



Kentucky  
Post School  
Outcomes



# Parent Involvement Report 2024

Prepared for the  
Kentucky Department of Education  
Office of Special Education and Early Learning

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## Background

The 2024 Parent Survey was administered from January through June 2024. This was the second consecutive year that we have used this timeframe, and we have seen an increase in response rates since this decision was made. Because of feedback from Local Education

Agencies (LEAs), surveys are often given during Admissions and Release Committee (ARC) meetings, a paper version is available, the survey is available in multiple languages, and the survey window is entirely within a single school year. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) contracted with the Kentucky Post School Outcomes Center (KYP SO) to develop the instrument, assist with distribution, collect and analyze data, and report results related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Indicator 8 for the Annual Performance Report as well as other items deemed to be in the state's interest. Indicator 8 provides information about parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement to improve services and results for children with disabilities. This report presents analyses of the data collected. Further analysis is available upon request.

## Indicator 8: Parent Involvement

Percentage of parents who report schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for students with disabilities.

## Methods

In consultation with KYP SO, KDE decided to include all parents of students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) during the 2023-24 school year as participants in the study. The State Director of Special Education contacted local Directors of Special Education and provided instructions on contacting parents to complete the survey. A sample letter was given to local directors for distribution to parents of students with IEPs by school staff who had such students on their caseload. The letter informed parents of multiple ways to access the survey, including a direct link located on the [Parent Involvement section of the KYP SO website](#), a QR code that could be scanned by a mobile device, and the opportunity to take the survey in person at the school at any time during the survey window, including during the annual ARC meeting. The survey was made available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Swahili, Somali, and Amish, as were the sample letters to parents. See the appendix for copies of the survey and sample parent letter.

The survey could have potentially been distributed to parents of over 114,000 students with IEPs in Kentucky. It was suggested that only one parent complete the survey per child. If parents had multiple children with IEPs, they should fill out one survey for each child. 17,330 responses were completed and collected for a response rate of 15.14%.

First, we present an overview of the data by question to provide a general overview of parents' responses. Next, we disaggregate the data by race and disability to further evaluate any patterns that might need to be addressed in efforts to increase parent involvement as a means to improve special education services and student outcomes.

## Items

### Item 1: Did the school involve you in a meaningful way to improve services and results for your child?



#### Parent Comment (Involvement)

"I believe our school does a FANTASTIC job of involving/including parents with their kid's education. The opportunity is there if parents want to take it."

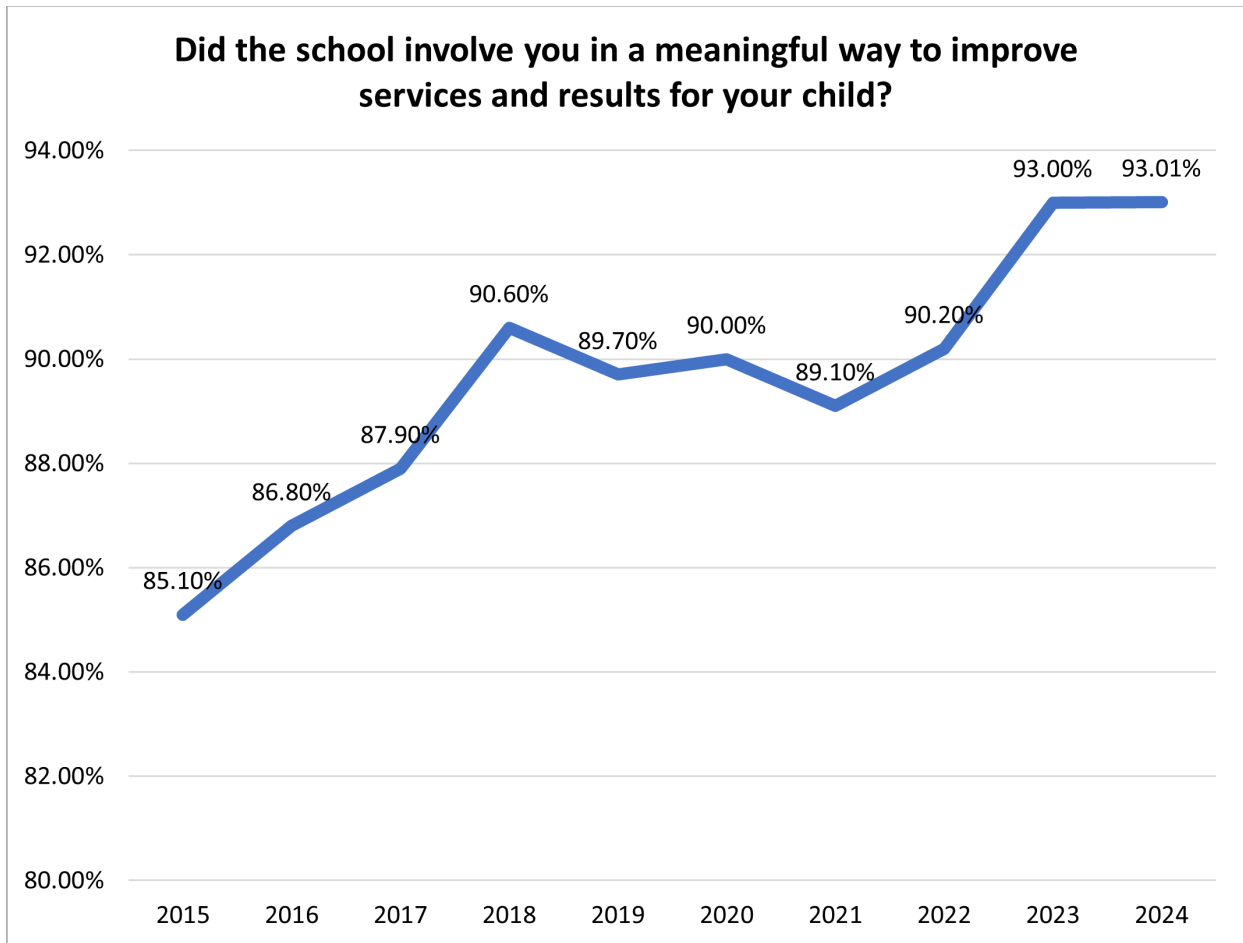
The survey's first and most important item is what is used for federal reporting purposes under Indicator 8. This item is deliberately worded to try to capture the language of the indicator itself. The actual item is, "Did the school involve you in a meaningful way to improve services and results for your child?" Response options were "Yes" and "No."

