Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Wisconsin Indicator 8: Family Engagement Survey – Supporting Students with IEPs

Detailed Summary Report 2024-25

Report prepared by:
Data Driven Enterprises
11184 Huron St., Ste. 17
Northglenn, CO 80234
Susan@DataDrivenEnterprises.com
303-819-5768

Table of Contents

Summary 3
Section I. Respondent Demographics 7
A. Current Year Demographics 7
B. Demographics Over Time 9
Section II. Closed-Ended Responses 11
A. Overall Results 11
B. Results by Subgroup 16
C. Results Over Time 19
D. Potential Focus Areas of Improvement Surrounding Closed-Ended Items 24
Section III. Open-Ended Responses 25
A. Categories and Themes 25
B. Overall Results 27
C. Results by Survey Type 33
D. Results by Race/Ethnicity 38
E. Results by Disability 44
F. Results Over Time 52
G. Potential Focus Areas of Improvement Surrounding Open-Ended Items 53
Appendix A: Agreement by Subgroup ..... Appx A-1
Appendix B: Examples of Actual Comments by Theme ..... Appx B-1

Summary

Introduction

Each year, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) administers a survey to families of students with disabilities. The Wisconsin Family Engagement Survey addresses Indicator 8 of the State Performance Plan (SPP) which requires the State to indicate the: *"Percent of parents with a child receiving special education services who report that schools facilitated parent involvement as a means of improving services and results for children with disabilities."* While a primary purpose of the Family Engagement Survey is to meet Indicator 8 requirements, it also serves as a mechanism for providing feedback to the state and districts on areas of strength and areas of improvement surrounding family engagement.

DPI's Family Engagement Survey is administered between February and June of a given school year with roughly one-fifth of the districts in the state conducting the survey each year. Milwaukee Public Schools, with an average daily enrollment of over 50,000, conducts the survey on an annual basis. The survey consists of 22 closed-ended questions which measure the following three areas:

1. Welcoming Environment
   - Example items:
     - 3. School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.
     - 6. School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community
2. Respectful Environment
   - Example items:
     - 7. IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs.
     - 9. School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.
3. Supportive Environment
   - Example items:
     - 17. I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.
     - 22. Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.

The survey also includes two open-ended items:

- What is the best thing about the special education services your child received this school year?
- What is something that the school could improve regarding the special education services your child received this school year?

Each open-ended question includes a checklist of areas to help guide respondents' comments. The checklist for both the best thing and area of improvement is as follows:

☐ Accommodations and Support	☐ Behavior and Disability-Related Needs	☐ Community and Non-School Services	☐ Diversity and Inclusion	☐ General Comments
☐ Home-School Communication	☐ IEP Development and Implementation	☐ Learning Environment and Inclusion	☐ Planning for Life After High School	☐ Progress Toward Goals
☐ School Staff Support	☐ Transitions Between Grades or Schools	☐ Other		

In previous years, respondents were asked a single question, "Please write any additional information that you think is important for improving the special education services students with disabilities receive"—without being provided any areas on which to comment. However, because it was often difficult to determine whether comments were positive or negative, this year's items were separated to encourage clearer, more targeted feedback.

Highlights

A total of 4,083 family members completed the survey in 2024-25. Of those, 16% completed the preschool age survey and 84% completed the school age survey.

Closed-Ended Responses

- Family members are positive. In fact, on average, 88% of family members agreed with the 22 survey items.
- The percent of family members agreeing with any given item ranged from 74% - 95%.
    - **Items with the highest level of agreement:**
        - In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas (95% agreed)
        - IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs (95%)
        - School staff offer me information in ways I understand (94%)
    - **Items with the lowest levels of agreement:**
        - School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school (74% agreed)
        - School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services (75%)
        - School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs (81%)
- When it comes to the **average percent agreement by subgroups:**
    - Family members of preschool children with disabilities are more positive, on average, than family members of school-age children with disabilities
    - There are no significant differences in the percent agreement averages by race/ethnicity.
    - Family members of children with emotional behavioral disorders are the least positive, on average; and family members of children with a speech or language impairment or significant developmental delay are the most positive.
- 2024-25 closed-ended results are similar to those obtained in 2023-24.

Open-Ended Responses

- Two open-ended questions were asked in 2024-25: what is the best thing about special education services and what is an area of improvement. Each open-ended question includes a checklist of areas to help guide family members' comments.
    - 75% of the family members checked a "positive" category regarding the best thing about special education services.
    - 13% of the family members wrote a comment regarding the best thing about special education services.
    - 43% checked a "negative" category regarding how the school could improve special education services.
    - 12% wrote a comment about how the school could improve.
- The most frequently-checked categories:
    - **Positive Categories**
        - Accommodations and Support (58%)
        - Progress Toward Goals (51%)
        - Learning Environment and Inclusion (43%)
    - **Negative Categories**
        - Community and Non-School Services (33%)
        - Planning for Life After High School (21%)

- The most frequently-mentioned themes in the comments:
    - **Positive Themes**
        - Accommodations and Support (66%)
        - School Staff Support (35%)
        - Progress Toward Goals (31%)
    - **Negative Themes**
        - Accommodations and Support (39%)
        - Home-School Communication (32%)
        - IEP Development and Implementation (30%)
- Family members of preschool-age children tend to be less negative in their responses to the open-ended questions than family members of school-age children.
    - While the percent of these two groups of family members who check a positive category is similar (76% of preschool vs. 75% of school-age family members), fewer preschool family members select a negative category (35%) compared to school-age family members (45%). Preschool family members are also slightly more likely to write a positive comment (15% vs. 13%), while school-age family members are more likely to write a negative comment (13% vs. 9%).
    - Differences exist in the areas of concerns mentioned by family members of preschool children and family members of school age children. Preschool family members are more likely to mention home-school communication and their child's progress as areas of concern; while school-age family members are more likely to mention classroom supports, IEP implementation, and staff responsiveness.
- Patterns are consistent across the racial/ethnic groups, with family members from all racial/ethnic groups more likely to check positive categories than negative categories, and the pattern of category selection is largely the same across groups.
- Across disability groups, family member responses are generally positive.
    - Most family members (70–82%) check at least one positive category, with the highest positivity among families of children with Hearing Impairments, Intellectual Disabilities, Significant Developmental Delays, and Autism, and the lowest among those with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities and Specific Learning Disabilities.
    - Negative ratings are more variable: lowest for Speech/Language Impairments (27%) and highest for Autism and Other Health Impairments (about 52-53%).
- A few disability-specific patterns emerge:
    - Emotional Behavioral Disability and Autism family members report the *broadest range* of concerns, especially around Behavior and Disability-Related Needs, Home-School Communication, and IEP Development and Implementation.
    - Intellectual Disability family members express higher concern about Planning for Life After High School and Progress Toward Goals, reflecting the complexity of transition and outcome planning for these students.
    - Specific Learning Disability and Other Health Impairment family members are more likely to emphasize Accommodations and Support and School Staff Support, issues tied to consistency and implementation of services.

Potential Recommendations

In addition to the potential focus areas identified in the closed-ended and open-ended sections (see pages 24 and 53), the following action items are suggested to further strengthen family engagement efforts. Many of these strategies may already be in place at the state or local level; they are provided to encourage reflection and ongoing improvement rather than to imply deficiencies.

1. **Broaden Family Engagement Practices**
   - Move beyond procedural compliance and IEP meeting satisfaction to strengthen everyday family-school partnerships. Districts should focus on equipping families with concrete tools to support learning at home.

2. **Enhance Communication and Transparency**
   - Establish systematic approaches for updating families about progress, service delivery, and transitions. Improving two-way communication can build stronger trust and engagement.

3. **Expand Access to Community and Transition Resources**
   - Develop more intentional linkages between schools, community agencies, and transition programs to ensure families are aware of postsecondary options and supports.

4. **Target Support for Specific Disability Groups**
   - Prioritize professional development and coaching for staff working with students with emotional behavioral disabilities and specific learning disabilities, focusing on behavioral support, consistency, and communication.

5. **Explore the category of "Accommodations and Support."**
   - This theme represents the top strength **and** area of concern.
   - Conduct a root cause analysis as to why perceptions vary among families to determine specific factors contributing to positive and negative experiences.
   - Identify districts or schools with positive feedback on these two themes and share and scale best practices.

Section I. Respondent Demographics

A. Current Year Demographics

A total of 4,083 parents completed the survey in 2024-25. The respondents represented:

- Parents of both preschool-aged and school-aged children with disabilities (see Displays II.A-1 and II.A-2);
- Parents representing a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds (see Displays II.A-3 and I.A-4); and
- Parents of children identified under a variety of disability categories (see Displays I.A-5 and I.A-6).

Display I.A-1: Number and Percent of Respondents by Survey Type

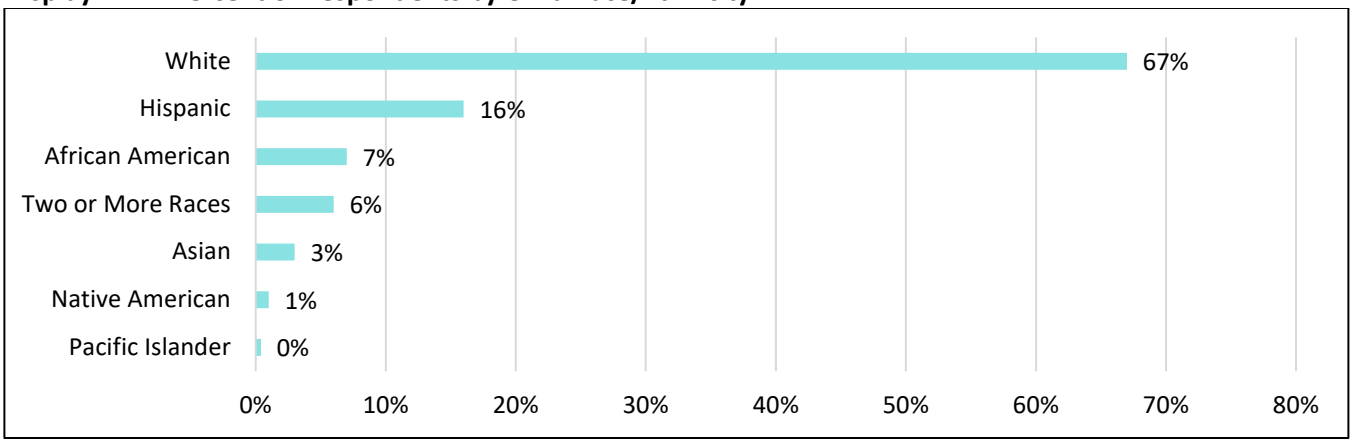
	# Respondents	% Respondents
Overall	***4,083***	***100%***
Preschool Age	646	16%
School Age	3,437	84%

Display I.A-2: Percent of Respondents by Survey Type

Display I.A-3: Number and Percent of Respondents by Child Race/Ethnicity

	# Respondents	% Respondents
Overall	***4,083***	***100%***
African American	294	7%
Asian	114	3%
Hispanic	651	16%
Native American	35	1%
Pacific Islander	4	<1%
Two or More Races	259	6%
White	2,726	67%

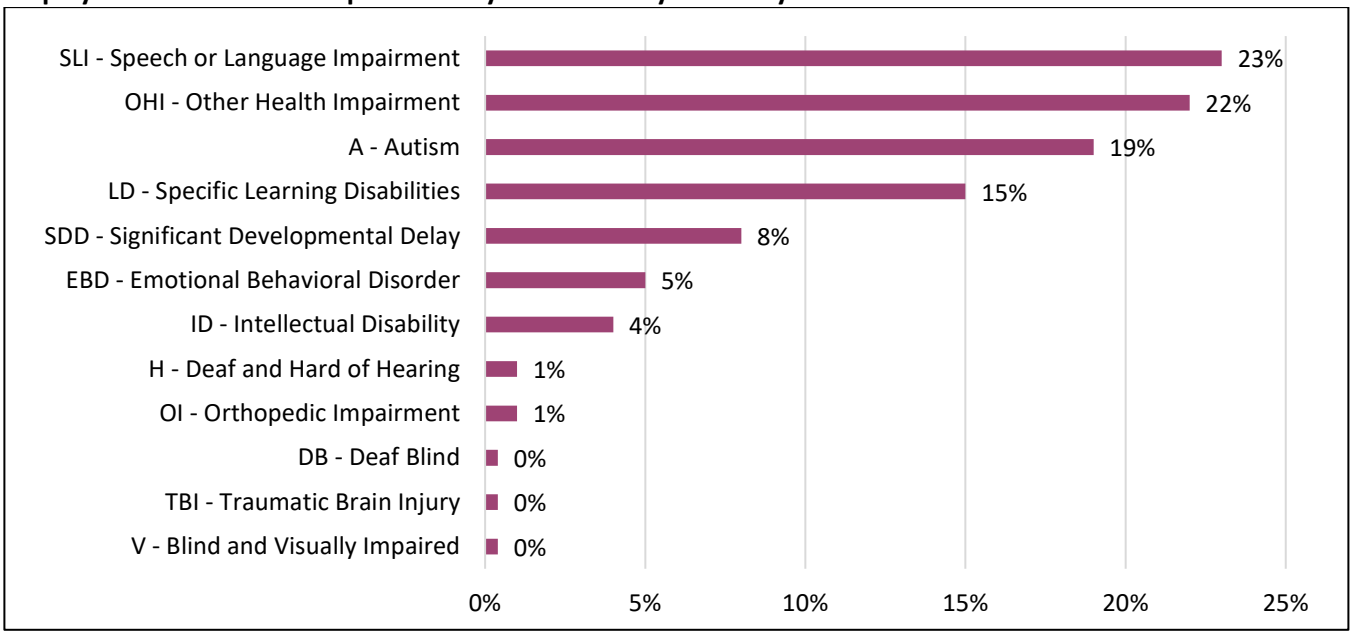
Display I.A-4: Percent of Respondents by Child Race/Ethnicity



Display I.A-5: Number and Percent of Respondents by Child Primary Disability

	# Respondents	% Respondents
Overall	***4,083***	***100%***
A - Autism	787	19%
DB - Deaf Blind	2	<1%
EBD - Emotional Behavioral Disorder	215	5%
H - Deaf and Hard of Hearing	60	1%
ID - Intellectual Disability	151	4%
LD - Specific Learning Disabilities	609	15%
OHI - Other Health Impairment	903	22%
OI - Orthopedic Impairment	24	1%
SDD - Significant Developmental Delay	346	8%
SLI - Speech or Language Impairment	956	23%
TBI - Traumatic Brain Injury	10	<1%
V - Blind and Visually Impaired	20	<1%

Display I.A-6: Percent of Respondents by Child Primary Disability



B. Demographics Over Time

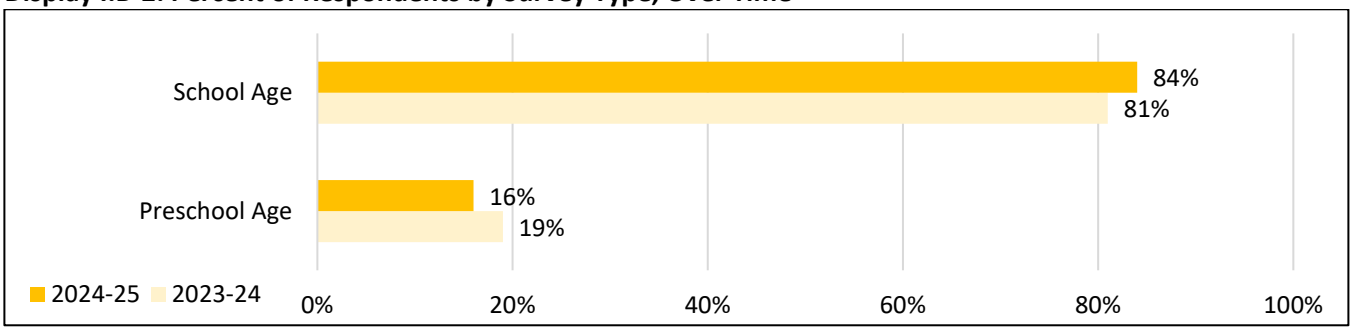
The characteristics of the 2024-25 respondents are generally similar to those of the 2023-24 respondents with some slight differences.

- A higher percentage of respondents completed the school-age survey in 2024-25 than in 2023-24 (84% vs. 81%, respectively).
- A lower percentage of respondents indicated their children were white in 2024-25 than in 2023-24 (67% vs. 75%, respectively).
- A higher percentage of respondents indicated their children had an autism diagnosis in 2024-25 than in 2023-24 (19% vs. 14%, respectively).

Display I.B-1: Number and Percent of Respondents by Survey Type, Over Time

	2023-24		2024-25	
	# Respondents	% Respondents	# Respondents	% Respondents
Overall	***4,352***	***100%***	***4,083***	***100%***
Preschool Age	811	19%	646	16%
School Age	3,541	81%	3,437	84%

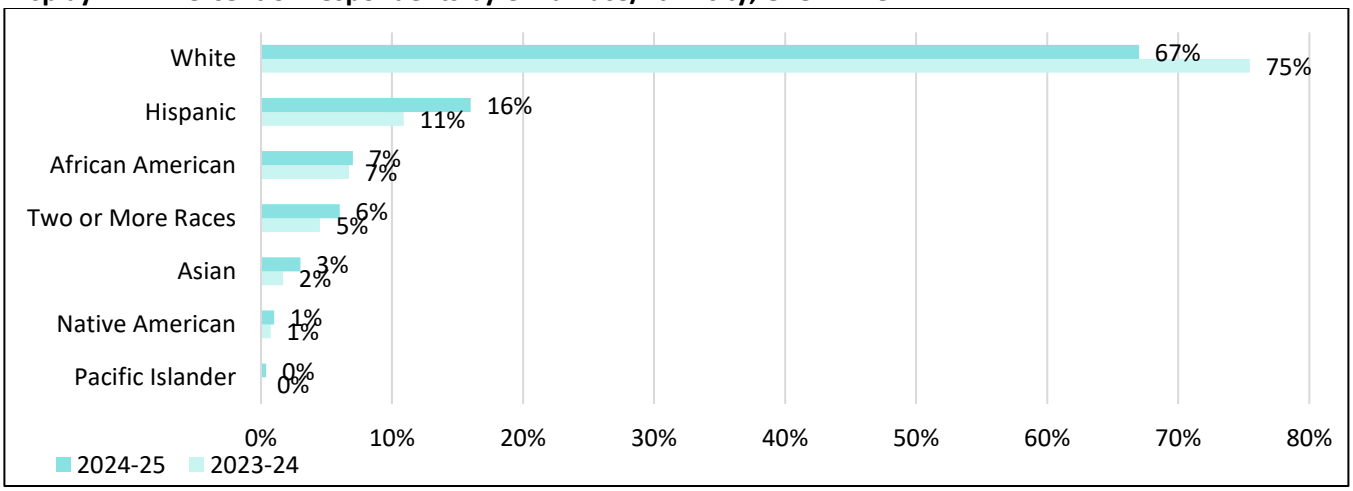
Display I.B-2: Percent of Respondents by Survey Type, Over Time



Display I.B-3: Number and Percent of Respondents by Child Race/Ethnicity, Over Time

	2023-24		2024-25	
	# Respondents	% Respondents	# Respondents	% Respondents
Overall	***4,352***	***100%***	***4,083***	***100%***
African American	292	%	294	7%
Asian	73	2%	114	3%
Hispanic	474	11%	651	16%
Native American	32	1%	35	1%
Pacific Islander	1	<1%	4	<1%
Two or More Races	196	5%	259	6%
White	3,284	75%	2,726	67%

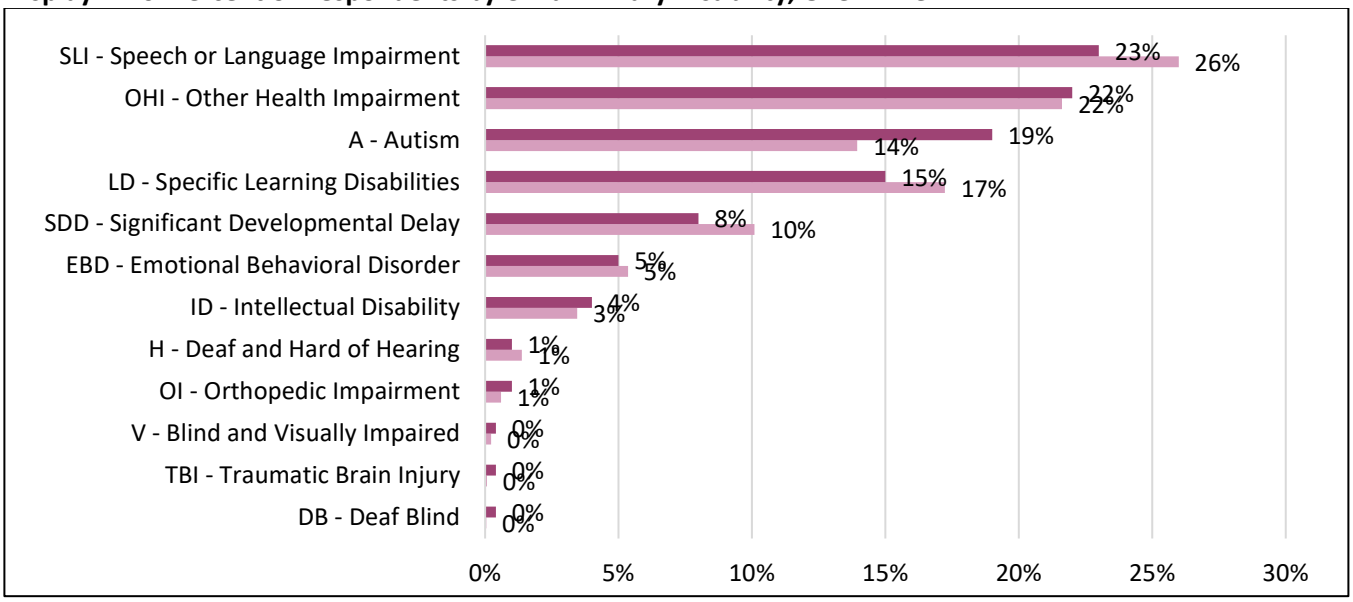
Display I.B-4: Percent of Respondents by Child Race/Ethnicity, Over Time



Display I.B-5: Number and Percent of Respondents by Child Primary Disability, Over Time

	2023-24		2024-25	
	# Respondents	% Respondents	# Respondents	% Respondents
Overall	***4,352***	***100%***	***4,083***	***100%***
A - Autism	607	14%	787	19%
DB - Deaf Blind	2	<1%	2	<1%
EBD - Emotional Behavioral Disorder	233	5%	215	5%
H - Deaf and Hard of Hearing	60	1%	60	1%
ID - Intellectual Disability	150	3%	151	4%
LD - Specific Learning Disabilities	750	17%	609	15%
OHI - Other Health Impairment	941	22%	903	22%
OI - Orthopedic Impairment	26	1%	24	1%
SDD - Significant Developmental Delay	439	10%	346	8%
SLI - Speech or Language Impairment	1,131	26%	956	23%
TBI - Traumatic Brain Injury	3	<1%	10	<1%
V - Blind and Visually Impaired	10	<1%	20	<1%

Display I.B-6: Percent of Respondents by Child Primary Disability, Over Time



Section II. Closed-Ended Responses

A. Overall Results

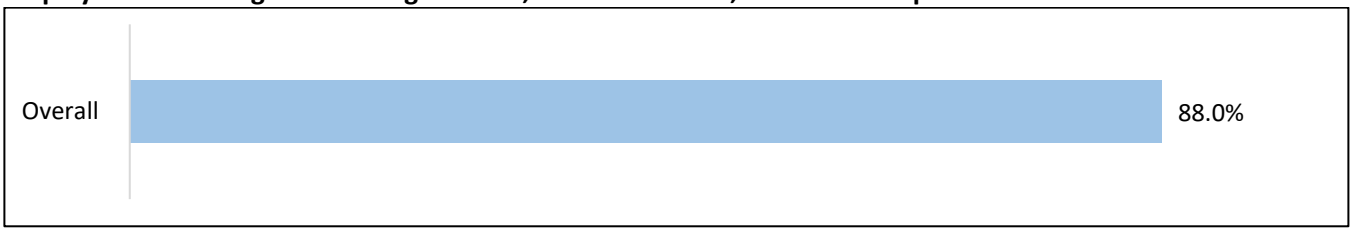
Displays II.A-1 through II.A-6 show the average percent of agreement across the 22 closed-ended items. The higher the score, the higher the percent of parents who, on average, agreed with the items.

On average, 88% of respondents agreed with any given item.

Display II.A-1: Average Percent Agreement Across All Items, Overall

Overall N	Overall
4,083	88.0%

Display II.A-2: Average Percent Agreement, Across All Items, Across All Respondents



Survey results are positive. On 20 of the 22 items, 81% or more of the parents had positive responses; on 14 of the items, 89% or more of parents had a positive response.

