School District to provide a comprehensive analysis of parent, staff and student satisfaction of the Hudson School District's special education program at all school levels, as defined in her March 21, 2005 study proposal. This report in conjunction with the statistical comparative analysis done by NHSAA will help inform future special education programming in the district.

B. Scope of Work and Timeline

The following is a timeline of major steps that were completed and the approximate time of completion.

TIMELINE OF TASKS AND STEPS

Week of March 7

- Researched special education parent surveys.

Week of March 14

- Met with Randy Bell, Superintendent; Richard Nolan, Hudson School Board Member; Dr. Irene Sousa, Hudson Special Education Director; Mary Ellen Ormond, Assistant Superintendent; to brainstorm what should be covered in the parent survey.
- Designed a draft pilot survey, cover letter and phone script.

Week of March 21

- Finalized draft pilot parent survey, cover letter and phone script. Reviewed focus group postcard or letter.
- Researched and created a rough draft of leadership/teacher/paraprofessional surveys.
- District prepared a phone list for parent telephone study-- Names of parents, telephone numbers and sorted by school level.
- District coordinated meeting space at the Hudson Police Department.
-

Week of March 28

- District office: For parent survey mailing, prepared mailing envelopes, self-addressed stamped return envelopes to be sent to Judy King. Included focus group reply form for those who would like to be in a focus group(with another return envelope).
- Conducted pilot parent survey via 15 telephone interviews.

Week of April 4

- Met with district and finalized parent survey.
- District mailed parent surveys on Thursday, April 7. Return date: Monday, April 18. District prepared reminder postcards to be mailed to parents on Tuesday, April 12.
- Finalized regular classroom teacher, special education teacher and paraprofessional surveys. Drafted and reviewed leadership survey. Drafted and reviewed cover letters.

Week of April 11

- Completed 60 telephone parent interviews and set up focus groups (for weeks of May 2 and May 9).
- Parent survey reminder postcards sent on April 12.
- Finalized teacher, paraprofessional, leadership mailings.

Week of April 18

- Arranged parent focus group meetings. The consultant contacted parents who returned focus group postcards.
- District prepared mailing to school administrators, classroom, SPED teachers, and paraprofessionals. Mail date: May 2.

Week of April 25 School vacation week

Week of May 2

- Conducted two parent focus groups (elementary, middle, high school) 6-8 individuals in each group, 60 minutes in length.
- Reviewed draft of student questions.
- District mails surveys to school staff and administrators on May 2. Return date: May 10. Email reminder sent on May 5.

Week of May 9

- Conducted three parent focus groups (elementary, middle, high school) 6-8 individuals in each group, 60 minutes in length.
- Set up focus groups for leadership, teachers, paraprofessionals for the weeks of May 16 and May 23.

Week of May 16/ Week of May 23

- Conducted focus groups for each staff group: leadership, special education teachers, classroom teachers, and paraprofessionals.

Week of June 6/Week of June 13

- Conducted middle school student focus groups(3 groups)
- Ten high school students had individual face-to-face interviews.

Mid-June-Mid-August

- Summarized mail-in surveys, telephone interviews and focus group information.
- Met with NHSAA to collaborate on study.
- Prepared report/ presentation for school board: August 15 meeting

II. Consultant's Background: Judy King**Education and Professional Experience:**

Judy King has twenty-three years of leadership experience in secondary and postsecondary education. Her expertise centers on systems thinking, communication, marketing, customer service, and team dynamics. She is a highly trained facilitator who assesses needs and motivates individuals and teams to reach their goals.

She has developed and delivered customer service and other training programs for Heidelberg Web Systems, Southern NH Medical Center, Daniel Webster College, Franklin Pierce College, Rivier College and several area school districts. She conducted telephone studies for a marketing research firm. While at Franklin Pierce and Rivier, she directed the marketing effort. Her responsibilities included: market research, focus groups, customer service and strategic planning.

Ms. King holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Salem State College and a Masters in Business Administration from Rivier College. She also completed graduate coursework in education at Boston University and the University of Massachusetts, Boston. In addition to her current position as Southern NH School-to-Careers Partnership Director, she teaches (graduate and undergraduate courses) and consults. For three years, she facilitated the Hudson School District Best Schools Leadership Team in designing and implementing a teacher evaluation and supervision model.

III. Parent Surveys

All special education parents received a letter from the school board chair that outlined the purpose of the study and assured parents confidentiality. The letter also stated that Judy King, an independent consultant, may be calling them to participate in telephone interviews. The consultant contacted fifteen parents by telephone to pilot test the survey for design and clarity. Overall parents were forthcoming with their responses and clearly understood the survey. As a result of the pilot study, the following changes were made for the final survey:

The pilot survey asked the following questions:

- What was working in special education for your child?
- What was not working in special education for your child?

The word “well” was added after the word working in the final survey:

- What was working well in special education for your child?
- What was not working well in special education for your child?

Four questions did not apply to parents of early elementary students. A statement was added after questions 16,17,18,19 that read: If this statement isn’t relevant to your child’s age, please do not respond.

The final survey, a letter from the consultant, and a focus group reply form were mailed to SPED parents’ residences. Judy King also completed 60 telephone interviews with parents. Parents who completed telephone interviews were asked to discard the mail survey. Parents were encouraged to participate in school level focus groups.

Table 1. Summary of parent survey responses:

School Level	Mail-in	Telephone	Mail +Tele surveys/# sent	%
High	73	22	95/200	47%
Middle	46	16	62/156	40%
Elementary	60	17	77/179	43%

Pre-School	14	5	19/36	53%
Undeclared	5			
TOTAL	198	60	258/571	45%

Out of the 60 parents contacted by telephone, 95% completed the survey. 35% of parents returned the mail survey. The introductory letter; first class mail; content of high personal interest; and the reminder postcard contributed to an excellent response rate.

