



Evaluation of the Phase Out of the Secondary
Learning Centers: Final Report

Office of Shared Accountability

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Suzanne Merchlinsky, M.A.
Elizabeth Cooper-Martin, Ph.D.
Scot McNary, Ph.D.



OFFICE OF SHARED ACCOUNTABILITY

Dr. Stacy L. Scott, Associate Superintendent
850 Hungerford Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20850
301-279-3925

Dr. Jerry D. Weast
Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Frieda K. Lacey
*Deputy Superintendent
of Schools*

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Executive Summary

Background

The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) conducted an implementation evaluation of the phase out of the secondary Learning Center (LCs) in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) in 2007–2008. In 2007, MCPS planned a multiyear initiative approved by the Board of Education to phase out the secondary LCs for the following reasons:

- The academic performance of secondary LC students lags far behind that of their disabled peers who are not in LCs.
- African American and Hispanic students are overrepresented in secondary LCs.
- The high concentration of students with disabilities in schools with secondary LCs makes it difficult for MCPS to provide these students with inclusive educational opportunities.
- There is a large number of students in segregated settings (i.e., outside their home or consortia schools). The large number of students in LCs contributed significantly to the large number of students in segregated settings.

The plan to phase out the secondary LCs included the following key elements for the 2007–2008 school year:

- All current Grades 6–12 students may remain in the secondary LCs through their graduation.
- Approximately 51 rising Grade 6 students who might be candidates for the secondary LCs are receiving their special education services in their home or consortia schools, according to their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The progress of these students will be carefully monitored to ensure that they are progressing in accordance with their IEPs.
- All of the current students in secondary LCs have the option of returning to their home or consortia schools to receive services, if their families request it and the IEP team recommends it, and students who wish to exercise this option will be supported.
- A comprehensive plan is being implemented to improve the quality of instruction at the secondary LCs for the students who remain through their high school graduation.
- Principals and staff will continue to receive additional professional development to help them better support students with disabilities in their home and consortia schools.
- General and special education teachers participated in mandatory professional development for the first time in the summer of 2007 to build their capacity to support the instructional needs of students with disabilities in the general education environment.

Educational Background of Transitioned Students

The multiyear plan to phase out the secondary LCs involved students with disabilities who previously received special education services since prekindergarten. Program design called for these students to receive instruction in self-contained classrooms for the majority of their school careers in all four core content areas. Students were enrolled in classes taught by a special

education teacher and a paraeducator with minimal opportunities to access the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment. These students have significant deficits in reading and mathematics and typically function two or more grade levels below their chronological peers. The plan to phase out the secondary LCs emphasized the importance of students with disabilities having access to curriculum and services in their home schools in the general education environment.

Evaluation Design

It should be noted that the phase out of the secondary LCs was in its first year of implementation at the time of the evaluation. Typically, outcomes are not addressed until a program's implementation has been determined to be complete. Therefore, full implementation and achievement of all desired outcomes would not be expected in the first year.

The evaluation utilized a multi-method design with input from key stakeholders to increase the validity of the evaluation findings. The following key questions guided the evaluation:

- To what extent does the initiative support former elementary and secondary LC students' and candidates' access to a more inclusive educational setting?
- To what extent are inclusive practices being implemented as intended?
- What impact has the initiative had on the delivery of special education services in receiving secondary schools?
- What impact has the phase out of the secondary LCs had on students' academic outcomes?
- To what extent are parents and school staff satisfied with the implementation of the initiative?
- What changes have been made in the secondary LCs to improve outcomes for the remaining students?

The data collection activities included the following:

- Developmental interviews with school and Office of Special Education and Student Services (OSESS) staff
- Classroom observations
- Surveys of parents, classroom professionals, principals, guidance counselors, and Resource Teachers for Special Education (RTSEs)

Survey response rates ranged from 24%, for parents of current LC students, to 68%, for RTSEs in schools receiving transitioned students.

Summary of Key Findings

Key findings are reported below for each evaluation question.

Key Question 1: To what extent does the initiative support former elementary and secondary LC students' and candidates' access to a more inclusive educational setting?

Support for students in a more inclusive educational setting included various classroom strategies, and the assignment of a central office case manager. The central office case manager component is well implemented, with a case manager assigned to each transitioned student. Some adaptations in classroom strategies were observed in the classrooms. These observations indicated the following findings:

- Strategies observed most frequently in the classrooms were the use of multiple modalities to present information to students and for students to convey their learning, individual or small-group assistance, and frequent and specific feedback to students.
- The most common classroom supports available to transitioned students, as reported by teachers, were extended time, preferential seating, and small-group instruction.
- Classroom professionals most frequently reported altering their teaching strategies by modifying the pace of instruction and increasing the use of differentiated activities. However, differentiated instruction and cooperative group work was not observed in most of the classrooms during this evaluation.
- All transitioned students were assigned a case manager from OSESS to advocate for students and provide a level of support appropriate to the needs of the family. Supports provided by the central office case manager included communicating with parents about students' needs and progress, facilitating meetings with school staff, attending IEP meetings, and sharing information about parent training opportunities.

Key Question 2: To what extent are inclusive practices being implemented as intended?

One intention of the transition was to provide support for teachers with transitioned students in their classrooms, and to provide a continuum of support for students in a variety of classroom environments. The Office of Organizational Development (OOD) provided mandatory training in July and August 2008 for Grade 6 general and special education teachers who would be working with special education students in general education classrooms in a co-teaching arrangement. Transitioned students in most schools were enrolled in a variety of classroom environments, including co-taught, supported, general education, and self-contained. Teachers of transitioned students also received support from their school's RTSE, leadership team, and central office case manager.

The extent of inclusive practices was partially implemented, as indicated by the following findings:

- Classroom professionals reported that they received more support from their schools' RTSE than from the leadership team or the central office case manager. However, it should be noted that the intention was for the central office case manager to work with RTSEs to support teachers.
- OOD provided mandatory training for Grade 6 general and special education teachers who would be working with special education students in general education classrooms in a co-teaching arrangement. In July and August of 2007, 285 teachers attended the mandatory training on best practices for co-teaching. Additionally, more than 200 paraeducators attended training on co-teaching. These included teachers and paraeducators from all middle schools, including the middle schools that received transitioned students. An item on the survey of classroom professionals asked teachers if they had attended the mandatory summer training. Sixty-one of the 132 Grade 6 teachers who responded to the survey indicated that they did not attend the mandatory summer training; 71 of the Grade 6 teachers indicated that they did attend.
- Most of the survey respondents considered themselves prepared to implement co-teaching strategies, understand the characteristics of disabilities, provide differentiated instruction, and implement behavioral strategies/techniques. Fewer considered themselves prepared to implement assistive technology in their classrooms.
- Approximately half of the transitioned middle school students were enrolled in co-taught classrooms for English, mathematics, social studies, and science. Seven percent were enrolled in co-taught classrooms for reading. The transitioned high school students were more evenly distributed across co-taught and self-contained classrooms for English and social studies. The majority of transitioned high school students were enrolled in self-contained classrooms for mathematics and reading.

Key Question 3: What impact has the initiative had on the delivery of special education services in receiving secondary schools?

A major component of the phase out was the increased implementation of co-teaching in the schools receiving transitioned students. Increased differentiation was expected due to the inclusion of the transitioned students and expected increase in the variety of instructional strategies implemented to address students' learning needs. Additionally, transitioned students received a 30-day periodic IEP review at the beginning of the school year. The following findings indicate that co-teaching and differentiation are in the beginning stages of implementation, and that the 30-day IEP review meetings with parents were well implemented.

- Of the 18 Grade 6 classrooms observed as co-teaching environments, half displayed support teaching (one teacher teaches the lesson while the other provides assistance and feedback to students) as their only co-teaching model. The other half of the co-taught

classrooms used support teaching in combination with other co-teaching strategies such as team teaching, shadow teaching, and support groups.

- Although co-teachers relied heavily on support teaching in the observed classrooms, the strategies that co-teachers used showed that most teachers were involved in providing assistance and feedback to students, as opposed to presenting instruction. The distribution of duties in co-taught classrooms was less equitable in the presentation of instruction.
- A majority of classroom professionals who responded to the survey indicated that they have increased their use of differentiation with the inclusion of transitioned students in their classrooms. Differentiated activities were observed in only 27% of the Grade 6 and 23% of the Grades 7–11 classroom observations.

Key Question 4: What impact has the phase out of the secondary LCs had on students' academic outcomes?

Data on students' academic outcomes should be interpreted with caution. First, course grades are based on appropriate modifications to assessments, content, instructional strategies, and assistive technology. Additionally, the Modified-Maryland School Assessment (Mod-MSA), which is designed for students whose regular coursework is modified significantly to address their disabilities, was not available from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in the spring of 2008. The Mod-MSA will be administered for the first time in spring of 2009 for middle school students with disabilities. However, these students took the regular MSA, which was not an appropriate assessment for reporting their outcomes.