In 2024, **93.0%** of respondents gave an affirmative ("Yes") response. This is identical to last year's rate and continues a pattern of high rates, which have remained around 90%. These

include 2015 (85.10%), 2016 (86.8%), 2017 (87.9%), 2018 (90.6%), 2019 (89.7%), 2020 (90.0%), 2021 (89.1%), 2022 (90.2%) and 2023 (93.0%) (See Figure 1).

Other items included in the survey were not reported as part of Indicator 8 but were considered valuable to the state for feedback related to parent involvement.

Figure 1



**Item 2: How well would you say that you understand the IEP process?**

The second question on the survey asked about parents' level of understanding of the IEP process. Specifically, the item was worded, "On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= "I don't understand the IEP process at all" and 5= "I fully understand the IEP process," how well would you say that you understand the IEP process?" The mean response for this item was **4.27** on the five-point scale, indicating that parents who answered the survey believed they were knowledgeable about the IEP process. Over half of the

**Parent Comment (IEP)**

"My child was tested for the need of an IEP, given an IEP, and I never heard anything from anyone after that. I was never told how I as a parent can help utilize an IEP for my child."

**respondents (52.8%)** scored the item a "5." The percentage of respondents reporting a full understanding of the IEP process remains similar to that of 2019 (54.0%), 2020 (53.6%), 2021 (51.9%), 2022 (51.1%) and the same as 2023 (52.8%). Only 2% of respondents scored the item a "1" meaning they did not understand the IEP process at all.

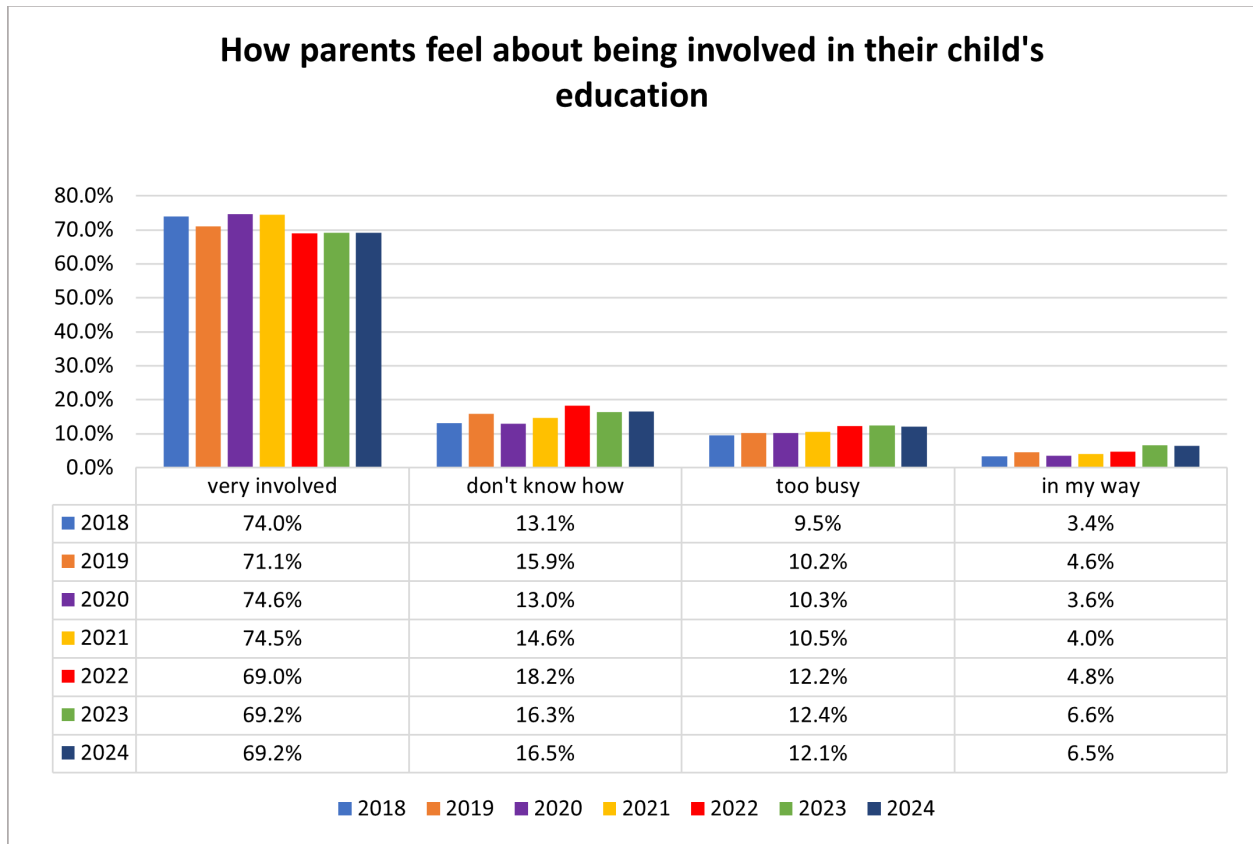
**Item 3: How do you feel about being involved in your child's education?**



A third item asked parents to describe their feelings about involvement in their child's education. This item allowed respondents to check any of the four response options that applied to them. **69.7%** of parents said they were very involved in their child's education (see Figure 2). 16.5% of respondents indicated wanting to be more involved but didn't know how to be, and 12.1% responded that they were too busy to be involved. 6.5% of respondents indicated they preferred being involved in their child's education in their own ways instead of getting help from the school. Note that respondents were able to select more than one answer. This year,

there was a slight drop in the percentage of respondents indicating they were very involved and slightly higher figures for the other answer options (see Figure 2).