IV. Parent Focus Groups

Background and Objectives:

Parent focus groups gave parents the opportunity to freely discuss their thoughts and concerns about the special education program. It is important to note that the focus group data is a small sample that provides a subjective, but not statistically valid understanding of the special education program. The focus groups are the opinions of a small sample size and were analyzed in conjunction with mail-in surveys and phone interviews. While not quantifiable, focus groups often have an overall theme and may support quantifiable data.

Methodology

The focus groups were between 60-75 minutes in length depending on group size.

2 Elementary school groups- Number of participants: 5, 7 (1 pre-school parent in each group)

2 Middle school groups-Number of participants: 4, 7

1 High School- Number of participants: 8

Total Focus Group Participants = 31

- Focus groups were held at a non-school location, Hudson Police Department, training room and conducted by Judy King, Independent Educational Consultant.
- Parents received a letter, survey and focus group reply form. One of the two self-addressed stamped envelopes was for returning the focus group reply form to the consultant. Parents were contacted by email (90%) or phone to confirm participation. The email confirmation included an agenda and directions to the Hudson Police Department.
- Parents were asked to arrive ten minutes prior to the start of the session. All sessions started on time.

The following is a list of ground rules and questions asked in the focus groups:

Facilitator agreed to:

- Keep conversation focused on the questions.
- Give everybody an opportunity to respond to each question.
- Get closure on the questions.
- Keep discussion to one-hour.
- Preserve anonymity and confidentiality.

Participants agreed to:

- Not share information shared by others outside of the focus group.
- Respect other's opinions.

Each group was asked the following open-ended questions:

- When you look at your child's whole educational experience, what more could the district do to help you and your child succeed?
- Regarding the education program of your child, what else do we need to know? What have we not asked?
- Other comments/concerns

V. Parent Results:

The analysis is based on reviewing the perceptions of parents based on their responses to numeric ratings to structured format questions. In addition, it is supported by perceptions conveyed in the written survey comments to open-ended questions and focus group comments. When a particular group's perception was supported by substantive data (survey and focus group data), the consultant has analyzed this information.

Summaries of individual parent focus group themes, concerns and ideas are noted (See Appendix A).

The parent survey questions were categorized under four major headings: Special Education Services, Communication, School Services, and IEP Meetings.

Table 2: Sample of Survey Calculation

Category: Special Education Services:

Question 1: My child's special education services meet his/her individual needs.

Parents responded

3(completely); 2(mostly); 1(minimally); 0(not at all)

At the middle school, 60 parents were surveyed. 2 did not answer this question= 58

21 responded x 3(completely) = 63

26 responded x 2(mostly) =52

8 responded x1 (minimally) = 8

3 responded x0(not at all) =0

58 responded 123

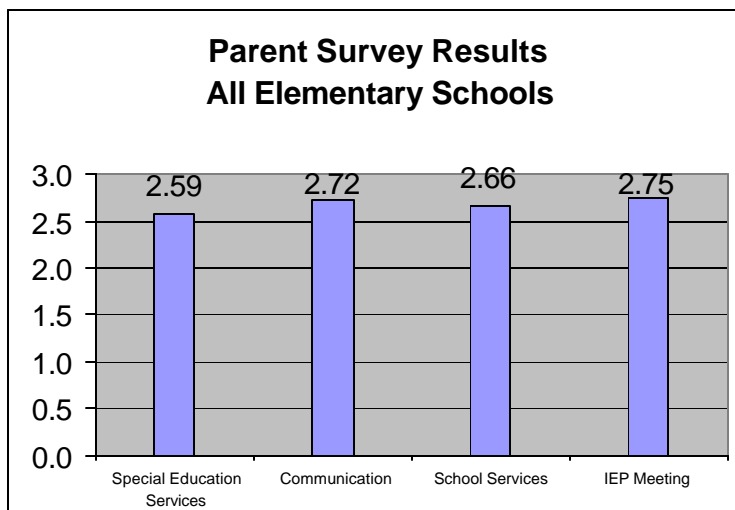
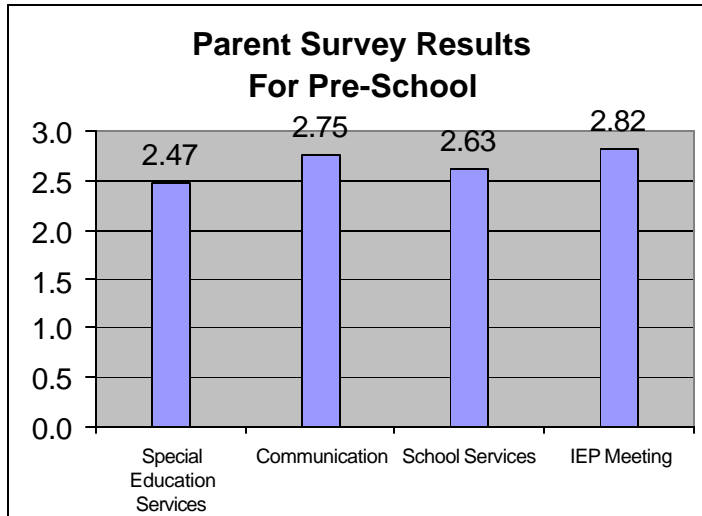
123 value divided by 58 responses = 2.12

The parent survey quantitative data has been calculated by individual question and school level. (See Appendix B).