The academic achievement of the Grade 6 transitioned students compared favorably to similar students with respect to course grades; their likelihood of earning a C or above was equal to or greater than that of comparison students for four core courses. Further, the transitioned students demonstrated growth in reading from Grade 5 to Grade 6, as indicated by the Measures of Academic Progress Assessment in Reading (MAP-R) Rasch Unit (RIT) scores.

The achievement of transitioned students on standardized tests was weaker than that of students with similar disabilities. Their mean scores were lower than comparison students on the MAP-R reading test and on the MSA tests in mathematics and reading. Also, a higher percentage of transitioned than comparison students scored at the basic level on each MSA test.

Key Question 5: To what extent are parents and school staff satisfied with the implementation of the initiative?

Parents expressed satisfaction with their children's experiences in the transition and the services they received from their central office case manager. School staff expressed needs for greater support for the transitioned students.

The following findings reflect the satisfaction of parents and school staff:

- A majority of responding parents expressed satisfaction with their children’s school experiences. Parents were most likely to indicate satisfaction with the opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff, and with their children’s safety at school. The fewest parents indicated satisfaction with academic issues such as the appropriateness of assessments and the availability of technology to support their children’s needs.
- Parents of transitioned students expressed satisfaction with the service they received from the central office case manager.
- Classroom professionals were more satisfied with the support they received from their school’s RTSE or leadership team than the support they received from the central office case manager assigned to each transitioned student.

Key Question 6: What changes have been made in the secondary LCs to improve outcomes for the remaining students?

Baseline data were not available to measure changes across time in the secondary LCs. The data collected and reported here provide information on the current status of classroom strategies and parent satisfaction in the secondary LCs, and should be interpreted accordingly.

As indicated by the following findings, similarities in classroom strategies and parent satisfaction existed between LCs and schools receiving transitioned students:

- Classroom observation and parent survey data were compared between the current LCs and the schools that received transitioned students. Similarities among LC classrooms and classrooms with transitioned students included frequent use of multiple modalities by teachers and limited differentiated activities.
- Although very few parents of LC students responded to the survey, they expressed a high level of satisfaction with their children’s school experiences.

Key Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the evaluation findings:

- Continue ongoing support and training for co-teaching, perhaps including content integration and modeled lessons. Consider assigning special education teachers to a specific subject area so they may become familiar with the content and thus become more equal partners in delivering instruction. Structure planning time so that co-teachers can plan instruction together.

- Conduct follow-up assessments with teachers who attended the co-teaching training in summer 2007. Determine if teachers needed additional support or resources once they began using co-teaching strategies in their classrooms that they may not have anticipated at the end of the summer training.
- Promote efforts to improve differentiation. Very few differentiated activities were observed, although teachers indicated that they had increased differentiation to meet the needs of the transitioned students in their classrooms. Comments from some school staff members indicated that the composition of their classrooms with transitioned students now included a wider range of abilities to access the curriculum. Therefore, differentiated activities are more important than ever.
- Provide support for guidance counselors. The majority of guidance counselors who responded to the survey indicated that they received little or no support upon the arrival of the transitioned students. They would be especially helpful in addressing the social/emotional needs of transitioning students, such as establishing social skills groups.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parents of transitioned students and students remaining in the secondary LCs to share their concerns with MCPS staff. Parents expressed high satisfaction with the opportunities for involvement and communication at the school level. Additionally, parents of transitioned students expressed satisfaction with the services provided by their central office case manager. It is important to hear from a larger number of parents of both transitioned and remaining LC students to be able to best meet their needs and determine areas of improvement to promote students' success.
- Continue to provide professional development to teachers who have transitioned students in their classrooms. Encourage job-embedded professional development that addresses individual student and staff needs.
- Reexamine the relationship between the state assessment scores and course grades after the Mod-MSA, a more appropriate assessment for this population of students with disabilities, is administered for the first time in spring of 2009.

Background

Goal of the Report

This report discusses the findings and recommendations from multiple data collection activities related to the phase out of the secondary learning centers (LCs) in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the following:

- Status of implementation—
 - in receiving schools for rising Grade 6 students who attended an elementary LC or other elementary school and would have matriculated to a secondary LC;
 - in receiving schools for former secondary LC students who chose to transition to their home or consortia school; and
 - in improving the instructional program in secondary LCs
- Participation of current secondary LC students in general education classrooms, and access to the comprehensive Core of Courses

It should be noted that the phase out of the secondary LCs was in its first year of implementation at the time of the evaluation. Typically, outcomes are not addressed until a program's implementation has been determined to be complete. Therefore, full implementation and achievement of all desired outcomes would not be expected in the first year.

Relation to the MCPS Strategic Plan

Goal 1 of the MCPS strategic plan is to ensure success for every student. This goal addresses the need to identify specific expectations for student achievement and describe methods to foster that achievement and remove barriers to learning (MCPS, 2006). Goal 2 of the MCPS strategic plan is to provide an effective instructional program that sets high standards for curriculum, instruction, and assessment (MCPS, 2006). The transition of students from the secondary LCs is a strategy designed to address both of these goals.

Organization of the Report

The remainder of this report is organized into the following sections:

- Program description
- Review of Literature
- Evaluation design (including evaluation questions, data sources, and methods)
- Findings (organized by evaluation question)
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

Program Description

Background on Secondary Learning Centers in Montgomery County Public Schools

MCPS has operated secondary LCs since the 1970s. The LCs provided special education services to students with disabilities in self-contained settings. Currently, secondary LCs are located in Montgomery Village, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Col. E. Brooke Lee, White Oak, and Tilden middle schools; and Watkins Mill, John F. Kennedy, and Walter Johnson high schools. In schools with secondary LCs, some students with disabilities receive special education services in LC classes, while others receive services in general education classes (Weast, 2007).

As of December 1, 2006, there were 295 students in the middle school LCs and 316 students in the high school LCs. These students have a variety of skills and abilities. They are generally two or more years below grade level in reading and typically demonstrate some deficits in the skill areas of decoding, word retrieval, fluency, vocabulary, written language, and organization. In mathematics, many demonstrate some deficits in the skill areas of calculation and problem solving. Overall, however, the LC students' reading and mathematics IEP goals are not significantly different from those of their disabled peers who currently receive services in home or consortia schools (Weast, 2007).

Plan to Phase Out the Secondary Learning Centers

MCPS planned a multiyear initiative, approved by the Board of Education, to phase out the secondary LCs in order to improve the delivery of special education services. The implementation of the initiative proposes phasing out the secondary LCs for the following reasons:

- The academic performance of secondary LC students lags far behind that of their disabled peers who are not in LCs.
- African American and Hispanic students are overrepresented in secondary LCs.
- The high concentration of students with disabilities in schools with secondary LCs makes it difficult for MCPS to provide these students with inclusive educational opportunities.
- There is a large number of students in segregated settings (i.e., outside their home or consortia schools). The large number of students in LCs contributed significantly to the large number of students in segregated settings.

The plan for the phase out of the secondary LCs includes the following key elements for the 2007–2008 school year:

- All current Grades 6–12 students may remain in the secondary LCs through their graduation.
- Approximately 51 rising Grade 6 students who might be candidates for the secondary LCs are receiving their special education services in their home or consortia schools, according to their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The progress of these

students will be carefully monitored to ensure that they are progressing in accordance with their IEPs.

- All of the current students in secondary LCs have the option of returning to their home or consortia schools to receive services if their families request it and the IEP team recommends it, and students who wish to exercise this option will be supported.
- A comprehensive plan is being implemented to improve the quality of instruction at the secondary LCs for the students who remain through their high school graduation.
- Principals and staff will continue to receive additional professional development to help them better support students with disabilities in their home and consortia schools.
- General and special education teachers participated in mandatory professional development for the first time in the summer of 2007 to build their capacity to support the instructional needs of students with disabilities in the general education environment.

Table 1 summarizes the models of co-teaching that were addressed in the training, and expected to be practiced in classrooms. Mandatory professional development was not offered to teachers who received transitioned students in Grades 7–12.

Educational Background of Transitioned Students

The multiyear plan to phase out the secondary LCs involved students with disabilities who previously received special education services since prekindergarten. Program design called for these students to receive instruction in self-contained classrooms for the majority of their school careers in all four core content areas. Students in LCs were enrolled in classes taught by a special education teacher and a paraeducator with minimal opportunities to access the general education curriculum in the least restrictive environment. These students have significant deficits in reading and mathematics and typically function two or more grade levels below their chronological peers. The plan to phase out the secondary LCs emphasized the importance of students with disabilities having access to curriculum and services in their home schools in the general education environment.

