

# **CPS SPECIAL EDUCATION ISSUES SURVEY RESULTS**

Fall 2018

## **The Advocates Group**

Survey instrument was prepared by Access Living and Legal Council for Health Justice for the special education Advocates and published on-line via SurveyMonkey through legal, teachers, civil rights, and parent advocacy networks. Survey was open from September 24, 2018 to October 12, 2018 and was available in English and Spanish. There were a total of 800 respondents: 194 parents, 554 teachers, principals and administrators, 1 student with a disability, and 51 other stakeholders (other stakeholders and a student with a disability data not included in this report).

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## Introduction

The Advocates issued this survey to examine the current situation in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) special education program under the supervision of the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and its Monitor. In May 2018 the ISBE found CPS' policies violated special education law and subsequently appointed a monitor to oversee the district's special education program for the next three years and carry out the agency's corrective actions. We hope ISBE finds these survey results to be a helpful indicator of the current status of ISBE's monitoring for further improvements. A total of 800 parents, teachers, students, and other stakeholders took the survey from September 24, 2018 to October 12, 2018.

## Key Findings

The Advocates still found significant, disturbing service delivery issues as well as a lack of transparency on the part of CPS administrators. As a result, parents and CPS staff are still not well-informed about students' rights or about the changes made this school year. To succeed, CPS reform requires stronger oversight by ISBE and stakeholders. The Fall 2018 CPS Special Education Issues survey results are briefly highlighted as follows:

1. **Staffing:** Insufficient staffing is resulting in missing services despite ISBE's oversight of CPS. Some students with disabilities are not receiving education services they are entitled to due to insufficient teachers and service providers.
  - a. Three-fourths of teachers and staff reported one or more teachers or service providers being unavailable for students.
  - b. The top three most unavailable service providers are: (1) special education teachers (50%), (2) paraprofessionals (42%), and (3) nurses (21%).
  - c. CPS staff also commented that students' IEP minutes are not being followed due to insufficient staffing resulting in unrealistic schedules and/or large caseloads.
  - d. Various service providers are still unavailable: bilingual special education teachers, dedicated case managers, physical therapists, American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, and special education teachers for students with visual impairment.

### Recommendation

The ISBE/Monitor must demand that CPS proactively recruit necessary positions while maintaining the quality and quantity of services to students. CPS' well-publicized creation of new positions is meaningless because the district has still not filled vacancies from the previous budget. CPS is not only failing to provide regular teachers, aides, nurses, and other special education staff, but also neglecting to fill the vacancies with substitutes.

2. **Inadequate Parent Communication:** Inadequate dissemination of knowledge and lack of transparency are still significant problems in CPS.
- a. 72% of parents have not heard about the new CPS special education “Parent Advisory Council” and/or the Parent University, a monthly parent training on the special education rights of students.
  - b. 60% of parents are generally aware that CPS has changed the special education policies mandated by ISBE as a result of its investigation into CPS’ special education program (ISBE Public Inquiry). However, less than 10% of parents have actually seen a copy of the newly changed policy guideline.

Recommendation

ISBE and CPS must ensure that all CPS parents actually receive their parent letter as soon as possible. The survey results clearly show that CPS’ avenues for communicating with parents are not working. CPS must reconsider the effectiveness of the current method of communication and launch a robust campaign to inform parents. Mail and email them about the changes and actively invite them to be a part of policy discussions. An automated call to all CPS families should notify families to be watching for this parent letter.

3. **Continuous Non-Compliance:** CPS is not following some of the ISBE mandated policy changes or the new law.
- a. Compensatory service discussion in an IEP meeting
    - i. More than half (54%) of parents who had an IEP meeting this year responded that compensatory services were not considered despite ISBE’s mandate to CPS as a result of the Public Inquiry.
    - ii. Almost 80% of CPS teachers and other staff who have been to an IEP meeting reported compensatory services were not considered.
  - b. Providing a draft IEP 5 days in advance to parents under Public Act 100-0993
    - i. Two-thirds of parents (66%) who had an IEP meeting this year did not receive a draft IEP in advance despite the new law requiring CPS to do so.

Recommendation

ISBE should urgently finalize appropriate compensatory service policies and procedures, with the Advocates’ input, and reach out to parents.

Although ISBE and CPS built an initial process to provide parents with a draft IEP and evaluation report to meet the requirements of Public Act 100-0993, the survey results show that actual practice is far from full compliance. Public Act 100-0993 aims to help parents be an equal member of an IEP meeting by informing them about education plans and service delivery. ISBE and CPS should review the current process and ensure compliance without inappropriately burdening school staff.

4. **Inappropriate Usage of Special Education Teachers and Aides:** Students are missing their services because some school principals pull their teachers and aides out for non-special education purposes. Those principals deploy special education staff to work as substitutes in general education classes, as office staff, and as lunchroom/recess monitors. Thirty-eight teachers and other staff described how some schools improperly take special education services from students with disabilities. Below are selected comments from teachers:
- a. "Since September 4, 2018, some special education teachers are currently being required/asked to teach in the general education classrooms without being certified to teach that grade level/subjects due to unavailability of certified and substitute teachers within CPS. Therefore, special education minutes outside the general education setting are not being delivered to the special education student."
  - b. "[S]ped teachers are being asked to revise students' minutes under the guise of "student need" but more likely to fit them into the current schedule that sped teachers have available (i.e. not enough teachers so no one is available at that specific time to service the child for coteaching - so revise the IEP stating he doesn't need such a high volume of minutes instead of hiring another teacher). The students' minutes and placement should be the final say of the sped teacher who knows the student best. I also have students who are not receiving their full amount of minutes at this time and receive no supports in the classroom and students who should have paraprofessional support but paraprofessionals are pulled to be substitute teachers or run errands."
  - c. "Due to vacancies, diverse learners are in classes with non LBS1 [special education] certified teachers. Substitutes are often pulled from co-taught classes to cover other general education classes. Bilingual Diverse Learners are not receiving the appropriate services, their instructional needs are not being met by school..."
  - d. "I and other sped teachers and sped paras are repeatedly directed to be substitutes in general education classrooms. Administration is often in the building on these days and does not follow the contract regarding coverage."
  - e. "Dedicated and shared paraprofessionals are being assigned recess and lunch duty (3 hours per day) instead of supporting students."
  - f. "My principal at XXX continues to pull special education teachers to act as substitute teachers. He calls us down to the office the morning of, tells us he is "canceling special ed for the day" and puts our students in random general education classes..."

#### Recommendation

ISBE must widely advertise that CPS families and staff can anonymously report school issues through the "Submitting Information to the ISBE Monitor" menu on its Monitor's website by including information in the CPS teacher and staff training material, sending an email to all CPS staff, and distributing an informative flyer to all CPS schools. In addition, the Advocates strongly request that ISBE create a designated hotline for school staff so they can report special

education violations without fearing retaliation. Any complaints received through the hotline must be registered and recorded with ISBE's monitor of special education policies.

5. **Inadequate Training:** CPS teachers and staff are not fully informed of the corrective changes ISBE mandated after finding CPS' violation of special education law.
  - a. At the time of the survey, 54% of CPS teachers and other staff had not attended a training session on the new special education manual or new law.
  - b. Twenty-five percent of teachers and other staff are unaware of a revised special education Procedural Manual with new changes and 77% of teachers and other staff have not seen a copy of the new Procedural Manual.

#### Recommendation

The first training session that ISBE conducted took place in August, but a significant number of teachers and staff reported that they had not yet been given an option to attend the training. ISBE should speed up its special education training of CPS teachers and staff so they can carry out the corrective policy changes with the CPS special education program.

6. **Initial Signals:** Due in large part to the Advocates' extensive work throughout the State's investigation, CPS reform is taking effect this school year. A majority of surveyed parents have not reported "blocks" against including IEP services that the team deems necessary. However, the findings are limited to parental and staff experience in the first month of School Year 2018-2019. The high numbers of parents who have not experienced issues also include parents who have not yet attended an IEP meeting. Due to these limitations, it is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of CPS reform by ISBE. An end of the school year survey will show more accurate data of the impact.
  - a. As of the survey period, approximately 70% of parents and more than 80% of teachers/staff have not experienced issues related to absence of a District Representative (DR), data collection, or computerized IEP system issues this school year.
  - b. However, some teachers commented that DRs are still making a decision against an IEP team's agreement, enforcing old illegal policies, and instructing teachers not to inform parents of missed service minutes (see Selected Comments).

#### Recommendation

ISBE continuously needs to enforce the corrected policies and collect feedback from parents and CPS staff throughout this school year. The above issues are related to the IEP process and most of the district's IEP meetings are scheduled in Spring 2019. It is yet too early to say CPS' special education program shows any measurable improvement.

The Advocates Group appreciates parents, student, teachers and other CPS staff members, and advocates who contributed to this survey for students with disabilities in CPS. We will continue to work with ISBE and CPS as a watchdog.