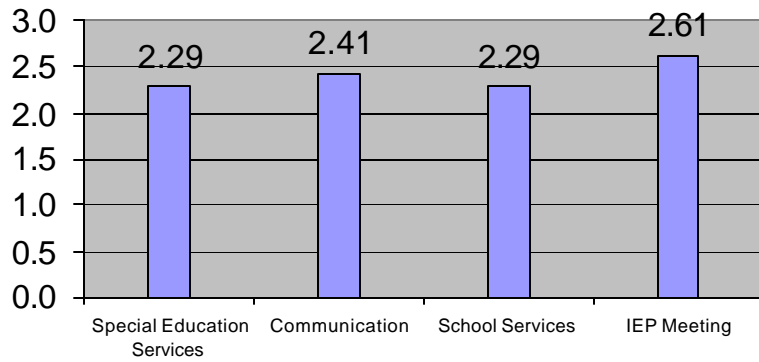
The parent survey qualitative comments are summarized by primary disability code (See Appendix C). Other disabilities are also noted.

The table that follows illustrates the summary results for each school in the four categories: Special Education Services, Communication, School Services and IEP Meetings.

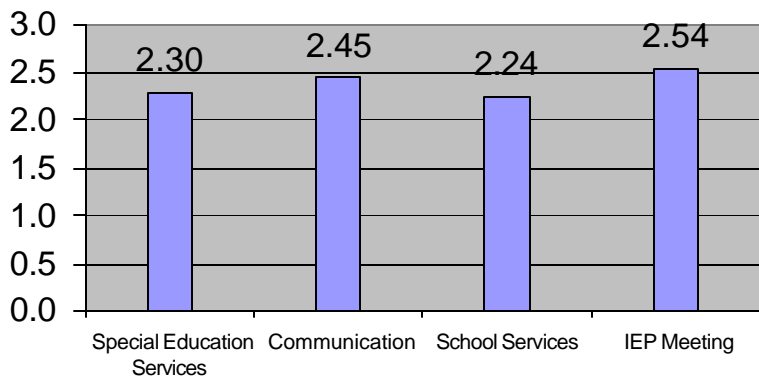
Table 3: Parent Survey Results-All Schools



Parent Survey Results Hudson Memorial School



Parent Survey Results for Alvirne High School



Parent Survey Results Analysis

Overall, the parent survey data is very positive. Parents rated each statement-Completely (3); Mostly (2); Minimally(1); Not at All(0)

The average response in almost every instance is above the 2.0 range. The range of the “not at all” response was between 1-10%. The vast majority of parents are mostly or completely satisfied with the special education program in the district.

The survey has been categorized into four major areas: Special Education Services, Communication, School Services and IEP Meeting. Below is a quantitative summary of each category by school level. At the end of each category is an analysis. Notes are made about particular statements and recommendations, when relevant.

It is important to note that when you examine each category from a systems perspective, it becomes more challenging to provide services and ensure communication at the middle and high school level than at the pre-school and elementary levels. Parents recognize that they and their children will potentially be connecting and communicating with more classroom teachers at the middle/upper levels.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES	Pre	Elem	Middle	High
1. My child's special education services meet his/her individual needs.	2.71	2.59	2.12	2.16
2. My child's SPED teachers are knowledgeable about my child's unique needs.	2.83	2.69	2.47	2.40
3. My child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) is followed by SPED teachers.	2.83	2.69	2.39	2.49
4. I am satisfied with the quality of my child's special education services.	2.53	2.58	2.19	2.11
5. I am satisfied with the moves my child has made from grade to grade.	2.25	2.55	2.17	2.30
6. I am satisfied with the moves my child has made from school to school.	1.67	2.42	2.40	2.33
SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AVERAGE	2.47	2.59	2.29	2.30

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES ANALYSIS:

Pre-school and elementary levels show higher ratings than middle/high school **in all statements.**

Please note: Pre-school Q5 and Q6: ask about satisfaction from grade to grade and school to school. If the statements were not relevant to the child's age (pre-school), the survey asked that they not respond to the statement. A small number of parents responded: #5(4 responses) and #6(2 responses). If it were not factored into the average, it would raise their school services to 2.88 and the overall average from 2.47 to 2.60.

Statement 1- Preschool parents supported this statement in focus groups and written comments. They commented on the excellent programming and personal attention their children receive. Elementary parents were generally pleased with special education services. In the middle and high school focus groups, parents didn't always feel that their child's needs were met.

Statement 3-Good overall averages.

Statement 4- 23% of high school parents were "minimally" or "not at all" satisfied with the quality of special education services. 19% of middle school parents were "minimally" or "not at all" satisfied with the quality of services. Some middle school and high school parents supported this statement in focus groups and in written open-ended responses. It wasn't any one service that was pointed out. It was different for each parent.

Statements 5 and 6-moves from grade to grade and school to school. In telephone conversations and focus groups, I found parents would reflect on the student's entire time with the district. A high school parent may have found one transition easier than another transition.

COMMUNICATION	Pre	Elem	Middle	High
1. I am satisfied with the information that I receive from the school about my child's educational program.	2.72	2.60	2.17	2.25
2. I am satisfied with the <u>amount of communication</u> I receive from the school about my child's educational program.	2.37	2.47	1.92	2.25
3. I understand the reason why my child receives special education services.	2.95	2.87	2.87	2.89
4. My child feels welcomed by special education teachers and staff.	2.94	2.87	2.61	2.45
5. My child feels welcomed by their classroom teachers.	2.94	2.84	2.29	2.29
6. My child is informed and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day and is offered the necessary supports.	2.50	2.49	2.14	2.14
7. I understand as a parent of a special needs student the special education process as explained in, "NH Procedural Safeguards Handbook for Special Education".	2.68	2.75	2.60	2.67
8. If I had a problem with my child's Individual Educational Plan (IEP), I know who to contact.	2.89	2.89	2.66	2.67
COMMUNICATION AVERAGE	2.75	2.72	2.41	2.45

COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS:

Overall, in the communications category, the pre-school and elementary schools have stronger ratings than the middle and high school. Parents in the focus groups who experienced two or more school level transitions commented on how they have less communication at the upper levels. 35% of middle school parents rated the amount of communication in the "minimum" or "not at all" category. Middle school parents had ideas on how to increase communication (See Appendix A).