Table 1
Models of Co-teaching

Model	Components	Advantages
Support teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One leads, one adapts assignments, gives feedback, gathers data on progress, monitors participation, provides assistance ● Natural starting point, but roles should be regularly alternated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity to provide additional assistance in heterogeneous class
Team teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Both share instruction simultaneously ● Take turns leading ● Role play – model ● Clarify or paraphrase what one teacher has said ● Equal commitment from both 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity to reinforce key points of a discussion through repetition ● Motivating to students and teachers alike ● Conversation between teachers engages students' interest and attention ● Students develop rapport with both teachers ● Active participation of both teachers increases opportunity to address most learning styles
Shadow teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One teaches ● Other follows up (another time of day) ● Use different strategy and materials (reteach) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity to learn material in two different ways ● Allows for support of students' learning styles
Parallel groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Both plan and deliver instruction jointly (exact material and content) ● Two separate groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lower student-to-teacher ratio ● Both teachers focused on individual needs of only half of the class ● Opportunity to facilitate and monitor students' problem-solving and cooperative learning skills ● Tool for reviewing for assessments ● Natural opportunity for teachers to observe students who may need further review or instruction
Needs groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One conducts a review with one group ● Other provides intensive instruction or enrichment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Opportunity for students to be supported in individual areas of need ● Small group instruction allows for a different means for understanding of concepts ● Pacing of small group dictated by student needs and/or opportunity for extension of learning ● Groups are flexible; skills can be rotated ● Assessment a natural piece
Interest groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Two different topics presented ● Students choose one of interest ● Teachers prepare and support one group/one topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students given opportunity to choose topics of interest, regardless of ability level ● Motivates students for learning ● Students develop ownership of learning
Station groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Content of lesson divided into two or more parts/opportunities ● Students rotate through stations ● Each teacher presents part of the lesson (one rotation could be independent activity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lower student-to-teacher ratio ● Students with disabilities integrated into the group ● Small groups provide for teaching of more concepts in a short amount of time

Review of Literature

A brief review of the literature reveals issues related to inclusion of students with disabilities in their home schools, from the perspectives of teachers, parents, and administrators. Therefore, the multi-method approach used in the current evaluation, with diverse stakeholder input, is appropriate for addressing these multiple perspectives.

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1994) identify seven variables for successful inclusion of students with disabilities: support from special education personnel; administrative support; appropriate curriculum; disability-specific teaching skills; an accepting, positive classroom atmosphere; effective general teaching skills; and peer assistance. Similarly, Jenkinson (1998) discusses the characteristics of school placements endorsed by parents of students with disabilities, including the amount of attention the child receives, curriculum issues, the child's self-esteem, and attitudes of school staff.

The severity of students' disabilities impacts the general education teacher's perceptions on potential success of inclusion. General education teachers may feel they are not qualified to teach students with severe disabilities in their classrooms, or that these students are not appropriately served in their neighborhood schools (Smith, 2000). Huefner (1994) cautions school administrators not to provide a "blanket approach" to educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) by either placing them in segregated settings or fully including them in general education classrooms without considering a continuum of services.

Evaluation Design

This section presents an overview of the scope and target population for the evaluation, the evaluation questions, the data collection strategies, and the strengths and limitations of the methodology.

Scope and Target Population of the Evaluation

The scope and target population for this evaluation study included: a) The transition of rising Grade 6 students who attended an elementary learning center (LC) or other elementary school and would have matriculated to a secondary LC, but are transitioning to their home or consortia school; b) Secondary LC students who chose to transition to their home or consortia school; and c) The participation of current secondary LC students in general education classrooms, and access to the comprehensive Core of Courses.

Evaluation Questions

The following key questions guided the learning center phase out implementation evaluation:

- To what extent does the initiative support former elementary and secondary LC students' and candidates' access to a more inclusive educational setting?
- To what extent are inclusive practices being implemented as intended?
- What impact has the initiative had on the delivery of special education services in receiving secondary schools?
- What impact has the phase out of the secondary LCs had on students' academic outcomes?
- To what extent are parents and school staff satisfied with the implementation of the initiative?
- What changes have been made in the secondary LCs to improve outcomes for the remaining students?

Data Collection Strategies

Multiple data collection strategies were used to address the evaluation questions. A description of each strategy is listed below.

Developmental Interviews with School and Office of Special Education and Student Services (OSESS) Staff

Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) staff conducted a series of interviews with school staff in a sample of the receiving schools, to determine issues that should be addressed with the surveys and classroom observations.

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured protocol, which allowed respondents to provide comment related to the following topics:

- Support for transitioning students
- Implementation of inclusive practices
- Impact on delivery of special education services
- Parent and staff satisfaction

The interviews were conducted in five schools, including two with secondary LCs (Tilden, Briggs Chaney, Farquhar, and Redland middle schools; and Walter Johnson High School). A total of 19 school staff members were interviewed, including principals, general and special education teachers, guidance counselors, and resource teachers for special education (RTSEs). Additionally, OSA staff interviewed two OSESS supervisors, and conducted a group interview with the OSESS case managers. Developmental interview protocols are in Appendix A.

Classroom Observations

OSA staff conducted observations in 63 secondary school classrooms from March to early May 2008. Both classes with transitioned students and current secondary LC classes were observed. The observed classes included 40 of the 70 transitioned students across all grades (57%). Selection criteria for the observations included subject area (with priority to mathematics and English classes), the number of transitioned students in the class, grade level, and the classroom environment (i.e., co-taught, supported, or self-contained). The environments of the observed classes, the distribution of subject areas observed, and the distribution of grade levels observed are presented in Tables E-1 through E-3.

OSA staff used a structured observation protocol to record the data. A copy of the instrument is in Appendix B. The protocol was developed based on—

- MCPS special education and co-teaching look-fors;
- a review of literature on teaching strategies for inclusion; and
- discussions with OSESS staff and the LC Transition Evaluation Advisory Group.

Prior to conducting the observations, the observers participated in training to promote inter-rater reliability, consequently improving the validity of the evaluation findings. In the first phase of the training, the observers met with an OSESS instructional specialist who is a case manager for the LC phase out. During the meeting, the participants viewed videos of classroom instruction and used the protocol to score the indicators. They discussed and debriefed their findings with the case manager. Next, two case managers scheduled classroom visits with the OSA observers in co-taught middle school classrooms. They each used the protocol to record their observations, and debriefed after the lesson. Summaries of the classroom observation data are in Appendix E.

Surveys of School Staff in Receiving Schools

A series of surveys was developed for school staff in the schools that received former secondary LC students and candidates. Surveys were administered to—

- classroom professionals (i.e., general and special education teachers and paraeducators);
- principals;
- guidance counselors; and
- RTSEs.

The survey instruments were developed based on input from: a) a series of in-person interviews with a sample of school staff (teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, RTSEs); b) interviews with OSESS staff, including case managers; and c) discussions with the LC Transition Evaluation Advisory Group. Copies of the school staff surveys are in Appendix C.

The survey of classroom professionals included both selected response and open-ended (free response) items. The surveys of principals, guidance counselors, and RTSEs were a series of open-ended questions only. Each of the surveys was sent via Test Pilot, with a requested window of time for completion. When the end of that window approached, OSA staff sent reminders to all survey recipients. When the deadline passed, it was extended an additional week with another reminder to all recipients. The selected response survey items were analyzed for descriptive statistics. The open-ended items were reviewed and coded by theme. Summaries of the selected response and coded open-ended responses are in Appendix F.

The surveys were distributed to 418 classroom professionals, 43 guidance counselors, 37 principals, and 37 RTSEs. Nearly half of the responding classroom professionals (47%) were general education teachers, 37% were special education teachers, and 14% were paraeducators (see Table F-1). The majority of responding classroom professionals (79%), principals (79%), RTSEs (76%), and guidance counselors (93%) were from elementary or middle schools; and 20% indicated high school affiliation (see Table F-2). This distribution is consistent with the distribution of transitioned students across middle and high schools.

Surveys of Parents

Parent surveys were conducted twice during the 2007–2008 school year. In fall 2007, only parents of the 70 transitioned students were surveyed. In spring 2008, the parents of the transitioned students were surveyed again, as well as parents of a sample of 144 current secondary LC students in Grades 7 and 9, and a sample of 400 parents of other Grade 6 students receiving special education services in the receiving schools. The survey covered topics relating to parents' satisfaction with various aspects of their children's school experience, adjustment to school, and services provided by their central office case manager (transitioned students only). Copies of the parent surveys are in Appendix D.

The fall parent surveys were distributed by the central office case managers. Spring parent surveys were mailed to homes, and included postage-paid return envelopes. Packets for families

who indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home included a survey in English and in their at-home language (Spanish, French, Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese). After the initial survey deadline passed, a second survey packet was sent to all parents. Instructions included with the follow-up packet asked parents to complete the second survey only if they had not already completed the original survey. Since the survey responses were anonymous, there was no way to determine which parents had already returned the survey. The survey instructions also included an option to complete the survey online. Ten parents chose the online option.

In order to increase the parent survey response rate, the evaluation advisory group recommended changing the format of the survey instructions to be more user-friendly. Additionally, principals were asked to encourage parents to complete the survey, and central office case managers contacted each family in their caseload to encourage them to complete the survey. Finally, members of the evaluation advisory group posted reminders via various electronic communication methods.

The parent surveys contained both selected response and open-ended items. The selected response survey items were analyzed for descriptive statistics. The open-ended items were reviewed and coded by theme. Summaries of the selected response and coded open-ended responses are in Appendix G.