The Advocates Group includes:

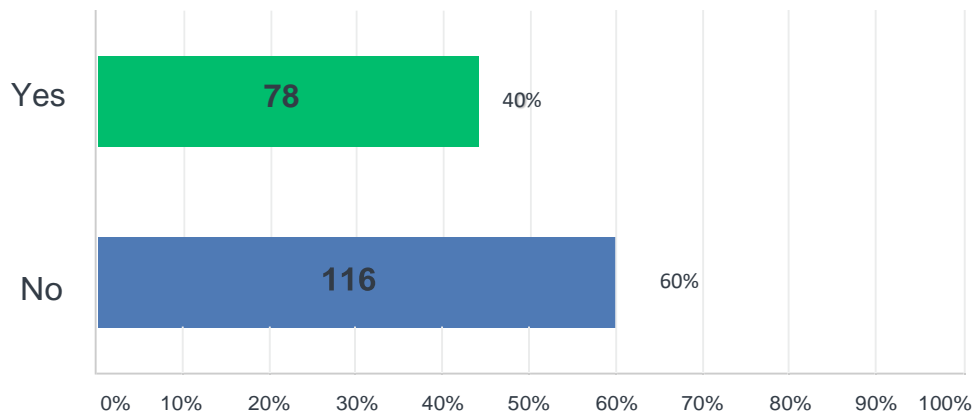
Access Living; the Shriver Center on Poverty Law; Chicago Principals and Administrators Association; the Chicago Teachers Union; Parents 4 Teachers; Ounce of Prevention Fund; Legal Council for Health Justice; Raise Your Hand for IL Public Education; LAF (Legal Assistance Foundation); Equip For Equality; Potter and Bolanos, LLC; Matt Cohen and Associates; 19th Ward Parents for Special Education, Sharon Weitzman Soltman, and Jewish Child & Family Services.

## Data for Parents

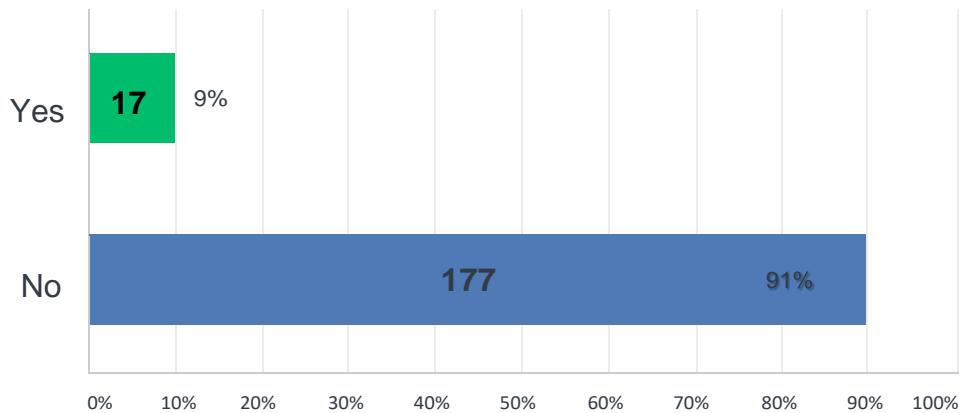
Total number of parents who took the survey: 194

- Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability who has an IEP: 165
- Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability who has a 504 Plan: 29

Q. Are you aware that CPS has revised the Procedural Manual for School Year 2018-19 to incorporate policy changes that were mandated by ISBE as a result of its investigation into CPS special education?

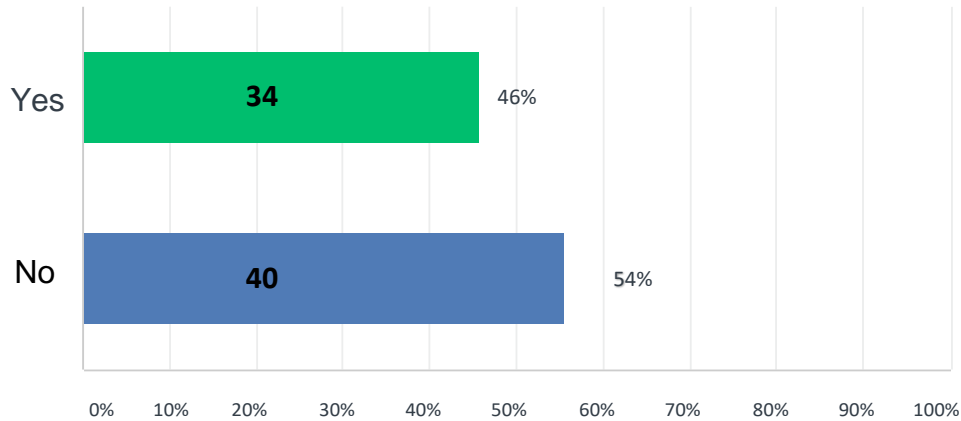


Q. Have you ever seen a copy of the CPS special education "SY2018- 2019 Procedural Manual"? (In print or online.)



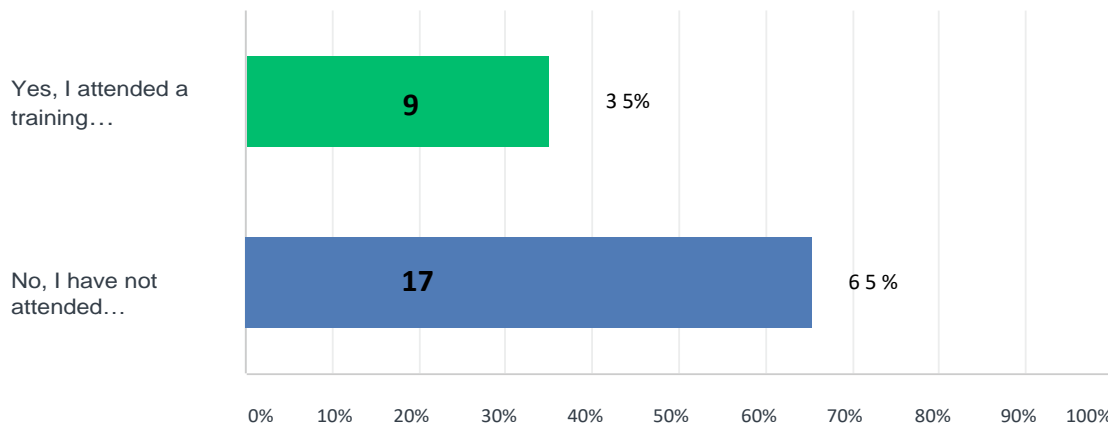


Q. Compensatory special education services are available for students whose services were or may have been improperly denied in the last two years by CPS. These compensatory services must be discussed at every IEP meeting this school year. **If you have been to an IEP meeting this school year, were compensatory services considered?**



\*Among the total of 194 parents, 120 responded that they have not yet attended an IEP meeting. This chart is based on the responses from the 74 parents who have been to an IEP meeting this school year.

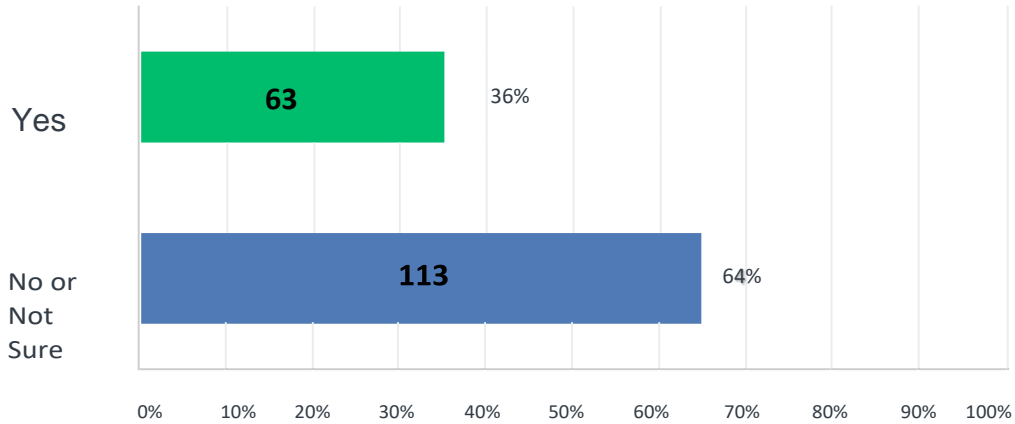
Q. If you are a CPS teacher, principal, administrator, or other staff: Have you attended a training session on the changes to the CPS special education policies and procedures for the 2018-2019 School Year?



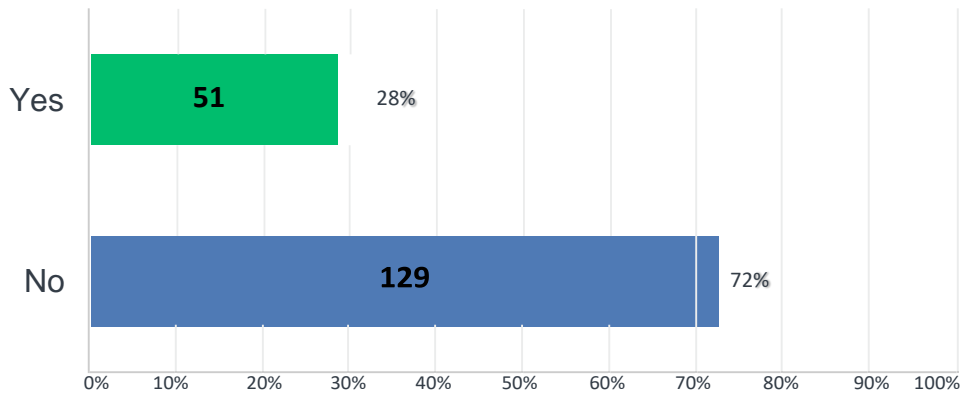
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSES
Yes, I attended a training session on the changes of the SY 18-19 CPS special education policies and procedures.	35%	9
No, I have not attended a training session and I was never given the option to attend one	54%	14
No, I have not attended a training session but I was given the option to attend one	11%	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>26</b>

\*The responses represent parents who also work for CPS.