When parents were asked whether their children felt welcomed by special education teachers and classroom teachers, elementary and pre-school parents rated both questions consistently high. At the middle and high school level, special education teachers were rated higher than classroom

teachers. Parent focus groups and open-ended responses support this data. In interviewing high school and middle school students, they were of the same opinion. They often commented how some classroom teachers knew their special needs and were very helpful. Others were not as helpful.

Parents know about the handbook and receive an annual copy. In telephone interviews and focus groups, parents commented on the need for a “user friendly” packet to supplement the handbook.

Statement #6-Participation in outside activities and receive supports- rated lower in middle school and high school. A significant amount of time in both middle school and high school focus groups discussed this issue and many parents want to see their children have better access to outside activities.

If parents have a problem, they know who to contact for assistance(at all school levels).

SCHOOL SERVICES	Pre	Elem	Middle	High
1. School personnel are responsive to my concerns about my child's educational program.	2.67	2.70	2.36	2.27
2. My child receives the support(s) necessary to be successful in school.	2.83	2.57	2.18	2.22
3. The school my child attends has an adequate number of teachers and support personnel.	2.58	2.60	2.22	2.17
4. My child is given regular opportunities to interact with all students, both with disabilities and without disabilities.	1.94	2.80	2.81	2.67
5. My child's classroom teachers are knowledgeable about my child's unique needs.	2.93	2.64	2.12	2.05
6. My child's Individual Education Plan(IEP) is followed by classroom teachers.	2.80	2.66	2.02	2.09
SCHOOL SERVICES AVERAGE	2.63	2.66	2.29	2.24

SCHOOL SERVICES ANALYSIS:

Statement 4- Pre-school parents want their children to have interaction with non-disabled peers. This statement was the only statement rated low by pre-school parents. Other school levels had high ratings on this statement.

Middle and high school parents are concerned about adequate support and staff numbers to support the program. Recommendation: Review NHSAA data. High school students have commented on the need for help in content areas other than English, lower-level mathematics, and history.

Statement 5- this data is supported by parent focus groups and student interviews. Many parents have found classroom teachers who are not knowledgeable about their child's unique needs. 19% of middle school parents and 20% of high school parents responded "minimally" or "not at all" to this statement. Student interviews and focus groups reinforced this perception. Both parents and students found some classroom teachers were entuned; others were not.

Statement 6-Classroom teachers following the IEP- 23% middle school and 24% of high school parents responded "minimally" or "not at all" to this statement. Same reasons as cited in statement 5.

IEP MEETING	Pre	Elem	Middle	High
1. My opinions and concerns were considered in the planning of my child's Individual Educational Plan(IEP).	2.76	2.71	2.61	2.57
2. The information about my child was explained to my satisfaction at the Individual Educational Planning(IEP) meeting.	2.81	2.72	2.59	2.51
3. I was made to feel welcome at my child's Individual Educational Plan meeting.	2.88	2.87	2.80	2.71
4. During the meeting, I had an opportunity for input.	2.88	2.88	2.80	2.76
5. I feel the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is meeting my child's needs	2.75	2.59	2.26	2.16
IEP MEETING AVERAGES	2.82	2.75	2.61	2.54

IEP MEETING ANALYSIS:

Only parents that attended the last IEP meeting responded to this set of questions. District-wide parents had high praise for the IEP meeting and how they are conducted. They believe that they had input and were welcomed. Statement #5 asks whether the IEP is meeting their child's needs. The preschool and elementary have a high average. The middle and high school show a drop in score. Middle school parents and high school parents often commented in focus groups that some classroom teachers were not following the IEP.

VI. Staff Surveys

Leadership, regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals.

On March 29, the superintendent sent a staff update that included information about the special education study program review. It outlined the purpose of the study; encouraged staff to participate; and explained the consultant's role. On April 29, the consultant sent a letter, survey, focus group reply form and two self-addressed stamped envelopes (one for the survey and one for the focus group). The envelopes were returned to the consultant to ensure confidentiality and anonymity.

Four surveys were developed: Leadership, regular classroom teachers, special education teachers and paraprofessionals. Each survey had questions pertinent to them.

Table 4: Summary of staff survey responses:

LEADERSHIP, REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHERS, SPED TEACHERS, PARAPROFESSIONALS

	received/#mailed	% received
Leadership*	35/51	69%
SPED teachers	33/46	71%
Regular classroom teachers	100/223	45%
Paraprofessionals	44/98	45%

212 responses/418 staff surveys

51% overall response

* Leadership: includes SPED department heads, SPED specialists(such as school psychologist, behavioral specialist) guidance and building administrators.

The two letters, self-addressed stamped envelope, and a reminder postcard all contributed to the excellent response rate. The open-ended questions were answered by the vast majority of respondents.

VII. Staff Focus Groups

Background and Objectives:

Staff focus groups gave parents the opportunity to freely discuss their thoughts and concerns about the special education program. It is important to note that the focus group data is a small sample that provides a subjective, but not statistically valid understanding of the special education program. The focus groups are the opinions of a small sample size and were analyzed in conjunction with mail-in surveys and phone interviews. While not quantifiable, focus groups often have an overall theme and may support quantifiable data.

Methodology

- The focus groups were between 60 minutes in length depending on group size.

Leadership	9
SPED teachers	8
Regular classroom teachers	10
Paraprofessionals	3
Total Focus Group Participants	30
- Focus groups were held at a non-school location, Hudson Police Department, training room and conducted by Judy King, Independent Educational Consultant.
- Staff received a letter, survey and focus group reply form. One of the two self-addressed stamped envelopes was for returning the focus group reply form to the consultant. Staff members were contacted by email or phone to confirm participation. The email confirmation included an agenda and directions to the Hudson Police Department. Staff members were asked to arrive ten minutes prior to the start of the session. All sessions started on time.
- The same ground rules that were distributed at the parent focus groups were given to staff.