The percent of respondents agreeing with any given item ranged from 74% - 95%. Items with the **highest** level of agreement:

- 8. In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas (95% agreed)
- 7. IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs (95%)
- 4. School staff offer me information in ways I understand (94%)
- 13. In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child (94%)

Items with the **lowest** levels of agreement:

- 18. School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school (74% agreed)
- 15. School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services (75%)
- 20. School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs (81%)

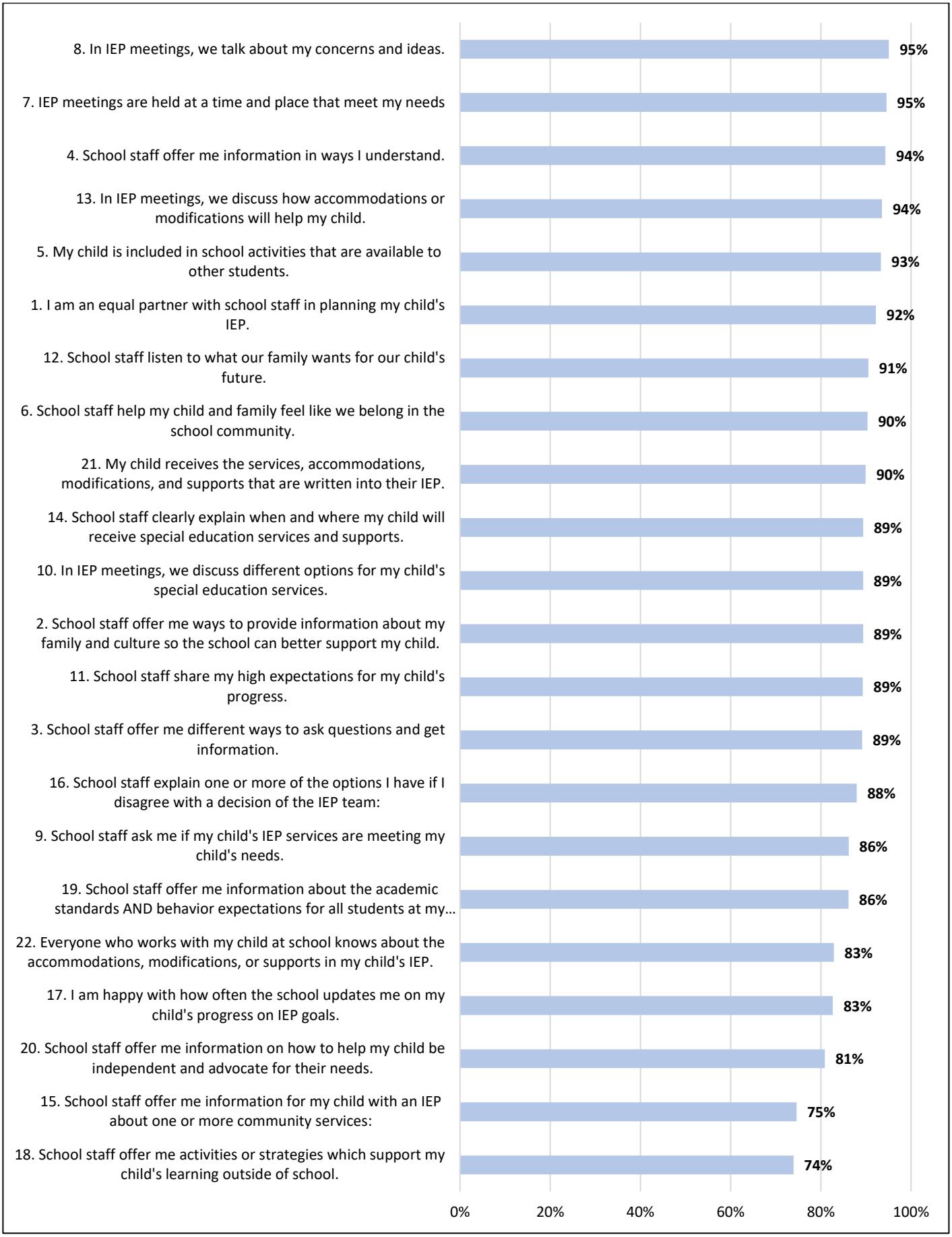
Parents overwhelmingly agree that IEP meetings are inclusive, respectful, and responsive to their input. Opportunities for improvement center on extending communication and resources beyond the IEP meeting itself—particularly around home support, community linkages, and consistent updates on student progress.

Display II.A-3: Percent Parents Who Agreed with a Given Question

Number of Respondents = 4,083

Q#	Questions	Overall
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	92.2%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	89.4%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	89.1%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	94.3%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students. (field trips, class performances, sports, clubs, other extracurricular activities, etc.)	93.3%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	90.3%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs	94.5%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	95.1%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	86.2%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	89.4%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	89.3%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, career, post-secondary education)	90.5%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	93.6%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	89.4%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services.	74.6%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team.	87.9%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	82.7%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	73.9%
19	School staff offer me information about the academic standards AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's grade level.	86.1%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	80.9%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	89.9%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	82.9%

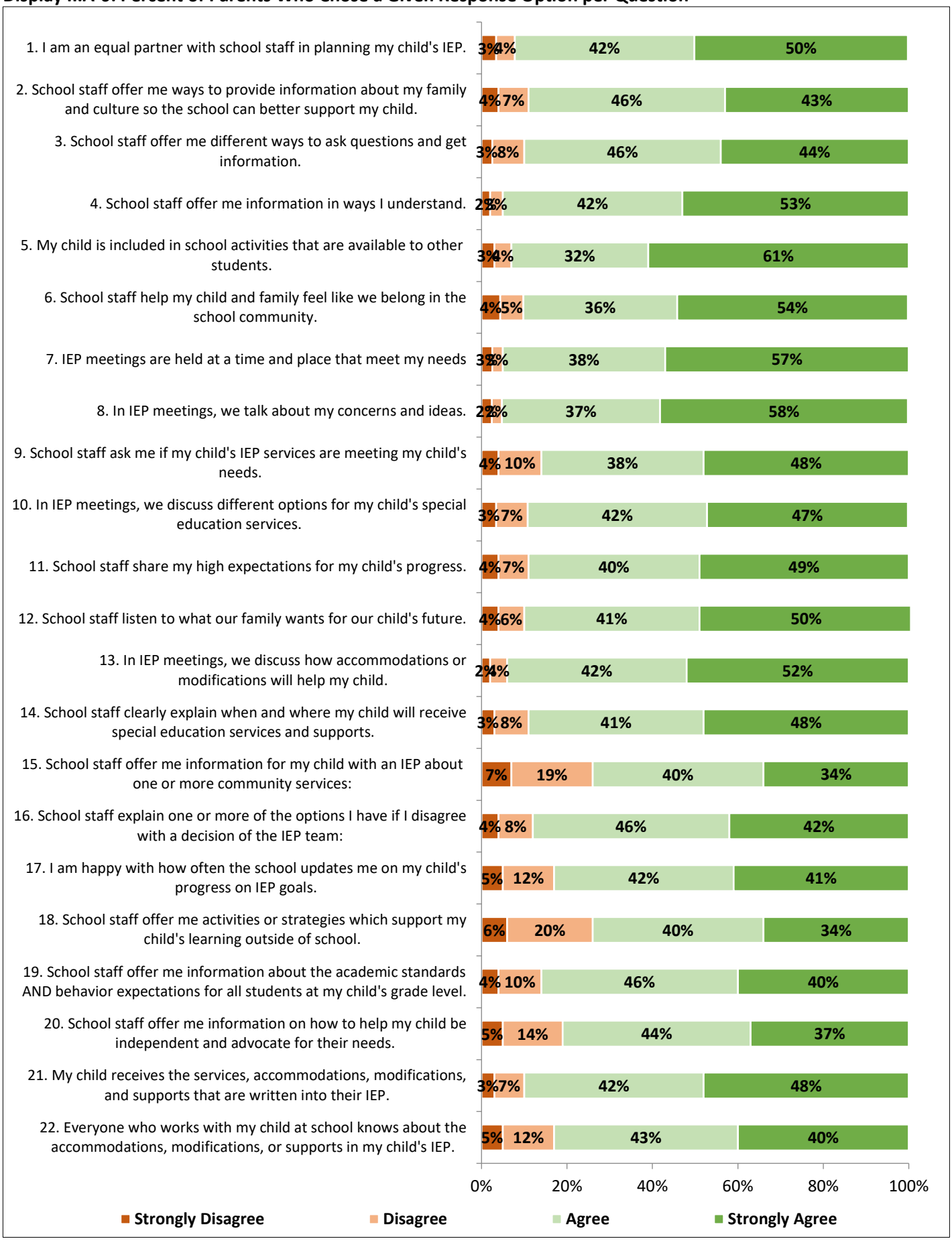
Display II.A-4: Percent Parents Who Agreed with a Given Question



Display II.A-5: Percent of Parents Who Chose a Given Response Option per Question
Number of Respondents = 4,083

Q#	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	3%	4%	42%	50%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	4%	7%	46%	43%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	3%	8%	46%	44%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	2%	3%	42%	53%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students. (field trips, class performances, sports, clubs, other extracurricular activities, etc.)	3%	4%	32%	61%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	4%	5%	36%	54%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs	3%	3%	38%	57%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	2%	2%	37%	58%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	4%	10%	38%	48%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	3%	7%	42%	47%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	4%	7%	40%	49%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, career, post-secondary education)	4%	6%	41%	50%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	2%	4%	42%	52%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	3%	8%	41%	48%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services.	7%	19%	40%	34%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team.	4%	8%	46%	42%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	5%	12%	42%	41%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	6%	20%	40%	34%
19	School staff offer me information about the academic standards AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's grade level.	4%	10%	46%	40%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	5%	14%	44%	37%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	3%	7%	42%	48%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	5%	12%	43%	40%

Display II.A-6: Percent of Parents Who Chose a Given Response Option per Question



B. Results by Subgroup

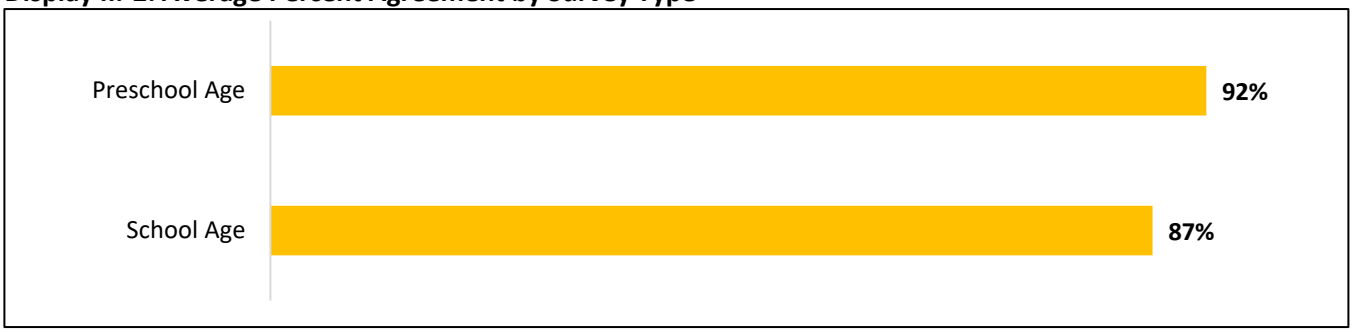
Displays II.B-1 through II.B-6 show the average percent of agreement across the items by subgroup. The higher the score, the higher the percent of parents who, on average, agreed with the items. Appendix A shows the results by item for each subgroup: Survey Type, Race/Ethnicity, and Primary Disability.

Parents of preschool children with disabilities are more positive, on average, than parents of school-age children with disabilities (Displays II.B-1 and II.B-2).

Display II.B-1: Average Percent Agreement Across All Items by Survey Type

	Overall N	Overall
Preschool Age	646	92.4%
School Age	3,437	87.1%

Display II.-2: Average Percent Agreement by Survey Type



While there are some differences in the Percent Agreement averages by race/ethnicity, none are statistically significant (Displays II.B-3 and II.B-4).

Display II.B-3: Average Percent Agreement by Child Race/Ethnicity

	Overall N	Overall
African American	294	84.8%
Asian	114	92.9%
Hispanic	651	88.9%
Native American	35	81.1%
Two or More Races	259	85.5%
White	2,726	88.2%

Note: Only those racial/ethnic groups based on 20 or more respondents are included.

Display II.B-4: Overall Average Percent Agreement by Child Race/Ethnicity

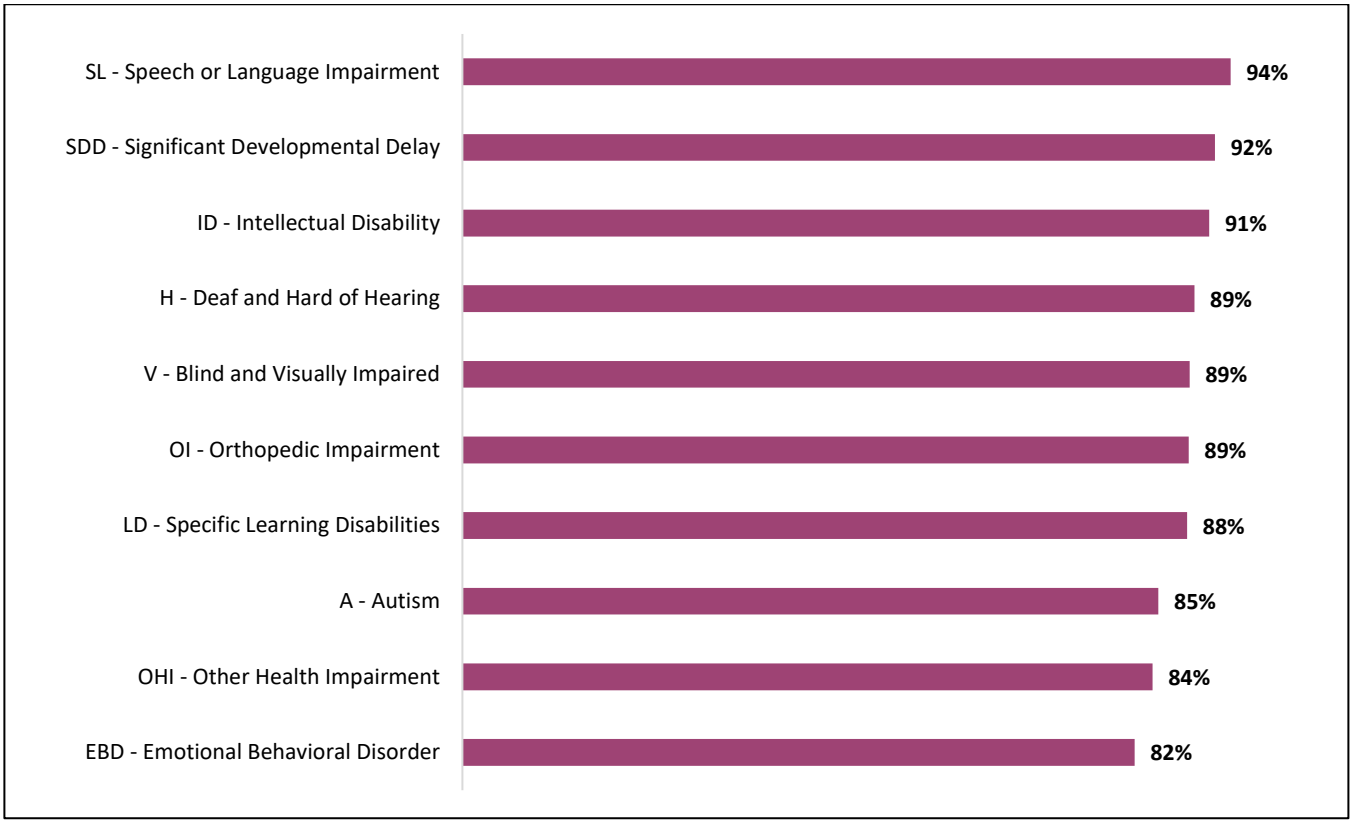
When examining results by disability category, parents of children with emotional behavioral disorders are the least positive, on average; and parents of children with a speech or language impairment or significant developmental delay are the most positive, on average (Displays II.B-5 and II.B-6).

Display II.B-5: Average Percent Agreement by Child Primary Disability

	Overall N	Overall
A - Autism	787	84.8%
EBD - Emotional Behavioral Disorder	215	81.9%
H - Deaf and Hard of Hearing	60	89.2%
ID - Intellectual Disability	151	91.0%
LD - Specific Learning Disabilities	609	88.3%
OHI - Other Health Impairment	903	84.1%
OI - Orthopedic Impairment	24	88.5%
SDD - Significant Developmental Delay	346	91.7%
SL - Speech or Language Impairment	956	93.6%
V - Blind and Visually Impaired	20	88.6%

Note: Only those primary disability groups based on 20 or more respondents are included.

Display II.B-6: Overall Average Percent Agreement by Child Primary Disability



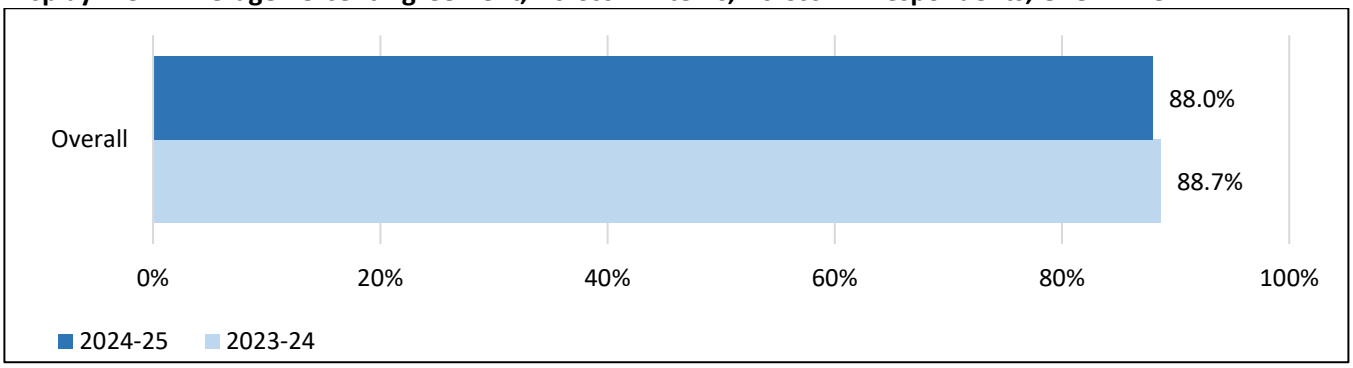
Overall Average Percent Agreement

The overall average percent agreement across all items stayed consistent at around 88%.

Display II.C-1: Average Percent Agreement Across All Items, Overall, Over Time

	Overall N	Overall
2023-24	4,352	88.7%
2024-25	4,083	88.0%

Display II.C-2: Average Percent Agreement, Across All Items, Across All Respondents, Over Time



Item Agreement

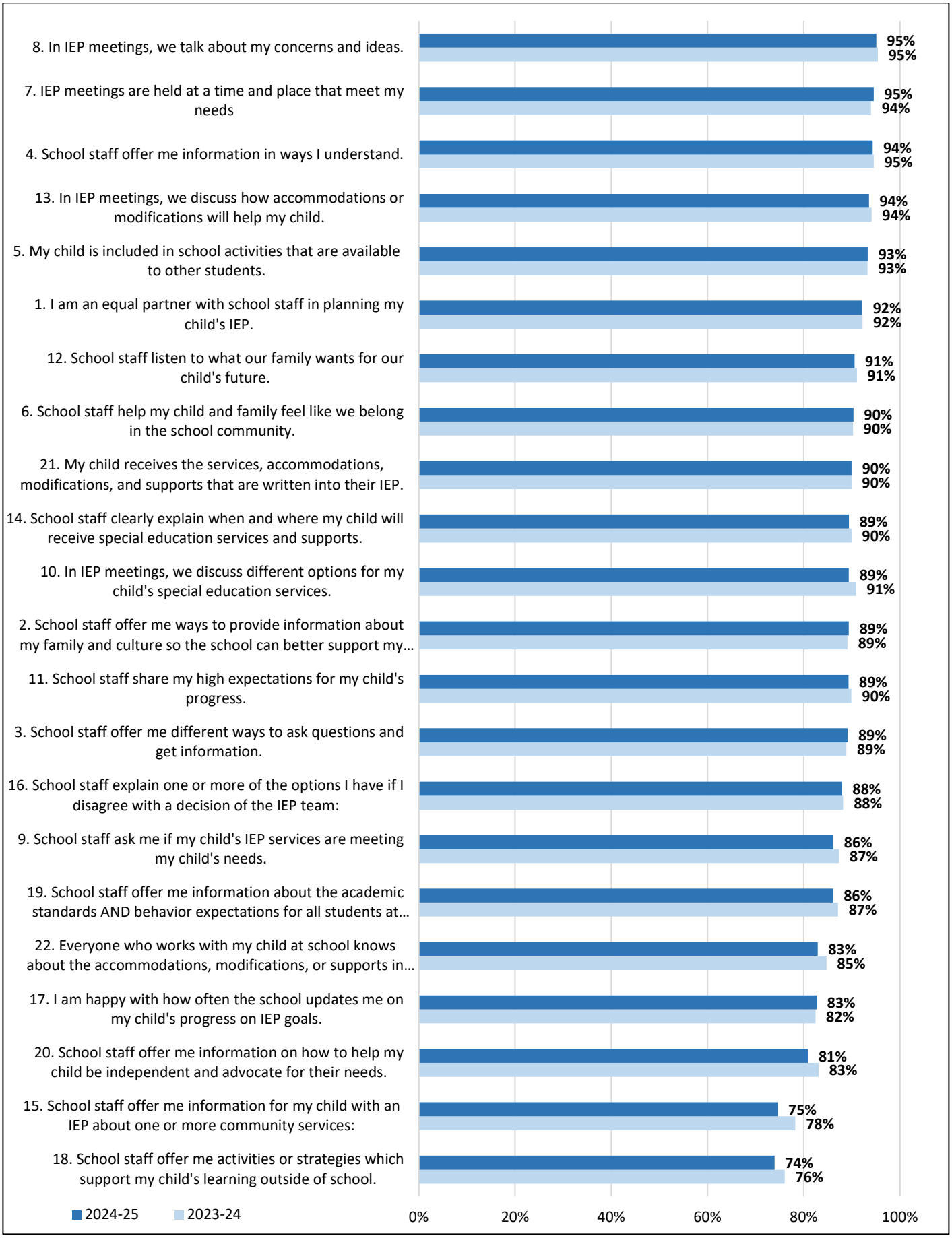
Item results were mostly consistent between 2023-24 and 2024-25. No item had an increase in its agreement level by more than .5 percentage points. Three items that decreased by over 2 percentage points:

- 15. School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services (percent agreeing decreased from 78.2% to 74.6%).
- 18. School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school (percent agreeing decreased from 76.1% to 73.9%).
- 20. School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs (percent agreeing decreased from 83.1% to 80.9%).

Display II.C-3: Percent Parents Who Agreed with a Given Question

		2023-24	2024-25
	Number of Respondents	***4,352***	***4,083***
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	92.2%	92.2%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	89.1%	89.4%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	88.9%	89.1%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	94.6%	94.3%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students. (field trips, class performances, sports, clubs, other extracurricular activities, etc.)	93.3%	93.3%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	90.2%	90.3%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs	94.0%	94.5%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	95.4%	95.1%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	87.3%	86.2%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	90.9%	89.4%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	89.9%	89.3%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, career, post-secondary education)	91.0%	90.5%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	94.1%	93.6%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	89.9%	89.4%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services.	78.2%	74.6%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team.	88.2%	87.9%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	82.4%	82.7%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	76.1%	73.9%
19	School staff offer me information about the academic standards AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's grade level.	87.1%	86.1%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	83.1%	80.9%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	89.9%	89.9%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	84.7%	82.9%

Display II.C-4: Percent Parents Who Agreed with a Given Question, Over Time



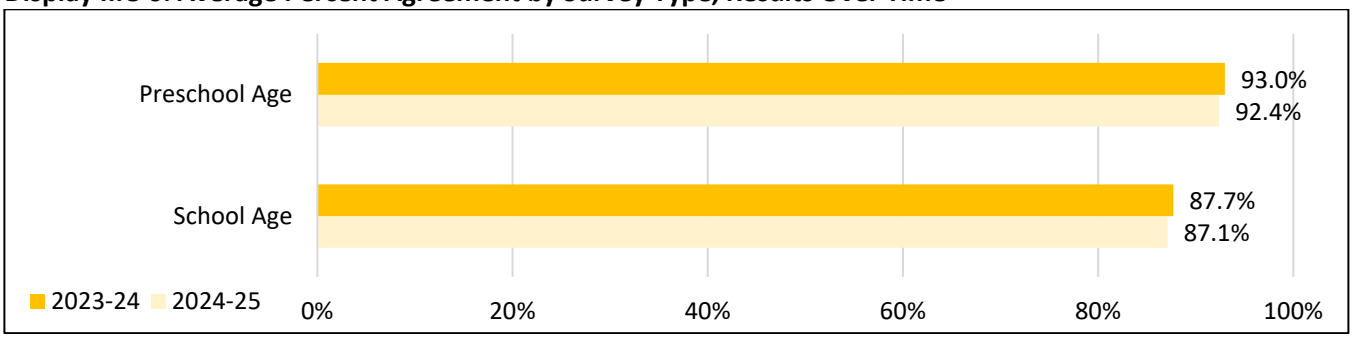
Average Percent Agreement by Subgroup

The results show that average agreement levels remained essentially unchanged from 2023-24 to 2024-25 for most subgroups with only minor variations among subgroups with smaller respondent counts.