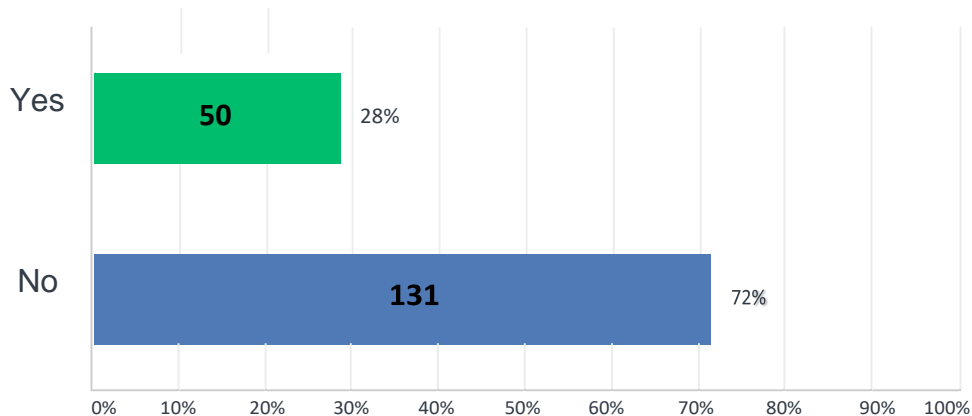
Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability: Is your child consistently receiving the services indicated on her/his IEP or 504 plan this school year?



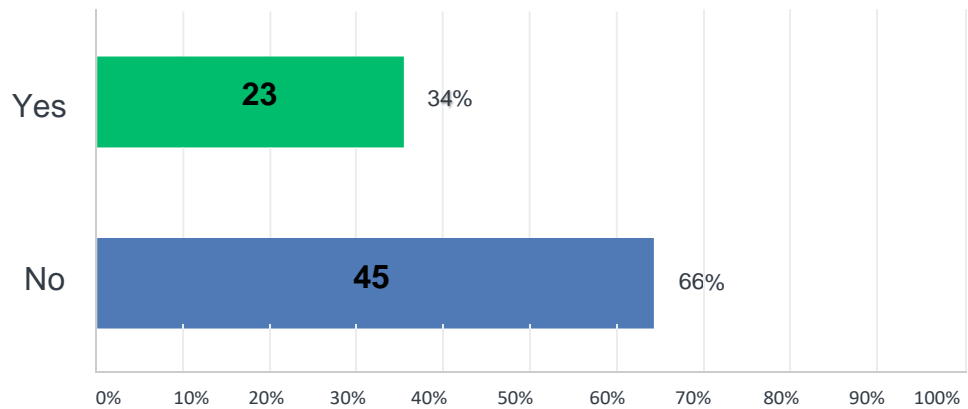
Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability: Have you heard of the new CPS Special Education "Parent Advisory Council"?



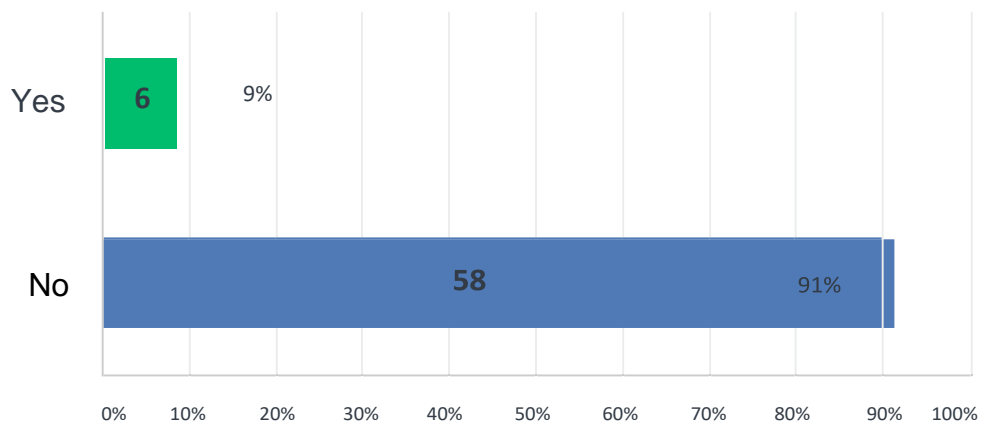
Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability: Have you heard about the Parent University, a monthly parent training on the special education rights of students?



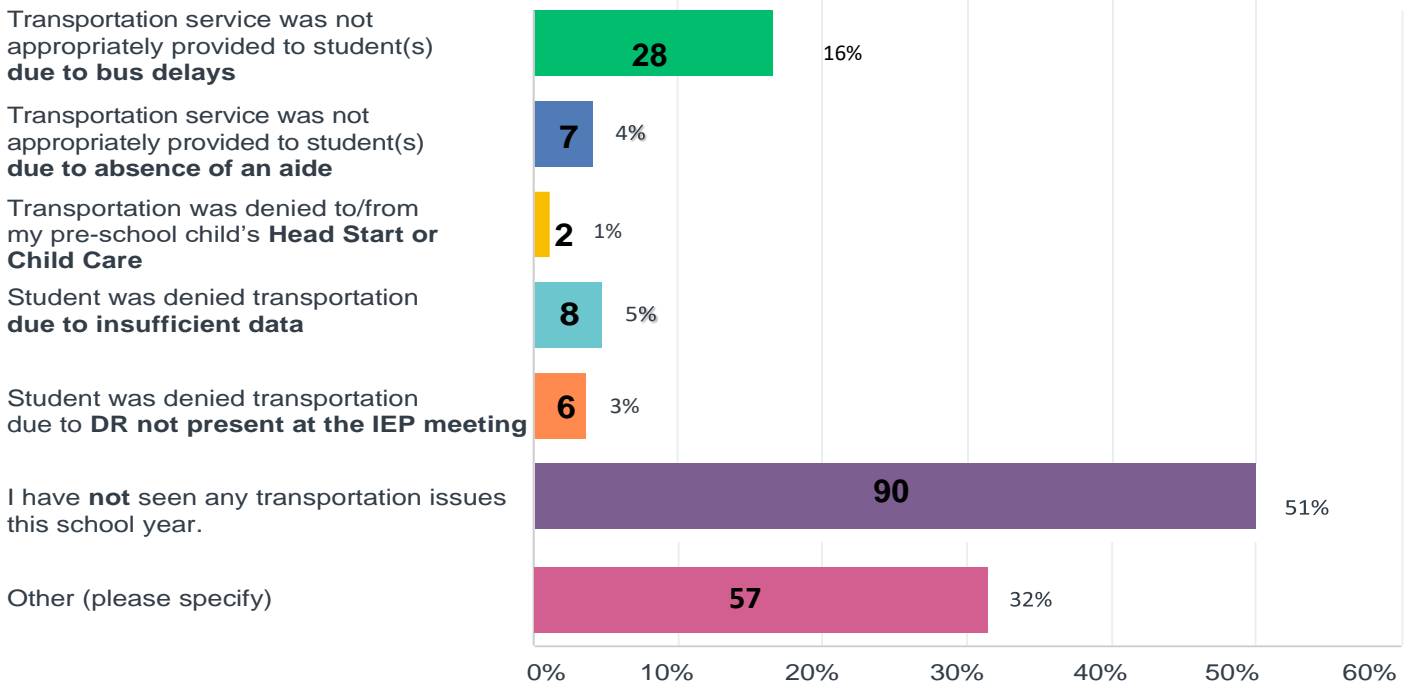
Q. Newly enacted Public Act 100-0993 requires CPS to provide parents with a draft evaluation and IEP 5 school days prior to an IEP meeting. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability and had an IEP meeting this school year: Did you receive draft copies of evaluations and IEP at least 5 school days in advance?



Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability who receives nursing services, have you been contacted to revise the IEP or 504 plan outside of your annual review?