Each group was asked the following open-ended questions:

- What more could the district do to help you as an (administrator, classroom teacher, special education teacher or paraprofessional) to best meet the needs of special education students?
- Regarding the special education program, what else do we need to know? What have we not asked?
- Other comments/concerns

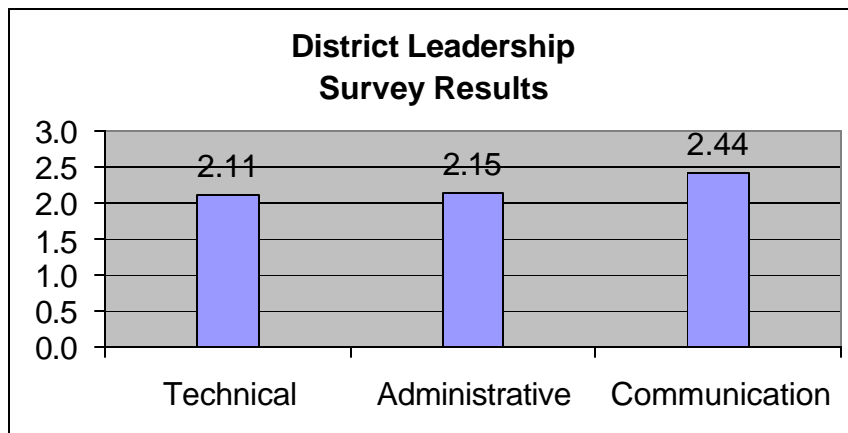
VIII. Staff Results:

The analysis is based on reviewing the perceptions of staff based on their responses to numeric ratings to structured format questions. In addition, it is supported by perceptions conveyed in the written survey comments to open-ended questions and focus group comments. When a particular group's perception was supported by substantive data, the consultant has analyzed this information. Focus group themes, concerns and ideas are also summarized(See Appendix D).

The staff survey questions were categorized under three major headings: **Technical** (level of knowledge to provide special education services); **Administrative**(support needed to provide special education services); and **Communication**(level of communication regarding special education services). The quantitative summaries and graphs have been done for each individual question by category (See Appendix E). Calculations were done using the same method as the parent survey. See Table 2-page 10.

The qualitative comments are sorted by school level and years of teaching experience (See Appendix F).

Table 5: Leadership Survey Results



Many respondents did not indicate school level therefore results were calculated as a district.

* Leadership: includes SPED department heads, SPED specialists(such as school psychologist, behavioral specialist) guidance and building administrators.

Table 6: Regular Teachers Survey Results

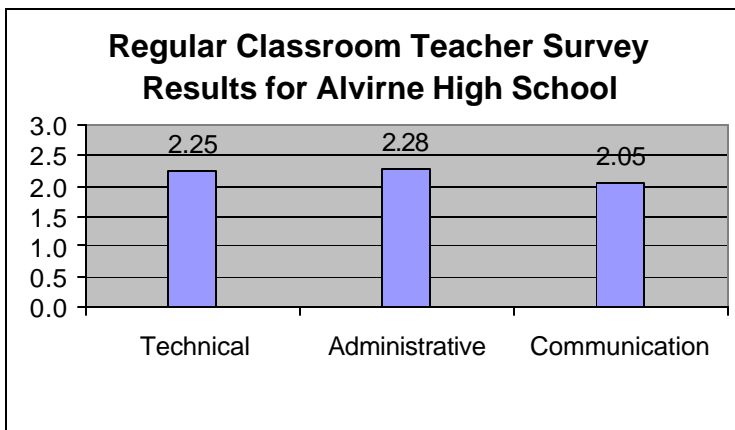
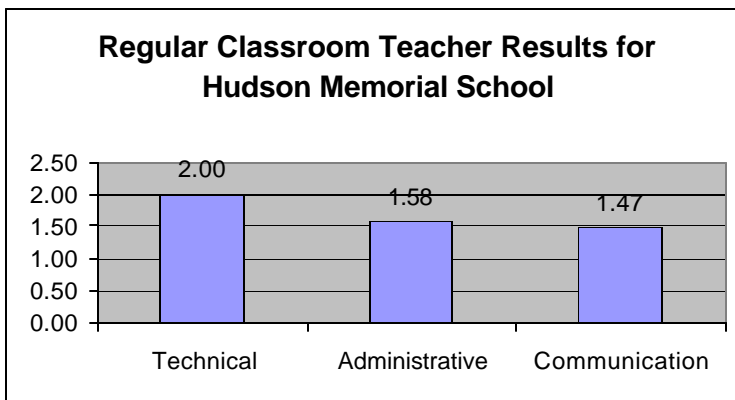
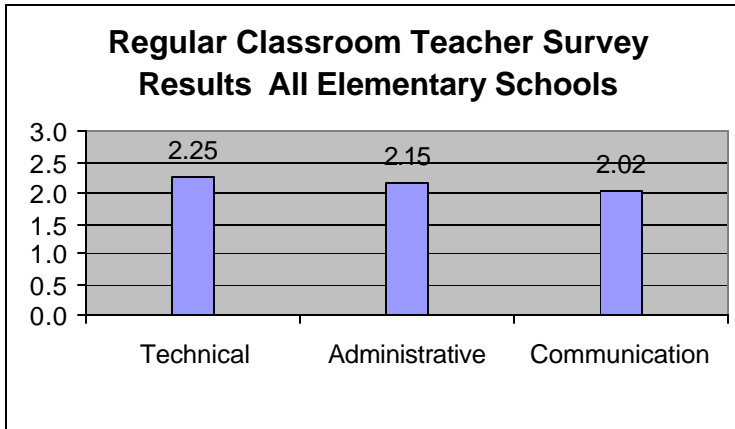
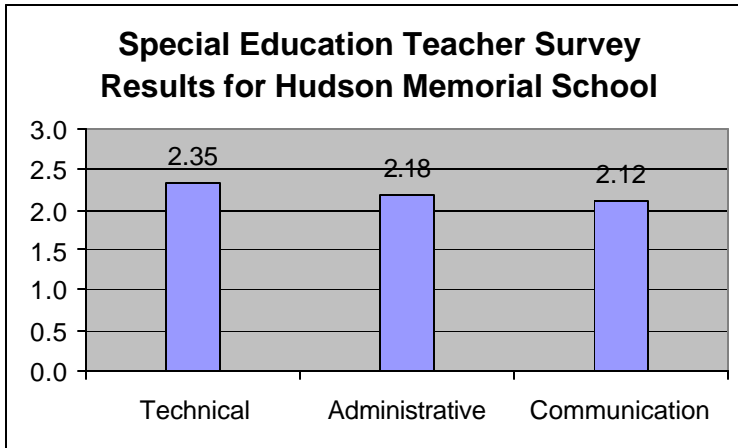
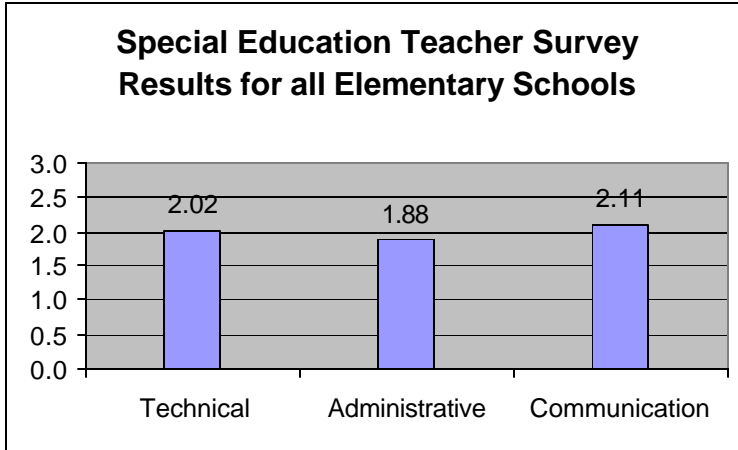