Display II.C-5: Average Percent Agreement Across All Items by Survey Type, Over Time

	2023-24		2024-25	
	Overall N	Overall	Overall N	Overall
Preschool Age	811	93.0%	646	92.4%
School Age	3,541	87.7%	3,437	87.1%

Display II.C-6: Average Percent Agreement by Survey Type, Results Over Time

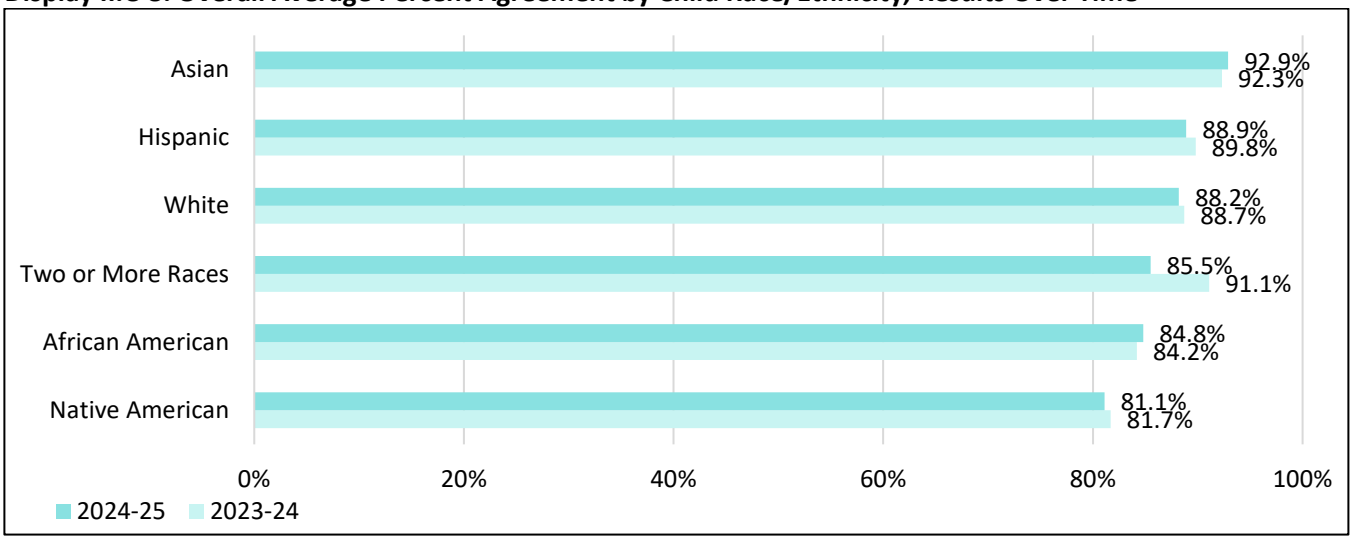


Display II.C-7: Average Percent Agreement by Child Race/Ethnicity, Results Over Time

	2023-24		2024-25	
	Overall N	Overall	Overall N	Overall
African American	292	84.2%	294	84.8%
Asian	73	92.3%	114	92.9%
Hispanic	474	89.8%	651	88.9%
Native American	32	81.7%	35	81.1%
Two or More Races	196	91.1%	259	85.5%
White	3,284	88.7%	2,726	88.2%

Note: Only those racial/ethnic groups based on 20 or more respondents are included.

Display II.C-8: Overall Average Percent Agreement by Child Race/Ethnicity, Results Over Time

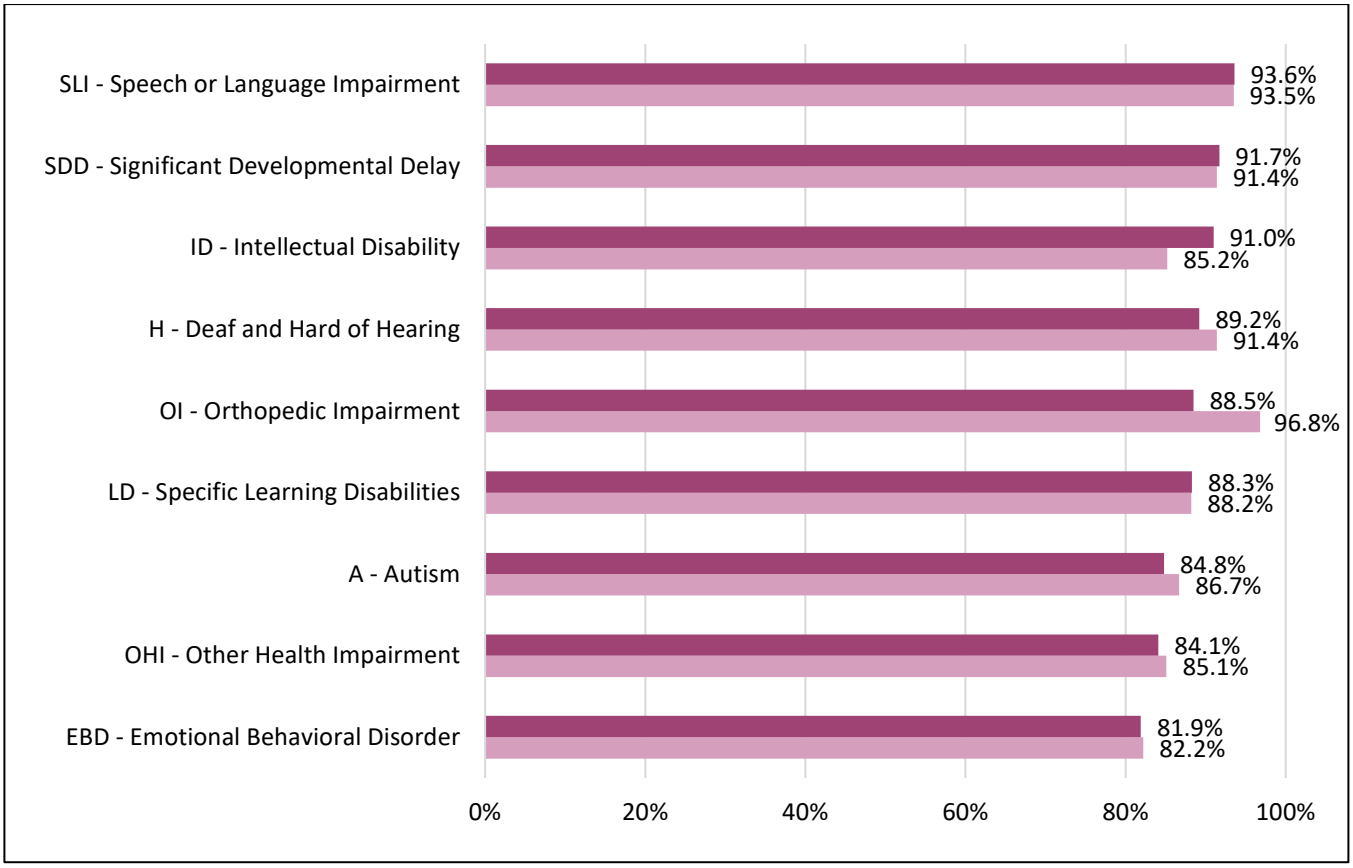


Display II.C-9: Average Percent Agreement by Child Primary Disability, Results Over Time

	2023-24		2024-25	
	Overall N	Overall	Overall N	Overall
A - Autism	607	86.7%	787	84.8%
EBD - Emotional Behavioral Disorder	233	82.2%	215	81.9%
H - Deaf and Hard of Hearing	60	91.4%	60	89.2%
ID - Intellectual Disability	150	85.2%	151	91.0%
LD - Specific Learning Disabilities	750	88.2%	609	88.3%
OHI - Other Health Impairment	941	85.1%	903	84.1%
OI - Orthopedic Impairment	26	96.8%	24	88.5%
SDD - Significant Developmental Delay	439	91.4%	346	91.7%
SLI - Speech or Language Impairment	1,131	93.5%	956	93.6%

Note: Only those primary disability groups based on 20 or more respondents are included.

Display II.C-10: Overall Average Percent Agreement by Child Primary Disability, Results Over Time



D. Potential Focus Areas of Improvement Surrounding Closed-Ended Items

1. **Examine the five lowest scoring items** and determine if action could be taken to improve family satisfaction.

2. **Examine the three items with a decrease in satisfaction** and determine if action could be taken to improve family satisfaction.

3. **Determine if additional efforts need to be targeted** toward school-age parents and families of students with emotional behavioral disabilities.

4. **Consider the stability of the results.** While the overall 88% agreement rate has remained steady across years, suggesting system stability and consistent performance, this stability may also indicate a plateau in improvement. To sustain progress, continuous improvement efforts should focus on innovative approaches to persistent challenges.

Section III. Open-Ended Responses

A. Categories and Themes

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked two open-ended questions:

- *"What is the best thing about the special education services your child received this school year?"* and
- *"What is something that the school could improve surrounding the special education services your child received this school year?"*

Each question was accompanied by a checklist of 13 categories (see Display III.A-1) that respondents could select to indicate the areas their comments addressed.

Responses were analyzed in three steps. First, the categories selected by respondents were tabulated. Second, the open-ended comments were coded using these same 13 categories as themes. Finally, the number of comments associated with each theme was tallied.

The following display provides a description of each category based on the open-ended comments respondents wrote surrounding each category.

Display III.A-1

13 Categories/ Themes	Positive Description	Negative Description
Accommodations and Support	Schools effectively implement IEP accommodations and provide individualized support that enables students to access instruction and achieve academic success, with staff demonstrating flexibility and creativity in meeting diverse learning needs.	IEP accommodations are inconsistently implemented across classrooms, with staff either unaware of required supports or refusing to provide them, resulting in students not receiving legally mandated services.
Behavior and Disability-Related Needs	Staff demonstrate understanding of disability-related behaviors and implement appropriate strategies and supports that help students develop self-regulation skills and succeed in the classroom environment.	Schools misinterpret disability-related behaviors as intentional misbehavior and lack sufficient training to understand and appropriately support students with autism, ADHD, and other conditions.
Community and Non-School Services	Schools provide families with information about community resources and collaborate with outside service providers to support students' needs beyond the school setting.	Families receive minimal information from schools about available community resources, therapy services, extracurricular activities, and support organizations that could benefit their children outside of school hours.
Diversity and Inclusion	Schools create welcoming, inclusive environments where students with disabilities are valued members of the classroom community and have meaningful opportunities to interact with general education peers.	Students with disabilities experience social isolation and segregation from general education peers, with inadequate efforts to address bullying and promote acceptance and understanding of diverse learning needs.
General Comments	Families express overall satisfaction and gratitude for special education services, praising the dedication of staff and the positive impact on their children's academic, social, and emotional development.	Responses reflect wide variation in service quality, ranging from expressions of deep gratitude for dedicated staff to accounts of systemic failures, discrimination, and significant harm caused by inadequate special education services.
Home-School Communication	Schools maintain regular, open communication with families through multiple channels, keeping them informed about student progress, challenges, and daily activities in a timely and responsive manner.	Communication between schools and families is inconsistent, infrequent, and reactive rather than proactive, leaving families without regular updates about daily activities, progress, and concerns.

13 Categories/ Themes	Positive Description	Negative Description
IEP Development and Implementation	IEP teams work collaboratively with families to develop meaningful, individualized plans with clear goals and appropriate services that are consistently implemented throughout the school year.	IEP meetings often feel rushed and predetermined with minimal consideration of family input, and agreed-upon services are frequently not implemented as written in the plan.
Learning Environment and Inclusion	Students with disabilities are integrated into general education settings with appropriate supports while also receiving specialized instruction, creating positive learning experiences where they feel comfortable and valued.	Students are isolated in separate settings or placed in general education without adequate support, while also facing unsafe or unsupportive classroom environments where their needs are not accommodated.
Planning for Life After High School	Schools provide transition planning and information about post-secondary options, vocational training, and community resources to prepare students for life after graduation.	Transition planning is inadequate and starts too late, lacking concrete guidance about post-secondary education, employment, vocational training, and independent living skills.
Progress Toward Goals	Students make measurable progress toward IEP goals through effective interventions and specialized instruction, with growth being documented and communicated to families.	Families receive vague, infrequent updates about student progress toward IEP goals without meaningful data or specific examples, and goals are often lowered rather than interventions intensified.
School Staff Support	Special education teachers, paraprofessionals, therapists, and administrators demonstrate genuine care for students, build strong relationships, and go above and beyond to ensure student success and wellbeing.	General education teachers and support staff lack awareness of IEP accommodations and training in disability-specific needs, while high turnover and understaffing result in inconsistent service delivery.
Transitions Between Grades or Schools	Schools facilitate smooth transitions between grade levels and buildings through advance planning, effective communication, and continuity of services and relationships.	Transitions are poorly managed with insufficient advance preparation and lack of communication between sending and receiving staff, requiring families to re-educate new teachers each year about their child's needs.
Other	This category captures miscellaneous positive feedback including appreciation for specific programs, staff members, and services that support student growth and family engagement.	This category includes diverse concerns such as technical issues with service delivery, requests for specific equipment or programs, and many expressions of complete satisfaction with no suggestions for improvement.

B. Overall Results

Respondents were asked to identify the **best aspects** ("Positive" categories) and **areas for improvement** ("Negative" categories) related to their child's special education services. After selecting the applicable categories, respondents could provide written comments to elaborate on their selections. In some cases, the comments did not align with the categories checked. Therefore, all comments were reviewed and recoded into one of the 13 established categories to ensure consistency in thematic analysis.

Category and Theme Analysis

- Of the 4,083 respondents who completed the survey, 3,059 (75%) of the respondents checked a positive category regarding the best thing about special education services; 1,768 (43%) checked a negative category regarding how the school could improve special education services (see Displays III.B-1 and III.B-3).
    - Some respondents checked both a positive and negative category. See Displays III.B-5 and III.B-6 for a summary of the percentage of categories that were only positive, only negative, or both.
- Of the 4,083 respondents, 541 (13%) respondents wrote a positive comment, while 487 (12%) wrote a negative comment (see Displays III.B-2 and III.B-4).
    - Some respondents wrote both a positive and negative comment. See Displays III.B-7 and III.B-8 for a summary of the percentage of comments that were only positive, only negative, or both.

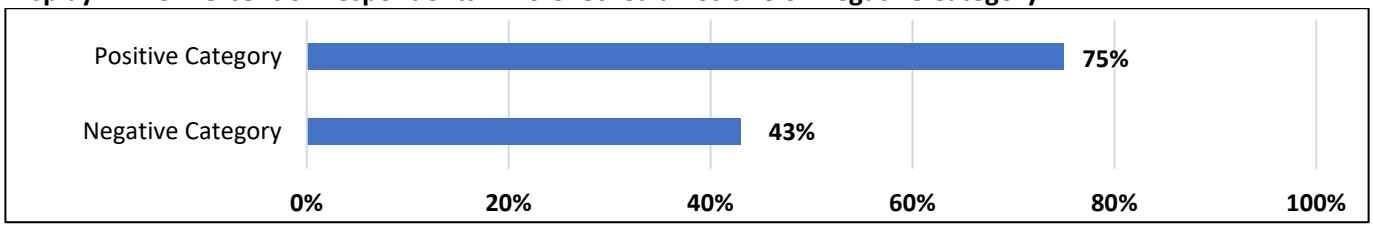
Display III.B-1: Table of Respondents Who Checked a Positive or Negative Category

	# Respondents	# Who Checked a Positive Category	% Who Checked a Positive Category	# Who Checked a Negative Category	% Who Checked a Negative Category
Overall	4,083	3,059	75%	1,768	43%

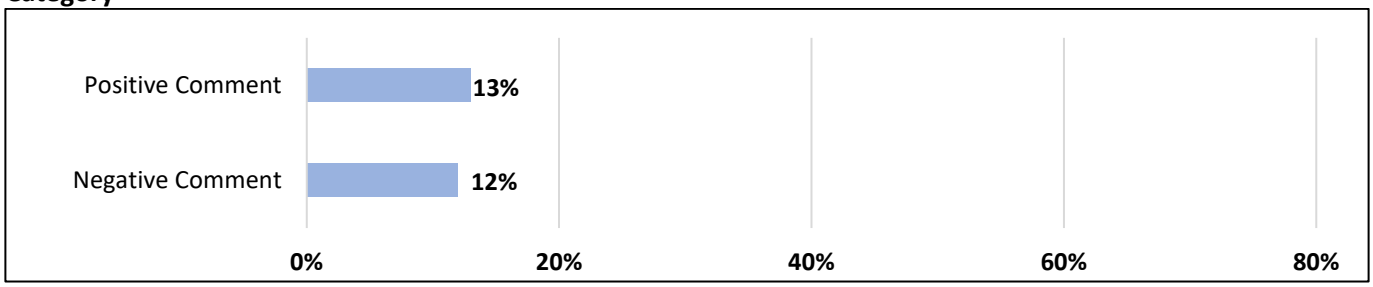
Display III.B-2: Table of Respondents Who Wrote a Positive or Negative Comment

	# Respondents	# Who Wrote a Positive Comment	% Who Wrote a Positive Comment	# Who Wrote a Negative Comment	% Who Wrote a Negative Comment
Overall	4,083	541	13%	487	12%

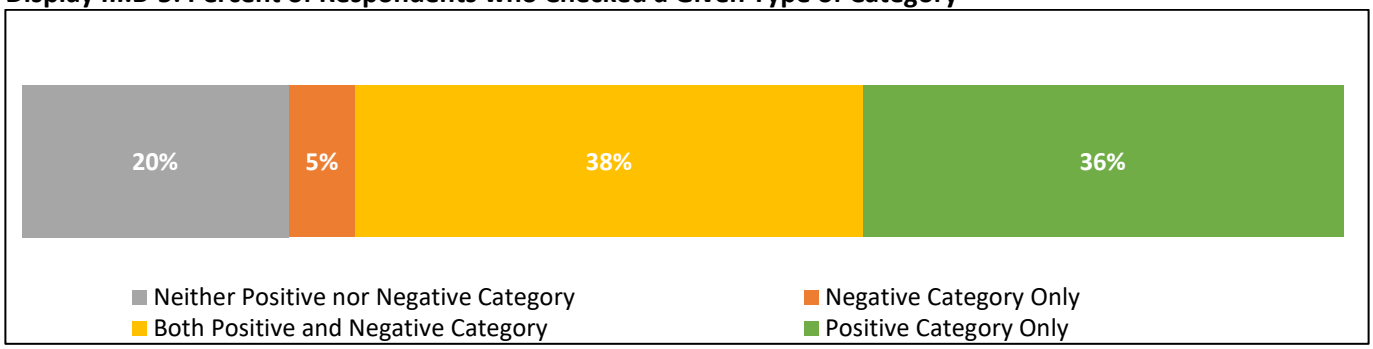
Display III.B-3: Percent of Respondents Who Checked a Positive or Negative Category



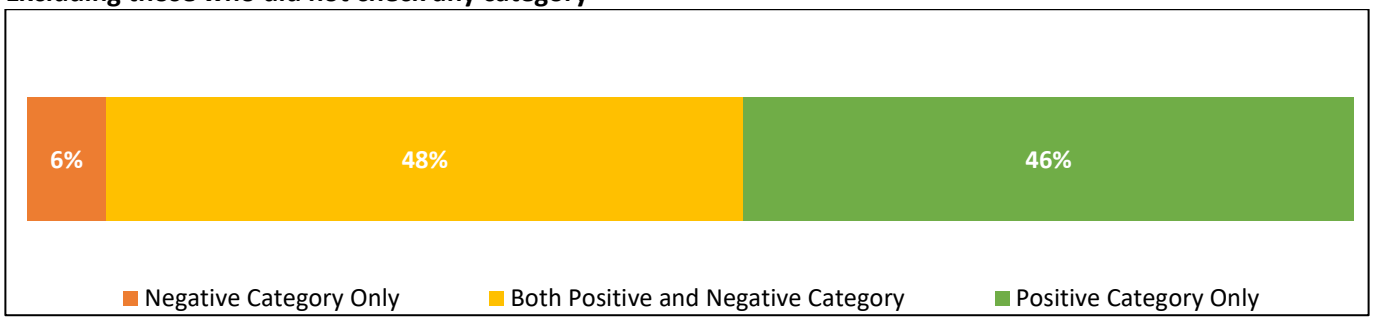
Display III.B-4: Percent of Respondents Who Wrote a Positive or Negative Comment for a Given Category



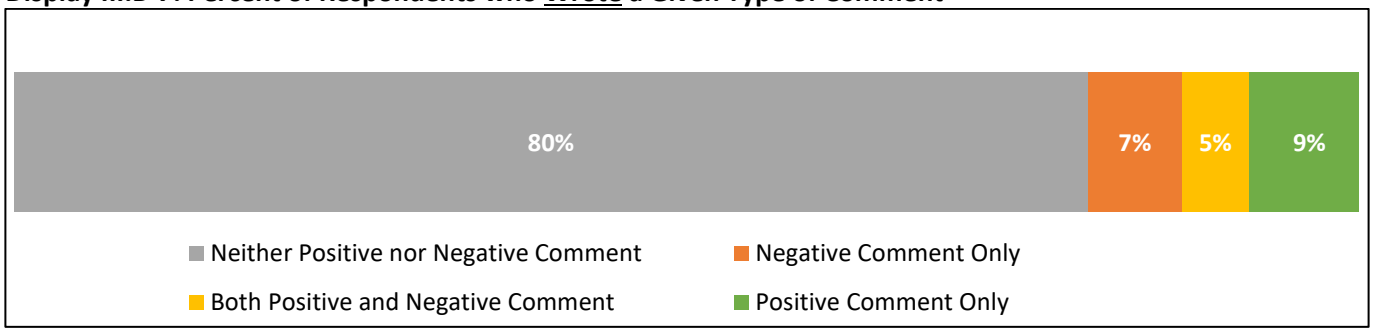
Display III.B-5: Percent of Respondents who Checked a Given Type of Category



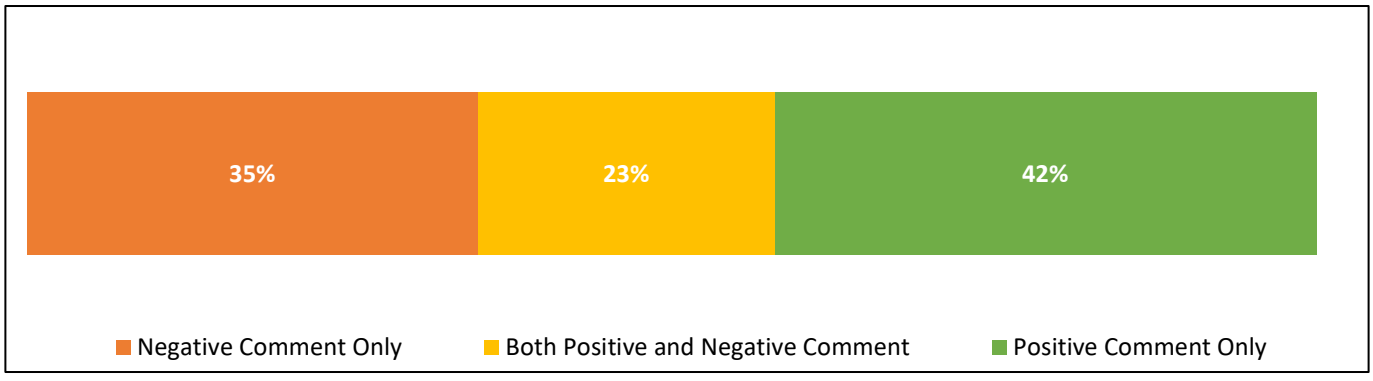
Display III.B-6: Percent of Respondents who Checked a Given Type of Category
Excluding those who did not check any category



Display III.B-7: Percent of Respondents who Wrote a Given Type of Comment



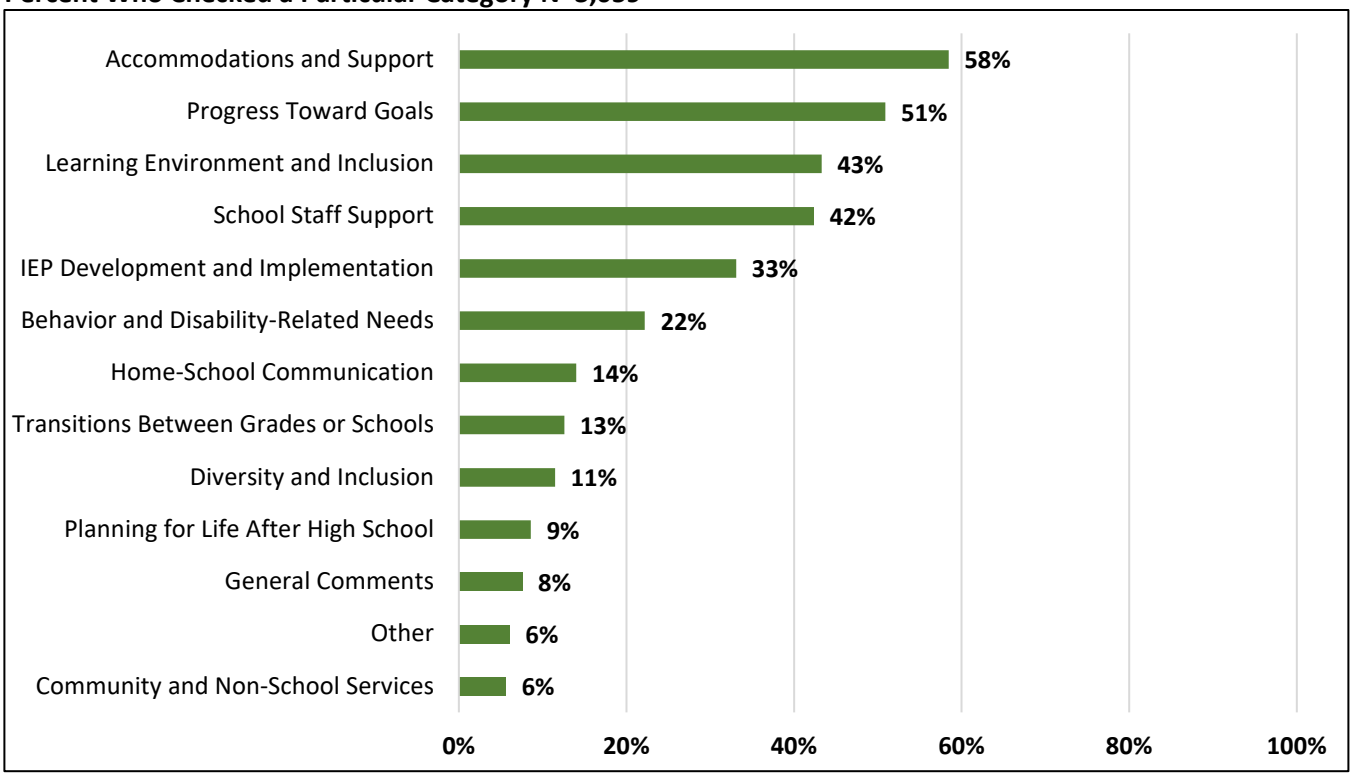
Display III.B-8: Percent of Respondents who Wrote a Given Type of Comment
Excluding those who did not write any comment