Figure 2



**Item 4: Do you feel that school staff welcome you to participate in planning for your child’s education?**

The survey then asked a question about how welcoming school staff made them feel about participating in their child's education. In 2024, 92.4% of the respondents reported feeling welcomed by school staff. This is similar to last year’s figure (92.6%), which continues at a higher rate than in 2022 (89.5%)

**Item 12: Has your school helped prepare your son or daughter for future employment through vocational training (e.g., exploring jobs, paid work experiences)?**

To assess the school's involvement in planning for transition, this item was asked of the parents of students who were 14 years or older (n=3,069) about vocational training services. 74.9% of respondents indicated that the school had helped prepare their son or daughter for future employment. This is a major decline from 2023 (90.0%) and the second consecutive year that this figure has declined (92.3% in 2022).

## Disaggregated Results

The survey included items related to race/ethnicity, primary disability, and age of the child (Tables 1-6). While several of these categories have too few responses to be included in this report, we include breakdowns by item for the largest groups.

Tables 1-3 report the item regarding overall meaningful involvement (used for Indicator 8), the level of understanding of the IEP (mean ratings), and school staff being welcoming. Data were disaggregated by race, disability, and age in 2024. As shown, all the disaggregated groups of respondents reported high rates in meaningful school involvement (around 90%), in school staff being welcoming (over 85%), and in understanding the IEP (mean > 4.00).

Among all the race groups, 93.6% of parents of White students reported the highest rates of meaningful school involvement. Parents of Hispanic or Latino students reported the highest rate of school staff being welcoming (93.4%). Parents of Native American students scored the highest in understanding the IEP (mean=4.38), although there were few respondents in this group. Among ethnic groups with higher populations, there was only minor variation in understanding the IEP, although parents of Asian students had the lowest average rating. Groups with fewer than 10 responses were not reported.

The difference in responses across disability categories continued to be very small in 2024. The overall involvement and welcoming staff rates were around 90%, and the mean of understanding the IEP was above 4.0 out of 5. Parents of children with Speech or Language Impairments reported the highest involvement rate (95.5%) for the second consecutive year, and parents of students with Functional Mental Disabilities felt the most welcomed by school staff (97.0%).

Among all the five age groups, over 90% of parents of students in all age groups reported meaningful involvement and welcoming services from the school. In general, parents of younger students responded most favorably. However, for parents of students over the age of 18, the trend reverses and shows very high numbers, which likely indicates greater involvement of parents with students on the Alternative Diploma track. Table 1 reports overall meaningful involvement, the level of understanding of the IEP (mean ratings), and school staff being welcoming by race (n=17,330).



Table 1

| Race                              | School involves parents meaningfully (%) | School staff are welcoming (%) | Understand IEP (mean score out of 5) |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| White (n=14,393)                  | 93.6%                                    | 92.8%                          | 4.28                                 |
| Black or African American (n=770) | 89.7%                                    | 89.3%                          | 4.21                                 |
| Multiple Race (n=981)             | 91.6%                                    | 91.2%                          | 4.28                                 |
| Hispanic or Latino (n=457)        | 92.3%                                    | 93.4%                          | 4.14                                 |
| Asian (n=137)                     | 93.4%                                    | 91.2%                          | 4.18                                 |
| Native American (n=21)            | 85.7%                                    | 85.7%                          | 4.38                                 |

Table 2 reports overall meaningful involvement, the level of understanding of the IEP (mean ratings), and school staff being welcoming by primary disability.

Table 2

| Primary Disability                      | School involves parents meaningfully (%) | School staff are welcoming (%) | Understand IEP (mean score out of 5) |
|---|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Speech or Language Impairment (n=4,013) | 95.5%                                    | 94.4%                          | 4.37                                 |
| Autism (n=2,716)                        | 91.7%                                    | 90.6%                          | 4.30                                 |
| Developmental Delay (n=1,573)           | 94.8%                                    | 94.0%                          | 4.31                                 |
| Specific Learning Disability (n=2,496)  | 92.4%                                    | 92.1%                          | 4.27                                 |
| Other Health Impairment (n=1,330)       | 91.5%                                    | 91.8%                          | 4.36                                 |
| Mild Mental Disability (n=1046)         | 95.9%                                    | 95.6%                          | 4.22                                 |
| Emotional Behavioral Disorder (n=542)   | 89.9%                                    | 88.9%                          | 4.21                                 |
| Functional Mental Disability (n=272)    | 94.9%                                    | 97.0%                          | 4.40                                 |

Table 3 reports overall meaningful involvement, the level of understanding of the IEP (mean ratings), and school staff being welcoming by student age.

Table 3

| Age                 | School involves parents meaningfully (%) | School staff are welcoming (%) | Understand IEP (mean score out of 5) |
|---------------------|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Age < 5 (n=3,231)   | 94.3%                                    | 93.7%                          | 4.25                                 |
| Age 5-9 (n=6,779)   | 94.2%                                    | 93.2%                          | 4.27                                 |
| Age 10-13 (n=4,166) | 91.7%                                    | 91.0%                          | 4.27                                 |
| Age 14-18 (n=3,048) | 90.7%                                    | 91.1%                          | 4.28                                 |
| Age >=19 (n=106)    | 93.4%                                    | 96.1%                          | 4.44                                 |

More details about how parents were involved in the child's education were further examined by students' race, disability, and age (Tables 4-6). There were four responses to this question: I am very involved with my child's education; I want to be involved in my child's education in my own ways and do not need the school's help; I want to be more involved, but I'm too busy with other commitments; and I want to be more involved, but I don't know how to be. In general, almost 70% of respondents reported that they were very involved in their child's education. This is slightly higher than in 2023.

Table 4 reports how parents feel about being involved in their child's education by race.

Table 4

| Race                              | I am very involved. | I don't need school involvement. | I don't know how to be involved. | I am too busy to be involved. |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| White (n=14,393)                  | 70.2%               | 6.6%                             | 15.8%                            | 11.7%                         |
| Black or African American (n=770) | 70.9%               | 5.2%                             | 19.9%                            | 11.6%                         |
| Multiple Race (n=981)             | 68.3%               | 5.8%                             | 18.2%                            | 14.8%                         |
| Hispanic or Latino (n=457)        | 61.7%               | 6.3%                             | 20.1%                            | 17.1%                         |
| Asian (n=1,437)                   | 62.0%               | 5.1%                             | 21.2%                            | 18.2%                         |
| Native American (n=21)            | 57.1%               | 9.5%                             | 4.8%                             | 19.0%                         |

Table 5 reports how parents feel about being involved in the child's education by primary disability.