Table 7: Special Education Teachers Survey Results



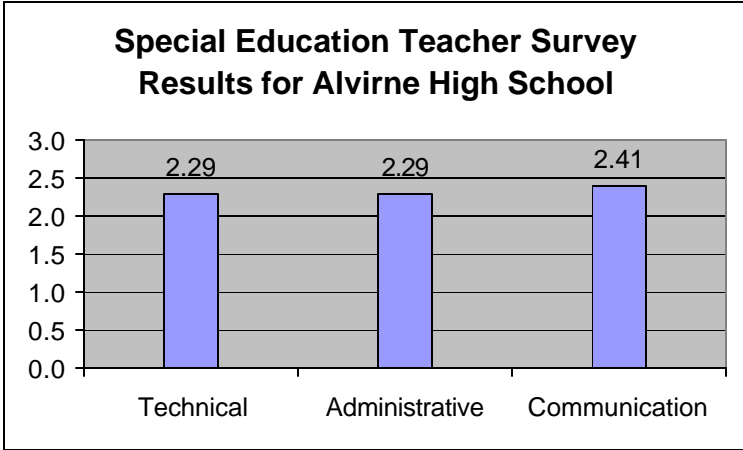
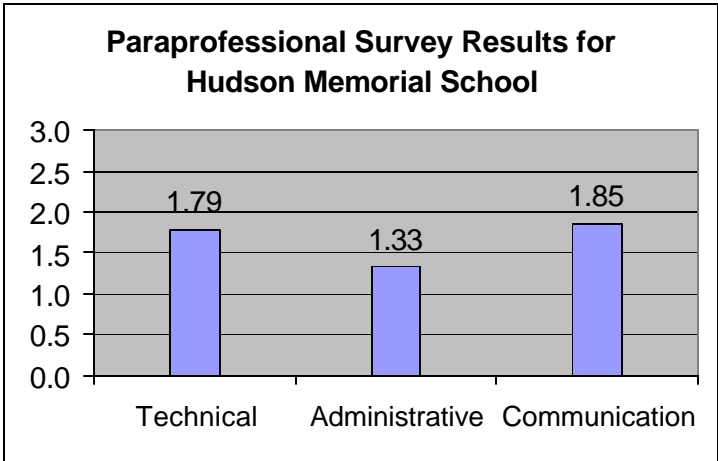
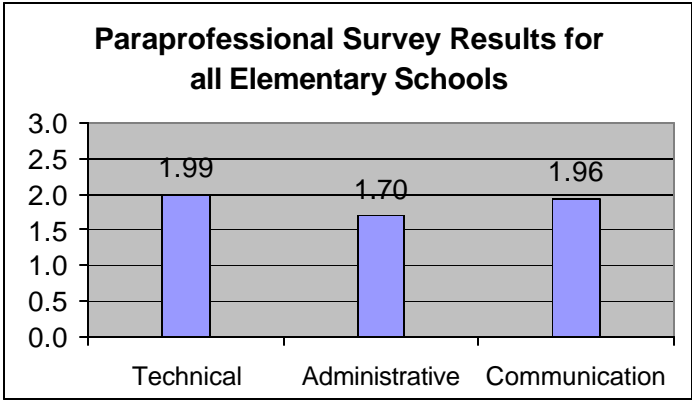
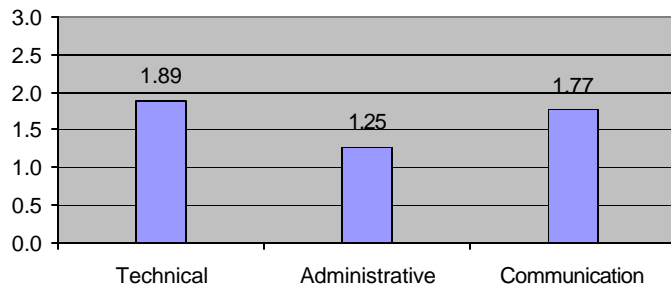