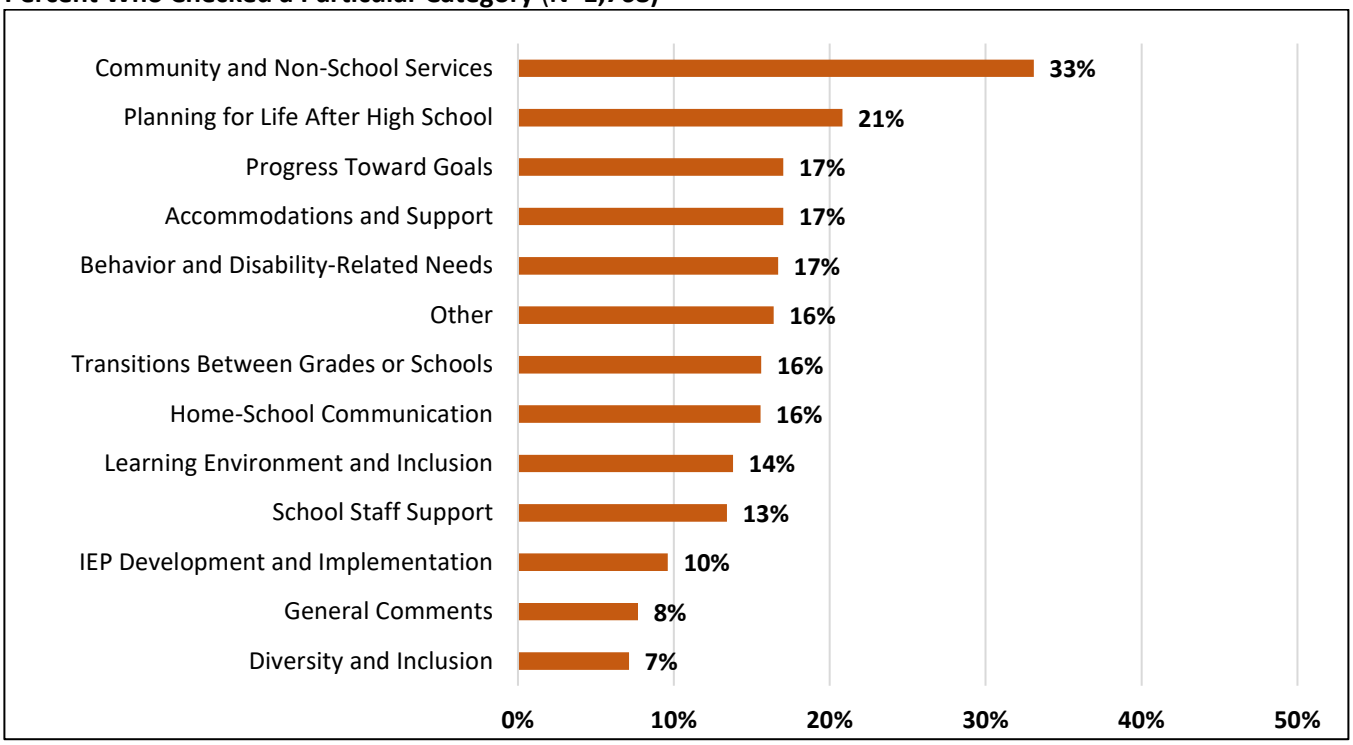
Positive and Negative Categories

- Displays III.B-9 and III.B-10 show the percentage of respondents who checked a given category among those respondents who checked at least one category.
- The most frequently checked **positive** categories:
    - Accommodations and Support (selected by 58%)
    - Progress Toward Goals (51%)
- The most frequently checked **negative** categories:
    - Community and Non-School Services (selected by 33%)
    - Planning for Life After High School (21%)
- The percentages are smaller for the negative categories than the positive categories because respondents who selected at least one positive category were more likely to select multiple categories than respondents who checked a negative category.
    - 67% of respondents who checked a positive category checked more than one positive category compared to only 41% of those who checked a negative category.
    - 24% of respondents who checked a positive category checked more than four positive categories compared to only 9% of those who checked a negative category.

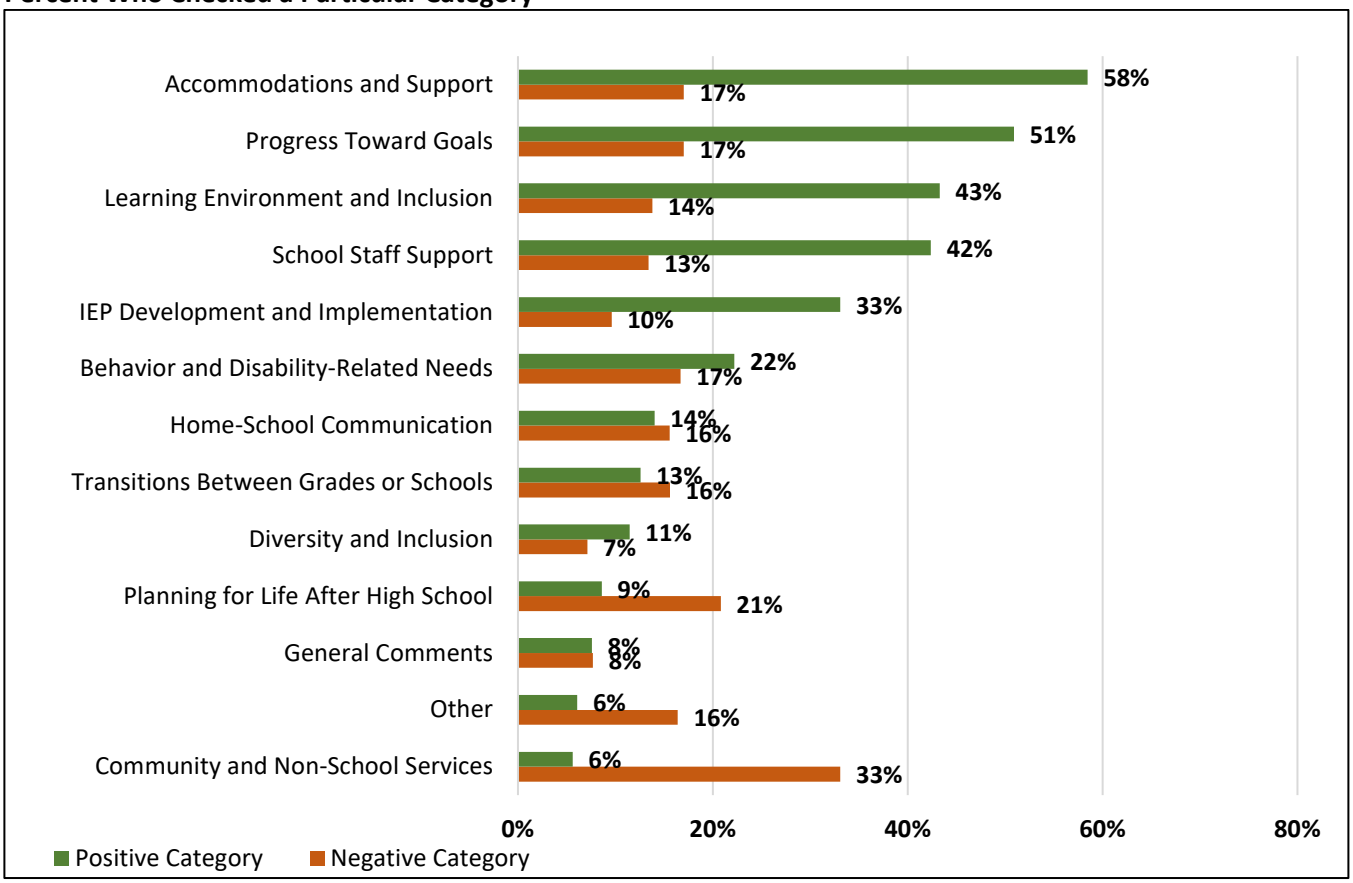
Display III.B-9: Positive Categories
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Positive Category*,
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category N=3,059



Display III.B-10: Negative Categories
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Negative Category*,
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category (N=1,768)



Display III.B-11: Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Positive/Negative Category*,
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category



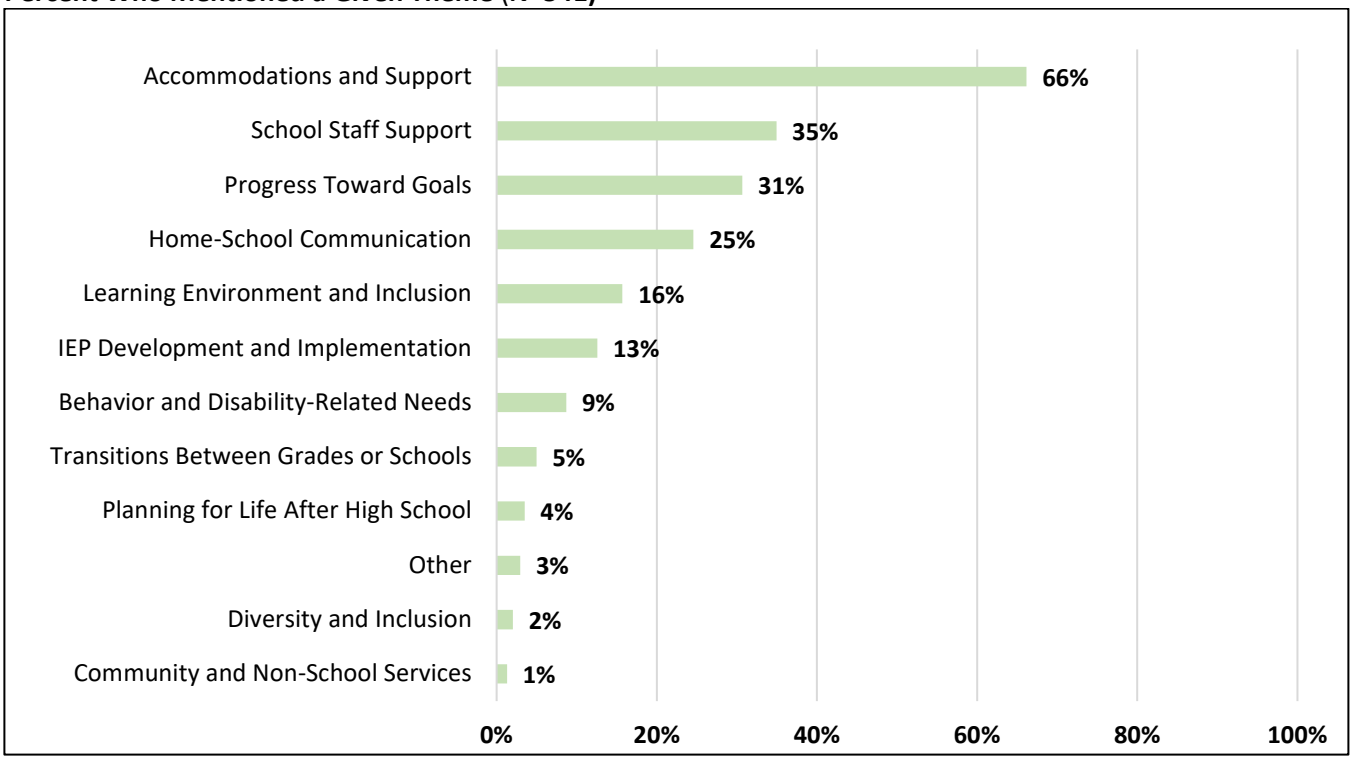
Positive and Negative Themes

- Displays III.B-12 and III.B-14 show the percentage of respondents who mentioned a particular theme among those who wrote a comment.

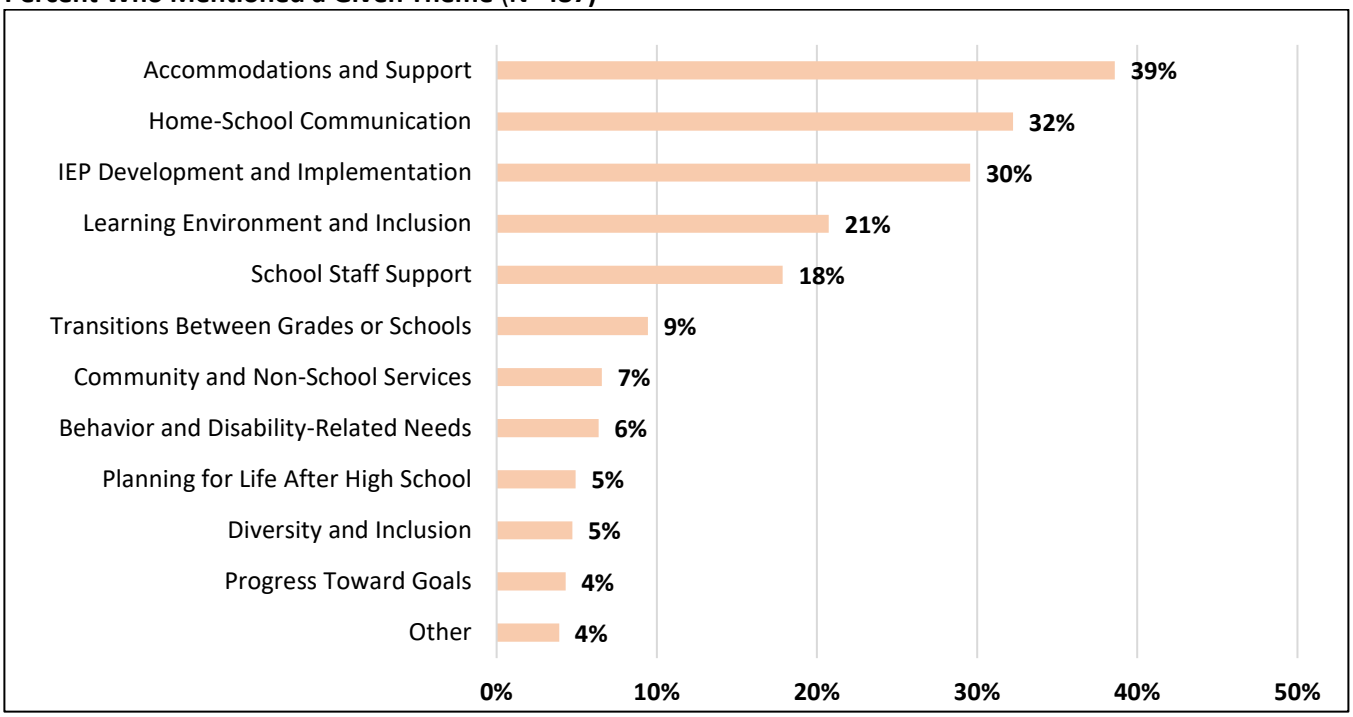
- The most frequently-mentioned **positive** themes:
  - **Accommodations and Support (mentioned by 66%)**
    - Synthesized example response: *"*My child's needs are recognized and supported through extended test taking, quiet spaces for learning and sensory breaks. This has been very beneficial for him to learn and succeed in a way that works for him."
  - **School Staff Support (mentioned by 35%)**
    - Synthesized example response: "The staff are very helpful and supportive. They are always available for questions and we have seen great progress with my child's IEP. Without this, I believe she would be far behind."

- The most frequently-mentioned **negative** themes:
  - **Accommodations and Support (mentioned by 39%)**
    - Synthesized example response: "Not all accommodations were followed per his IEP - his tests should have highlighted key words, small group setting for test taking. Not all teachers follow her IEP and offer things like preferential seating, Closed Captioning, etc. Some do, but it is definitely not all.*"*
  - **Home-School Communication (mentioned by 32%)**
    - Synthesized example response: "Most communication took a long time to get. If I had a concern, the special education teacher would typically take two weeks to respond. They would blame it on how much other work they had to do with IEPs or other children's behaviors.*"*

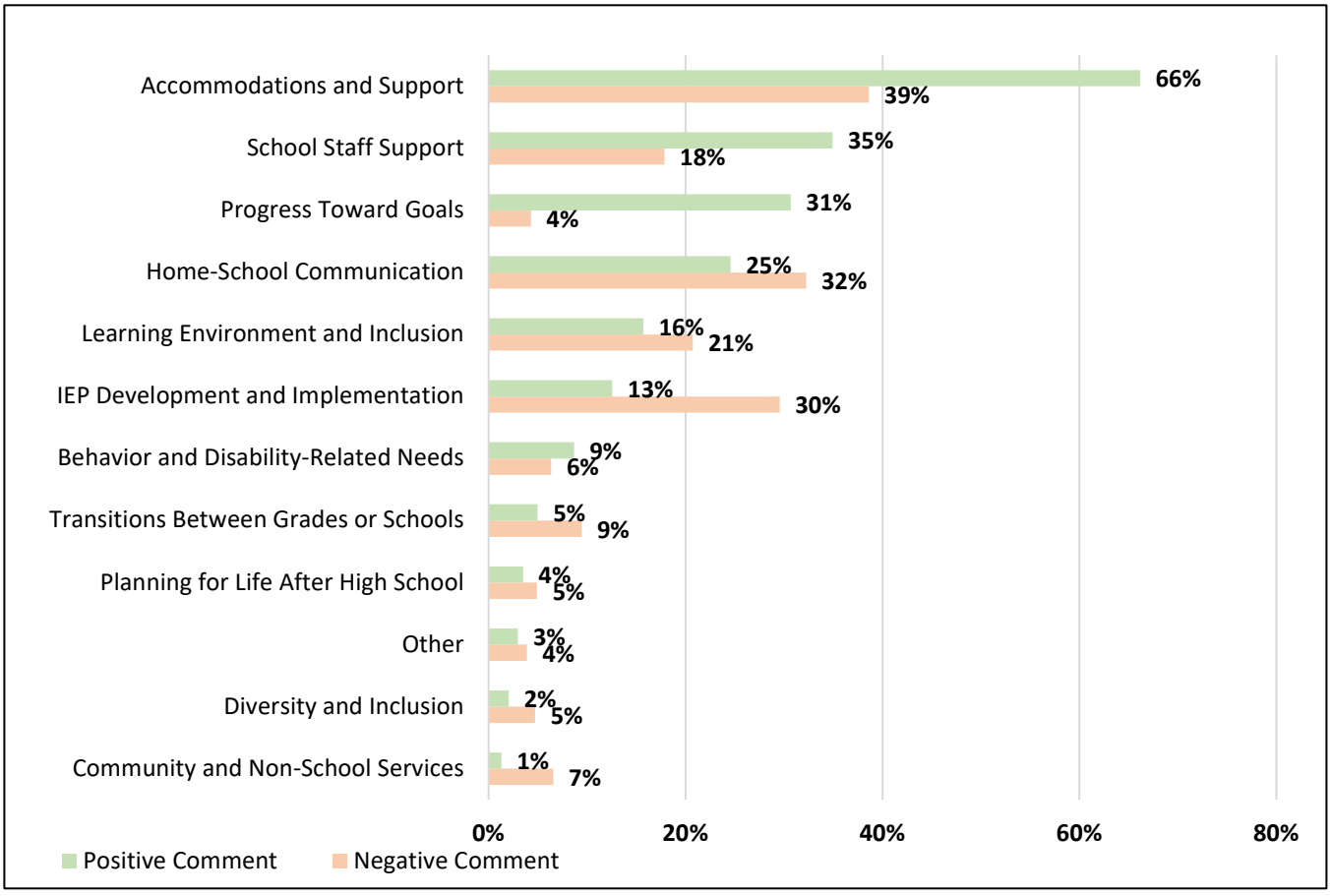
Display III.B-12: Positive Comments
Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Positive Comment*,
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme (N=541)



Display III.B-13: Negative Comments
Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Negative Comment*,
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme (N=487)



Display III.B-14: Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Positive/Negative Comment*,
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme



C. Results by Survey Type

Category and Theme Analysis

- Of the 4,083 respondents who completed the survey, 646 completed the preschool-aged survey and 3,437 completed the school-aged survey (see Displays III.C-1 and III.C-2).
    - Similar proportions of respondents of school-age (75%) and preschool-age (76%) children checked at least one positive category.
    - Fewer respondents checked a negative category overall, with 45% of respondents of school-age children and 35% of respondents or preschool children selecting at least one.
    - In both groups, respondents were about twice as likely to select a positive category as a negative one.
- A relatively small proportion of respondents wrote open-ended comments.
    - Positive comments: 15% of preschool respondents vs. 13% of school-age respondents.
    - Negative comments: 9% of preschool respondents vs. 13% of school-age respondents.
    - Thus, respondents or preschool children were slightly more likely than respondents of school-age children to write positive comments, while respondents of school-age children were more likely to write negative ones.