Survey Response Rates

Table 2 provides information on the response rates for all surveys. Among school staff, principals, guidance counselors, and RTSEs had higher response rates than classroom professionals. Parents in all groups had a lower response rate than school staff.

Table 2
Response Rates for Surveys of Parents and School Staff

Survey Populations	<i>N</i>	Response Rate (%)
Parents of transitioned students – fall 2007	26	37
Parents of transitioned students – spring 2008	24	34
Parents of current LC students	34	24
Parents of other students receiving special education services	121	31
Classroom professionals	207	49
Principals	24	65
Guidance counselors	29	67
Resource teachers for special education (RTSEs)	25	68

Analysis of Student Outcome Data

The sample for the analysis was 48 Grade 6 transitioned students. The 22 remaining transitioned students were excluded because the number in any grade level was too low to conduct a meaningful analysis. The learning profiles and academic pathways of transitioned students are

most similar to students who receive more than 15 hours of special education services through the resource room or the Learning and Academic Disabilities Program in their home or consortia schools. There were 560 of these students in Grade 6; they formed the comparison group.

The following measures of academic achievement from 2007–2008 were analyzed:

- End-of-year grade in English 6
- End-of-year grade in Math 6 (Math A)
- End-of-year grade in Science 6
- End-of-year grade in Social Studies 6
- Measures of Academic Progress Assessment in Reading (MAP-R) Rasch Unit (RIT) score
- MSA scale score in mathematics
- MSA scale score in reading

For course grades, logistic regression was used to test for differences between transitioned and comparison students in the likelihood of earning a C or above versus a D or below. For MAP-R and MSA scores, analysis of covariance was used to test for differences in mean scores and included matching each transitioned student with one or more comparison students. This matching used a propensity score which incorporated the following measures into one composite variable for each student: gender, race/ethnicity, receipt of Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) services, and performance on the same test in spring 2007 (e.g., MAP-R RIT score from spring 2007 was used as a matching variable for the analysis of spring 2008 MAP-R RIT scores). Receipt of English for Speakers of Other Languages services was not used because less than 4% of the sample received this service.

To control further for differences between transitioned and comparison students, all analyses that compared these two groups included measures of race/ethnicity, gender, receipt of FARMS services, and prior performance. The latter was measured by the student's score from the same test in spring 2007 for each analysis of MAP-R and MSA scores and by the student's MSA scale scores in both mathematics and reading for each analysis of course grades.

Both statistical significance tests and effect sizes were calculated. The former examines the likelihood that observed differences occurred by chance. However, statistical significance is influenced by sample sizes such that with a large sample, even small differences may be significant. Therefore, because of the small sample size, effect sizes also were used to judge whether the observed differences were large enough to be of practical significance to educators (American Psychological Association, 2001).

To measure effect sizes, logit d was calculated for analyses of course grades and Hedge's g was calculated for analyses of standardized tests. Conventional thresholds for effect sizes are 0.20 for a small effect, 0.50 for a moderate effect, and 0.80 for a large effect (Cohen, 1988). Note that adjusted means and proportions are shown in the following tables for analyses involving transitioned and comparison students.

To check for improvement over time, the MAP-R RIT scores of transitioned students from spring 2007 and spring 2008 were compared using a paired t-test. This analysis was not done for MSA tests, because the scores are not comparable across grade levels (i.e., Grade 5 vs. Grade 6).

Strengths and Limitations of Methodology

This evaluation featured several strengths with regard to internal validity and reliability of the evaluation findings. First, since any single method has limitations, this study benefited from employing a multi-method approach. Second, developmental interviews were conducted with school staff and OSESS specialists to develop survey questions and observation items that would address relevant issues and expected classroom practices. Third, the findings discussed in this report were based on input from multiple stakeholders who were asked many of the same questions in order to triangulate information. Finally, stakeholders were included in an evaluation advisory group to provide input on the evaluation questions and data collection instruments. These procedures improved the validity of the instruments used in the evaluation as well as the validity of the evaluation findings.

A limitation of this evaluation was a low response rate from parents on the surveys, despite multiple attempts to encourage participation. As a result, the generalizability of the findings or the external validity of the study may be argued. Another limitation is the scarcity of available student outcome measures that can be analyzed across grade levels. Therefore, it is very difficult to show growth that occurs from one year to the next. In the current analysis, only the MAP-R RIT scores were used to measure growth from Grade 5 to Grade 6. Neither MSA scores nor course grades could be used for this purpose. Finally, it should be noted that the phase out of the secondary LCs was in its first year of implementation at the time of the evaluation. Typically, outcomes are not addressed until a program's implementation has been determined to be complete. Therefore, full implementation and achievement of all desired outcomes were not expected in the first year.

Findings

The program evaluation was developed using a series of key evaluation questions. Findings in this section are organized by evaluation question.

Evaluation Question: To what extent does the initiative support former elementary and secondary LC students' and candidates' access to a more inclusive educational setting?

Data sources to address this evaluation question included classroom observations, surveys of school staff, and a group interview with central office case managers. Support for students in a more inclusive educational setting included various classroom strategies and the assignment of a central office case manager. Findings indicate that the central office case manager component is well implemented, with a case manager assigned to each transitioned student. Some classroom strategies were not universally well integrated into the classrooms.

Classroom Strategies

During the classroom observations, Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) staff indicated the presence of strategies that would make the curriculum accessible to the transitioned students and other students in the classroom. Additionally, classroom professionals indicated on their survey the strategies available in their classrooms to make the curriculum accessible to all students.

For each strategy on the observation protocol, observers rated whether the strategy occurred “once or twice,” “throughout the lesson,” or was “not observed.” The tables in Appendix E address each observed strategy, the type of classroom environment, and the level at which the strategy was observed. Classroom observations regarding classroom strategies to support access to a more inclusive educational setting are discussed below. Because only Grade 6 teachers received mandatory professional development, the classroom observation data are disaggregated for Grade 6 and Grades 7–11.

In nearly three fourths of the observed classes at all grade levels (73%), staff demonstrated multiple modalities to students throughout the lesson (e.g., presenting information to students verbally, in writing, and/or with demonstrations or models), and another 24% of Grade 6 teachers and 27% of Grades 7–11 teachers displayed the strategy once or twice. Staff in Grade 6 self-contained non-LC classrooms¹ most frequently displayed multiple modalities (100% throughout the lesson), followed by LC classes (83% throughout the lesson) (see Tables E-4a and E-4b). Staff in slightly less than one half of the observed Grade 6 classes (46%) and more than half of the observed Grades 7–11 teachers (62%) made connections to prior background knowledge throughout the lesson, and another 49% of Grade 6 and 35% of Grades 7–11 teachers demonstrated the strategy once or twice. This strategy was displayed most frequently in Grade 6 self-contained non-LC classes and LC classes (67% throughout the lesson in each setting) (see Tables E-5a and E-5b).

¹ A self-contained non-LC classroom is a self-contained classroom in a school that does not have a secondary LC.

Staff in nearly half of the observed Grade 6 classes (46%) and 19% of the Grades 7–11 classes made explicit connections among concrete, pictorial, and abstract concepts throughout the lesson. Staff in Grade 6 supported classes most frequently displayed this strategy throughout the lesson (54%), followed by self-contained non-LC Grade 6 classes (50%) (see Tables E-6a and E-6b). The majority of staff in the observed classes (92% in Grade 6 and 85% in Grades 7–11) did not demonstrate the use of technology such as a calculator, computer, Alphasmart, or Kurzweil. Given the time of year that the observations were conducted, this finding is not surprising. By the third quarter, it would be expected that staff had already demonstrated, and students had used the appropriate technology (see Tables E-7a and E-7b).

Staff in more than two thirds of the observed Grade 6 classes (68%) and nearly half of the observed Grades 7–11 classes (46%) used instructional strategies (e.g., manipulatives, drawings, demonstrations, think alouds, graphic organizers) to enhance instruction or promote student engagement throughout the lesson. Staff in another 27% of Grade 6 classes and 42% of Grades 7–11 classes did so once or twice. Staff in Grade 6 self-contained non-LC classes used the strategies most frequently (100% throughout the lesson), followed by Grade 6 co-taught classrooms (67% throughout the lesson) (see Tables E-8a and E-8b). Staff in 86% of the Grade 6 observed classes and 69% of the Grades 7–11 classes provided individual or small-group assistance to students throughout the lesson, and another 14% in Grade 6 and 27% in Grades 7–11 did so once or twice (see Tables E-9a and E-9b).

A majority of staff in the observed classes (84% in Grade 6 and 77% in Grades 7–11) provided frequent and specific feedback to students throughout the lesson, and another 16% in Grade 6 and 20% in Grades 7–11 provided feedback once or twice. This practice occurred in all of the Grade 6 self-contained non-LC classrooms (see Tables E-10a and E-10b). Staff in nearly two thirds (62%) of the observed Grade 6 classes and slightly more (69%) of the Grades 7–11 classes used appropriate wait time (at least three seconds after asking a question or after a student answers) throughout the lesson, with another 27% of Grade 6 and 23% of Grades 7–11 classes using appropriate wait time once or twice. Staff in all of the self-contained Grade 6 non-LC classes used this strategy more frequently than staff in other classrooms environments. Staff in less than half (46%) of the Grade 6 supported classes used appropriate wait time throughout the lesson (see Tables E-11a and E-11b).