Table 8: Paraprofessional Survey Results



Paraprofessional Survey Results for Alvirne High School



STAFF QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS
Leadership, Special Education Teachers, Regular Classroom Teachers and Paraprofessionals

- Each group had a different set of survey questions. All surveys had the categories: Technical, Administrative And Communication.
- Possible responses to each question were: not at all (0); minimally (1); mostly (2); and completely (3).
- For each question, not at all and minimally were added together and divided by the total number of responses to that particular question. If the response to these two ratings was 20% or higher, it has been noted. If the ratings were below 20%, it was noted as a positive for that particular category.
- Based on staff perceptions, observations and recommendations were made for each category.

LEADERSHIP ANALYSIS

Leadership*	received/#mailed 35/51	% received 69%
--------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------

* Leadership: includes SPED department heads, SPED specialists (such as school psychologist, behavioral specialist) guidance and building administrators.

- Many leadership surveys did not indicate a school level therefore it is a district wide analysis.

TECHNICAL

	0/1 not at all/minim	2/3 mostly/completely
Q2 District I have had adequate admin. training to meet the needs of SPED students.	26%	74%
Q5 District Regular classroom teachers received training to meet the needs of SPED students.	41%	59%

Technical category positives: The continuum of programming meets the needs of identified students; special education teachers and paraprofessionals have received adequate training; and are satisfied with the progress their students are making toward IEP goals.

Observations/Recommendations: Review staff professional development needs. All staff focus groups wanted more training for themselves and others. See NHSAA Professional Development Analysis.

ADMINISTRATIVE

	0/1	2/3
Q1 District The staffing configuration for the present population of identified students for each category of identified students is sufficient.	33%	67%

Administrative category positives: Scheduling issues involving special education are resolved in an effective manner; SPED administrators work collaboratively with building administrators to address programming; and staffing and resource needs of special education programs.

Observations/Recommendations: See NHSAA: Review ratio of SPED students to SPED teachers and/or aides.

Leadership Analysis Continued

COMMUNICATION Communication questions did not have 0-not at all and 1-minimum scores above 20%.

Communication category positives: Regular and SPED staff effectively communicate/work cooperatively; SPED students encouraged to participate in activities outside school day; all work as a team; parents actively involved; opportunity for input; regular classroom teachers, SPED teachers, paras and guidance work collaboratively to meet the students' needs.

Observations/Recommendations: Building administrators do not perceive communication problems. SPED teachers, regular classroom teachers and paraprofessionals indicated in their surveys that they are concerned about communication with building administrators.

SPED TEACHER ANALYSIS

SPED teachers	received/#mailed	% received
13 elementary, 7 middle, 11 high, 2 misc	33/46	71%

TECHNICAL

		0/1	2/3
		not at all/minim	mostly/completely
Q1	District I have received professional development in the disability categories with which I am currently working with in my classroom	25%	75%
Q5	Elem I have the opportunity to provide input about the SPED students in my building.	31%	69%

Technical category positives: Building administrators, classroom teachers and paraprofessionals are knowledgeable about the needs of SPED students. Middle and high school SPED teachers provide input about their students.

Observations/Recommendations: Review NHSAA professional development analysis. Elementary SPED teachers want the opportunity to provide input.

SPED Teacher Analysis Continued

ADMINISTRATIVE		0/1	2/3
Q5	Elem I have time to meet the needs of my caseload.	54%	46%
Q6	District The district has provided the necessary supports(time, materials, equipment) that I need for my SPED students.	60%	40%
Q7	District Scheduling issues involving SPED students are resolved in an effective manner.	33%	67%

Administrative category positives: Appropriate programs to meet needs, accommodations carried out by classroom teachers, appropriate direction and support from building and district administrators, satisfied with progress of students. Middle and high have time to meet their caseloads.

Observations/Recommendations: Review caseload at elementary level-by school. Focus group concerned about supports. Review resource allocations. See NHSAA analysis. Review current scheduling practices.

COMMUNICATION		0/1 not at all/minim	2/3 mostly/completely
Q3	District Building administrators work collaboratively with me to meet the needs of SPED students.	36%	64%

Communication category positives: Parents are actively involved; building administrators, regular teachers, guidance, and paras work collaboratively, work as a team.

Observations/Recommendations: SPED teachers felt the whole team worked well together. They want more collaboration with building administrators.

REGULAR CLASSROOM TEACHER ANALYSIS

Regular classroom teachers **received/#mailed** **% received**
 45 elementary, 25 middle, 29 high school **99/223** **45%**

TECHNICAL

	0/1 not at all/minim	2/3 mostly/completely
Q1 SPED students in my class receive appropriate programming and support.	Elem 21% Middle 32%	79% 68%
Q3 I have opportunities to meet and discuss my SPED students' progress with SPED teachers.	Elem 29% Middle 54% HS 21%	71% 46% 79%
Q4 I have received the training that I need to meet the needs of my SPED students.	Elem 42% Middle 50% High 48%	58% 50% 52%
Q6 I have reviewed all my SPED students' IEPs.	High 25%	75%

Technical category positives: District: SPED students are interacting with their non-disabled peers.
 Elem and Middle teachers are reviewing their students IEPs.
 High- Students receive appropriate programming and support.
 District: are consistently carrying out IEP accommodations.