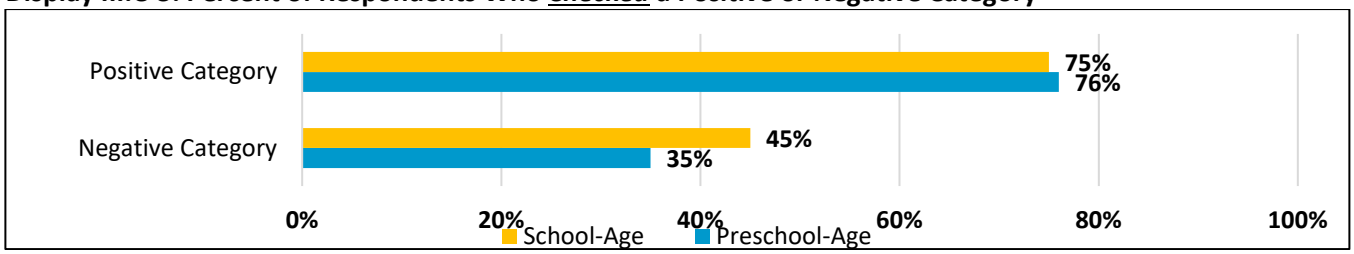
Display III.C-1: Table of Respondents Who *Checked* a Positive or Negative Category

	# Respondents	# Who Checked a Positive Category	% Who Checked a Positive Category	# Who Checked a Negative Category	% Who Checked a Negative Category
School-Age	3,437	2,566	75%	1,545	45%
Preschool-Age	646	493	76%	223	35%

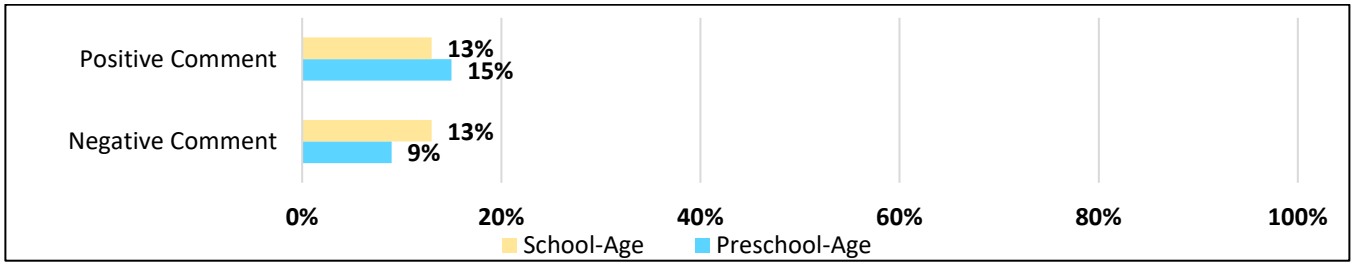
Display III.C-2: Table of Respondents Who *Wrote* a Positive or Negative Comment

	# Respondents	# Who Wrote a Positive Comment	% Who Wrote a Positive Comment	# Who Wrote a Negative Comment	% Who Wrote a Negative Comment
School-Age	3,437	446	13%	431	13%
Preschool-Age	646	95	15%	56	9%

Display III.C-3: Percent of Respondents Who *Checked* a Positive or Negative Category



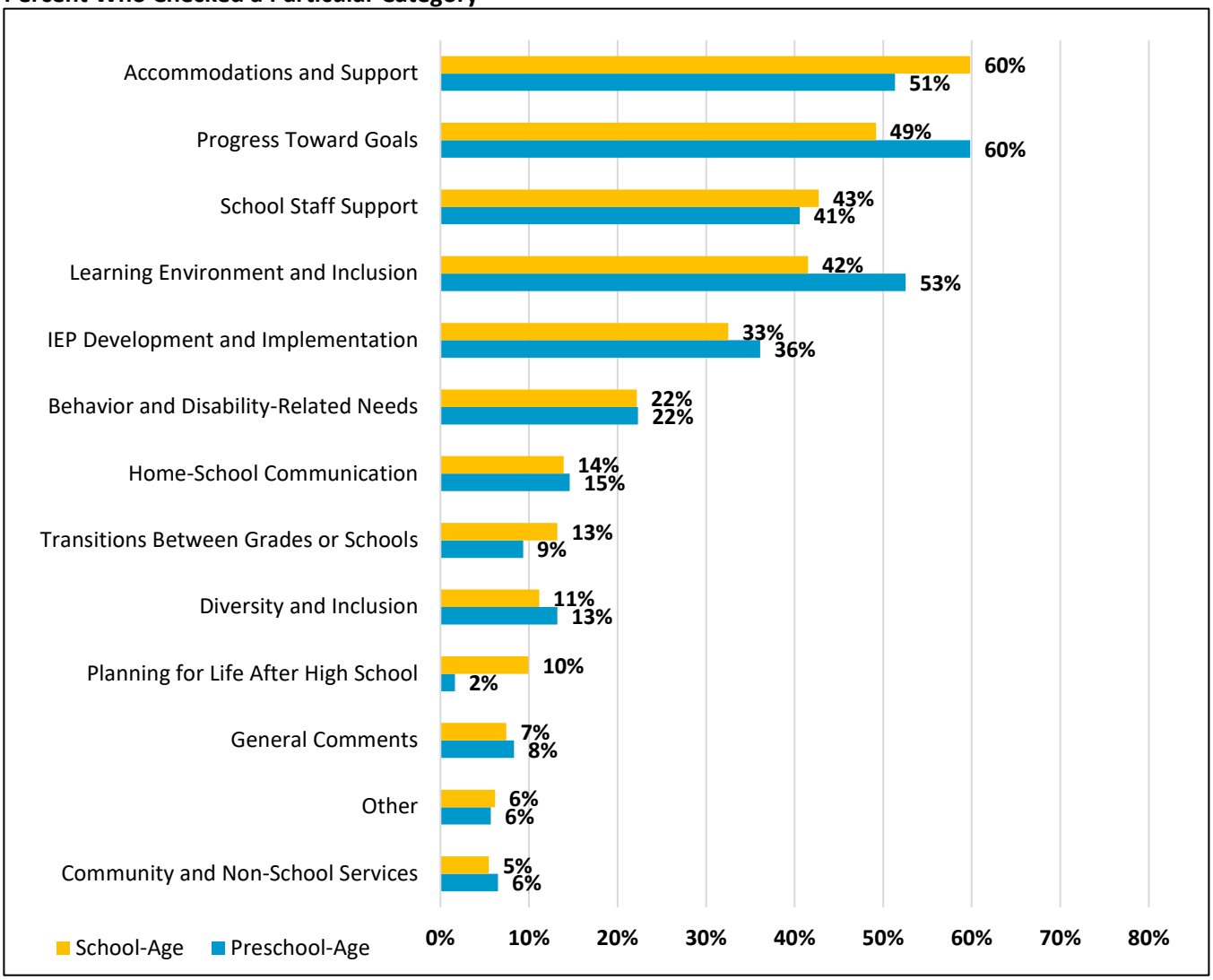
Display III.C-4: Percent of Respondents Who *Wrote* a Positive or Negative Comment



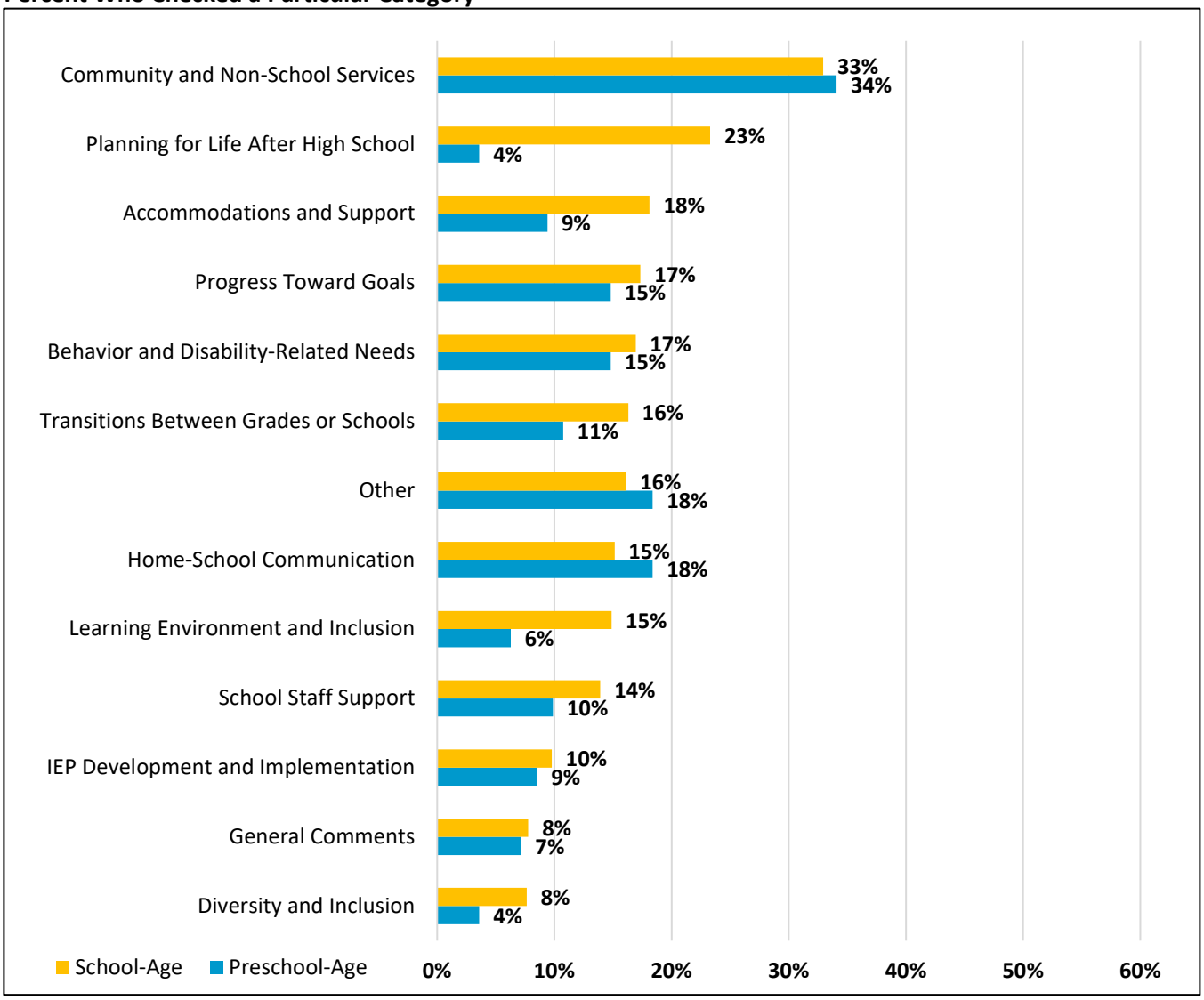
Positive and Negative Categories

- For the school-age groups, their most frequently-mentioned positive category was (see Display III.C-5):
  - Accommodations and Support (mentioned by 60% school-age and 51% preschool-age).
- For the preschool age groups, their most frequently mentioned positive category was:
  - Progress Toward Goals (mentioned by 49% school-age and 60% preschool-age).
- For both of these groups, their most frequently-mentioned negative category was (see Display III.C-6):
  - Community and Non-School Services (mentioned by 33% school-age and 34% preschool-age).

Display III.C-5: Positive Categories, By Survey Type
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Positive Category,*
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category



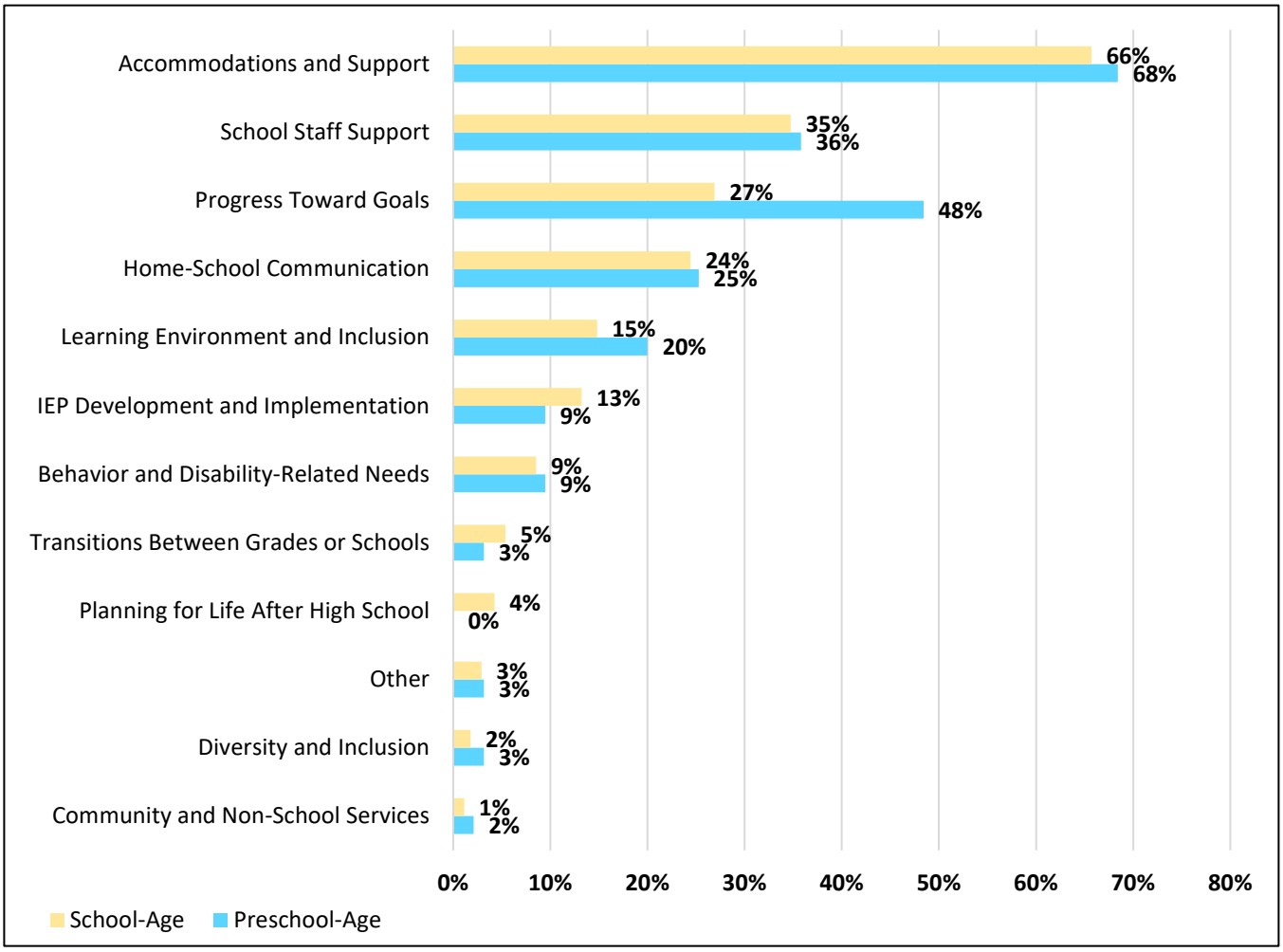
Display III.C-6: Negative Categories, By Survey Type
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Negative Category*
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category



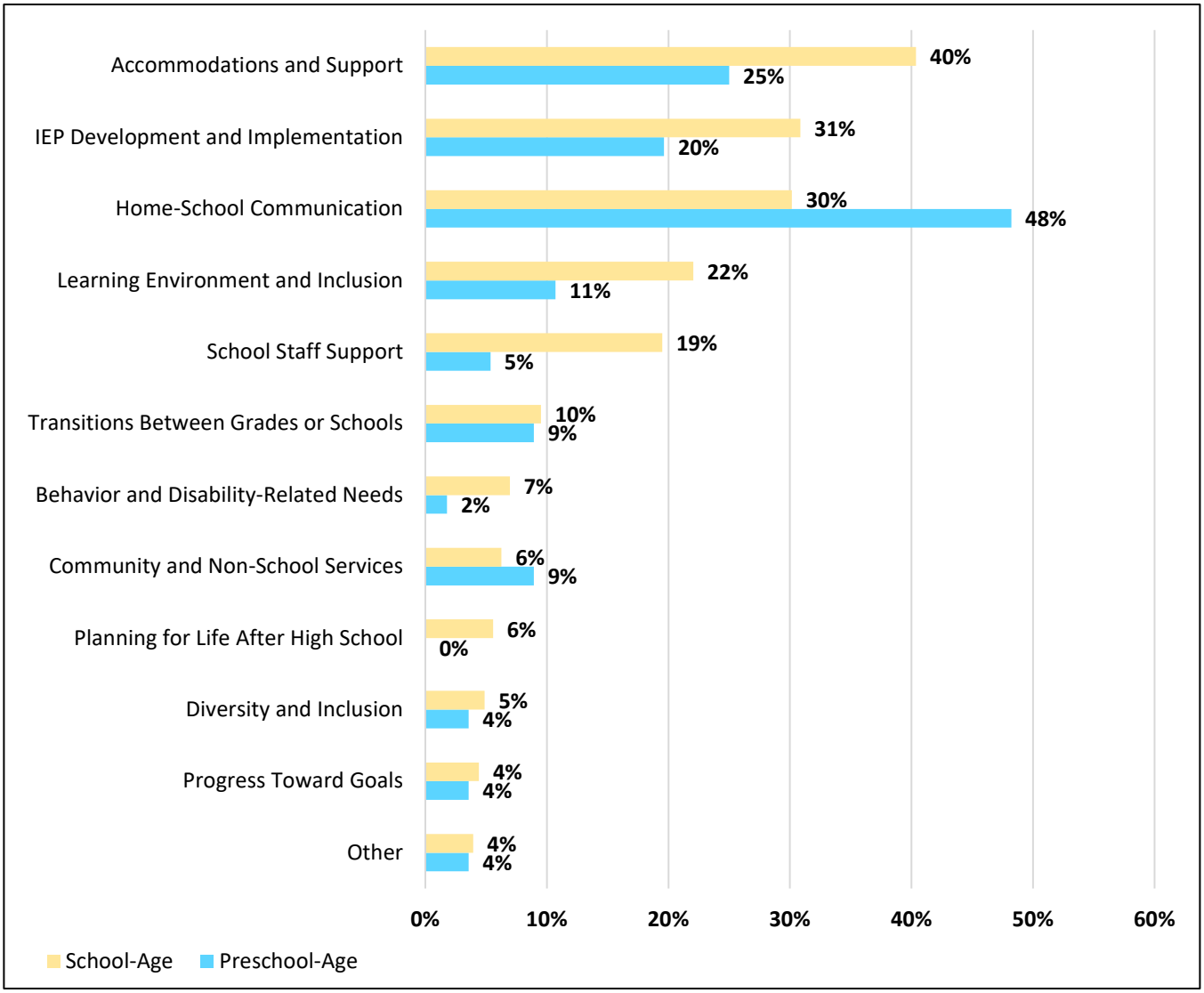
Positive and Negative Themes

- Generally, the positive themes mentioned by respondents of preschool-aged children are similar to those mentioned by respondents of school-age respondents.
    - Accommodations and Support (mentioned by 66% school-age and 48% preschool-age).
    - School Staff Support (mentioned by 38% school-age and 36% preschool-age).
- The positive themes with the largest differences:
    - Progress Toward Goals (22 percentage point difference; 27% school-age; 48% preschool-age).
    - Learning Environment and Inclusion (5 percentage point difference; 18% of school-age; 20% of preschool-age).
- School-age respondents expressed notably higher levels of concern than preschool respondents in several areas:
    - Accommodations and Support: 40% of school-age respondents vs. 25% of preschool respondents mentioned this as a concern.
    - IEP Development and Implementation: 31% vs. 20%
    - Learning Environment and Inclusion: 22% vs. 11%.
    - School Staff Support: 19% vs. 5%.
- Preschool respondents were more likely than school-age respondents to raise issues around:
    - Home-School Communication: 48% vs. 30%

Display III.C-7: Positive Comments, By Survey Type
Of those Respondents *Who Wrote a Positive Comment,*
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme



Display III.C-8: Negative Comments, By Survey Type
Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Negative Comment*,
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme



D. Results by Race/Ethnicity

Category and Theme Analysis

Respondents were asked to indicate the race/ethnicity of the child receiving special education services. The table below displays the number of respondents in each racial/ethnic group, along with the number and percentage who selected at least one category and/or provided a written comment in response to the open-ended questions (see Displays III.D-1 and III.D-2). *In subsequent discussions and charts, only those groups with at least 20 responses are included.*

- Across all racial/ethnic groups, roughly three-quarters of respondents selected at least one positive category, and about 40-50% selected a negative category.
- The percentage checking a positive category ranged from 71% (Native American) to 83% (Asian).
- The percentage checking a negative category ranged from 42% (White) to 48% (Two or More Races).
- Overall, respondents across racial/ethnic groups were more likely to identify positive aspects than negative aspects of their child's special education services than areas needing improvement.

Display III.D-1: Table of Respondents Who *Checked* a Positive or Negative Category

	# Respondents	# Who Checked a Positive Category	% Who Checked a Positive Category	# Who Checked a Negative Category	% Who Checked a Negative Category
African American	294	217	74%	138	47%
Asian	114	95	83%	50	44%
Hispanic	651	499	77%	287	44%
Native American	35	25	71%	16	46%
Pacific Islander	4	3	75%	1	25%
Two or More Races	259	188	73%	125	48%
White	2,726	2,032	75%	1,151	42%

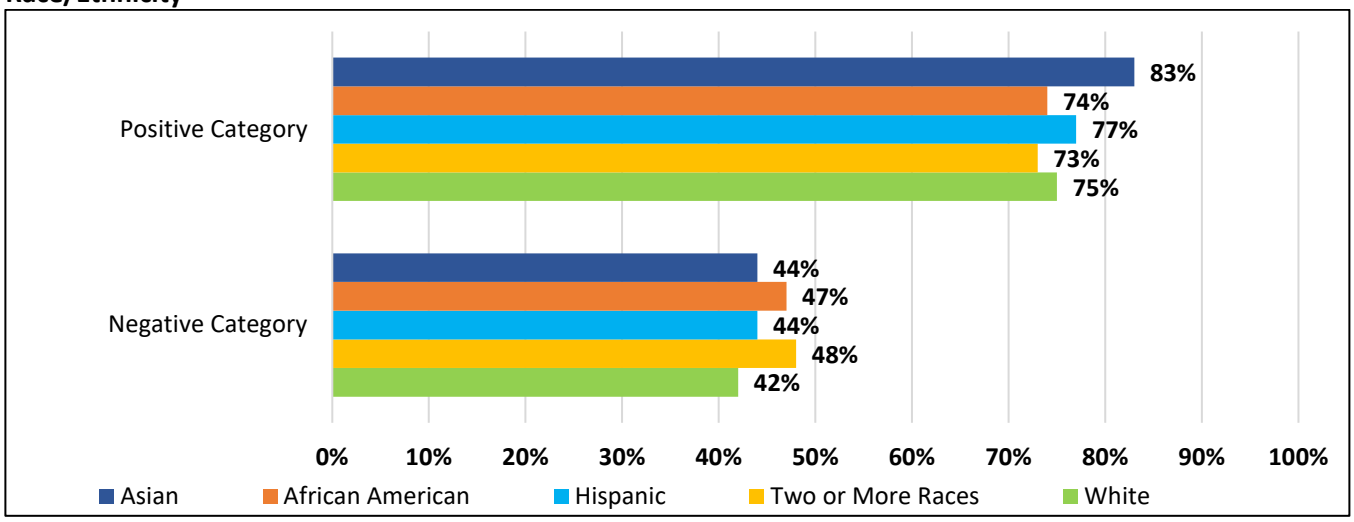
Overall, a relatively small proportion of respondents provided written comments compared to those who checked categories. Across racial/ethnic groups, about 4-15% wrote a positive comment and 6-14% wrote a negative comment.

- The highest rates of written comments were among White (15% positive; 13% negative) and Two or More Races (14% positive; 14% negative) respondents.
- The lowest rates occurred among Asian respondents (4% positive; 7% negative).
- Patterns were generally consistent across groups, with respondents from all racial/ethnic groups slightly more likely to write positive than negative comments.

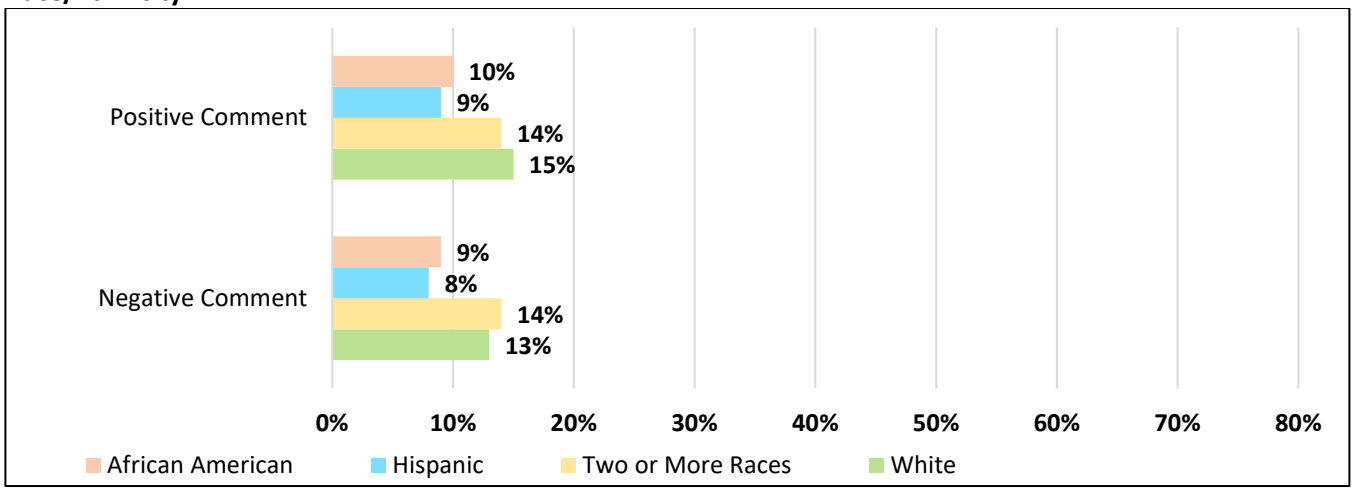
Display III.D-2: Table of Respondents Who *Wrote* a Positive or Negative Comment for a Given Category

	# Respondents	# Who Wrote a Positive Comment	% Who Wrote a Positive Comment	# Who Wrote a Negative Comment	% Who Wrote a Negative Comment
African American	294	28	10%	26	9%
Asian	114	5	4%	8	7%
Hispanic	651	61	9%	50	8%
Native American	35	3	9%	2	6%
Pacific Islander	4	1	25%	0	-
Two or More Races	259	35	14%	37	14%
White	2,726	408	15%	364	13%

Display III.D-3: Percent of Respondents Who *Checked* a Positive or Negative Category, By Child Race/Ethnicity