Table 5

| Primary Disability                      | I am very involved. | I don't need school involvement. | I don't know how to be involved. | I am too busy to be involved. |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Speech or Language Impairment (n=4,013) | 73.4%               | 5.4%                             | 15.1%                            | 10.4%                         |
| Autism (n=2,716)                        | 70.5%               | 5.3%                             | 18.3%                            | 10.9%                         |
| Developmental Delay (n=1,575)           | 70.8%               | 5.1%                             | 15.3%                            | 13.2%                         |
| Specific Learning Disability (n=2,496)  | 71.1%               | 5.9%                             | 14.5%                            | 12.3%                         |
| Other Health Impairment (n=1,330)       | 70.2%               | 8.9%                             | 14.2%                            | 11.3%                         |
| Mild Mental Disability (n=1,046)        | 65.1%               | 11.5%                            | 12.2%                            | 13.9%                         |
| Emotional Behavioral Disorder (n=542)   | 71.4%               | 6.5%                             | 17.0%                            | 11.8%                         |
| Functional Mental Disability (n=272)    | 77.2%               | 9.9%                             | 8.8%                             | 9.2%                          |

Table 6 reports how parents feel about being involved in their child's education by age.

Table 6

| Age                 | I am very involved. | I don't need school involvement. | I don't know how to be involved. | I am too busy to be involved. |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Age < 5 (n=3,231)   | 70.3%               | 4.7%                             | 18.5%                            | 11.3%                         |
| Age 5-9 (n=6,779)   | 71.2%               | 5.3%                             | 16.8%                            | 12.2%                         |
| Age 10-13 (n=4,166) | 68.2%               | 6.8%                             | 16.4%                            | 13.1%                         |
| Age 14-18 (n=3,048) | 67.3%               | 10.3%                            | 14.0%                            | 11.5%                         |
| Age >=19 (n=106)    | 73.5%               | 10.4%                            | 9.4%                             | 6.6%                          |

When disaggregated by race, the range of parents who indicated they were very involved in their child's education was 57.1% - 77.8%. White, African American/Black, and Multiple Race parents reported higher percentages of being very involved in their child's education than parents from other races. Parents of Hispanic students showed noticeable improvement from last year, while parents of Asian students saw a decline.

The disaggregated racial data showed a range of 15.8%-25.0% of parents who indicated they did not know how to be involved in their child's education. The data show Parents of Asian and Hispanic students reported the highest levels of not knowing how to be involved (25.0% and 22.6%, respectively).

Over 70% of parents among all disability groups with sufficient respondents to report stated they were very involved in their child's education in 2024. The parents of students with Functional Mental Disabilities (FMD) reported the highest rate (77.2%) of involvement and the lowest rate of feeling they know how to be involved in their child's education (8.9%). Parents of students with speech/language disabilities were the second most likely to indicate they were involved in their child's education (73.4%) and had the lowest rate of noting they had insufficient time to be involved. Parents of students with Mild Mental Disabilities (MMD) reported the lowest level of being involved in their students' education (65.1%).

For a second consecutive year, parents of students 19 years and above scored the highest in terms of being involved. This year, parents of those students ages 14-18 reported the lowest rate of involvement. Consistent with previous years, parents of students younger than five showed high rates of "not knowing how to be involved."

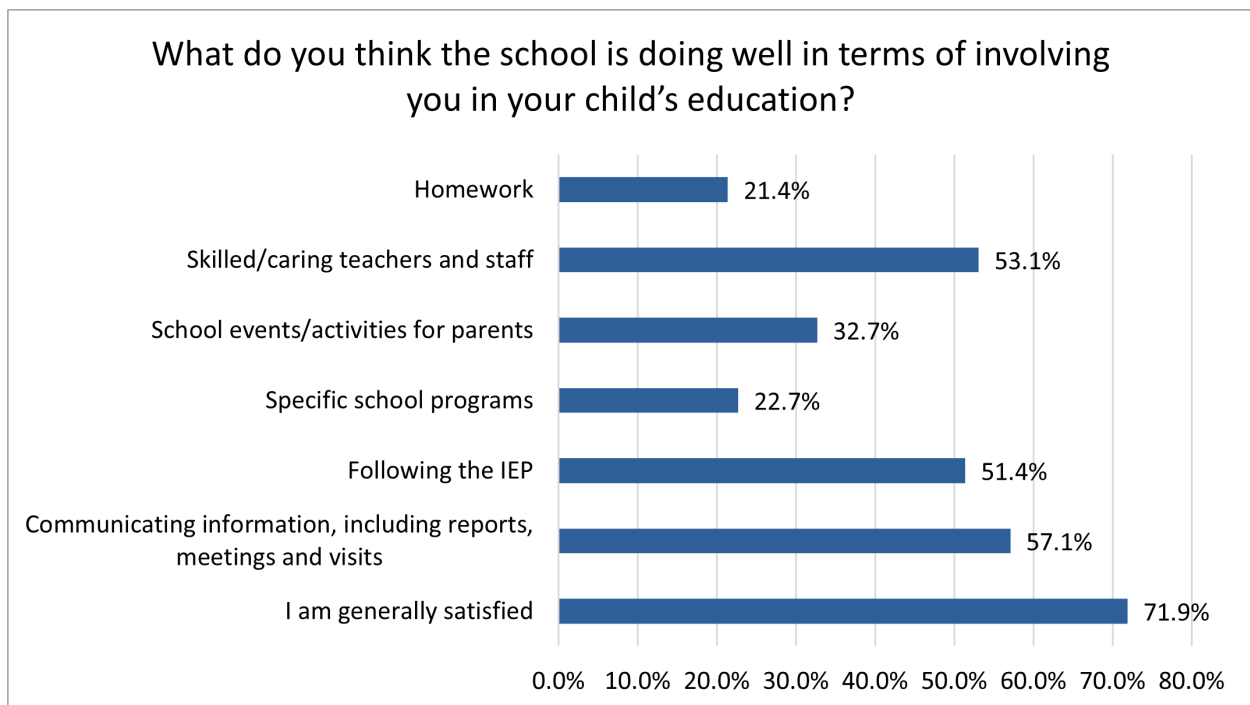
**Item 5: What do you think the school is doing well in terms of involving you in your child's education?**

Two multiple-choice questions with the option for text responses were asked to get detailed information about parents' perceptions of how the school involved them in their children's education: 1) What do you think the school is doing well in terms of involving you in your child's education? 2) What do you think the school can do better to involve you in your child's education? The multiple choices offered categories of responses. "Other" was also an option for both items, with an opportunity to supply a text-based response. A sample of these responses is included in Appendix C.