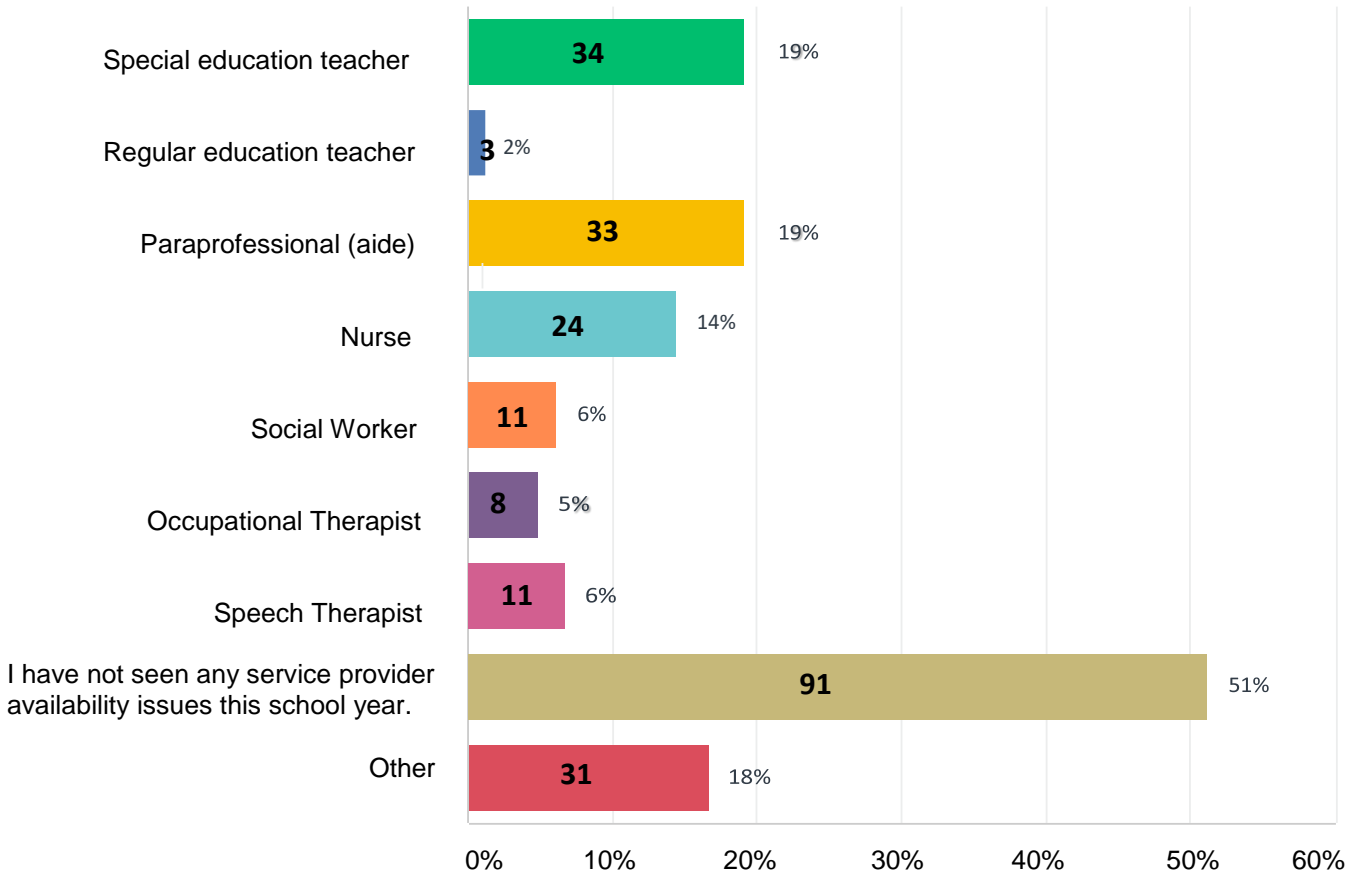
Q. For Parents\*: Have you seen, this school year, the following Transportation issues (select all that apply):



\* Total respondents: 177; Most of "Other" respondents are parents of students who do not have/use transportation services. Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

\* This chart only includes parents' responses. CPS teachers and other staff's responses can be found on p. 19.

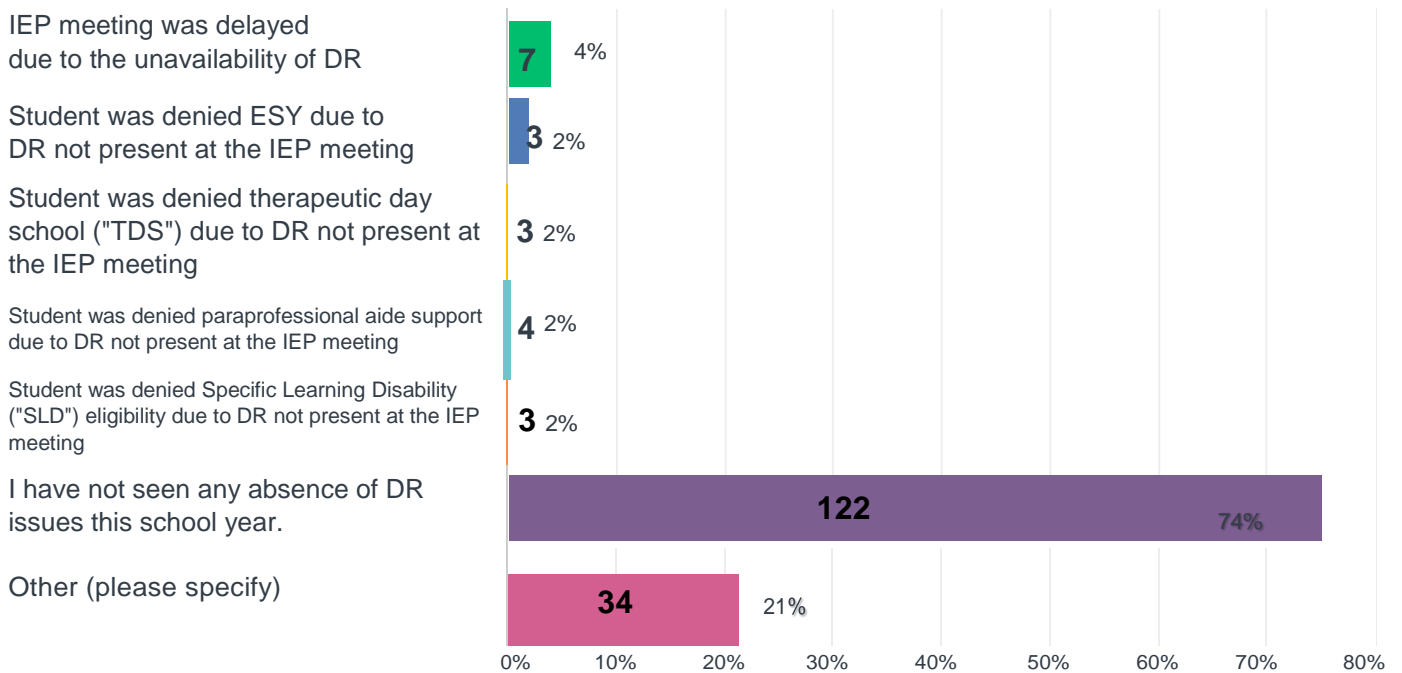
Q. For Parents\*: Have you seen, this school year, a Student not receiving services due to the Unavailability of the following service providers (select all that apply):



\* Total responses: 177; "Other" responses include less frequent services and parents not being informed about staffing situation at schools. Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

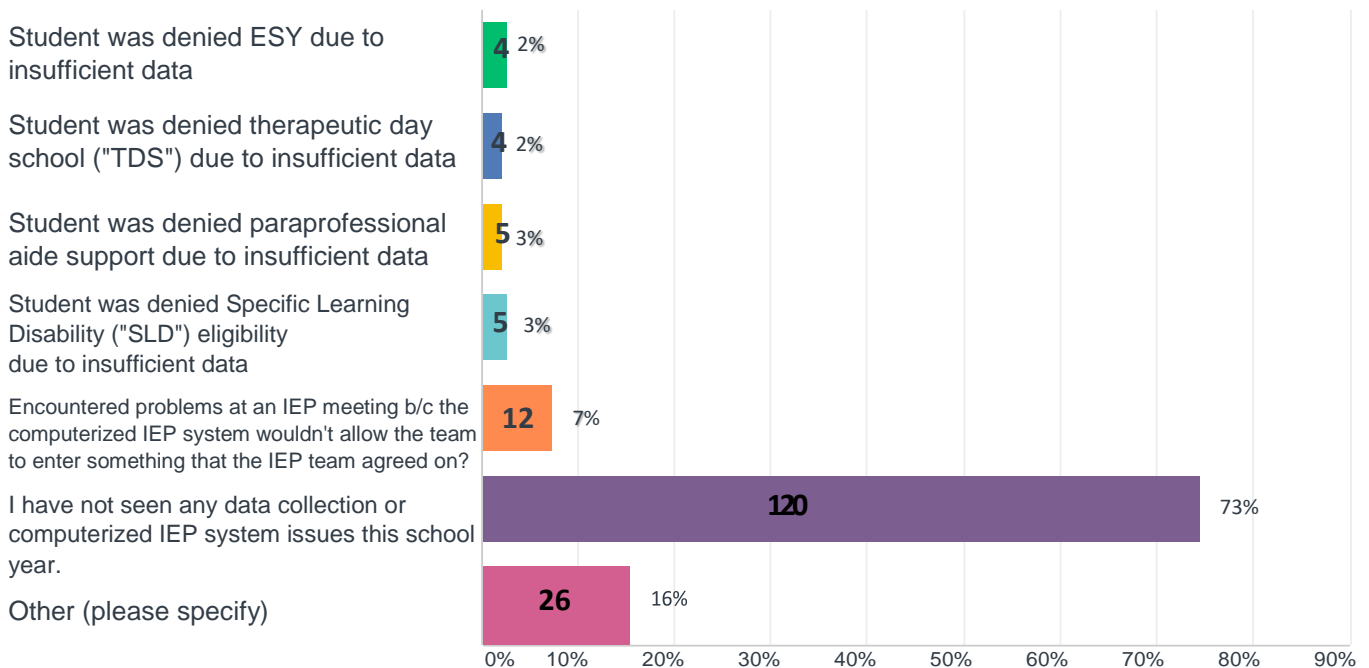
\* This chart only includes parents' responses. CPS teachers and other staff's responses can be found on p. 20.