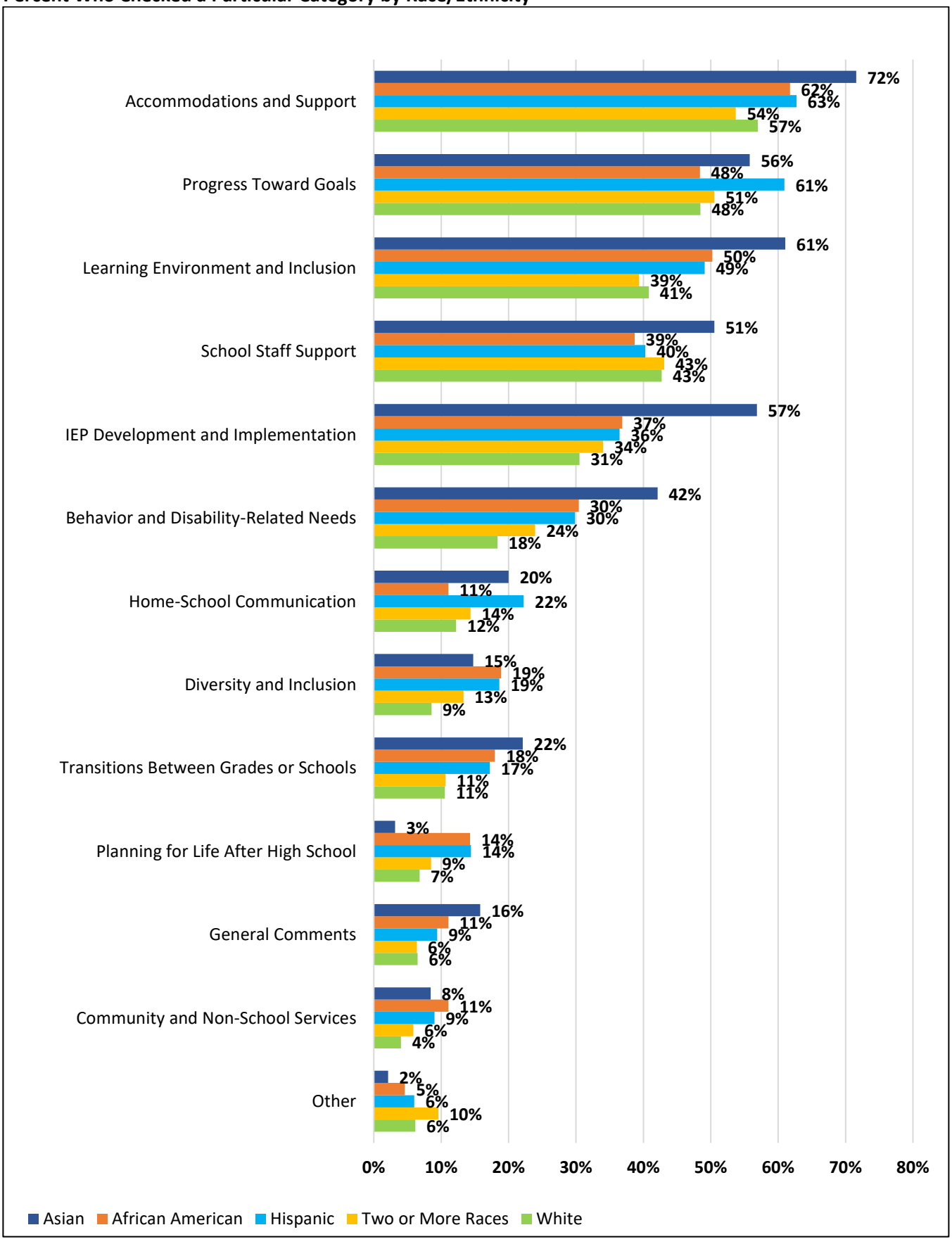
Display III.D-4: Percent of Respondents Who *Wrote* a Positive or Negative Comment, By Child Race/Ethnicity



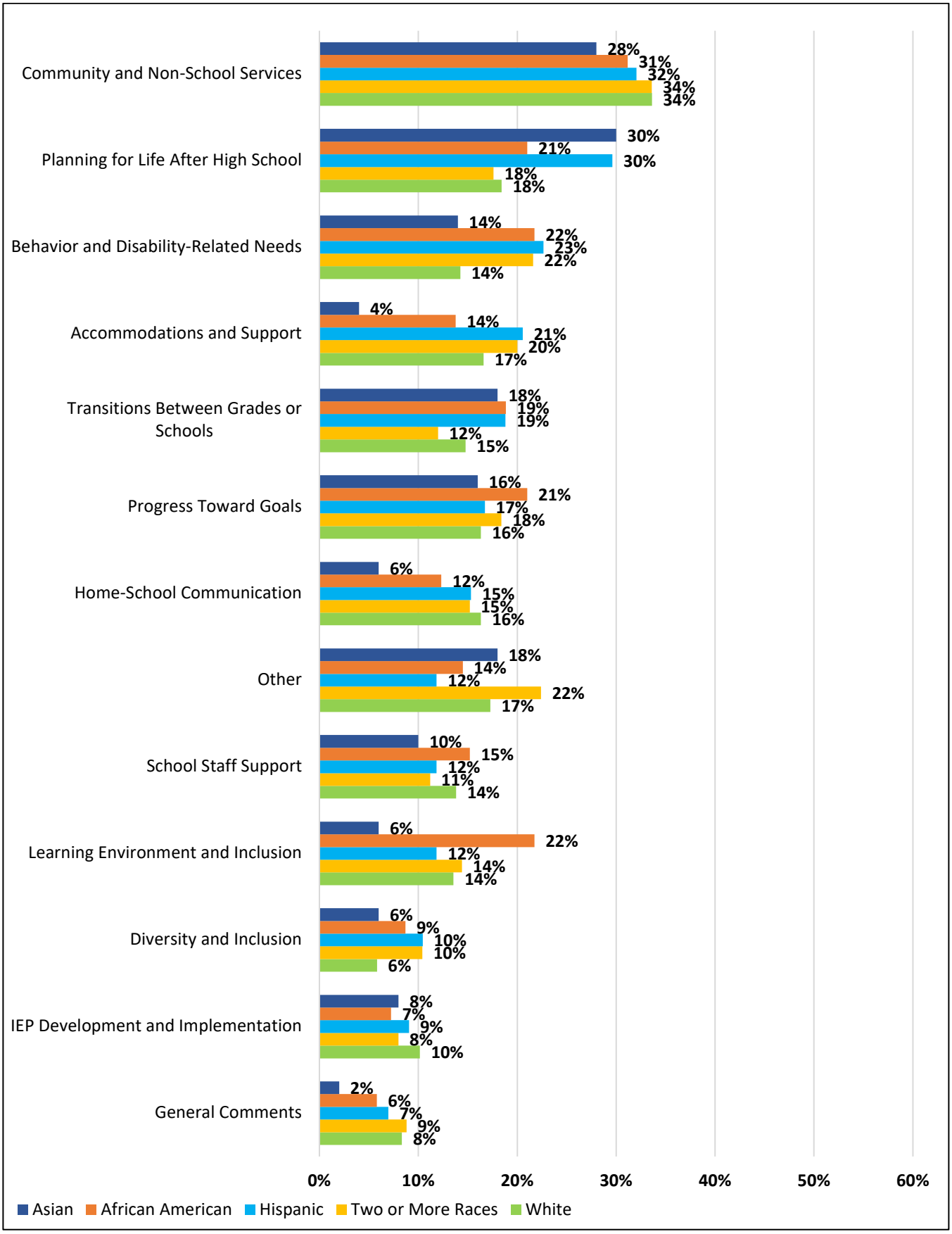
Categories

- For all racial/ethnic groups, the most-frequently checked positive categories:
  - Accommodations and Support (54-72% amongst the groups)
  - Progress Toward Goals (48-61% amongst the groups)
- For all racial/ethnic groups, the most-frequently checked negative categories:
  - Community and Non-School Services (28-34% amongst the groups).
  - Planning for Life After High School (18–30% amongst the groups).
- Respondents across all racial/ethnic groups share similar priorities, with greatest concern about access to community services and planning for postsecondary transitions.

Display III.D-5: Positive Categories
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Positive Category*,
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category by Race/Ethnicity



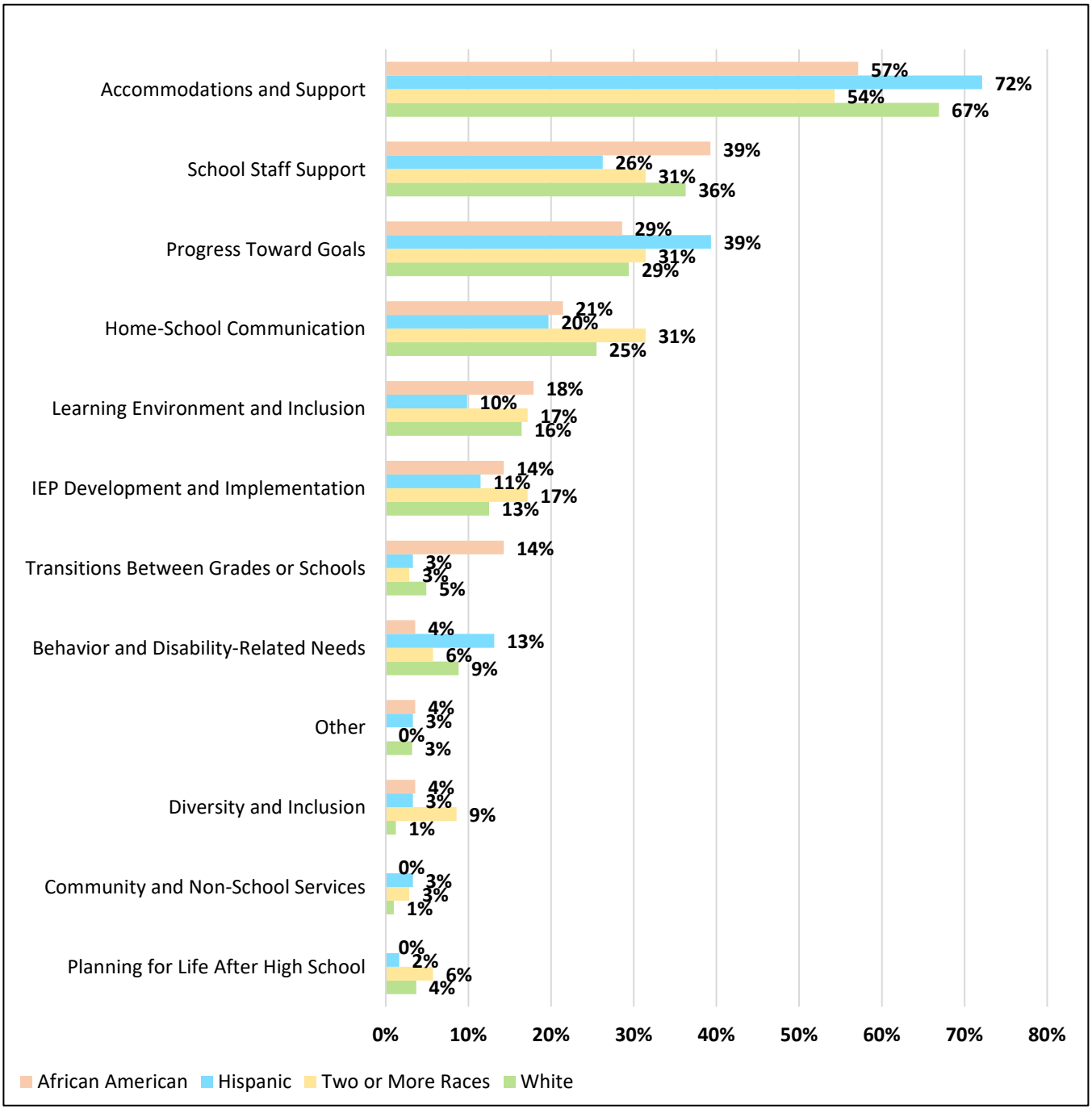
Display III.D-6: Negative Categories
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Negative Category*,
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category by Race/Ethnicity



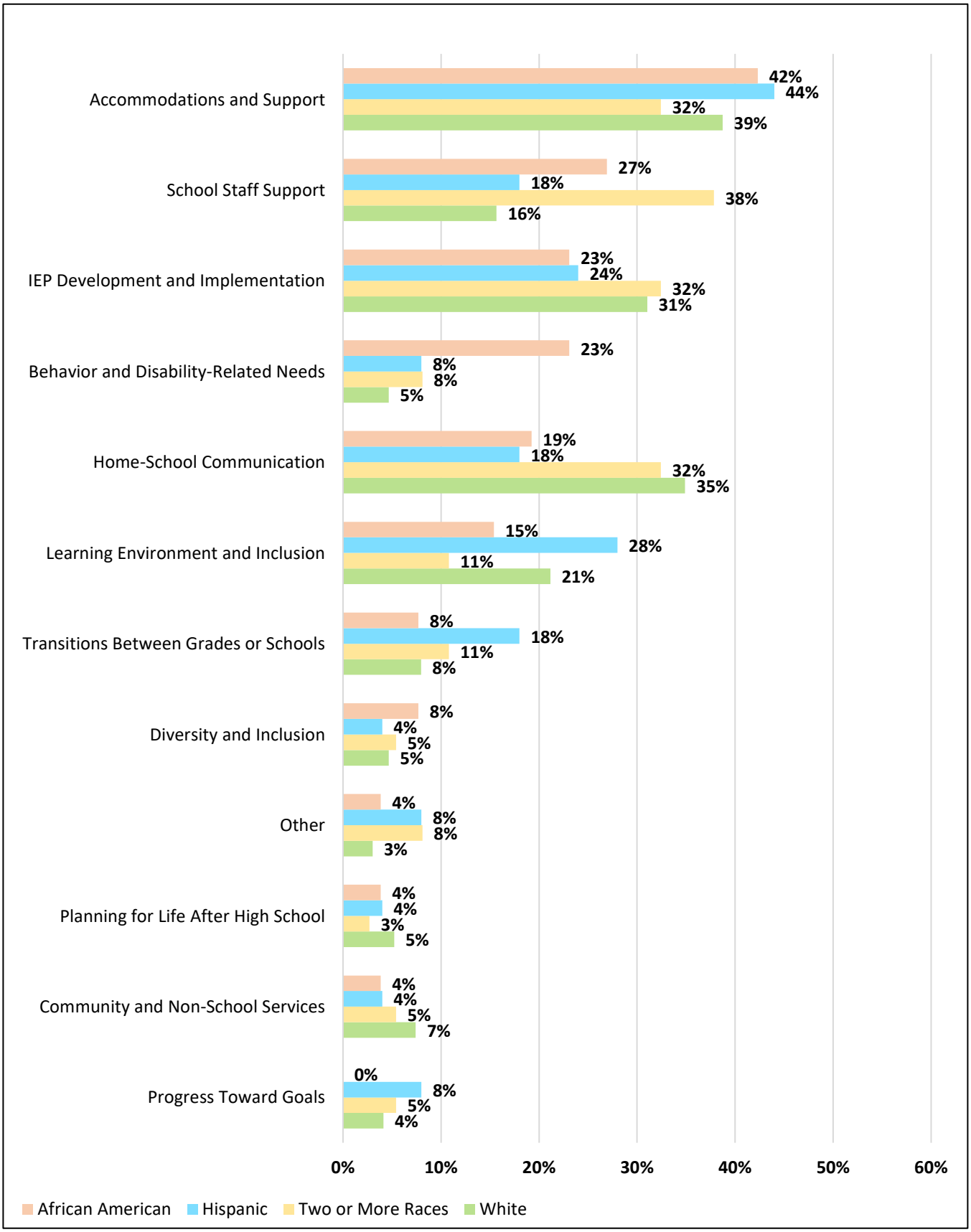
Themes

- For all racial/ethnic groups, the most-frequently mentioned positive themes:
  - Accommodations and Support (54-72% amongst the groups).
  - School Staff Support (26-39% amongst the groups)
- For all racial/ethnic groups, the most-frequently mentioned negative themes:
  - Community and Non-School Services (28–34% amongst the groups).
  - Planning for Life After High School (18-30% amongst the groups)

Display III.D-7: Positive Comments, By Race/Ethnicity
Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Positive Comment*,
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme



Display III.D-8: Negative Comments, By Race/Ethnicity
Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Negative Comment*,
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme



E. Results by Disability

Category and Theme Analysis

- Respondents were asked to indicate the primary disability of the child receiving special education services. The table below displays the number of respondents in each disability group, along with the number and percentage who selected at least one category and/or provided a written comment in response to the open-ended questions (see Displays III.E-1 and III.E-2). *In subsequent charts, only those groups with at least 20 responses are included.*
- Across disability categories, most respondents checked a positive category, though the proportion varied from about 70% to 82%.
- Highest positivity: Hearing Impairment (82%), Intellectual Disability (79%), Significant Developmental Delay (77%), and Autism (77%).
- Lowest positivity: Emotional/Behavioral Disability (70%) and Specific Learning Disability (73%).
- Negative responses were more variable, ranging from 27% (Speech/Language Impairment) to 53% (Autism).
- In short, most groups reflected generally positive feedback, but Autism and Other Health Impairment families showed relatively high levels of both positive and negative comments—indicating more mixed experiences.

Display III.E-1: Table of Respondents Who *Checked* a Positive or Negative Category

	# Respondents	# Who Checked a Positive Category	% Who Checked a Positive Category	# Who Checked a Negative Category	% Who Checked a Negative Category
Autism	787	604	77%	419	53%
Deaf-Blind	2	2	100%	2	100%
Emotional Behavioral Disability	215	151	70%	104	48%
Hearing Impairment	60	49	82%	30	50%
Intellectual Disability	151	119	79%	64	42%
Orthopedic Impairment	24	17	71%	10	42%
Other Health Impairment	903	676	75%	469	52%
Significant Developmental Delay	346	268	77%	133	38%
Specific Learning Disability	609	444	73%	261	43%
Speech or Language Impairment	956	702	73%	262	27%
Traumatic Brain Injury	10	8	80%	5	50%
Visual Impairment	20	19	95%	9	45%

Across disability categories, the percentage of parents who wrote a positive comment was consistently low (ranging only from 11% to 16%); and the percentage who wrote a negative comment was similarly low (6% to 16%).

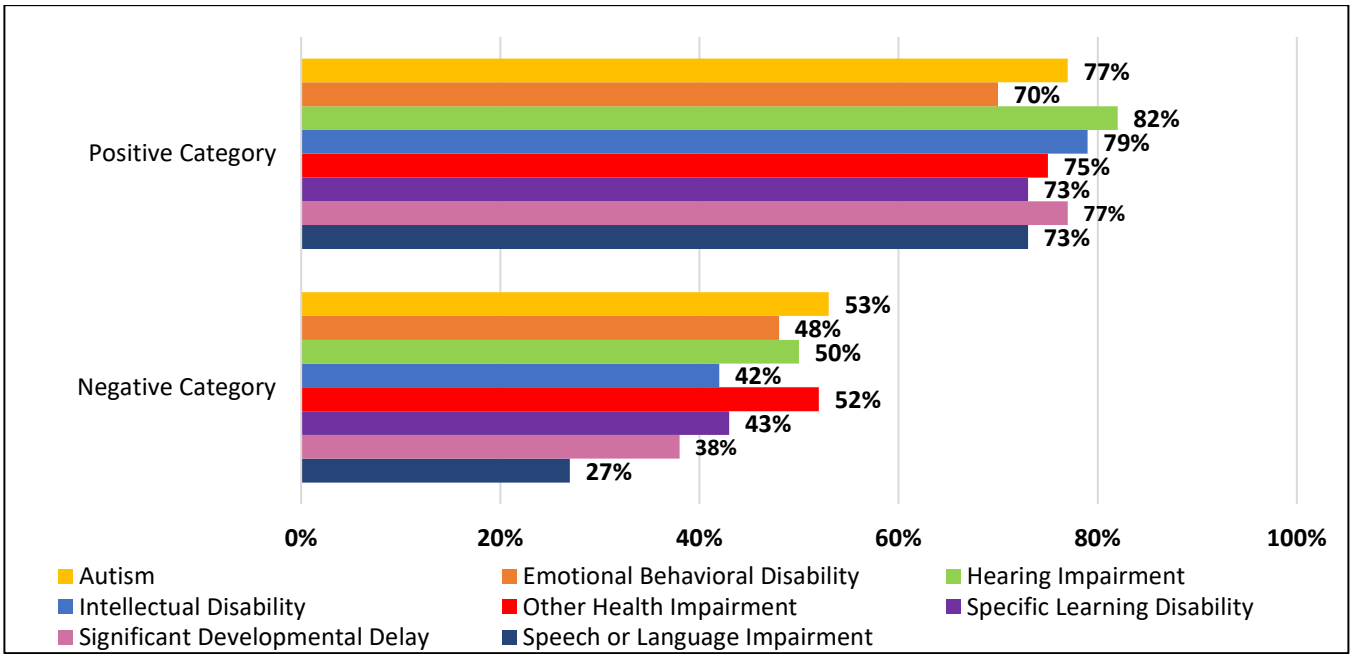
- Most positive commenting: Autism (16%) and Emotional/Behavioral Disability (15%).
- Least positive commenting: Speech/Language Impairment (11%) and Significant Developmental Delay (12%).
- Most negative commenting: Autism (16%) and EBD (15%).
- Least negative commenting: Speech/Language Impairment (6%) and Significant Developmental Delay (8%).

In short, parents across all disability groups rarely wrote open-ended comments, and when they did, the tone was mixed but relatively balanced. Autism and EBD families were slightly more expressive—both positively and negatively—while Speech/Language Impairment and SDD families were less likely to comment at all.

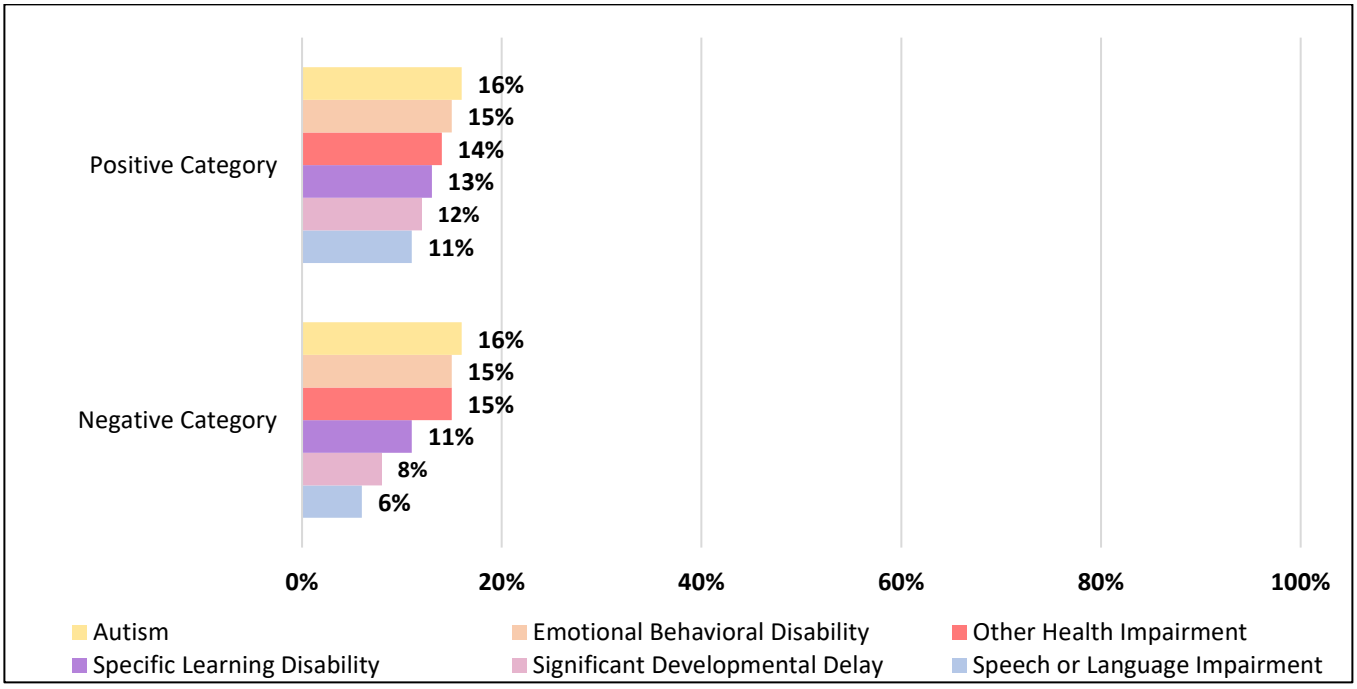
Display III.E-2: Table of Respondents Who *Wrote* a Positive or Negative Comment for a Given Category

	# Respondents	# Who Wrote a Positive Comment	% Who Wrote a Positive Comment	# Who Wrote a Negative Comment	% Who Wrote a Negative Comment
Autism	787	129	16%	127	16%
Deaf-Blind	2	1	50%	1	50%
Emotional Behavioral Disability	215	33	15%	33	15%
Hearing Impairment	60	9	15%	8	13%
Intellectual Disability	151	15	10%	21	14%
Orthopedic Impairment	24	4	17%	2	8%
Other Health Impairment	903	126	14%	131	15%
Significant Developmental Delay	346	41	12%	28	8%
Specific Learning Disability	609	78	13%	70	11%
Speech or Language Impairment	956	102	11%	62	6%
Traumatic Brain Injury	10	2	20%	2	20%
Visual Impairment	20	1	5%	2	10%

Display III.E-3: Percent of Respondents Who *Checked* a Positive or Negative Category