There were two multiple-choice questions where parents were able to identify what the school was doing well and what schools could do better to involve parents in their child’s education. The results of the question "What do you think the school is doing well in terms of involving you in your child's education?" are given in Figure 3. Among all the responses, 71.9% of parents were generally satisfied with the school’s involvement, and more than half of parents confirmed that the school did well in communicating information, following the IEP, and having skilled/caring teachers and staff for students. Lower numbers reported that the school was doing well at offering homework (21.4%), hosting events for parents (32.7%), and offering specific school programs (22.7%).



Figure 3



**Item 6: What do you think the school can do better to involve you in your child's education?**

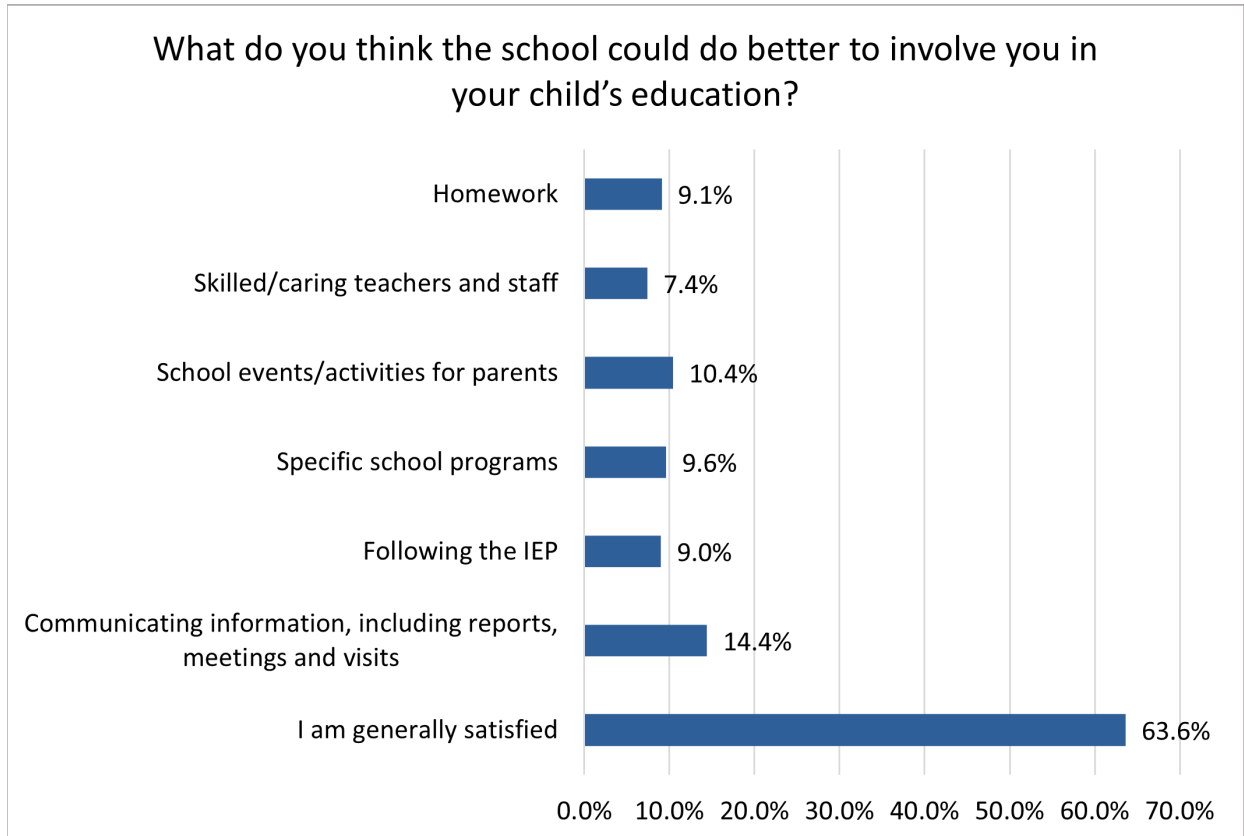
**Parent Comment  
(Communication)**

“I believe consistent, clear communication among all involved is the most important piece to a team's success when it comes to supporting IEP kids.”

Among all the responses to the multiple-choice question, "What do you think the school can do better to involve you in your child's education?" 63.6% reported being generally satisfied with the school's efforts (see Figure 4). The multiple-choice options for ways schools could better involve them received fairly low (7.4% – 14.4%) rates. The highest two areas noted were related to communication and events for parents.

Scores for individual items for both what the school is doing well and what it could do better remained remarkably consistent with scores from the previous year.

Figure 4



Narrative comments for what the school is doing well and could be doing better largely mirrored the same categories in the multiple-choice options. We include a sample of these comments in Appendix C. Because respondents often commented without indicating if they were writing about what the school is doing well or what could be done better, the data are grouped together as general comments that reflect the overall sentiments expressed. Parents often noted the positive impacts of school staff home visits and online learning opportunities.



## Survey Format

At the request of the Office of Special Education and Early Learning (OSEEL), we examined differences in responses to items based on whether the survey was completed online (n=14,272) or via paper (n=3,058). Responses did tend to vary in meaningful but not uniform ways. Table 7 presents the results of this analysis.

Table 7

| Item                                 | Online (n=14,272) | Paper (3,058) |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| School involves parents meaningfully | 92.2%             | 96.3%         |
| School staff are welcoming           | 91.4%             | 97.0%         |
| Understand IEP (mean score out of 5) | 4.27              | 4.24          |
| Very Involved                        | 70.5%             | 65.8%         |
| Involved in own way                  | 6.1%              | 8.2%          |
| Too busy to be involved              | 11.8%             | 13.3%         |
| Don't know how to be involved        | 16.1%             | 18.2%         |

In most cases, including the item used for Indicator 8, parents who took the survey on paper scored more favorably than those who took it online. This is also true for feeling welcomed by school staff. However, parents who responded to the item “Which of the following statements describe how you feel about being involved in your child's education?” parents who took the survey online scored more favorably than those who took it via paper. The response “I am very

involved” was significantly higher for those taking it online, while reporting “being involved in their own way,” “being too busy to be involved,” and “not knowing how to be involved” all scored higher by parents taking the survey on paper.