With the inclusion of the transitioned students, it was expected that teachers would need to provide more differentiated instruction (e.g., different activities, formats, or outcomes). Only (27%) of the Grade 6 classes and 23% of the Grades 7–11 classes displayed any differentiated activities at any time during the lesson. Only 8% of the Grade 6 classes and none of the Grades 7–11 classes included differentiated activities throughout the lesson (see Tables E-12a and E-12b). Staff in more than half of the observed classes (62% in Grade 6 and 58% in Grades 7–11) asked questions at a variety of levels (e.g., recall, comprehension, inference) throughout the lesson, while another 32% in Grade 6 and 39% in Grades 7–11 did so once or twice. This practice occurred most frequently in Grade 6 self-contained non-LC classes (83% throughout the lesson) and least frequently in Grades 7–11 co-taught classes (33% throughout the lesson) (see Tables E-13a and E-13b). In more than half (54%) of the observed Grade 6 classes and less than half (43%) of the Grades 7–11 classes, strategies (e.g., writing process, decoding process, etc.)

were visually displayed in the room or verbally referenced by the teacher. This strategy occurred most frequently in Grade 6 self-contained non-LC classes (see Tables E-14a and E-14b).

Students in 43% of the observed Grade 6 classes and 23% of the Grades 7–11 classes worked in cooperative groups or pairs at some point during the lesson (either once or twice or throughout the lesson). Students in Grade 6 self-contained non-LC classes were in cooperative groups more frequently than students in other classroom environments (see Tables E-15a and E-15b). Students in less than half of the observed classes (40% in Grade 6 and 42% in Grades 7–11) used technology (e.g., calculator, Kurzweil, Alphasmart) at anytime during the lesson. Students in co-taught classes used technology more frequently than students in other classroom environments (see Tables E-16a and E-16b).

Students in nearly all of the observed classes (97% across all grade levels) used multiple modalities (e.g., verbal, writing, drawing, demonstration) to convey their learning. Students in 73% of the Grade 6 and 58% of the Grades 7–11 observed classes used multiple modalities throughout the lesson (see Tables E-17a and E-17b). Students in most of the observed classes (87% in Grade 6 and 81% in Grades 7–11) had opportunities for repeated practice at some point in the lesson (see Tables E-18a and E-18b). Students in most of the observed classes (89% in Grade 6 and 81% in Grades 7–11) used organizational strategies such as graphic organizers or agenda books during the lesson, with 43% in Grade 6 and 27% in Grades 7–11 using them throughout the lesson (see Tables E-19a and E-19b).

Other Classroom Supports

Classroom professionals responded to survey items regarding supports in their classrooms to make the curriculum accessible to transitioned students (see Table F-3). Most respondents indicated that extended time (89%) and preferential seating (82%) are available. Approximately two thirds (67%) offer small-group instruction. More than one half indicated the use of modified content of assignments or assessments (61%), pull-out for assessments (58%), a paraeducator assigned to the classroom (55%), and modified format for assignments or assessments (54%). Nearly half indicated the use of assistive technology (47%), pull-out for purposes other than assessments (42%), and specific reading or mathematics interventions such as Fastt Math or Corrective Reading (40%). Nearly one third of the respondents reported that they have a paraeducator assigned specifically to the transitioned students (31%), and materials rewritten at an appropriate reading level (29%).

Central Office Case Manager

All transitioned students were assigned a case manager from OSESS to advocate for students and provide a level of support appropriate to the needs of the family. According to a group interview with central office case managers, they also provide the following support to families:

- Proactively check-in with phone calls
- Share information on workshops, parent training opportunities
- Take parents on visits to investigate technology they can use at home

- Facilitate meetings with school staff
- Act as liaison when there are problems with school
- Attend IEP meetings

Another role of the central office case manager is to support school staff in meeting the needs of the transitioned students, primarily through interaction with the resource teacher for special education (RTSE). According to a group interview with central office case managers, they provide the following services to school staff:

- Build the capacity of school staff to support all students with disabilities
- Review resource room schedule
- Review student scheduling
- Suggest additional supports for students
- Review appropriateness of interventions
- Provide professional development
- Observe students
- Meet with grade-level teams
- Monitor grades
- Suggest and provide training on instructional strategies
- Suggest other resources available in MCPS
- Set up peer visits for teachers
- Conduct informal meetings to support teachers
- Assist in shifting belief systems about inclusion
- Maintain contact with school-based case manager
- Provide coaching on reading and mathematics interventions
- Work with school-based administrators when encountering roadblocks
- Monitor students' grades on Edline
- Contact teachers about students' grades

Evaluation Question: To what extent are inclusive practices being implemented as intended?

The data sources to address this evaluation question included surveys of school staff, and Office of Special Education and Student Services (OSESS) data on classroom environments for transitioned students. One intention of the phase out was to provide support for teachers with transitioned students in their classrooms, and to provide a continuum of support for students in a variety of classroom environments. Summer training was mandatory for Grade 6 general and special education teachers and paraeducators receiving transitioned students. Transitioned students in most schools were enrolled in a variety of classroom environments, including co-taught, supported, general education, and self-contained. Teachers of transitioned students also received support from their school's RTSE, leadership team and central office case manager. Additionally, most teachers felt prepared to meet the needs of their transitioned students. The following findings indicate that the extent of inclusive practices was partially implemented.

Professional Development for School Staff

A component of the proposal to phase out the secondary LC was for principals and staff to receive additional professional development to help them better support students with disabilities in their home and consortia schools.

OOD provided mandatory training for Grade 6 general and special education teachers who would be working with special education students in general education classrooms in a co-teaching arrangement. In July and August of 2007, 285 teachers attended the mandatory training on best practices for co-teaching. Additionally, more than 200 paraeducators attended training on co-teaching. These included teachers and paraeducators from all middle schools, including the middle schools that received transitioned students. An item on the survey of classroom professionals asked teachers if they had attended the mandatory summer training. Sixty-one of the 132 Grade 6 teachers who responded to the survey indicated that they did not attend the mandatory summer training; 71 of the Grade 6 teachers indicated that they did attend.

Some schools also offered professional development activities throughout the school year as needed by their staff with transitioned students in their classrooms. While none of these school-based professional development activities were mandatory, they indicate the issues that were relevant to individual schools with transitioned students. Survey respondents indicated from a list that they attended the following types of professional development activities (see Table F-4):

- Training on differentiation (38%)
- Training on assistive technology (34%)
- Training on inclusive practices (32%)
- Training on co-teaching (other than summer 2007) (31%)
- Training on behavioral strategies/techniques (29%)
- Training on disability characteristics (20%)
- Training on acceptance of students with disabilities (12%)

Table F-5 shows respondents' perceptions of their preparedness to meet the needs of the transitioned students in their classrooms. For all but one of the items listed, more than 90% of respondents indicated themselves to be either "well prepared" or "somewhat prepared" for the following:

- Implement co-teaching strategies in your classroom with transitioned students (94%)
- Understand the characteristics of the disabilities in your classroom with transitioned students (93%)
- Provide differentiated instruction in your classroom with transitioned students (91%)
- Implement behavioral strategies/techniques with transitioned students (91%)

Just over three fourths of those who responded (77%) indicated they were either "well prepared" or "somewhat prepared" to implement assistive technology in their classrooms (see Table F-5).

Other Supports for School Staff Receiving Transitioned Students

The support system for teachers comes from a variety of sources: the resource teacher for special education (RTSE), the school's leadership team, and the central office case manager assigned to each transitioned student. Table F-6 shows the types of supports provided by each, according to the survey respondents. (It should be noted that the intention was for the central office case manager to work with RTSEs to support teachers, rather than working directly with classroom teachers.) For most of the items listed, respondents indicated that the RTSE provided support more frequently than the school leadership team or the central office case manager. According to the responses, the central office case manager appears to be the least involved in supporting classroom professionals. For example, 73% (151 respondents) indicated that the RTSE attends IEP meetings, while 36% (75 respondents) indicated the central office case manager and 31% (64 respondents) indicated the school leadership team, respectively, attend IEP meetings (see Table F-6). (Parent responses indicated a different perspective, with 95% reporting that their central office case manager attends their child's IEP meetings. See Table G-12.)

Principals, RTSEs, and guidance counselors responded to open-ended survey items about supports provided by the school's leadership team and supports or training they themselves received to prepare for the inclusion of the transitioned students in their schools. Principals (38%) and RTSEs (40%) most frequently mentioned classroom observations with feedback as a support provided to teachers with transitioned students in their classrooms (see Table F-7). Approximately one third of counselors (33%) and RTSEs (36%), and 19% of principals mentioned that co-teaching training or support was provided to teachers. Nearly one third of RTSEs (32%), 24% of principals, and 13% of counselors mentioned technology training, such as Promethean boards and Kurzweil. One third of the principals (33%), one fifth of the RTSEs (20%) and 7% of the counselors mentioned monitoring implementation of accommodations as a support for teachers (see Table F-7 for open-ended responses).