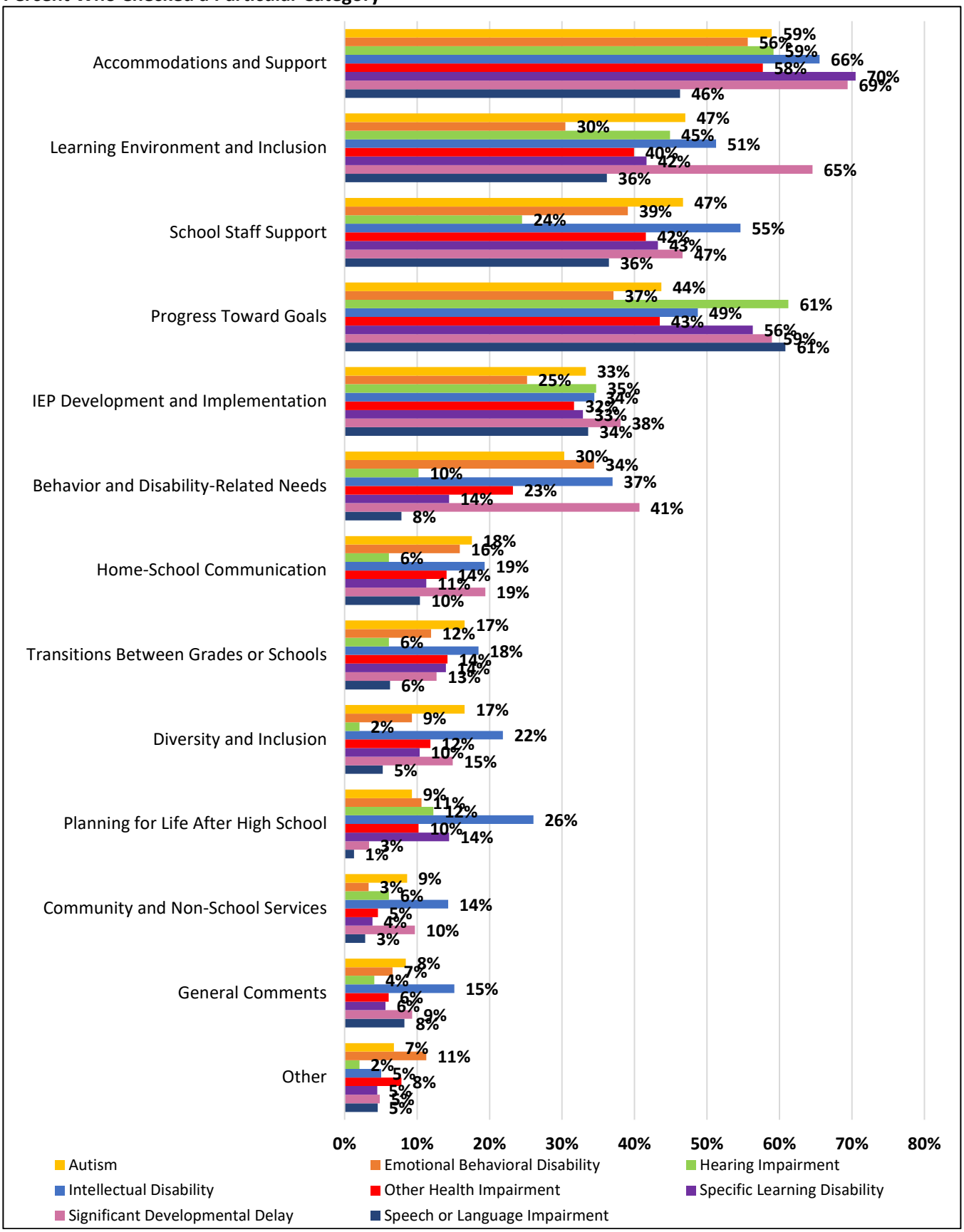
Display III.E-4: Percent of Respondents Who *Wrote* a Positive or Negative Comment for a Given Category



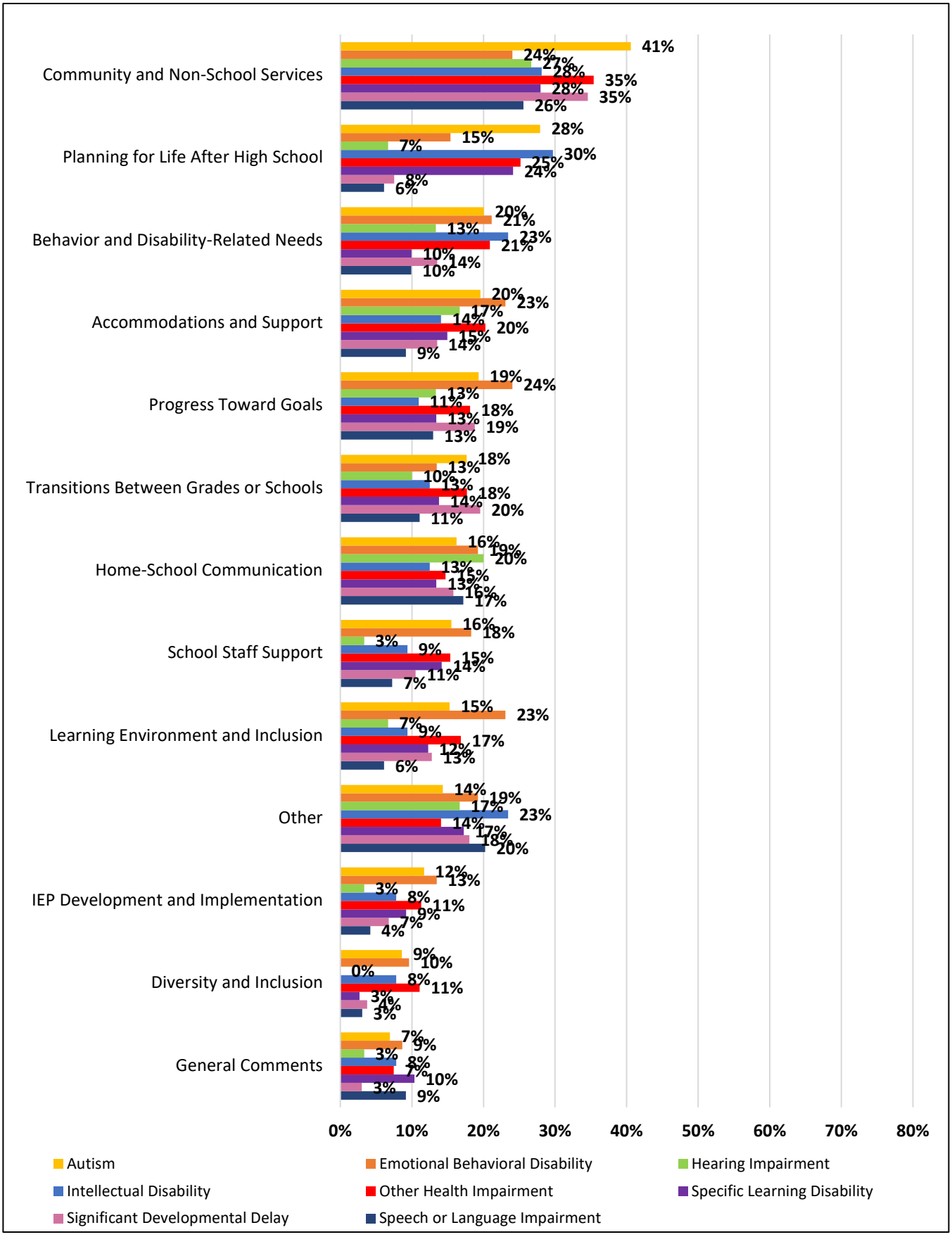
Categories

- For most disability groups, the most-frequently checked positive category:
  - Accommodations and Support (56-70% amongst the groups).
  - Progress Toward Goals (37-61%)
- The strongest positive perceptions come from respondents of students with Speech or Language Impairments and Significant Developmental Delays, while respondents of EBD students had lower ratings.
- Across nearly all disability groups, the most frequently selected negative themes were:
  - Community and Non-School Services (24-41% amongst the groups).
  - Planning for Life After High School (6-30% amongst the groups)
- A few disability-specific patterns emerged:
  - Emotional Behavioral Disability (EBD) and Autism (A) respondents reported the *broadest range* of concerns, especially around Behavior and Disability-Related Needs, Home-School Communication, and IEP Development and Implementation.
  - Intellectual Disability (ID) respondents expressed higher concern about Planning for Life After High School and Progress Toward Goals, reflecting the complexity of transition and outcome planning for these students.
  - Specific Learning Disability (LD) and Other Health Impairment (OHI) respondents were more likely to emphasize Accommodations and Support and School Staff Support, issues tied to consistency and implementation of services.
  - Speech or Language Impairment (SL) and Significant Developmental Delay (SDD) respondents reported relatively *fewer negative themes*, indicating lower overall dissatisfaction.

Display III.E-5: Positive Categories, By Primary Disability
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Positive Category*,
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category



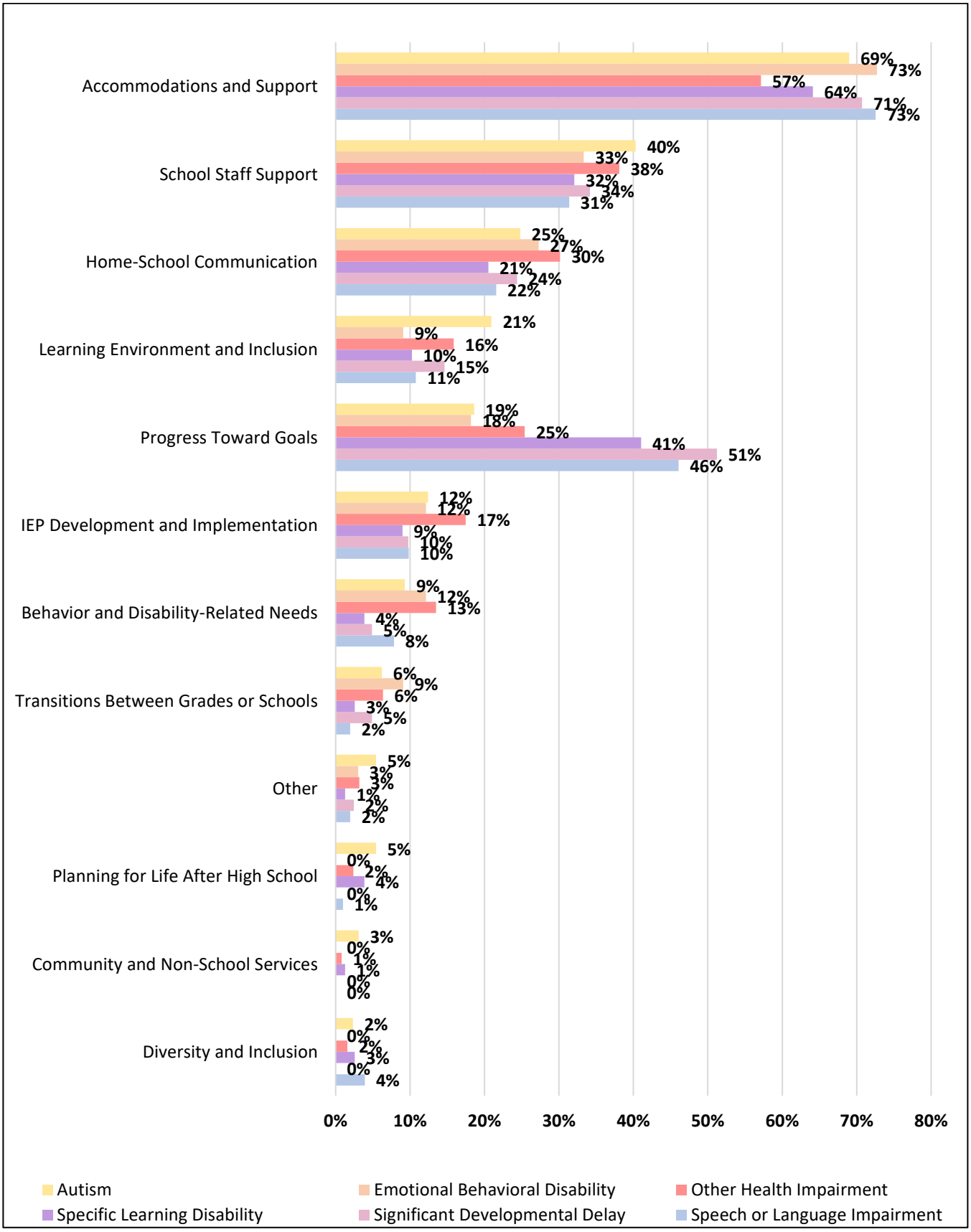
Display III.E-6: Negative Categories, By Primary Disability
Of Those Respondents Who *Checked at Least One Negative Category,*
Percent Who Checked a Particular Category



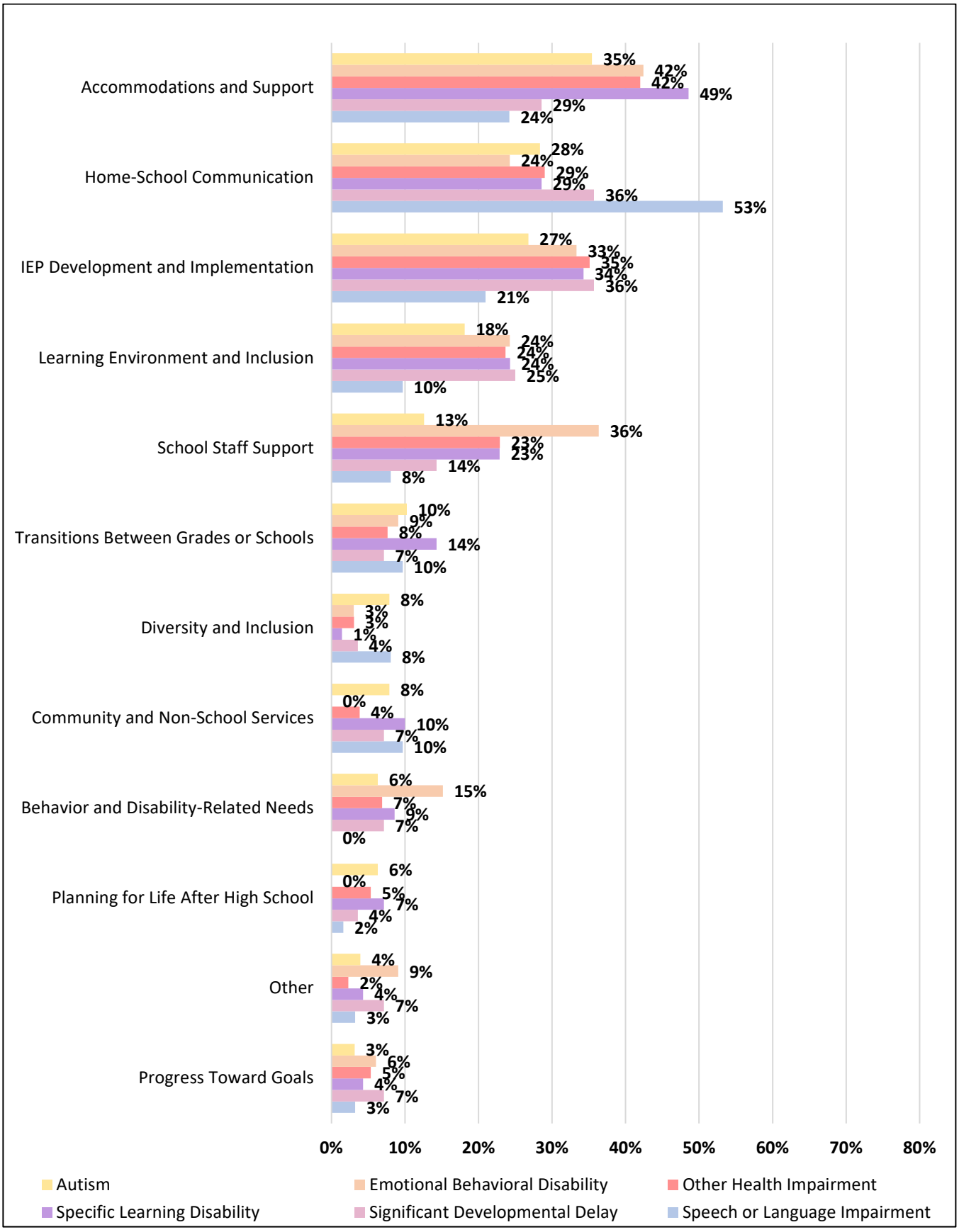
Themes

- For most disability groups, the most-frequently mentioned positive themes:
    - Accommodations and Support (57-73% amongst the groups).
    - IEP Development (24-53% amongst the groups)
- Respondents of children with autism, emotional behavior disability, or other health impairment are less significantly less positive in this area:
    - Progress Toward Goals (18-25% of autism, emotional behavior disability, or other health impairment groups compared to 41-51% of specific learning disability, significant developmental delay, or speech language impairment groups).
- For most disability groups, the most-frequently mentioned negative themes:
    - Accommodations and Support (24-49% amongst the groups).
    - High School Communication (24-53% amongst the groups)
- Respondents of students with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities were more likely than those in most other disability groups to mention concerns related to School Staff Support and Behavior and Disability-Related Needs.
- Concerns about Home-School Communication were mentioned across all disability groups but were most common among parents of students with Speech or Language Impairments.

Display III.E-7: Positive Comments, By Primary Disability
Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Positive Comment,*
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme



Display III.E-8: Negative Comments, By Primary Disability
Of those Respondents Who *Wrote a Negative Comment,*
Percent Who Mentioned a Given Theme



F. Results Over Time

In previous years, the survey included a single open-ended question. In 2024–25, this format was revised to include two distinct prompts—one asking parents to identify the best aspects of their child's special education services and another asking what could be improved.

The proportion of respondents who provided a written comment increased from 22% in 2021–22 to 24% in 2023-24 but then slightly decreased to 20% in 2024–25 (based on responses to either open-ended item). This decline likely reflects a change in response behavior rather than a drop in survey engagement. In 2024–25, respondents were given checklists of possible topics before the open-ended fields. 75% of respondents selected at least one positive category and 43% selected at least one negative category, yet most did not write an accompanying comment. This suggests that many respondents may have viewed selecting categories as adequately conveying their feedback, thereby reducing the perceived need for additional narrative input.
As a result, while the open-ended response rate slightly decreased, the introduction of checklists increased the structure and clarity of feedback—allowing more precise categorization of themes, even with fewer written comments. Thus, the decrease in open-ended responses appears procedural rather than attitudinal; while fewer respondents wrote comments, the checklist format yielded clearer, more structured feedback suitable for analysis.

Because the open-ended items were substantially revised in 2024-25, from a single prompt to two distinct questions accompanied by checklists of possible response categories, results are **not comparable over time**. The change altered both the structure and the cognitive task for respondents: instead of freely generating comments on any topic, respondents could now select from predefined categories before deciding whether to elaborate in writing. This modification likely influenced both participation rates and the nature of the feedback provided. Consequently, trend analysis across years would not yield meaningful or valid comparisons.

G. Potential Focus Areas of Improvement Surrounding Open-Ended Items

1. **Review Common Themes**
   - Analyze the most frequently mentioned positive and negative themes to identify areas where families consistently express satisfaction or concern, and determine where targeted improvements can have the greatest impact.

2. **Address Recurring Concerns**
   - Prioritize action in the most common areas of concern—such as Accommodations and Support, Home-School Communication, and IEP Development and Implementation—to ensure consistent, high-quality practices statewide.

3. **Investigate Mixed Feedback**
   - Examine disability groups or regions where families expressed both high positivity and high negativity (i.e., Autism and Other Health Impairment) to understand the drivers of differing experiences and identify replicable best practices.

4. **Review the Full Family Engagement Report**
   - This Continuous Improvement Report summarizes key results at a high level. The Detailed Summary Report includes more detailed findings that can inform deeper analysis and targeted action planning.

5. **Promote Local Reflection**
   - Share state-level themes and comment summaries with districts and invite local teams to review their own open-ended responses, identify strengths, and develop targeted action steps to improve family engagement and satisfaction.

Appendix A: Agreement by Subgroup

The following displays show the percent of school-age and preschool parents who agreed with a given item by survey type, race/ethnicity, and by disability.

Display Appx A-1: Percent of Parents Who Agreed with a Given Item, by Survey Type

Q#	*Number of Respondents*	% Agreement Preschool 646	% Agreement School-Age 3,437
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	94.1%	91.8%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	93.9%	88.5%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	93.0%	88.4%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	96.6%	93.9%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students. (field trips, class performances, sports, clubs, other extracurricular activities, etc.)	96.1%	92.8%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	96.1%	89.3%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs	96.7%	94.1%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	96.5%	94.8%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	91.8%	85.1%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	92.9%	88.7%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	94.9%	88.3%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, career, post-secondary education)	95.6%	89.6%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	96.1%	93.1%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	93.0%	88.7%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services.	82.2%	73.3%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team.	93.1%	87.0%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	85.5%	82.1%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	84.5%	71.9%
19	School staff offer me information about the academic standards AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's grade level.	89.8%	85.4%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	85.1%	80.1%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	95.5%	88.9%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	92.7%	81.1%

Display Appx A-2: Percent of School Age Parents Who Agreed with a Given Item, by Child Race/Ethnicity

		% Agreement					
		A	**B**	**H**	**I**	**T**	**W**
Q#	***Number of Respondents***	87	254	544	32	215	2,302
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	93.1%	90.9%	93.1%	84.4%	87.9%	92.1%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	92.0%	83.7%	88.4%	78.1%	82.2%	89.7%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	94.2%	86.2%	89.0%	87.5%	86.9%	88.5%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	98.8%	90.9%	94.2%	87.5%	95.3%	93.9%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students. (field trips, class performances, sports, clubs, other extracurricular activities, etc.)	96.5%	88.8%	91.8%	93.8%	91.5%	93.4%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	96.5%	83.6%	88.8%	81.3%	85.0%	90.2%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs	97.6%	91.6%	93.5%	90.6%	94.8%	94.4%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	98.8%	94.4%	94.4%	93.8%	93.4%	95.0%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	89.4%	82.1%	87.1%	81.3%	82.6%	85.2%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	95.3%	89.6%	89.0%	81.3%	87.7%	88.5%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	92.9%	86.8%	90.1%	78.1%	84.9%	88.3%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, career, post-secondary)	97.7%	88.4%	91.0%	78.1%	87.1%	89.5%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	100.0%	90.8%	93.6%	90.6%	91.0%	93.3%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	96.5%	87.3%	91.2%	83.9%	86.7%	88.2%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services:	76.9%	68.7%	76.9%	50.0%	72.5%	73.2%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team:	93.9%	83.7%	86.4%	74.2%	85.4%	87.7%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	94.1%	77.7%	83.3%	74.2%	82.2%	82.0%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	80.0%	65.3%	76.1%	58.1%	72.1%	71.6%
19	School staff offer me information about the academic standards AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's grade level.	92.8%	79.0%	86.1%	81.3%	83.7%	85.9%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	90.2%	77.0%	81.5%	61.3%	75.7%	80.5%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	95.2%	91.4%	88.2%	84.4%	86.6%	88.8%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	91.8%	83.6%	82.6%	71.9%	77.8%	80.5%

A=Asian; B=African American; H=Hispanic; I=Native American; T=Two or More Races; W=White.

Note: *This racial/ethnic group did not meet the minimum threshold of 10 to be included in the table: Pacific Islander (n=1).*

Display Appx A-3: Percent of Preschool Parents Who Agreed with a Given Item, by Child Race/Ethnicity

		% Agreement				
		A	B	H	T	W
Q#	*Number of Respondents*	*27*	*40*	*107*	*44*	*424*
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	88.5%	90.0%	94.3%	93.2%	94.8%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	96.3%	85.0%	93.3%	83.7%	95.7%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	96.3%	87.5%	92.4%	84.1%	94.3%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	96.3%	97.5%	96.2%	88.4%	97.4%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students (field trips, class performances, other extracurricular activities, etc.).	92.3%	89.5%	91.2%	97.6%	98.0%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	96.3%	87.2%	95.3%	90.0%	97.6%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs.	96.3%	92.1%	97.1%	93.0%	97.4%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	96.3%	91.9%	96.2%	93.0%	97.3%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	92.0%	83.8%	94.3%	81.4%	92.9%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	92.6%	88.6%	96.2%	85.4%	93.4%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	96.0%	89.2%	96.2%	92.7%	95.4%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, friendships, social skills, transition to 5K and elementary education).	92.3%	92.1%	95.3%	92.5%	96.4%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	96.3%	89.2%	97.1%	90.0%	97.0%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	88.9%	92.3%	93.4%	90.2%	93.4%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services:	79.2%	71.0%	86.3%	74.4%	82.8%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team:	88.0%	85.3%	94.7%	85.7%	94.4%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	88.9%	81.1%	89.5%	80.5%	85.1%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	76.0%	72.2%	86.7%	85.4%	85.4%
19	School staff offer me information about the early learning standards, developmentally appropriate practices, AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's age and developmental level.	92.3%	83.3%	92.3%	85.4%	89.9%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	84.0%	68.6%	89.2%	73.2%	86.8%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	92.3%	89.5%	96.2%	90.2%	96.6%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	92.3%	91.9%	94.2%	87.2%	92.9%

A=Asian; B=African American; H=Hispanic; T=Two or More Races; W=White.