It is unclear why responses differ by response method. The online respondents reported statistically higher percentages of feeling positive about being involved. At the same time, those online rated schools statistically lower on involving parents meaningfully. Interviews or focus groups would help delve into the factors leading to these results.

The other differing format in survey administration was the language in which the survey was taken. 128 surveys were taken in Spanish, five in Arabic, and two in Swahili. The rest were taken in English, with no respondents using Somali or Amish translations. Differences between English and Spanish survey administrations showed slightly higher scores on Indicator 8 for those taking the survey in Spanish. Spanish language survey takers also reported a lower understanding of the IEP, higher in being too busy or not knowing how to be involved, but paradoxically to Indicator 8, less likely to report being involved.

It is important to understand how representative our sample was to the population of parents of all students with IEPs in the state of Kentucky. We use Child Count data from December 2023 to generate population data and compare disaggregated sample categories of interest to those of the population. The Annual Performance Report (APR) requires two demographics to be analyzed, including race/ethnicity (mandatory) and region, chosen by the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC). We report these two variables here, in addition to gender, disability category, and age. To determine whether a demographic group in our sample is representative of that population, we use a threshold of 3% difference in the percentage of each group in the sample to the corresponding percentage in the population. If the difference is less than 3%, we consider the demographic group to be representative; if the difference is 3% or more, we consider the group to be not representative and note whether the group is over or under-represented.

Tables 8-12 present the results of our representativeness analysis.

Table 8

| Race     | Sample (%) | Population (%) | Difference |
|----------|------------|----------------|------------|
| White    | 85.8%      | 75.2%          | 10.6%*     |
| Black    | 4.6%       | 10.7%          | -6.1%      |
| Hispanic | 2.7%       | 7.4%           | -4.7%      |
| Multiple | 5.9%       | 5.4%           | 0.5%       |

\*=sample is not representative of population



Table 9

| Gender | Sample (%) | Population (%) | Difference |
|--------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Male   | 65.0%      | 65.6%          | -0.6%      |
| Female | 34.2%      | 34.4%          | -0.2%      |

\*=sample is not representative of population

Table 10

| Disability                      | Sample (%) | Population (%) | Difference |
|---------------------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Mild Mental Disability          | 6.4%       | 9.5%           | -3.1%      |
| Functional Mental Disability    | 1.7%       | 2.5%           | -0.8%      |
| Specific Learning Disability    | 15.2%      | 16.7%          | -1.5%      |
| Emotional-Behavioral Disability | 3.3%       | 3.4%           | -0.1%      |
| Autism                          | 16.5%      | 10.8%          | 5.7%*      |
| Multiple Disabilities           | 6.2%       | 1.7%           | 4.5%*      |
| Other Health Impairment         | 8.1%       | 14.8%          | -6.7%      |
| Developmental Delay             | 9.6%       | 12.3%          | -2.7%      |
| Speech or Language Impairment   | 24.4%      | 26.8%          | -2.4%      |

\*=sample is not representative of population

Table 11

| Region   | Sample (%) | Population (%) | Difference |
|--|------------|----------------|------------|
| Central Kentucky Educational Cooperative               | 14.6%      | 16.2%          | -1.6%      |
| Green River Region Educational Cooperative             | 21.1%      | 19.1%          | 2.0%       |
| Kentucky Education Development Corporation             | 12.5%      | 7.1%           | 5.4%*      |
| Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative                | 16.3%      | 6.0%           | 10.3%*     |
| Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services | 5.6%       | 8.3%           | -2.7%      |
| Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative                    | 4.9%       | 7.5%           | -2.6%      |
| Southeast/Southcentral Educational Cooperative         | 5.6%       | 13.8%          | -8.2%      |
| Western Kentucky Educational Cooperative               | 15.6%      | 10.3%          | 5.3%*      |
| Greater Louisville Educational Cooperative             | 3.8%       | 11.7%          | -7.9%      |

\*=sample is not representative of population

Table 12

| Age      | Sample (%) | Population (%) | Difference |
|----------|------------|----------------|------------|
| <5       | 18.6%      | 8.6%           | 10.0%*     |
| 5 to 9   | 39.1%      | 40.5%          | -1.4%      |
| 10 to 13 | 24.0%      | 26.6%          | -2.6%      |
| 14 to 18 | 17.6%      | 25.3%          | -7.7%      |
| >18      | 0.6%       | 0.7%           | -0.1%      |

\*=sample is not representative of population

As seen in Table 8, respondents were generally not representative in terms of race/ethnicity. Proportionally, parents of white students were more likely to respond to the survey than were parents of Black or Hispanic students. Given that parents of White students were generally more positive in their responses, this could indicate an overall inflation of Indicator 8 figures as well as other items. It could also indicate that responding to surveys such as these is another form of parent involvement that varies by race/ethnicity. It might also be the case that surveys are distributed or encouraged to be taken with different efforts based on race/ethnicity, either consciously or unconsciously. Continued efforts to help district personnel understand and address equitable response rates. It is also noteworthy that under-represented groups also tend to report higher rates of being too busy to be involved in their child’s education. The same may be a factor in their lower response rates to the survey.

### Parent Comment (Disability Category)

“Our county has failed my Autistic daughter in so many ways. They need resources and they need to be trained and educated on autism and other invisible disabilities.”

In the area of disability category, parents of students with Mild Mental Disability (MMD) and Other Health Impairments (OHI) were under-represented, while parents of students with Autism and Multiple Disabilities were over-represented. While there is no way of knowing definitively, we suspect that many parents are unfamiliar with the disability categories used in education and inaccurately report their child’s disability. MMD and OHI are consistently under-represented, and both are terms that are not immediately intuitive or congruent with terms used in

medicine, which parents may be more familiar with. Additionally, parents of students with Autism tend to be an active community and represent a group with a label more easily recognizable to the general public. Multiple Disabilities as a discrete category might confuse some parents and be inaccurately selected. Still, there is the possibility that parents of students

with MMD and OHI are legitimately under-represented, although our data cannot speak to a definitive reason for this. Helping parents understand education-related disability categories may be useful. This finding might indicate an overall need to understand the IEP better as well. Another strategy to encourage greater representativeness might be to encourage the formation of disability-specific parent groups, in this case, related to parents of students with MMD and OHI, or to investigate new ways to inform and engage parents in the IEP process.