**Q. For Parents: Have you seen, this school year, the following Absence of District Representative ("DR") issues (select all that apply):**



\* Total responses: 164; Most of "Other" responses stated that the respondents have not yet had an IEP meeting this year. Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

**Q. For Parents: Have you seen, this school year, the following Data collection or Computerized IEP system issues (select all that apply):**



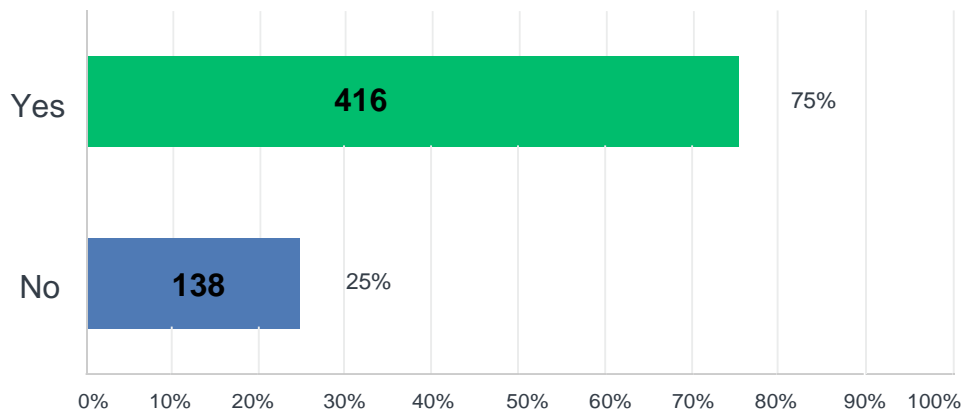
\* Total responses: 164; Most of "Other" responses stated that the respondents have not yet had an IEP meeting this year. Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

## Data for Teachers, Staff, and Administrators

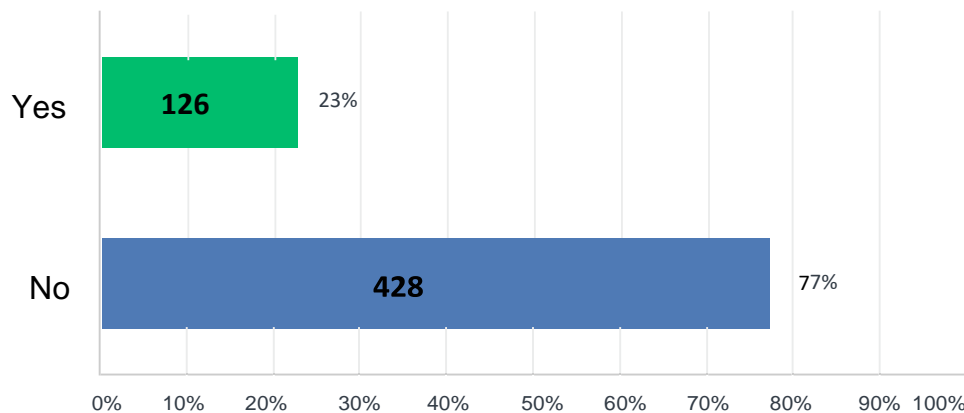
Total number of CPS educators who took the survey: 554

- CPS Teacher or other Staff: 549
- CPS Principal: 1
- Other CPS Administrators: 4

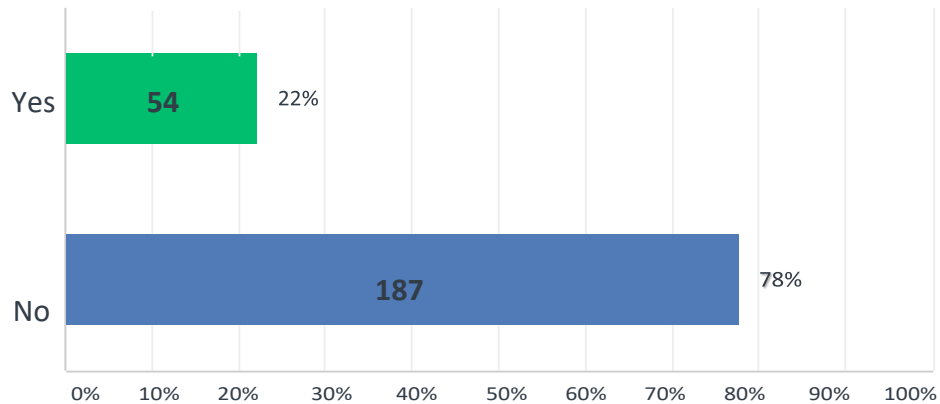
Q. Are you aware that CPS has revised the Procedural Manual for School Year 2018-19 to incorporate policy changes that were mandated by ISBE as a result of its investigation into CPS special education?



Q. Have you ever seen a copy of the CPS special education "SY 2018- 2019 Procedural Manual"? (In print or online.)

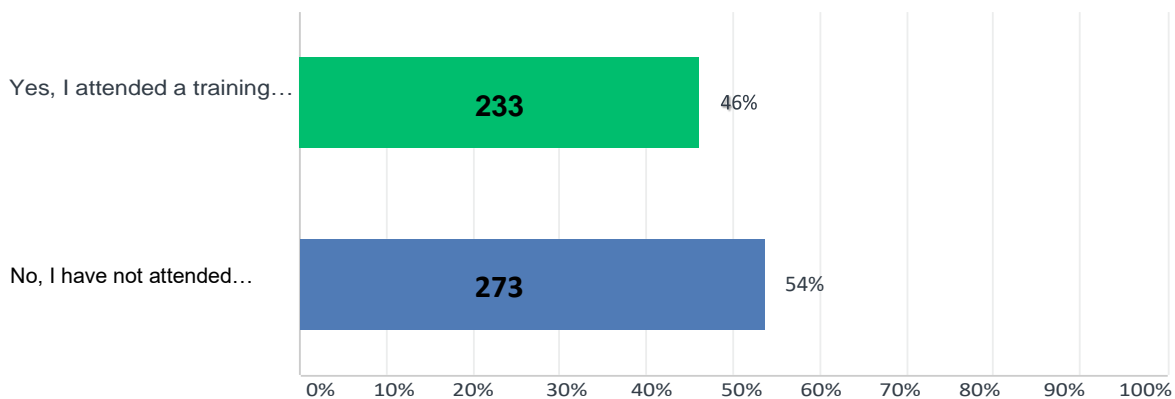


Q. Compensatory special education services are available for students whose services were or may have been improperly denied in the last two years by CPS. These compensatory services must be discussed at every IEP meeting this school year. **If you have been to an IEP meeting this school year, were compensatory services considered?**



\* 313 out of 554 teachers, staff, and administrators in total, responded that they have not yet attended an IEP meeting. Thus, this chart is based on the responses from 241 special education staff and administrators who have been to an IEP meeting this school year.

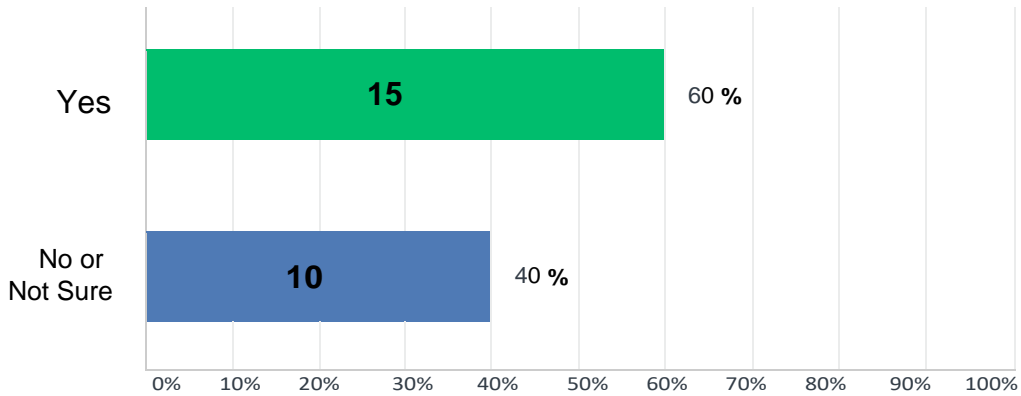
Q. If you are a CPS teacher, principal, administrator, or other staff: Have you attended a training session on the changes to the CPS special education policies and procedures for the 2018-2019 School Year?



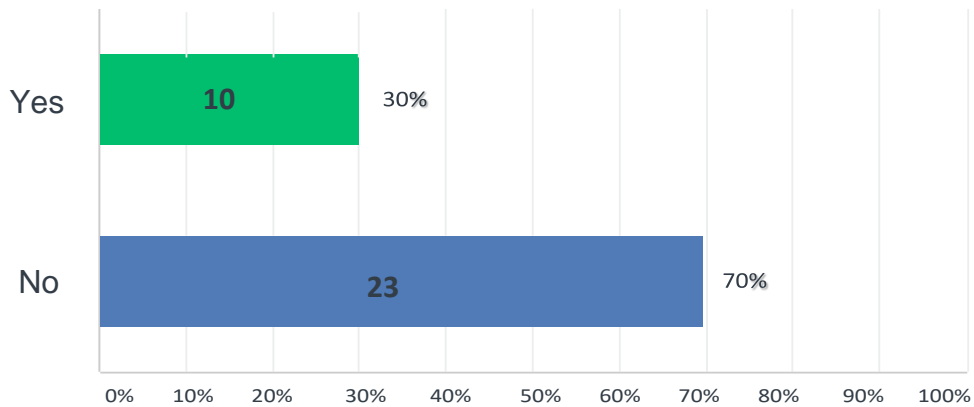
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, I attended a training session on the changes of the SY 18-19 CPS special education policies and procedures.	46.14%	233
No, I have not attended a training session and I was never given the option to attend one	38.02%	193
No, I have not attended a training session but I was given the option to attend one	15.84%	80
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>506</b>