Note: *These racial/ethnic groups did not meet the minimum threshold of 10 to be included in the table: Native American (n=3); and Pacific Islander (n=1).*

Display Appx A-4: Percent of School Age Parents Who Agreed with a Given Item, by Child Primary Disability

		% Agreement									
		A	EBD	H	ID	LD	OHI	OI	SDD	SL	V
Q#	*Number of Respondents*	*683*	*214*	*52*	*149*	*608*	*862*	*19*	*213*	*612*	*14*
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	90.2%	90.2%	88.5%	93.8%	92.8%	89.5%	89.5%	96.2%	94.7%	92.9%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	87.4%	83.3%	86.3%	91.2%	89.3%	85.9%	78.9%	92.5%	92.6%	92.9%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	87.6%	84.6%	86.3%	89.9%	87.8%	85.9%	84.2%	93.0%	93.2%	85.7%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	93.3%	91.1%	96.2%	95.2%	94.7%	92.7%	94.7%	94.3%	95.6%	100.0%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students. (field trips, class performances, sports, clubs, other extracurricular activities, etc.)	89.2%	86.8%	98.1%	95.9%	95.9%	90.1%	94.7%	94.3%	97.5%	100.0%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	86.4%	80.2%	90.4%	91.2%	90.7%	86.3%	89.5%	94.3%	95.5%	100.0%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs	94.3%	91.1%	94.2%	95.9%	93.6%	92.6%	100.0%	94.3%	96.8%	100.0%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	94.1%	93.9%	96.2%	97.3%	95.7%	92.9%	100.0%	96.2%	96.3%	100.0%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	83.2%	77.0%	86.5%	90.4%	87.0%	80.8%	78.9%	90.1%	91.7%	85.7%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	86.7%	86.4%	82.0%	90.5%	90.4%	86.2%	89.5%	91.5%	92.9%	78.6%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	85.8%	81.7%	92.3%	89.9%	89.4%	85.1%	78.9%	92.0%	95.0%	85.7%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, career, post-secondary education)	87.3%	86.7%	90.4%	92.6%	91.5%	86.0%	84.2%	92.4%	95.1%	78.6%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	92.3%	91.5%	96.1%	95.2%	93.7%	91.4%	89.5%	92.9%	95.7%	100.0%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	86.7%	83.2%	90.2%	94.6%	89.5%	86.0%	77.8%	91.0%	93.8%	85.7%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services:	66.4%	67.0%	78.4%	83.7%	75.8%	67.0%	68.4%	82.0%	84.3%	57.1%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team:	84.8%	84.1%	86.0%	90.1%	86.5%	84.9%	94.4%	90.3%	92.2%	85.7%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	80.9%	74.9%	82.7%	87.0%	82.3%	77.4%	84.2%	87.3%	89.4%	78.6%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	62.0%	62.1%	78.4%	80.7%	74.0%	65.2%	63.2%	85.6%	86.2%	85.7%
19	School staff offer me information about the academic standards AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's grade level.	80.3%	80.0%	82.4%	85.5%	88.3%	82.3%	78.9%	91.5%	93.0%	85.7%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	74.1%	70.5%	90.2%	85.3%	82.2%	75.8%	78.9%	86.2%	90.1%	92.9%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	86.8%	81.8%	86.5%	93.8%	89.3%	86.1%	94.4%	92.4%	94.9%	92.9%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	76.9%	72.5%	80.8%	89.6%	82.6%	75.0%	100.0%	89.0%	90.8%	85.7%

A=Autism; EBD=Emotional Behavioral Disorder; H= Deaf and Hard of Hearing; ID=Intellectual Disability; LD=Specific Learning Disabilities; OHI=Other Health Impairment; OI=Orthopedic Impairment; SDD=Significant Developmental Delay; SL=Speech or Language Impairment.

Note: *These primary disability groups did not meet the minimum threshold of 10 to be included in the table: DB-Deaf-Blind (n=2); and TBI-Traumatic Brain Injury (n=9).*

Display Appx A-5: Percent of Preschool Parents Who Agreed with a Given Item, by Child Primary Disability

		% Agreement			
		A	OHI	SDD	SL
	Number of Respondents	***104***	***41***	***133***	***344***
1	I am an equal partner with school staff in planning my child's IEP.	89.4%	90.2%	94.7%	95.6%
2	School staff offer me ways to provide information about my family and culture so the school can better support my child.	93.3%	87.8%	92.4%	95.0%
3	School staff offer me different ways to ask questions and get information.	88.5%	87.8%	91.7%	95.3%
4	School staff offer me information in ways I understand.	95.1%	95.1%	97.7%	96.5%
5	My child is included in school activities that are available to other students (field trips, class performances, other extracurricular activities, etc.).	93.8%	94.9%	94.5%	97.2%
6	School staff help my child and family feel like we belong in the school community.	94.1%	95.0%	96.2%	96.7%
7	IEP meetings are held at a time and place that meet my needs.	95.1%	95.1%	96.2%	97.3%
8	In IEP meetings, we talk about my concerns and ideas.	95.1%	95.1%	96.9%	96.7%
9	School staff ask me if my child's IEP services are meeting my child's needs.	86.1%	87.8%	90.1%	94.5%
10	In IEP meetings, we discuss different options for my child's special education services.	90.1%	90.0%	91.6%	94.2%
11	School staff share my high expectations for my child's progress.	89.1%	95.1%	96.1%	96.1%
12	School staff listen to what our family wants for our child's future (independence, friendships, social skills, transition to 5K and elementary education).	92.1%	92.7%	94.7%	97.0%
13	In IEP meetings, we discuss how accommodations or modifications will help my child.	95.0%	95.1%	96.1%	96.2%
14	School staff clearly explain when and where my child will receive special education services and supports.	86.1%	90.2%	93.1%	95.2%
15	School staff offer me information for my child with an IEP about one or more community services:	69.9%	68.4%	80.5%	88.4%
16	School staff explain one or more of the options I have if I disagree with a decision of the IEP team:	88.2%	92.7%	90.8%	95.3%
17	I am happy with how often the school updates me on my child's progress on IEP goals.	78.0%	78.0%	84.5%	88.4%
18	School staff offer me activities or strategies which support my child's learning outside of school.	72.2%	73.7%	84.5%	89.5%
19	School staff offer me information about the early learning standards, developmentally appropriate practices, AND behavior expectations for all students at my child's age and developmental level.	82.5%	84.2%	89.1%	93.3%
20	School staff offer me information on how to help my child be independent and advocate for their needs.	74.7%	70.0%	84.3%	90.7%
21	My child receives the services, accommodations, modifications, and supports that are written into their IEP.	90.9%	90.0%	97.7%	96.7%
22	Everyone who works with my child at school knows about the accommodations, modifications, or supports in my child's IEP.	86.5%	89.7%	95.2%	93.7%

A=Autism; OHI=Other Health Impairment; OI=Orthopedic Impairment; SDD=Significant Developmental Delay; SL=Speech or Language Impairment.

Note: *These primary disability groups did not meet the minimum threshold of 10 to be included in the table: EBD- Emotional Behavior Disorder (n=1); H-Deaf and Hard of Hearing (n=8); ID-Intellectual Disability (n=2); LD-Specific Learning Disabilities; OI-Orthopedic Impairment (n=5); TBI-Traumatic Brain Injury (n=1); and V-Blind and Visually Impaired (n=6).*

Appendix B: Examples of Actual Comments by Theme

Accommendations and Support

Positive Theme Comments
Staff has been very good with accommodations and allowing my child to access tools that help her function throughout her day. We have not had any issues with any staff regarding use of self-regulation tools and are offered accommodations by all staff me
The accommodation and support is so helpful in allowing my child to make progress towards his goals. He is aware of what his goals are due to the support he receives from School Staff. His Case manager was beyond helpful in the transition from elementary school to middle school. I was worried about the inclusion and what that would look like for my child on an IEP and that has been of no concern at all.
My son was given extra time to take notes and was given printed notes from the teacher when applicable. This gave him time to absorb the information at home rather than feeling rushed during limited class time. There have been classes where the teacher was not initially providing any additional supports but once it was brought to their attention that additional help was needed, they were accommodating.
They really provide a lot of different supports for him using several staff, several times a week. The communication to us at home is also frequent and very helpful.
I like how my child is able to use a laptop and have the accommodations of her IEP and all the laptop programs that she can continue to use during school at home

Negative Theme Comments
I have very strong beliefs that our school needs extreme help when it comes to IEP interventions, they need accommodating learning areas for children who struggle, but especially when they have their intervention time there are many distractions, no consistency with qualified instructors. When we demanded change there was a distinct backlash in the special education department and administrators in saying there wasn't enough resources and availability in space accommodations to meet our desire for change. As far as the transitions between grades and getting summer reading help, per ACT20, they do not have implementations ready to discuss our options, as they mentioned they will be working on it, i feel is not a thought out process of planning when it comes to the children's rights per ACT20. There for a lack in providing consistent care for our child's growth and future goals.
The schools need to provide the accommodations and allow them to be used however also be willing to add to them for the needs of the student behavior the school never ever sees and since they don't see it then it's not their problem they can't see as the camera and microphone is off, there is no planning for the feature at all no help on services at all i was informed we would only receive one progress report this year due to IEP meetings counting as it however i never received the said progress report and ignored when we requested it there is no consideration when a student transitions between schools at all. All IEP development is done by school staff and if we don't agree who cares and then if we want to add a need/Goal of we keep an eye on it or we don't need to do that it's an online school like learning how to write and not just type services need improvement also
The schools need to provide the accommodations and allow them to be used however also be willing to add to them for the needs of the student behavior the school never ever sees and since they don't see it then it's not their problem they can't see as the camera and microphone is off, there is no planning for the feature at all no help on services at all i was informed we would only receive one progress report this year due to IEP meetings counting as it however i never received the said progress report and ignored when we requested it there is no consideration when a student transitions between schools at all.
At the end of the semester, our daughter was failing nearly all her classes. I was not notified by her special education case worker and it wasn't until the week before the semester ended that I had to reach out to her teachers myself to request support and accommodations for her to pass. Her IEP was poorly executed, lacking the necessary support she needs. I contacted the Department of

Education for assistance and, while I received a lot of guidance in re-writing the IEP and asking questions, my request for an IEP meeting was denied. The principal and vice principal were dismissive and unprofessional in their interactions with both me and my daughter.
Compliance with her IEP strongly varies by teacher. Some teachers are not even informed she is on an IEP. Her case manager was non-existent for the first 2 years on her IEP. This year she was assigned a better case manager, but she was then out for half of the school year, so essentially hasn't had a case manager. Many of the staff only wants to follow the exact letter of the IEP, and don't stop to think about what might actually help our daughter in their class. Simple accommodations aren't given if we haven't thought of them the year before and written them into the IEP. They answer questions only as though they are lawyers, and fail to offer options to us, or even our options on who else to turn to if we disagree. We are not always able to anticipate every tiny thing she may need. For example, she failed Health class the first time she took it. A big contributor was that she was too afraid to do CPR on the dummies at school. She find them very creepy. This is understandable, but also not something we had explicitly written an accommodation for in her IEP. The teacher and her case manager did not bother to consider accommodations for her and we were not aware until she got an F on her report card. When she took the course a second time, we talked to the teacher about this proactively. It turns out those dummies had been thrown out because they had so much mold in them anyway, and an alternative was provided to her. Had anyone considered what Sophie needed to be successful in the first place, she wouldn't have received an F or had to take the class again.

Behavior and Disability-Related Needs

Positive Theme Comments
She has been able to have speech therapy and is better able to convey her needs and wants in ways people can understand, which greatly helps her keep her emotions under control. She is a completely different person than when she started school, and a lot of that progress is due to the use of an IEP
The staff that has supported my son the last 3 years at LES have been nothing short of incredible. We had a fantastic year with minimal behavior issues this year, and the staff deserves as much credit as my son for the work he has put in! I couldn't be happier, especially coming from a district I wound up very unhappy with in regards to my son's IEP and needs.
The best thing for me about the special education is that they are working with my child, so he can communicate better. With better communication, he has less emotional outbursts and can work with his classmates better.
The district empowers both students and parents, welcomes collaboration, and allows parents to be equal members of the IEP team. Supporting students' social-emotional learning and mental health is a priority, as evident by the implementation of SEL throughout school settings.
Case manager truly believes in my son and is strength based. He understands barriers and behaviors that stem from his diagnosis and has a relationship with him that is reflected in the progress he has made.

Negative Theme Comments
The IEP services do not provide enough support in behavior and disability-related needs, provided no support of information about planning for life after high school, community and non-school services, and the IEP services are inconsistently delivered and delivered in a way that do not support my students educational achievement or improvement.
There was another time where our student was suspended for bad behavior in on particular class. But his behavior was exactly what the IEP was meant to address, and no communication was ever sent home until it got so bad that a suspension was needed.
Additionally it seemed at times that my child's misbehavior was viewed and treated as non-compliance or mal-indented versus disability-related and that my child was expected to follow guidelines and target behaviors geared toward or suitable for neuro typical children but not necessarily entirely realistic or flexible enough for a child with disabilities.

Community and Non-School Services

Positive Theme Comments
Staff does a great job of getting the kids out into the community to help learn about their daily living skills
My child has received wonderful support from his teachers and the staff at Opp Inc as he is participating in a vocational training in the afternoons. This has been a very good experience for him and I appreciate all the feedback I get.
We love working with the middle school SPED admin and always feel that we are partners when building an IEP. She is a wonderful listener and comes up with creative, positive ideas for improving our child's IEP. When we were concerned about the transition to high school next year, she connected us with her HS counterpart and both of them have fielded our many questions and concerns with grace, knowledge and patience. Our trust in them is strong.
My child is currently going to Partners in Excellence and is showing great improvement.
My child has received wonderful support from his teachers and the staff at Opp Inc as he is participating in a vocational training in the afternoons.

Negative Theme Comments
I wish the school would provide me with community events, resources, and information for my son to get involved with his peers more. Due to his autism, socializing and making friends has always been difficult. It would be great to find more ways to get him interested in being in group settings.
Provide more information about anything that my benefit my child in the community that I may not know about
Providing more tools for outside school. As a parent I don't know the tricks taught and it's tough to work with my child. She struggles with dyslexia and it's tough to watch her struggle to read, etc. when all her peers aren't. I signed up for free online audio book but never heard anything more on that.
There are not a lot of options for non-school services in our area. We were utilizing the use of a tutor two days a week, that could be the reason for the minimal discussion on community and non-school services.
Offer resources for support outside of school. Professional tutor options specifically.

Diversity and Inclusion

Positive Theme Comments
My child has developed a trusting and loving relationship with their special education teacher, which has been foundational in building overall skill and confidence. The school is welcoming, diverse, has dedicated and skills staff and I appreciate the communication from the school and the special ed teacher.
They staff always explain ways my child can learn and improve on his academics like other kids in his class with a feeling of inclusion.
My son's school has done a great job keep him with his peers and a part of the class. The teacher has worked really hard getting him to do his work without as much support. We're really happy with the progress that has been made this year.
The teachers and support staff are professional and you can tell they enjoy their jobs. They understand inclusion, but also provide the support needed for my child in the public school setting. "Our school is always looking for new way and new things to help include my child in class activities. They are very creative and always figure out a way to include him and his chair in everything
The school district does a great job of promoting inclusion and supports in the general education environment.

Negative Theme Comments
School needs to learn how to include all children and not exclude child while they have special education classes going on so the special needs children miss most of the extracurricular activities like library, gym, music. Fun things kids should enjoy but can't cause they have extra needs
Child is not included/materials or activities are always adapted in a way that a blind child can also participate and benefit from it.
My son has adhd and impulsive tendencies because he has an inability to not fidget and play with items around him he gets punished by missing dojo points. Which causes him to miss out on incentives and does not allow him to participate with his peers in rewards he is unable to earn because of his disability.
I think having an IEP should be considered when playing sports when it comes to the GPA eligibility requirement. These are kids that we are aware have learning disabilities, so some adjustment or considerations should be made to on the GPA requirement.
Not certain on how much time student spends in the regular classroom during each day. Part of the IEP is to have time in the regular classroom with his peers. We understand it does not work out every day due to behavior but it seems like there are times that attempts are not being made to try and get back to the regular classroom.

Home-School Communication

Positive Theme Comments
My daughter receives speech services twice a week. Her teacher regularly provides at home sheets to help us practice with her, however they also clearly communicate about what they are still working on and how we can best support her. It amazes me the clarity of my daughter's speech within this year--many thanks to the talented teachers! Their expertise and dedication to learning is shown in every lesson. And their frequent communication helps us help our daughter.
Since working with the speech pathologist in 4K, the communication between the school and home has been very good. Having our child practice the skills in both the school and home settings was critical in helping him make progress.
We have certainly seen progress which matches the goals outlined in the IEP meetings. We get info on how to support his speech here at home and can tell when he has been practicing at school. We are very pleased with the progress and he enjoys his time in speech.
Creating opportunities for shared communication modes among self-contained students and staff. Attempts to communicate some information daily regarding events so I can check understanding and reliability at home.
His speech pathologist . She is so thorough and really patient with my busy toddler. She explains things to me in ways I understand and also gives us "homework"□ (aka games) to do at home to practice skills that my toddler learns with her at school

Negative Theme Comments
Communication on how to work on activities at home to continue what is being taught/worked on in school.
Reaching out on how to work with him at home with his braille skills.
I would like more info on specific items being worked on and homework for the child to practice at home for these items (like speech items being worked on or new things in class that he might be struggling with being new)
I would love to know what my child is working on so we can implement it at home (tips or cues that are used at school that we can also use at home)
I would love to know what my child is working on in speech services - cues or tips I can use at home to further develop my student's skills.

IEP Development and Implementation

Positive Theme Comments
My Son would not be able to attend school without an IEP. The support is an incredible relief to me as a mother to know that he is OK when he is at school. Thanks for all you do.
My son's IEP has been invaluable to his development and learning. He has grown as a child and a student because of them. WE NEED TO KEEP IEPs IN OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT!
The goals are appropriate, well-considered, and measurable. The meetings are long enough to ensure my child's every need is met through goals and accommodations. All members of the staff that work with my child seem very knowledgeable about her disability, accommodations, and what works to achieve the very best from her.
The best thing about our daughter's Special Education services and IEP is that we really like our Special Education Teacher. She goes above and beyond to help support her in the classroom. She also has been good about updating the IEP if there are changes I would like added to it. I really like her work on my child's handwriting and math skills.
The school and staff have been great with helping met my child's needs. They will even help correct each other if they miss something an accommodation on his IEP.

Negative Theme Comments
The school and I should have been more open to exploring options to help WITH my child involved instead of acting surprised that I wanted to make sure that my child had a say in some parts of his IEP.
it seems not all of the teachers are aware the IEP adjustments, and she is in the regular classes doing what everyone else is doing which makes it overwhelming for her and myself
My child is often treated as badly behaved, rather than dealing with a disability. When there have been incidences, the school principal is focused on consequences rather than the supports and strategies in the IEP. We have needed to remind them multiple times to read the IEP, and ask that everyone who works with our child be familiar with the IEP.
I would appreciate if other gen ed staff were held accountable for their knowledge and follow through for the IEP accommodations. It felt that every class my child had without a SPED staff member was more difficult and she struggled a lot.
Goals are not written at the IEP meetings- parents are denied meaningful participation by school staff determining services prior to writing goals. Goals for a child do not affect the instruction provided as kids are put into a group regardless of needs based on grade. There is no adjustment to services based on child’s individual needs.

Learning Environment and Inclusion

Positive Theme Comments
This school makes every effort to make my child feel important and included in her education. It makes great effort to enhance her learning environment.
Overall environment and staff effort have been very good.
The teachers who have invested in knowing my child as an individual, beyond academic performance, and who have adapted coursework and test taking environments for him without lowering their expectations of him have made a big difference in his ability to be successful, and they have instilled confidence in him that he can do hard things.
The Special Education teachers, principal and Paras work well with our child to keep and other students safe. The special education teachers and paras try to do the best with the little resources that they have available to them.
The special education services my child receives allows him to sit in a quiet space and learn or ask for help if he is struggling and needs 1:1 assistance.

Negative Theme Comments
My daughter gets speech therapy for a few letter sounds that she couldn't pronounce. She is otherwise very bright and able bodied. Because speech is considered special needs, she received an invitation to the Special Olympics. That feels very inappropriate to me.
Total lack of disability accommodation by the principal & staff and the hostile learning environment for my children due to their race makes it impossible for them to finish high school at this school. For children who were both on the Middle School honor roll to now being fifth & second to last in class rank clearly shows the difference between high school staff and middle school [6th-8th grade] staff in the same building of the small district school.
Not sure where this fits in, but after the IEP meeting, my son feels like he is "stupid". He starts to feel down about himself even more than usual. He doesn't have a very high self-esteem and this just rubs his nose in the fact that he "NEEDS" and IEP.
Additionally, the school lacks a lunchroom space for students to socialize, and while there are clubs, they are led by students and not designed to be inclusive for kids who struggle socially.
While this placement may have improved the comfort and learning environment for my child's regular ed peers (by removing my child), I think it dramatically lessened the quality and comfort of the learning environment for my child and contributed to the escalated behaviors we saw from my child thereafter. Though I did understand the conflict that staff was having with my child, when he was disrupting the learning environment of his peers, I think removing him was not the right solution and other things could have been attempted

Planning for Life After High School

Positive Theme Comments
I truly appreciate the IEP team and how they have the best interests of my child at heart. They have worked to ensure that my child has the tools to help them succeed in school and are working for life beyond the school walls.
Very happy we could meet to discuss the option my child has to complete his senior year with everything he needs to plan what he wants to do after graduation.
The school is helping my child reach her goals of attending college after high school.
Really thinking about plans for college and beyond as well as connecting us with DVR and possible assistance that could provide
At his last IEP meeting we started discussing what life after high-school will look like and what steps he should be taking now to meet his goals for life.

Negative Theme Comments
Horrible planning for after high school. No programming was presented to us for 18-21. Very disappointed. Failed on transition for after high school.
No planning for life after high school yet. There have been some issues with kids making fun of Autism but they are address when it happens.
I know some schools really help with planning for after high school, starting at age 14. I have not had that experience with a lot of 'wait until his junior year'. I do think there are tactics that we can think about to help plan after high school. It would be great to see some community based activities that would help reinforce skills like budgeting and making food. I believe that some of those types of skills could come from school.
"My student is a sophomore and I feel like I haven't heard or discussed a plan of ""what next"". Only thing mentioned is he is on track to graduate and what he wants to go to college for. No plans on how to get him there or what life looks after graduation."
Is my child moves towards graduation, this area could be identified as having some gaps. It would definitely be helpful to have more opportunities in this area.

Progress Toward Goals

Positive Theme Comments
This year we saw consistent continuity of services and they definitely positively contributed towards his progress toward goals.
The school has done a great son . He has grown so much since starting school there. He went from being a non-verbal child to someone who can hold conversations with someone.
Since my son has had an IEP program put in place and help with the school, my son has grown so much in so many ways. Without the teacher noticing he needed additional help back in second grade, I don't know where he would be now. I am truly grateful for the teachers he has had along the way.
I am so impressed and proud of my child's improvement with her speech! Everyone involved has done a great job!
My daughter is improving in her speech goals, she is better able to learn in the classroom because of this improvement.

Negative Theme Comments
I see the goal on the IEP, to reach a 3.5 on reading on the STAR testing. I do not see how they are going to help him attain it. What are the strategies they are using to help him attain that goal. He is dyslexic, and how are they making sure he understands what he needs to read alone during class. He tells me sometimes he is lost, and falls behind because of the directions. If you don't understand those, all of your work will be wrong.
As the parent I have been having to explain and provide learning materials to the school staff on how to react or provide support to my child. I am told one thing about progress, and I but see the complete opposite. My child has behaviors and spends more time out of the classroom then in because staff are not trained or if they are they don't use training in how to handle a child with a disability and a learning disability.
It would be good to go back in fill in some of the missing gaps in my son's education. My son has dyslexia. The school district did not have phonic based reading when he was younger. I feel that this has set him back in his reading and writing and those gaps have never been filled in. He is a very smart kid and would have been able to pick up on these skills.
I want my child's progress to continue in order for her to reach grade level abilities or above by the time she graduates from HS. I will work with the Sp Ed team in order for my child to be the best she can be.
The progress toward goals does not address the overarching goal of remedying his speech challenges.

School Staff Support

Positive Theme Comments
I was grateful that his teacher noticed he was struggling in more than speech. She helped look into more testing and even though he didn't qualify for extra services we worked together as a team to provide accommodations in his IEP for current and future teachers to use to help him.
My son's Special Education Teacher works tirelessly to support my son in his academics and with his behavior. She is crucial to his progress at school. She utilizes multiple strategies to work with his needs and communicates with us at home to help support him.
Student has great para support thru out the day. Student struggles with behavior at times and we know the paras are there to help.
The regular education teacher and special education teacher have really done great with aligning my son's current grade level work with his goals so he can be more successful in the classroom.
We are very fortunate to have a great special Ed teacher in our school. I feel she is a crucial part of my child's development and education.

Negative Theme Comments
Non-core teachers are not aware of the learning disabilities that my son has and he struggles with those classes and getting the support that he needs
With a child in the IEP program on the spectrum it is important to me that if an aide is need at all times to direct the student or assist the student it should be provided. There have been a couple times where the student has either left school grounds, walked through traffic, and no single staff member noticed or cared.
Most teachers don't understand the meaning of an IEP or what it is. More knowledge for the teachers and also have them know who the students in their class are.
Information has been shared with us that the general ed teachers do not have access to the IEPs which is absurd as they are the ones who need to be aware of accommodations and why the accommodations are needed.
Our district is really struggling with staffing. And I know they are advertising and trying to get more people in. But overall, the special ed dept needs more paras and support. There are more kids than adults sometimes and I've seen the struggle especially this last year with juggling the kids.

Transitions Between Grades or Schools

Positive Theme Comments
Every transition from one school to the next has gone well. Every teacher I have talked to has been very supportive.
A very positive and welcoming introduction to the school building for my child. They will be excited to come to school next year in 4K because of the learning they did, fun they had, and most importantly the great teacher they had.
I've been so impressed with my child's team at the school. They've helped him so much. I feel like he's really prepared for the transition to high school!
My daughter had her first year in high school and this year her support team spent a lot of time helping to reiterate my expectations around assignment completion and also navigating the social aspect of high school.
The team was supportive and has helped my son transition into the 4th grade smoothly. Much appreciated!

Negative Theme Comments
Middle school is one year away, I am hopeful there will be planning for that transition as we near the end of next school year.
Transparency regarding services during the transition between special education teachers
I guess the only thing I worry about is the fact that my child is changing schools. He is very attached to his helpers and they all change next year. I don't know if they know who those will be and how we are going to have a smooth transition.
Wish they would help him prepare and give him tips for high school now that he won't have IEP. Also would be nice if they share IEP person at high schools contact information in case we feel that he might need help in high school after all if he is having issues.
The transition between grades and staff could be better. It seems like starting over each year, explaining what strategies work best for my child. That information should be passed on internally between staff and documented. It should also be shared with other staff outside of special education.