We conceptualize regions by the Special Education Regional Technical Assistance Centers (SERTACs) and find substantial variation in representativeness by region. Of particular note is the under-representation of the Louisville metropolitan area (Greater Louisville Education Cooperative) and the Southeast South-Central Educational Cooperative (SESC). These regions have consistently been under-represented and may require intervention from the state to foster greater participation. Regions that are over-represented also were over-represented last year, which likely indicates greater emphasis being placed on the survey in these regions. Garnering strategies from over-represented regions and sharing their methods with under-represented regions (as well as state-wide) might yield positive results

Representativeness by student age also continues to follow a similar pattern to that in previous years. Parents of younger students are over-represented, perhaps indicating a strong initial desire to participate in many domains of their child's education, which is common among all students with and without disabilities. This tends to wane as children get older, with the 14-18 age group under-represented. This may be related to survey fatigue or burnout. It may also indicate a higher level of frustration with the school system (this is the same age group with the lowest Indicator 8 score) or the typical decline in parent involvement in older students with and without disabilities. Coupled with the low score regarding transition services, the under-representation of parents of students in this age group is concerning. Efforts to make high school personnel aware of the importance of receiving feedback from their parents may increase the representativeness of this group and add greater validity to survey results.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

It is remarkable to note that the actual results for Indicator 8 continued to increase even with a greater response rate. The response rate has essentially doubled over the past two years, and still, over 90% of respondents indicated that their child's school district made an effort to involve them in their child's education. We recommend that the state continue to make survey response rates a priority for districts and prioritize districts improving areas identified as weaknesses. It should be noted that district reports are available upon request, and at the time of this report, 107 of the districts in the state have requested such reports. The larger response rates give us greater confidence in our results, represents a wider sample of the population, and increases representativeness. It also reflects the value and impact of the state prioritizing a specific area.

This year was the second administration of the survey in several additional languages (Swahili, Somali, and Amish). The fact that the additional language option of Swahili was used by two respondents this year compared to zero in the first year of implementation indicates the districts' requests to extend support for non-native English-speaking parents are helpful. In addition to the novel use of the Swahili translation, 5 Arabic and 128 Spanish versions were completed. Regionally, the greater Louisville region is both under-represented and has lower scores.

It is also noteworthy that the results for most items have remained fairly consistent over the years. This is a positive in the sense that results are generally favorable. We did see an increase in most parental involvement indicators for parents of both Black and Hispanic students. Both are still below those of White students but have improved. At the same time, there is a need to focus on seeing greater improvement overall and within subgroups from an already high baseline. Now that districts have a healthy emphasis on response rates, it seems apropos to identify additional ways to delve deeper into the data in terms of what districts are undertaking to improve results.

The inability to link responses to other data collected by KDE hinders targeting specific areas for improvement, such as the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) data. The anonymity of the survey promotes a greater response rate, but it may be worthwhile to consider making the survey available through Infinite Campus (IC). Doing so could allow the research team to link responses to particular programs and services recorded through IC. It might also add an additional component to parent involvement by examining engagement with the Parent Portal itself.

This year, we were able to separate online surveys from paper surveys. This is useful for examining differences in response to items based on the format used (see Table 7) and tracking which districts utilize each method. The paper format is useful in reaching respondents who may lack internet access, but it is also cumbersome to enter. It may also be informative for the Office of Special Education and Early Learning (OSEEL) to be able to examine the ways that surveys are being distributed. A higher proportion of paper surveys may indicate that school staff have greater potential for biasing results by targeting certain respondents to distribute the survey or jeopardizing anonymity by receiving the surveys themselves before mailing them to

## Parent Comment (Teachers)

“It is apparent that the school needs more help - more teachers and more staff in order to support the growing number of students that would benefit from individualized education assistance.”

KYPSO. Several comments from parents noted that their children were not receiving the support that they needed. This may be due to a lack of teachers. However, the need for teachers to develop problem-solving skills to engage students with significant support needs, including non-verbal ones, would benefit students, teachers, and parents.

In conclusion, this report demonstrates the high levels of involvement of parents of students with IEPs in their children’s education. State efforts to increase response rates have allowed us to

have greater confidence that this is an accurate reflection of parent sentiment. Greater work can be done to increase minority representation and involvement and encourage the use of findings.

## Key Takeaways and Recommendations

- Districts need to be focused on improving results, not just response rates. They should be encouraged to use their data to improve results.
- Parents noted that a lack of resources negatively impacted children with significant support needs. Districts working with parents to critically and creatively address this lack may help address this.
- Incorporating a way to take the survey through Infinite Campus will enable the ability to see how parent involvement relates to different programs and practices.
- Continuing to work with racial and ethnic minorities to understand the value of their feedback (via the survey) and to listen to their needs regarding what they need and how they want to be more involved in their child’s education.
- Continue to provide timely updates regarding response rates to districts.

## Appendix A – Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parents and Guardians,

[INSERT NAME OF DISTRICT] and the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) value your input and want to hear about your experience as a parent or guardian of a child with an Individual Education Program (IEP). The information you offer will give the KDE and [INSERT NAME OF DISTRICT] valuable data on how to improve parent and family engagement.

To collect your input, we ask that you complete a brief survey about how the school supported parent or guardian engagement to improve services and results for your child during the **current** school year. Specifically, we want to hear about how your child’s school involves you in the special education process. The survey is available in English, Spanish, Arabic, Somali, Swahili, and Amish. All responses are anonymous and cannot be traced back to you or your child.

The online survey can be completed in three ways:

1. Go to [www.kypso.org/parent](http://www.kypso.org/parent) and select “*Click here to access the 2024 Parent Survey.*”
2. Scan the code below into your smartphone or mobile device. Some smartphones will open the survey link automatically when you open your camera, others may need a QR code scanner app. If you do not have access to a computer or smartphone, you may contact your child’s school to request a printed copy and a confidential envelope.