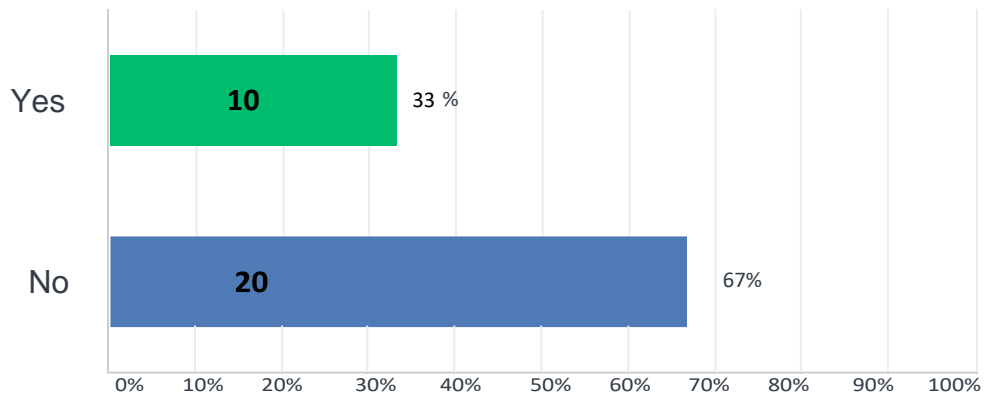
Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability: Is your child consistently receiving the services indicated on her/his IEP or 504 plan this school year?



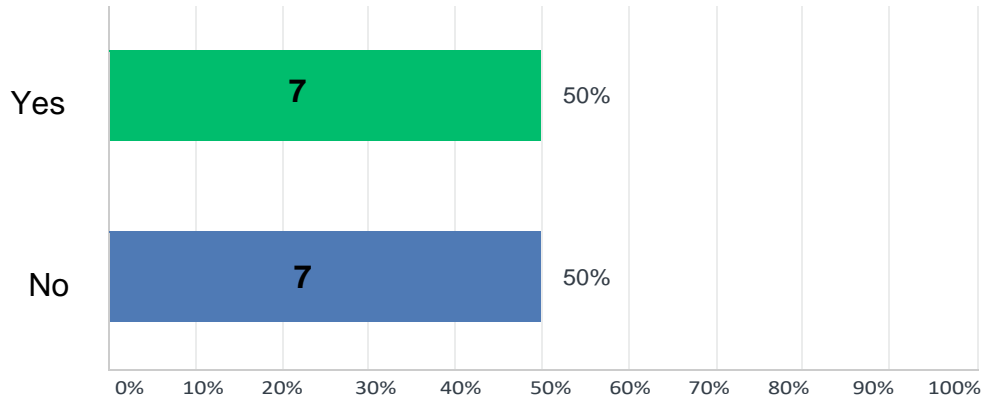
Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability: Have you heard of the new CPS Special Education "Parent Advisory Council"?



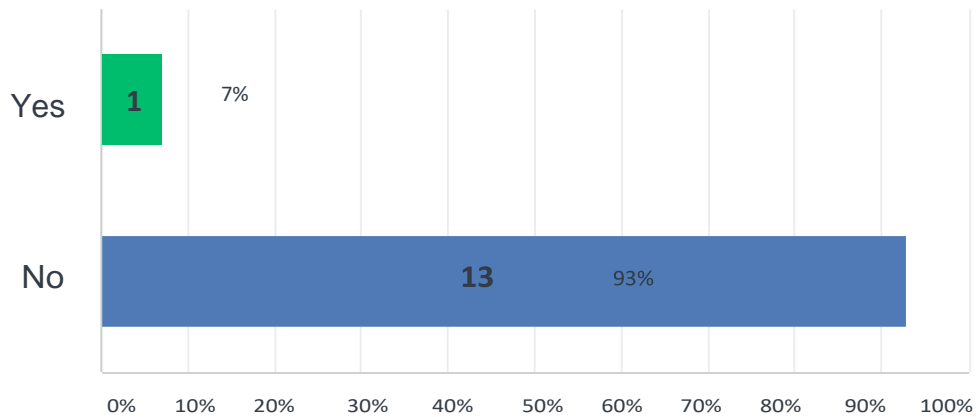
Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability: Have you heard about the Parent University, a monthly parent training on the special education rights of students?



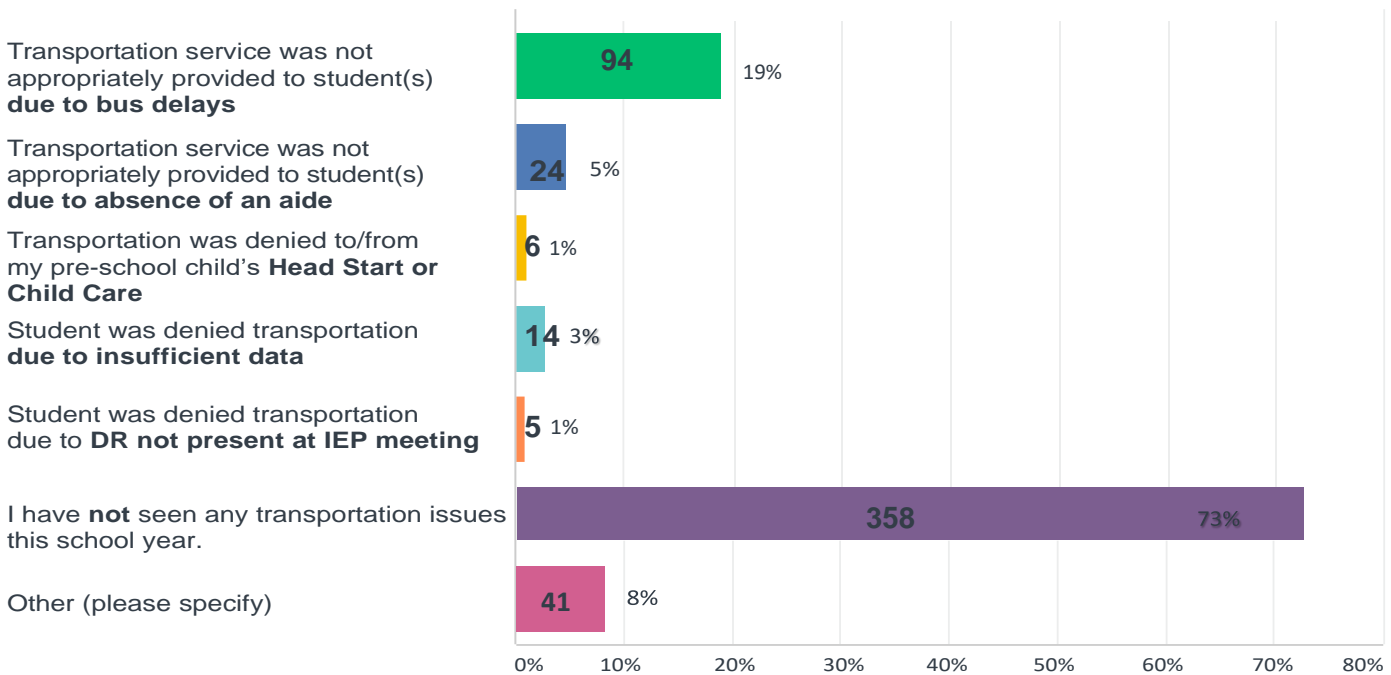
Q. Newly enacted Public Act 100-0993 requires CPS to provide parents with a draft evaluation and IEP 5 school days prior to an IEP meeting. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability and had an IEP meeting this school year: Did you receive draft copies of evaluations and IEP at least 5 school days in advance?



Q. If you are a Parent of a CPS Student with a Disability who receives nursing services, have you been contacted to revise the IEP or 504 plan outside of your annual review?



Q. For Teachers and Other Staff\*: Have you seen, this school year, the following Transportation issues (select all that apply):



\* Total respondents: 493.