Approximately one third of the principals (32%; 7 respondents) and RTSEs (35%; 8 respondents), and a majority of the counselors (71%; 17 respondents) indicated that they themselves received little or no support to prepare for the inclusion of the transitioned students. Nearly one half of the principals (46%; 10 respondents) and RTSEs (44%; 10 respondents), but only 13% of the counselors (3 respondents) indicated that they received support from a central office case manager or OSESS staff member (Table F-8).

More than two thirds of the responding classroom professionals (69%; 143 respondents) indicated that the amount of their planning time has stayed the same this year, while 24% (50 respondents) indicated less planning time. Only 7% (15 respondents) indicated that they were provided more planning time with the transitioned students in their classrooms.

Classroom Environments for Transitioned Students

Another goal of the phase out of the LCs was to address the high number of students in segregated settings. However, it was not a goal for all transitioned students necessarily to be

placed in all general education classes. Rather, the 70 students who transitioned from LCs to their home or consortia schools were offered a continuum of classroom environments to meet their needs. These environments included the following:

- Co-taught classes, with both a general and special education teacher
- Supported classes, with a general education teacher and a paraeducator
- Self-contained classes, with a special education teacher and all other students with IEPs
- General education classes, without support staff and other students with and without IEPs

Most of the transitioned students' course schedules included a mixture of several of these classroom environments. Table 3 provides a summary of the classroom environments for the transitioned students. Approximately half of the transitioned middle school students were enrolled in co-taught classrooms for English (54%), mathematics (56%), social studies (49%), and science (46%). Nearly half of the transitioned middle school students were in self-contained classrooms for English (42%), and approximately one third (32%) were in self-contained classrooms for mathematics. Most of the transitioned middle school students (84%) were enrolled in self-contained classrooms for reading.

The transitioned high school students were more evenly distributed across co-taught and self-contained classrooms for English and social studies (38% each in co-taught and self-contained for those subject areas). The majority of transitioned high school students (62%) were enrolled in self-contained classrooms for mathematics and reading.

Table 3
Classroom Environments for Transitioned Students

Subject Area	% of Students in Co-Taught Classes	% of Students in Supported Classes	% of Students in General Education Classes	% of Students in Self-Contained Classes
Middle School Students (N=57)				
English	54	4	0	42
Mathematics	56	12	0	32
Social Studies	49	21	10	16
Science	46	33	14	7
Reading	7	5	4	84
High School Students (N=13)				
English	38	8	15	38
Mathematics	15	0	23	62
Social Studies	38	8	15	38
Science	23	23	0	8
Reading	0	8	8	62

Note. Not all students are enrolled in all subjects. Therefore, some percentages may not add to 100.

Evaluation Question: What impact has the initiative had on the delivery of special education services in receiving secondary schools?

Data sources to address this evaluation question included classroom observations, surveys of school staff, and parent surveys. A major component of the transition was the increased

implementation of co-teaching in the schools receiving transitioned students. Increased differentiation was expected, due to the inclusion of the transitioned students and expected increase in the variety of students' learning needs. Additionally, transitioned students received a 30-day periodic IEP review at the beginning of the school year. The following findings indicate that co-teaching and differentiation are in the beginning stages of implementation, and that parents' experiences at the 30-day IEP review meetings were positive.

Co-teaching

Receiving schools were encouraged to use a co-teaching model for classrooms that included transitioned students. A co-teaching classroom has two certified teachers—a general education teacher and a special education teacher—not a certified teacher supported by a paraeducator. However, some co-taught classrooms utilize paraeducator support as well. Mandatory training was provided in summer 2007 for Grade 6 general and special education teachers on co-teaching. Training on co-teaching was not mandated for teachers in other grades who received transitioned students in their classrooms. (See Table 1 for a summary of co-teaching strategies addressed in the summer training.)

Of the 18 Grade 6 classrooms observed as co-teaching environments, half (50%) displayed support teaching (one teacher teaches the lesson while the other provides assistance and feedback to students) as their only co-teaching model. While this model is considered in MCPS to be an appropriate starting point for co-teaching, it is expected that more teachers will move beyond this model to a more equitable distribution of responsibility in co-taught classes.

Although co-teachers relied heavily on support teaching (with one teacher primarily responsible for delivering instruction) in the observed classrooms, the strategies that co-teachers used showed that most teachers were involved in providing assistance and feedback to students. In nearly all of the observed Grade 6 co-taught classrooms (94%), both teachers had at least some involvement in checking for understanding, providing feedback to students, and responding to students' requests for assistance. In most of the observed Grade 6 co-taught classrooms (83%), both teachers demonstrated knowledge of the lesson's content, and students asked both teachers for assistance. In nearly three fourths (72%) of the co-taught Grade 6 classrooms, both teachers shared responsibilities for classroom management (see Table E-20).

The distribution of duties in Grade 6 co-taught classrooms was less equitable in the delivery of instruction. For example, both teachers were involved in delivering instruction in just half of the observed co-taught classes (50%). Only 22% of the observed Grade 6 co-taught classrooms displayed both teachers' names in the classroom or on the door (see Table E-20).

Teaching strategies

Survey data also addressed changes in teaching strategies to meet the needs of transitioned students. Respondents to the survey of classroom professionals were asked how they had modified their teaching strategies to meet the needs of the transitioned students (see Table F-9). Approximately two thirds (66%) of the responding classroom professionals indicated that they

modified the pace of their instruction. More than half indicated that they increased differentiation (61%), increased work with small groups (59%), increased reteaching activities (54%), and varied modalities for delivering instruction (51%). Fewer than half (44%) responded that they co-taught with another general or special education teacher. More than one third increased the use of assistive technology (36%) and increased hands-on activities (36%). Fewer than one fourth (22%) increased their use of instructional technology such as a Promethean board.

Other school-level supports

Some principals ($N=23$), RTSEs ($N=24$), and guidance counselors ($N=26$) responded to an open-ended survey item about supports added to the school to meet the needs of transitioned students (see Table F-10). Their responses were grouped by topic and analyzed. Principals (30%) and guidance counselors (19%) most frequently indicated that the most supportive addition was paraeducator time. RTSEs most frequently mentioned the addition of assistive technology and a central office case manager (29% each). More than one third of guidance counselors (35%), 17% of RTSEs, and 13% of principals responded that there were no new resources or supports. The data in Table F-11 indicate some additional changes in the schools, with the inclusion of the transitioned students.

Parents' Participation in IEP Meetings

All of the fall 2007 parent survey respondents (i.e., parents of transitioned students only) reported that they attended their child's spring 2007 annual IEP review meeting and the fall 2007 30-day review meeting. Almost all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about their spring 2007 annual IEP review meeting (see Table G-1):

- The meeting time and location were convenient for me to attend (100% agreement)
- I had enough information about my child's progress to fully participate in the meeting (89% agreement)
- I participated in the development of my child's IEP (e.g., goals and objectives, accommodations) (96% agreement)
- I was treated as a respected member of the IEP team (100% agreement)
- My opinions about my child's needs were valued (92% agreement)
- There was enough time during the meeting to address the IEP goals (96% agreement)
- I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date (92% agreement)

Almost all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about their fall 2007 30-day periodic review meeting (see Table G-2):

- The meeting time and location were convenient for me to attend (100% agreement)
- I had enough information about my child's progress to fully participate in the meeting (96% agreement)
- I participated in the review of my child's IEP (goals and objectives, accommodations) (100% agreement)

- I was treated as a respected member of the IEP team (96% agreement)
- My opinions about my child's needs were valued (96% agreement)
- School staff communicated the status of my child's progress (100% agreement)
- There was enough time during the meeting to address the IEP goals (96% agreement)
- I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date (91% agreement)

The information in Table 4 compares respondents' agreement with statements about their child's spring 2007 annual IEP review meeting and the fall 2007 30-day periodic review meeting. Only one area changed more than 5 percentage points. Agreement with the statement, "I had enough information about my child's progress to fully participate in the meeting," increased from spring to fall.

Table 4
Respondents' Experiences With Their Child's Annual IEP Review Meeting
(Spring 2007) and 30-Day Periodic Review Meeting (Fall 2007)

Respondents' experiences	% of Respondents Agreeing With Each Statement (N=26)	
	Spring 2007 Annual IEP Review Meeting	Fall 2007 30-Day Periodic Review Meeting
The meeting time and location were convenient for me to attend	100.0	100.0
I had enough information about my child's progress to fully participate in the meeting.	89.5	95.7
I participated in the development/review of my child's IEP (goals and objectives, accommodations).	96.2	100.0
I was treated as a respected member of the IEP team.	100.0	95.7
My opinions about my child's needs were valued.	92.3	95.7
School staff communicated the status of my child's progress.	NA	100.0
There was enough time during the meeting to address the IEP goals.	96.2	95.7
I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date.	92.0	90.9

NA: No comparable question was asked.