3. If using a printed copy, the sealed envelope can be returned to your child’s special education case manager, and they will ensure it is sent to the appropriate location. You may also mail the completed survey to the address below:

*Human Development Institute  
c/o Tony LoBianco  
126 Mineral Industries Building  
Lexington, KY 40506*

Only one parent or guardian per student should complete this survey. However, if you have more than one child with an IEP, please complete the survey for each of your children.

Survey results will be carefully studied by the KDE and the Human Development Institute (HDI) at the University of Kentucky (UK) and reported to the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). The results will help us further understand what supports parents and districts may need to ensure meaningful parent and family engagement in special education.

The deadline for completing this important survey is **June 30, 2024**. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact [INSERT NAME/NUMBER/EMAIL].

Thank you for your help.

[Insert Your name and position]

## Appendix B – Parent Involvement Survey



### Parent Survey 2024

This is a survey for parents of students receiving special education services. Your responses will help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. In responding to each statement, think about your experience in working with the school. You may skip any item that you feel does not apply to you or your child. All responses are anonymous and cannot be traced back to you or your child. Please answer these questions as they pertain to the 2023-24 school year.

1. Did the school involve you in a meaningful way to improve services and results for your child?

Yes

No

2. On a scale of 1 - 5, where 1 = "I don't understand the IEP process at all" and 5 = "I fully understand the IEP process," how well would you say that you understand the IEP process?

1

2

3

4

5

3. Which of the following statements describe how you feel about being involved in your child's education? (Check all that apply)

- I want to be more involved, but I don't know how to be.
- I want to be more involved, but I'm too busy with other commitments.
- I want to be more involved in my child's education in my own ways and do not need the school's help.
- I am very involved with my child's education.

4. Do you feel that school staff welcome you to participate in planning for your child's education?



Yes

No

5. What do you think the school is doing well in terms of involving you in your child's education? (Check all that apply)

- I am generally satisfied
  - Communicating information, including reports, meetings, and visits
  - Following the IEP
  - Specific school programs
  - School events / activities for parents
  - Skilled / caring teachers and staff
  - Homework
  - Other (please specify)
- 

6. What do you think the school could do better to involve you in your child's education? (Check all that apply)

- I am generally satisfied and there is no need of improvement so far
  - Communicating information, including reports, meetings, and visits
  - Following the IEP
  - Specific school programs
  - School events / activities for parents
  - Skilled / caring teachers and staff
  - Homework
  - Other (please specify)
- 

Please answer a few questions about yourself and your child so that we may focus our efforts to improve services.

7. What is your school district?

8. What is your child's race / ethnicity? (Select one)

- White
- Black or African American
- Native American
- Asian
- Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino
- Multiple Race

9. What is your child's primary disability? (Select one)

- Autism
- Deaf-Blindness
- Developmental Delay
- Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD)
- Functional Mental Disability (FMD)
- Hearing Impairment
- Mild Mental Disability (MMD)
- Multiple Disabilities
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment including Blindness
- I don't know

10. What is your child's gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other / Prefer not to answer

11. What was your child's age on June 30, 2023?

12. If your child was at least 14 years old, has your school helped to prepare your son or daughter for future employment through vocational training (e.g., exploring jobs, paid work experiences)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- N/A

## Appendix C – Select Comments from Parents



- Due to my child's diagnosis, teachers have been limited in understanding his disability. Currently, we feel that most interventions are being followed. This has taken a tremendous amount of advocacy from us as parents.
- Through Infinite Campus, I can keep up with my child's progress in real-time and determine when we need to supplement a lesson at home.
- I believe our school does a FANTASTIC job of involving/including parents with their kid's education. The opportunity is there if parents want to take it.
- The school allowed my child to learn at home online which is the very best option for us with all things considered.
- I believe consistent, clear communication among all involved is the most important piece to a team's success when it comes to supporting IEP kids.
- Our school is a phenomenal school with amazing staff who genuinely care about their students. Special Education students are always included in every aspect of the school.
- Awesome one-on-one time with teacher to allow development for trust and rapport, he sees they care, so he cares!
- Allow parents access to homework when it's assigned, not after it's been flagged missing or has been graded.
- Over-reliant on social media for giving out information, and it's still limited to specific groups. This area is horrible with Wi-Fi and internet connection. Miss out on a lot of stuff.
- I would like to see more opportunities for special needs children in sports and other extracurricular activities.
- Stick to one form of communication across all classes instead of using different apps and sites to give information. It causes confusion. Organize yourselves. I have students in other schools and this makes me miss out on so many events and school work.
- There needs to be enforced polices on when it's obvious a teacher isn't following an IEP, even when brought to their attention.
- My child was tested for the need of an IEP, given an IEP, and I never heard anything from anyone after that. I was never told how I as a parent can help utilize an IEP for my child.
- Having more support therapists instead of one OT for the whole district.
- I have no clue what is going on with my child's speech. There has been no update. Not one person has sent a report home or called to tell me the progress or what needs to be worked on.
- Our county has failed my Autistic daughter in so many ways. They need resources and they need to be trained and educated on autism and other invisible disabilities.

- Send information in Spanish!
- Listening to the parent and child when it comes to preventing bullying AND taking bullying seriously. My child's school does NOT take bullying incidents seriously, gaslights victims and then things escalate over time until someone gets hurt.
- Some of the staff act as if they would rather not be bothered with helping my child succeed, even after reaching out to them for ways I could help.
- Listen to the parents and don't always assume we are clueless. Also the educational lingo should be simplified and clear to the parents.
- Home visits were great, I explained things that my child was struggling with at home and the teacher was very helpful and worked with her in class and also sent home some resources to help her at home. It was an Awesome experience.
- A meeting with teachers of all subjects at the beginning middle and towards the end of the year would be helpful to make a plan of action and discuss issues unitedly.
- I would like to see more events/meetings with the team working with my child. I like meeting his educators and learning about what is going on at school. Also, I would like more opportunities to volunteer with the classroom(s).
- It is apparent that the school needs more help - more teachers and more staff in order to support the growing number of students that would benefit from individualized education assistance.