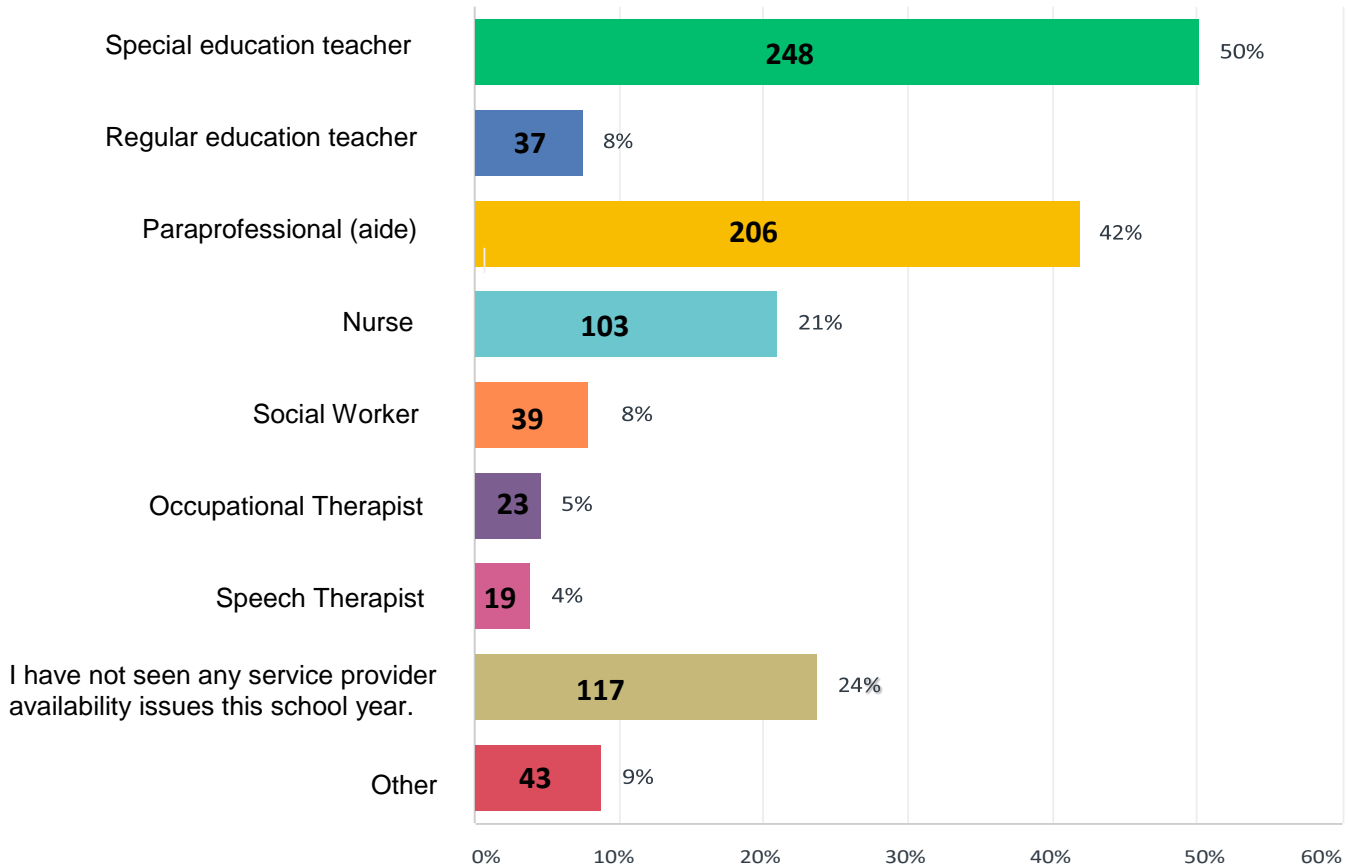
\* Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

\* This chart only includes CPS teachers and other staff's responses. Parents' responses can be found on p. 12.

\* "Other" responses include the following transportation issues:

- Transportation was denied or not appropriately discussed at the IEP meeting because student lived outside of school boundaries.
- Not enough lockdowns for wheelchairs on a route.
- Several students with wheelchairs were sent non-wheelchair accessible buses. They missed at least a week of school.
- Transportation not provided due to no nurse being assigned.
- Transportation delayed due to lack of equipment (harness) for student.

Q. For Teachers and Other Staff\*: Have you seen, this school year, a Student not receiving services due to the Unavailability of the following service providers (select all that apply):



\* Total responses: 493

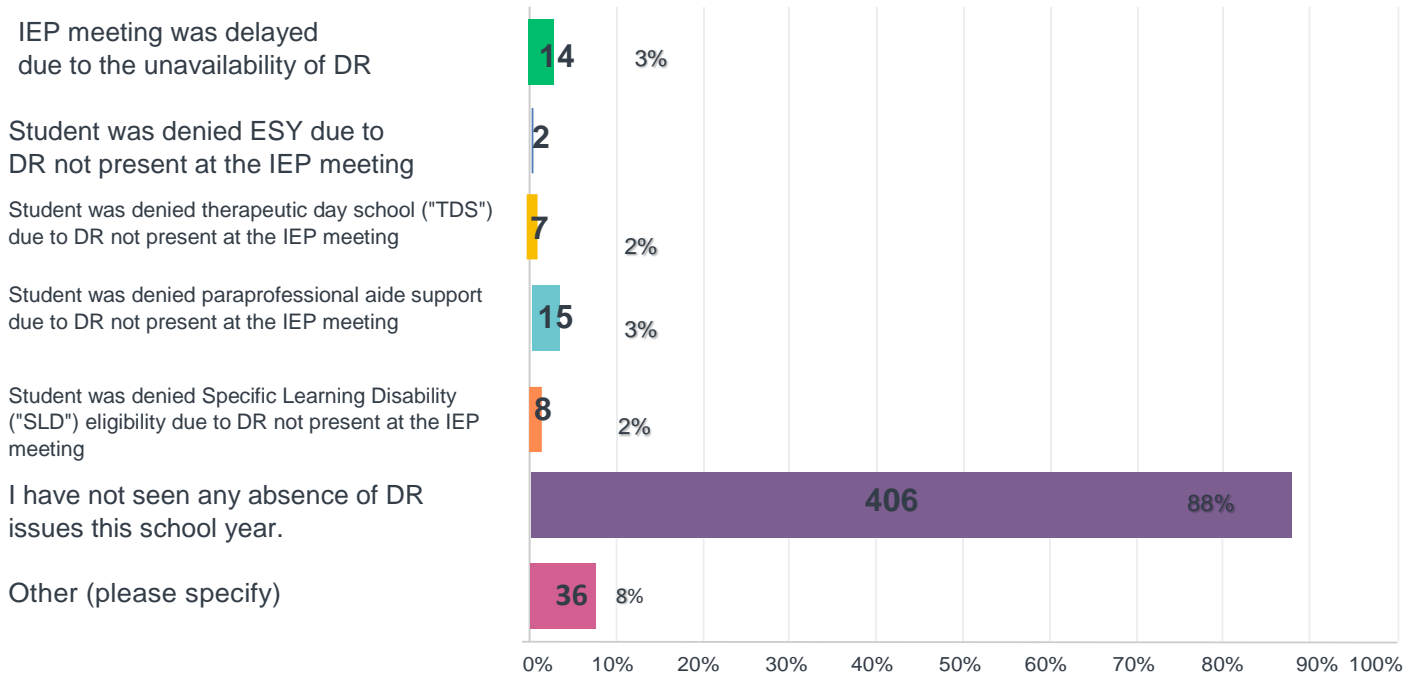
\* Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

\* This chart only includes CPS teachers and other staff's responses. Parents' responses can be found on p. 13.

\* "Other" responses include the following service provider availability issues:

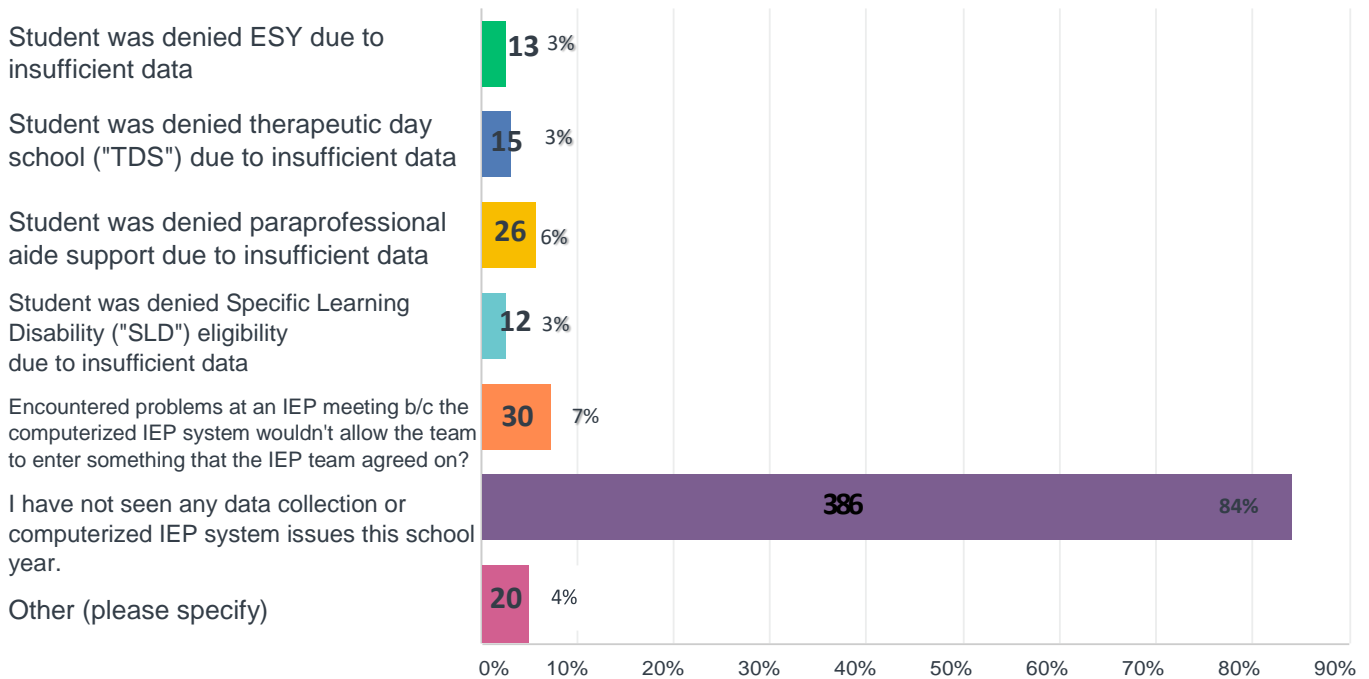
- Students' IEP minutes are not being followed due to (1) Unrealistic service schedules, (2) large caseloads, and/or (3) inappropriate deployment of special education teachers and aides,
- Lack of dedicated case managers
- Lack of physical therapists
- Lack of American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters
- Lack of special education teachers for students with visual impairment
- Lack of bilingual special education teachers
- Quality of service concern due to a revolving door of substitutes not familiar with students and their IEP required services.