Evaluation Question: What impact has the phase out of the secondary LCs had on students' academic outcomes?

Data on students' academic outcomes should be interpreted with caution. First, course grades are based on appropriate modifications to assessments, content, instructional strategies, and assistive technology. Additionally, the Modified-MSA (Mod-MSA), which is designed for students whose regular coursework is modified significantly to address their disabilities, was not available from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in the spring of 2008. The Mod-MSA will be available for the first time in spring of 2009 for middle school students with

disabilities. However, these students took the MSA which was not an appropriate assessment for reporting their outcomes.

As with the implementation components, the analysis of student outcome data indicated both success and challenges. Some of the following tables show results for fewer than 48 transitioned students and fewer than 560 comparison students because they exclude students without the outcome measure or measures of prior performance.

Course Grades

The performance of transitioned students was stronger than or equal to comparison students for course grades. Transitioned students were more likely than comparison students to earn a C or above in Grade 6 English, science, and social studies (Table 5). These differences were statistically significant ($p < .05$) for English and social studies and approached standard levels of statistical significance for science ($p = .07$). Based on effect sizes, the differences between the two groups for each of the three courses was large enough to be of practical significance to educators.

Table 5
2007–2008 End-of-Year Grades of A, B, or C by Course and Student Group

Course	Student group				Effect size
	Transitioned		Comparison		
	N	% A, B, or C	N	% A, B, or C	
English 6*	47	85.0	508	78.8	0.55
Science 6	45	89.2	491	78.8	0.43
Social Studies 6**	45	86.8	471	73.6	0.75
Math 6 (Math A)	47	78.5	511	73.9	0.14

* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

For Math 6, the difference between transitioned and comparison students in the likelihood of earning a C or above was not statistically significant ($p > .05$) and was too small to be useful in an educational setting (Table 5). Appendix H provides more detail on course grades.

MAP-R RIT Scores

Transitioned students showed growth in their MAP-R RIT scores from Grade 5 to Grade 6 (Table 6). The MAP-R RIT scores of transitioned students increased during Grade 6; the difference in their RIT scores between spring 2007 (mean=175.1) and spring 2008 (mean=182.1) was statistically significant ($t(38)=3.6$, $p < .001$). The difference between transitioned and comparison students in MAP-R RIT scores was not statistically significant (Table 6).

Table 6
Spring 2008 Standardized Scores by Student Group

Test	Student group				Effect size
	Transitioned		Comparison		
	Mean	Group N	Mean	Group N	
MAP-R RIT scores	182.1	39	198.0	505	-0.24
MSA mathematics scale scores*	375.9	47	386.6	521	-0.76
MSA reading scale scores**	365.9	47	381.8	521	-0.54

* $t(562) = -5.02, p < .001$. ** $t(561) = -3.56, p < .001$.

MSA Scores

Transitioned students had lower MSA scores than comparison students (Table 6). These differences were statistically significant and large enough to be practically significant for both mathematics and reading. Further analysis revealed that a smaller proportion of transitioned than comparison students were proficient or advanced on the MSA tests in mathematics and in reading (Table 7).

Table 7
2008 MSA Proficiency Levels by Subject and Student Group

Level	Subject and student group			
	Mathematics		Reading	
	Transitioned (<i>N</i> =47)	Comparison (<i>N</i> =521)	Transitioned (<i>N</i> =47)	Comparison (<i>N</i> =521)
Basic	100.0	67.2	80.9	47.4
Proficient	0.0	31.5	19.1	45.7
Advanced	0.0	1.3	0.0	7.1

The findings on student outcomes indicate a discrepancy, for both the comparison and transitioned students, between course grades and MSA performance. No information was available to explain the relationship.

Evaluation Question: To what extent are parents and school staff satisfied with the implementation of the initiative?

Data from parent surveys and surveys of school staff were used to address this evaluation question. Parents expressed satisfaction with their children's experiences in the transition and the services they received from their central office case manager. School staff expressed needs for greater support for the transitioned students. The following findings reflect the satisfaction of parents and school staff.

Parents' Satisfaction with Their Children's School Experiences

In most areas, parents' satisfaction remained high from fall 2007 to spring 2008. Table 8 displays the satisfaction of parents of transitioned students for various aspects of their children's school experience. (Table G-3 provides summary data for all groups of surveyed parents. Tables G-4 through G-7 provide complete survey data for all parents.) From fall 2007 to spring 2008, parents' satisfaction remained relatively constant (within 10 percentage points) on most survey items. On three items, parents' satisfaction decreased at least 10 percentage points over time: "availability of technology to support your child's needs" (from 88% to 68%); "Staff's understanding of your child's social/ emotional needs" (from 88% to 78%); and "appropriateness of assessments" (from 83% to 73%). (One additional item, "your child's transportation to and from school," also decreased over time by more than 10 percentage points [from 96% to 83%]. However, in the spring 2008 survey, the qualifier "determined by the IEP" was added and the item received many more responses of "Don't know/not applicable.")

At both survey times, parents of transitioned students expressed the greatest satisfaction with "opportunities for parental involvement and communication" and "child's safety at school," with each of those items rated at greater than 90% satisfaction in both fall 2007 and spring 2008. On the fall 2007 survey, parents of transitioned students expressed the least satisfaction with "staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs" (79%). In spring 2008, parents expressed the least satisfaction with "availability of technology to support your child's needs" (68%), followed by "appropriateness of assessments" (73%).

Table 8
Parents of Transitioned Students' Satisfaction
With Their Child's Current School Experience

Please indicate your satisfaction with each of the following, during the current school year.	% Parents of Transitioned Students ^a	
	Fall 2007 (N=26)	Spring 2008 (N=24)
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff	96	96
Your child's transportation to and from school, determined by the IEP	96	83
Your child's overall adjustment to this school	92	88
Your child's safety at school	91	96
Availability of technology to support your child's needs	88	68
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress	88	79
Staff's understanding of your child's social/ emotional needs	88	78
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives	87	83
Accessibility (e.g., time, format, physical layout) of middle/high school orientation (over the summer)	83	N/A
Appropriateness of assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, assignments)	83	73
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum	83	88
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs	83	83
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs	83	83
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch)	83	91
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs	79	78

^a Percentage of parents that indicated "Satisfied" or "Very Satisfied."

Each group of parents was asked to indicate areas in which their children had improved, stayed the same, or declined during the school year (Table 9). In seven of the eight indicators, more parents of transitioned students reported improvement than did parents of current LC students. On the spring 2008 survey, parents of other students receiving special education services in the receiving schools indicated improvement by more than 10 percentage points in the areas of "relationship with classmates" and "participation in extracurricular activities" compared with parents of transitioned students (Table 9). (Tables G-8 through G-11 provide complete survey data for all groups of surveyed parents.)

Table 9
Parents' Reports of Students' Improvement

Indicate changes you have noticed in your child this school year:	% of	% of	% of Parents	% of Parents
	Parents of Transitioned Students: Fall 2007 ^a N=24	Parents of Transitioned Students: Spring 2008 ^a N=24	of Current Learning Center Students: Spring 2008 ^a N=34	of Other Students Receiving Special Education Services: Spring 2008 ^a N=121
Motivation to learn	65.2	50.0	41.2	55.8
Confidence in abilities	50.0	54.2	41.2	59.7
Relationship with teachers	56.5	41.7	27.3	46.2
Academic performance	41.7	45.8	36.4	54.6
Relationship with classmates	33.3	41.7	26.5	51.8
Independence during the school day	62.5	45.8	52.9	53.3
Attendance	47.8	45.8	23.5	40.8
Participation in extracurricular activities	N/A	25.0	11.8	35.8

^a Percent of parents that indicated "Improved."

Parents' Satisfaction with Case Manager Support

All transitioned students were assigned a central office case manager to serve as a liaison between MCPS and the school, advocate for their needs, and provide resources to parents and school staff. Since fewer than 20 parents responded to the series of items about the case manager, these findings should be interpreted with caution.

Nearly all of the responding parents (95%) indicated that their central office case manager helps them to work with the school when there are problems, and attends their child's IEP meetings. A large majority agreed that their case manager responds to concerns in a timely fashion (88%), provides information about resources to help their child (83%), and provides a level of support that meets their needs (83%). Nearly three fourths of responding parents (72%) agreed that their case manager contacts them to find out how their child is doing in school (Table 10). (Table G-12 provides complete survey data on satisfaction with case manager support.)

Table 10
Parents' Satisfaction with Case Manager Support

Survey Items	% Agreement ^a
Case manager contacts me to find out how my child is doing in school (N=18) ^b	72
Case manager provides me with information about resources to help my child (N=18) ^b	83
Case manager helps me to work with the school when there are problems (N=19) ^b	95
Case manager attends my child's IEP meetings (N=19) ^b	95
Case manager responds to my concerns in a timely fashion (N=17) ^b	88
Case manager provides a level of support that meets my needs (N=18) ^b	83

^a Percentage that indicated "Agree" or "Strongly Agree."

^b Not all respondents answered each of these items. Therefore, the Ns vary.