Observations/Recommendations: Elementary and middle school teachers do not feel that SPED students are given adequate programming and support. All want an opportunity to meet and discuss student progress with SPED teachers, particularly at the middle school. The teacher focus group had this same concern. District wide training is needed. High school teachers are not reviewing all the SPED students IEPs. In the focus group, some teachers commented on their SPED caseload that varies from year to year (10-50 SPED students).

Regular Classroom Teachers Analysis Continued

ADMINISTRATIVE		0/1	2/3
Q1 SPED dept in my building is a resource to assist me in providing appropriate instruction to SPED students.	Elem	20%	80%
	Middle	54%	46%
Q2 I am satisfied with the progress students are making toward their IEP goals.	Middle	39%	61%
Q3 Scheduling issues involving SPED students are resolved in an effective manner.	Middle	33%	67%

Administrative category positives: Elementary and high school- are satisfied with the progress students are making toward IEP goals and scheduling issues are resolved. High school-SPED department is a resource to teachers.

Observations/Recommendations: Middle school staff are not seeing the SPED department as a resource, not satisfied with students' progress and scheduling issues are not resolved in a timely manner. Review role of SPED department at various school levels. What is working at the elementary and high school level that is not in place at the middle school. Students(in their interviews) and teachers at the high school commented on the connection that regular classroom teachers have with the SPED department.

COMMUNICATION		0/1	2/3
Q1 Parents are actively involved in the special education process of their children.	Elem	21%	79%
	Middle	50%	50%
	High	52%	48%
Q2 SPED teachers work collaboratively with me to meet the needs of SPED students.	Elem	30%	70%
	Middle	57%	43%
Q3 Building administrators work collaboratively with me to meet the needs of SPED students.	Elem	59%	41%
	Middle	83%	17%
	High	52%	48%
Q5 Guidance works collaboratively with me to meet the needs of SPED students.	Elem	26%	74%
	High	38%	62%

Regular Classroom Teachers Analysis Continued

Q6 I have the opportunity to provide input about the special needs students in my building.	Elem	21%	79%
	Middle	52%	48%
	High	26%	74%
Q7 Building administrators, classroom teachers, SPED teachers guidance, and paraprofessionals work as a team to provide SPED services to our students.	Middle	36%	64%

Communication category positives: District: Paraprofessionals work collaboratively with classroom teachers. Elementary: The whole team works together to provide services. Middle: Guidance works collaboratively with classroom teachers. High: SPED teachers work collaboratively with classroom teachers and the whole team works together to provide services.

Observations/Recommendations: Parents are less actively involved in middle and high school(however SPED teachers feel parents remain actively involved at each school level). Build collaboration at elementary and middle school with SPED team. Building administrators, particularly in the middle school, need to collaborate more with teachers. Elementary and high school guidance needs to work more collaboratively with teachers. District wide teachers want more opportunity for input, particularly at the middle school. All staff focus groups reinforced this need.

PARAPROFESSIONAL ANALYSIS

Paraprofessionals	received/#mailed 44/98	% received 45%	0/1	2-3
			not at all/minim	mostly/completely
TECHNICAL				
Q1 I have received professional development in the disability categories with which I am currently working with in my classroom.			67%	42%
Q3 I have the opportunity to provide input about the special needs students I support . **			33%	67%
Q5 I have the opportunity to provide input about the special needs students in my building. **			40%	60%

***Q 3 and Q5 were inadvertently repeated.*

Strong technical positives: Reviewed all the IEPs, required to perform only the tasks associated within the scope of training and expertise.

Observations/Recommendations: Review professional development needs. Explore ways to include their input in the special education program.

Paraprofessional Analysis Continued

	0/1	2/3
ADMINISTRATIVE		
Q1 I receive appropriate direction and support from building and district administrators.	60%	40%
Q2 The SPED department in my building is a resource to assist me in providing appropriate instruction to SPED students.	52%	48%
Q3 The district has provided the necessary supports(time, materials, equipment,etc) that I need for my SPED students.	57%	43%
Q4 I receive relevant communication in a timely manner regarding department and school issues.	38%	62%

Administrative positives: None--all questions were rated low.

Observations/Recommendations: Review job description/role of paraprofessionals. Clearly define expectations. Find out more specifics about needed supports.

COMMUNICATION

Q2 Building administrators work collaboratively with me to meet the needs of special needs students.	57%	43%
Q4 Guidance works collaboratively with me to meet the needs of special needs students.	48%	52%
Q5 Building administrators, classroom teachers, special education teachers guidance, and paraprofessionals work as a team to provide SPED services to our students.	25%	75%

Communication category positives: Regular classroom teachers and SPED staff work collaboratively with paraprofessionals.

Observations/Recommendations: Building administrators and guidance have minimal contact with paraprofessionals. Teachers would be working more closely with administrators and guidance. Paraprofessionals want input as part of the team(see paraprofessional comments and focus group).

IX. Student Interviews/Focus Groups

In mid-May, middle school and high school parents received a letter and reply form from the consultant asking whether they would to have their child participate in a focus group (middle school students) or individual interview (high school students). Their child's responses were strictly confidential and anonymous. School personnel arranged the logistics, location and confirmation with parents.

On 6/6/05, twelve high school students were individually interviewed: Four 12th graders; one 11th grader, two 10th graders; and three 9th graders. On 6/13, three middle school focus groups were conducted: Seven 6th graders; two 7th graders; and three 8th graders.

The students were asked the following questions:

- What more could the district do to help you as a special needs student?
- Regarding the special education program at your school, what else do we need to know?
- Tell me about Directed Studies. What works well? What doesn't work well?

The high school student interviews responded to the above questions. The middle student focus groups were not as effective. It was difficult for students to share this information with their peers present.

Student interviews and focus groups are summarized (See Appendix G).

X. Appendixes

See separate volume.