Q. For Teachers and Other Staff: Have you seen, this school year, the following Absence of District Representative ("DR") issues (select all that apply):



\* Total responses: 461; Most of "Other" responses stated that the respondents have not yet had an IEP meeting this year or unsure of the definition of "DR." Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

Q. For Teachers and Other Staff: Have you seen, this school year, the following Data collection or Computerized IEP system issues (select all that apply):



\* Total responses: 461; Most of "Other" respondents stated that they have not yet had an IEP meeting this year. Total percentage exceeds 100 because some respondents chose multiple answers.

## Selected Comments

Please describe below any current issues or concerns you have regarding CPS special education this school year.

### CPS Parent Comments (107 total comments)

- Team members not aware of procedures and practices adopted since Inquiry.
- We requested an urgent IEP meeting, but because staff was “unavailable or sick” (according with Esp. Edu. Dir.) we still waiting for a date but in the meantime school still doing same way with “behaviors” taking away my son from class just don’t register them in the system for suspension...
- Not given log of when my child receives services. We are still waiting to see if my son receives a AT device since last year.
- I feel like I do not know if my child is actually receiving the number of minutes/week listed in the IEP with the special ed teacher. Teacher is vague on what she does for my child and says she only helps my child if he “needs help”.
- I learned a lot of their survey about available resources. I have searched on the CPS website but materials are difficult to locate.
- Communication is not being delivered to working parents. Meaning any training or knowledge share is during day hours. The university is also during working hours
- The biggest problem is being short staff of paraprofessionals and special ed teachers. I also believe that special ed teachers should have a teacher's aide. Their work load is not meant for a human.....
- Nurses not showing up or experienced with feeding tube or pumps. Not having a full time dedicated aid that is stated in iep.
- Therapist not showing up as scheduled, even after renegotiating frequency of visits. school tries to avoid providing services based on grades. When "kids grades are just fine", they say kids don't need services.
- My child was placed in a school that didn't follow their IEP. Once I questioned CPS and the monitor about it, I received no answer from CPS and the monitor told me that placement and the implementation of the IEP wasn't in her scope.
- No one knows the student better than the parent but often, the parent concerns are not taken into account.
- My son's aides had not completed the required background checks prior to the start of the school year. His math tests are being administered in class, even though his IEP calls for them to be administered separately and untimed. The nurse did not follow the doctor's orders on medication administration and one of his doses was completely missed for the first 3 weeks for school, the other was given at the wrong time of day. The nurse did not contact me until after I had informed the teacher that my son seemed to be having issues with his meds at school and what the proper dosing schedule was, even though she was given two bottles of medication for my son on

the first day of school (the two doses are of different strengths, I fill two scripts at additional cost to my family to make it easy for the school nurse).

- We have encountered problems with disorganization and underfunding. Plans fall apart at the last minute. We also keep encountering teachers who know little to nothing about Dyslexia, aren't certified to teach evidence-based methods and don't even seem remotely curious to learn more.

## CPS Teacher and other staff Comments (339 total comments)

- Student's IEP minutes are not being met/serviced due to shortage of special education teachers. Special education teachers are asked to do case management duties for large caseloads.
- Since September 4, 2018, some special education teachers are currently being required/asked to teach in the general education classrooms without being certified to teach that grade level/subjects due to unavailability of certified and substitute teachers within CPS. Therefore, special education minutes outside the general education setting are not being delivered to the special education student.
- My issue with CPS is making it appear on paper that they are in compliance and students are still not receiving the support the need and according to their IEP need. The other issue is case managers and network staff having final say on IEPs and needed minutes for students and not listening to classroom teachers and SPED teachers who know students best. People who do not know a student or their strengths and areas of concern should not have the power to decide what is best for that student!
- Are you tracking who actually signed into the webinars that were offered as an alternative to the "mandatory" in person PD offered at the start of the school year? I know people in multiple schools who were told that they would do the webinar once the school year started and that still hasn't been done. It was an extremely easy way to bypass this PD and it appears there were no consequences and this PD actually wasn't mandatory at all. This further weakens the impact any other "mandatory" requirements related to diverse learners will have.
- Initial and annual 504/IEP meetings pushed back because nursing is covering direct service. Some schools with diabetics have had a different nurse almost every day.
- Dedicated SECA or TA being denied to students whose IEP clearly states one should be appointed. TA and SECA being pulled from classrooms to help in other rooms or to support other school events.
- An amendment to class size is needed. Rather than using a number of total students to determine class size limits, a limit to the number of content areas and grade levels taught in one classroom is needed. At this time, students can be taught any combination of subjects in a separate classroom as long as the total number of students does not exceed 8-15. What this looks like in reality is a teacher teaching multiple content areas simultaneously which is disruptive to student learning and reduces students' direct instruction time. For example, separate classroom instruction from 8-9 am might have 9-year-olds learning science, 10-year-olds learning reading, and 11-year-olds learning math at one time because class size limits are being met. This means the teacher is only able to provide direct instruction for each content area 33% of the time, so in that respect, minutes are not being met. Furthermore, without a precise way to account for teacher workload, no consideration is being given to how students are grouped. Teachers of separate classroom instruction are expected to design and

deliver lessons for more than 15 content areas in one day which clearly reduces available time for providing appropriate support.

- My concerns are regarding the lengthy process when a new teacher is needed. Students are not getting their IEP minutes filled because there is not teacher to provide the class. This is especially relevant when students have inclusion minutes in the same grade level or grade band as students with resource room minutes. Either the inclusion students are being serviced, or the resource room students aren't. When the issue is brought up, there are meetings and "red tape" to cut. The process of obtaining a budget for a necessary teacher is long, and in the meantime students are not getting their needs met.
- PD was offered at XXX HS for educators. There was no one to give the PD. All teachers signed in then left. I never received any training on new rules for SPED. Counselors & case managers are denying students paras as well as revising IEPs without teacher and parent consent to cut SPED minutes with principal being aware. SPED students are in tears can't keep up and have no help. Parents are being misled and use of delay tactics. Meanwhile the poor students suffer. PLEASE DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS!!!
- Students have not been getting supports they need. Case mgr. makes it impossible to add minutes to iep's, regardless of need, due to scheduling concerns. ALL iep's are written for inclusion, regardless of LRE. BIP are impossible to implement with only one adult in room and 3 students on behavior intervention plans in iep's. Iep's not written to support students in middle school block schedule. Minutes are only being approved for reading and math, so students w significant needs get zero supports in writing, as, and science. It's a disaster for our learners.
- I have a student who has significant medical needs, is wheelchair bound, visually impaired and with adaptive score in the 30's and was placed in my cluster primary program. Student needs are not being met and all clinicians agree. We had a meeting with the DR and he stated that we needed to give the child a chance in a cluster program and get 10 weeks of data before removing her 100% of the time. One person decided against a team of 8 specialists and after a 25 minute observation. Not right and not fair for the child or family. In ten weeks the child who happens to have a syndrome with brain damage is not going to be any less brain damaged in 10 weeks.
- Conversations with DR and case manager about student data without special education teacher.
- DR has not returned answers to questions asked by case manager in regards to a student.
- From the DR, we were told not to open the IEP draft for the 3 year Re-eval prior to the Eligibility Determination which was different from what ISBE had told us.
- Yesterday at our school training by the case manager and the district rep said some concerning things. 1. We are not to call parents and let them know we have 2 vacancies in primary and minutes not being served. Not to lie to parents, but said we shouldn't be calling parents to inform them. As of now we are not sending letters. 2. We are out so out of compliance that we now have to write IEPs for students we don't know. I have a first grader, on my caseload I've never met. When asked about how to know how they're doing; we were told to ask the sub. 3. Substitutes count as an inclusion teacher. 4. ISBE didn't allow District Reps at SSM training meetings, is this true? 5. Mandated SSM webinar not available, no release date, and conflicting info on whether network will hold a meeting or if it'll happen at schools. None were planned thus far.



- Denying option to even check for a paraprofessional on the IEP. Minutes not being met. Classes of 6 students in an instructional class combined into one large instructional class of 12 students because no special education teacher. Barely any support from admin on time during school day to gather, analyze, and interpret data to write IEPs. Para pro services denied.
- I have reported issues to the isbe monitor. We have not had IEP services/minutes for all sped students for the school year already. A position was vacant, but there was no advertising for the position. We have a person in a SECA position who is not doing anything related to being in a SECA position (for two years now) - she is mostly being used as an office assistant. The admin will not give us updated sped schedules we have been requesting, due probably to fear of us reporting the lack of IEP services/minutes to the isbe monitor.
- I am concerned with the disparity of services we are supposed to be providing students per their IEP and the amount of services that we are able to provide. I am only able to provide about half of the services the students on my caseload are supposed to receive. All additional special education teachers on staff or open positions (we have 2 open positions) have full caseloads and are not/would not be able to support my students. Also, instead of getting qualified subs to fill those open special education teacher positions and support those caseloads, my administration has opted to move paraprofessionals from their assigned students to teach small pull-out groups. Students are not getting their para support as well as not getting the special education teacher support they are supposed to be getting. This has been going on for 2 months.