Classroom Professionals' Satisfaction with Support from Central Office Case Manager, RTSE, and School Leadership Team

Classroom professionals answered survey questions about the types of support they received from the central office case manager, their school's leadership team, and their RTSE to assist them with the transition of former LC students into their classrooms. The types of support received are discussed above. Classroom professionals were most satisfied by the support they received from their RTSE, with approximately two thirds (66%) indicating that they were "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied." More than half (58%) expressed satisfaction with support provided by their schools' leadership teams; less than half (45%) were satisfied with support received by the central office case manager (Table 11, Table F-12). However, it should be noted that the intention was for the central office case manager to work with RTSEs to support teachers.

Table 11
Classroom Professionals' Satisfaction with Supports Provided by the RTSE,
School Leadership Team, and Central Office Case Manager

Overall satisfaction with the support received from:	% Satisfied ^a (N=207)
RTSE	66
School leadership team	58
Central office case manager	45

^a Percentage that responded "Very satisfied" or "Satisfied."

Other Issues Facing Teachers and Students

Some school staff commented on open-ended survey items about the most significant issues facing teachers and students, as well as the greatest successes of the transition. When asked

about successes, they most frequently mentioned academic achievement and social acceptance/making friends (see Table F-13).

When asked about the most significant issues facing teachers and paraeducators in their classrooms with transitioned students, school staff most frequently commented on the students' being below-grade level academically (22% to 36%) and the inappropriateness of the curriculum (25% to 28%) (see Table F-14). Similarly, a majority of school staff who offered open-ended comments mentioned that being academically below-grade level was the most significant issue facing the students (52% to 69%), followed by social issues (35% to 45%) (see Table F-15). Furthermore, school staff answering the open-ended items most frequently mentioned the need for greater individual or small-group support (19% to 48%), and greater academic needs (33% to 40%) as the ways in which the needs of the transitioned students differed significantly from other students receiving special education services in their schools (see Table F-16). (Some parents also commented on what has been going well and not going well with their children. However, because of the small number of respondents to the open-ended survey items, those items are only summarized in Tables G-13 and G-14, and not reported as findings.)

Evaluation Question: What changes have been made in the secondary LCs to improve outcomes for the remaining students?

Baseline data were not available to measure changes across time in the secondary LCs. The data collected and reported here provide information on the current status of classroom strategies and parent satisfaction in the secondary LCs, and should be interpreted accordingly.

Data sources to address this question included classroom observations and parent surveys. The findings indicate similarities in classroom strategies and parent satisfaction between LCs and schools receiving transitioned students.

Observations were conducted in LC classrooms. Table 12 displays the strategies observed in the secondary LC classrooms. The strategies displayed most frequently in LC classrooms were staff's presentation or demonstration of multiple modalities to students and appropriate wait time (each observed throughout the lesson in 83% of the classrooms). In nearly as many classrooms, staff provided individual or small-group assistance and frequent and specific feedback to students, and students used multiple modalities (each observed throughout the lesson in 75% of the classrooms). In two thirds (67%) of the observed LC classrooms, staff made connections to prior learning and asked questions at a variety of levels, and students had the opportunity for repeated practice throughout the lesson. In just over half of the observed LC classrooms (58%), staff used instructional strategies to enhance instruction or promote student engagement throughout the lesson. In fewer than half of the observed LC classrooms, students used graphic organizers or other organizational strategies, and staff made explicit connections among concrete, pictorial, and abstract concepts throughout the lesson (42% each).

In two thirds of the observed classrooms (67%), strategies (writing process, problem-solving process, decoding process, etc.) were not displayed in the room or verbally referenced by the teacher, nor did students use technology. There was no student work in collaborative groups or

pairs in 75% of the observed LC classrooms. The majority of staff in the observed LC classrooms (83%) did not demonstrate the use of technology. However, given the time of year that the observations were conducted, this finding is not surprising. By the third quarter, it would be expected that staff had already demonstrated, and students had used the appropriate technology. Differentiated activities were not observed in most of the LC classrooms (92%).

Table 12
Strategies Observed in Secondary LC Classrooms (N=12)

Observed Strategies	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Staff present or demonstrate multiple modalities to students (e.g., written, oral, demonstrations, movement, models)	0	17	83
Staff use appropriate wait time (at least 3 seconds after asking a question or after a student answers)	8	8	83
Staff provide individual or small group assistance to students	0	25	75
Staff provide frequent and specific feedback to students	8	17	75
Students use multiple modalities (e.g., verbal, writing, drawing, demonstration)	8	17	75
Staff make connections to prior learning or background knowledge	8	25	67
Staff ask questions at a variety of levels (e.g., recall, comprehension, inference)	8	25	67
Students have the opportunity for repeated practice (may be in small groups, differentiated instruction)	25	8	67
Staff use instructional strategies (e.g., manipulatives, drawings, demonstrations, think alouds, graphic organizers) to enhance instruction or promote student engagement	17	25	58
Students use graphic organizers or other organizational strategies (e.g., webs, color coding, agenda books)	8	50	42
Staff make explicit connections among concrete, pictorial, and abstract concepts	25	33	42
Strategies (e.g., writing process, decoding process) are visually displayed in the room or verbally referenced by the teacher	67	17	17
Students use technology (e.g., calculator, Alphasmart, Kurzweil, computer)	67	17	17
Students work in cooperative groups or pairs	75	8	17
Staff demonstrate use of technology (e.g., calculator, computer, Alphasmart, Kurzweil)	83	8	8
Staff provide differentiated activities (e.g., different activities, formats, or outcomes to meet individual learning needs)	92	8	0

Parents of current LC students who responded to the survey indicated their satisfaction with various aspects of their children's school experience (see Table G-3). Nearly all responding parents expressed satisfaction with their child's safety at school (94%), their child's independence at transitions during the school day (94%), and staff's understanding of their child's social/ emotional needs (91%). A large majority also expressed satisfaction with the following:

- Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives (88%)
- Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs (88%)
- Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs (88%)
- Your child's overall adjustment to this school (88%)
- Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs (85%)
- Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff (85%)
- Your child's transportation to and from school, determined by the IEP (85%)
- Staff's expectations for your child's achievement (84%)
- Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress (82%)
- Availability of technology to support your child's needs, determined by the IEP (82%)

LC parent satisfaction was lowest for the following items, although still rated as satisfied by a majority:

- Appropriateness of assessments (79%)
- Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum, determined by the IEP (74%)
- Opportunities for your child to participate in general education classes (74%)
- Your child's opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (71%)
- Opportunities for your child to work on social skills at school, determined by the IEP (62%)

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the findings from multiple data collection activities.

To what extent does the initiative support former elementary and secondary LC students' and candidates' access to a more inclusive educational setting?

Findings about classroom strategies that support students' access to a more inclusive educational setting were gleaned from classroom observations and survey responses. Teachers were observed frequently using multiple modalities in their teaching and, likewise, students responded and communicated their learning with multiple modalities, including verbal, writing, or demonstrations. Most classroom professionals indicated that extended time and preferential seating were available in their classrooms, and approximately two thirds indicated small-group instruction was available, as well. More than half of the respondents indicated that a paraeducator was assigned to their classroom, with approximately one third having a paraeducator assigned specifically to support the transitioned students.

Classroom professionals commented that differentiated instruction and modified materials are essential because the transitioned students lag behind their peers academically, and do not have many of the background skills and knowledge needed to access the curriculum successfully. While more than half of the classroom professionals indicated increased differentiation as a modification to their teaching strategies, very little differentiation was observed in the classrooms. Cooperative group work among students was similarly absent.

In addition to classroom supports, a central office case manager was assigned to each transitioned student. The role of the central office case manager was to advocate for the student, and provide the family with support in meeting their child's needs at school. (Parents' satisfaction with the central office case manager support is discussed below.)

To what extent are inclusive practices being implemented as intended?

A major effort to train Grade 6 general and special education teachers on co-teaching methods was undertaken in summer 2007. OOD provided mandatory training for Grade 6 general and special education teachers who would be working with special education students in general education classrooms in a co-teaching arrangement. Approximately one third of the classroom professional survey respondents indicated that they participated in additional training on co-teaching during the 2007–2008 school year. While nearly all respondents felt at least somewhat prepared to implement co-teaching strategies, these strategies were not observed beyond the initial level of support teaching.

In addition to professional development, other supports were provided to teachers of transitioned students by the central office case manager, RTSE, and school leadership team. These supports included participating in IEP meetings, providing specific information about a student, and serving as a liaison with parents. These supports were most frequently provided by the RTSE.

Transitioned students were distributed across a variety of classroom environments, offering a continuum of support. Approximately half of the middle school transitioned students had the majority of their classes in co-taught environments, and most were in self-contained classes for reading. Among the high school transitioned students, the majority attended self-contained classes for reading and mathematics, while approximately equal numbers were in co-taught or self-contained classes for other core subjects.

What impact has the initiative had on the delivery of special education services in receiving secondary schools?

One strategy for supporting teachers and transitioned students was the expanded implementation of the co-teaching model, in which both a special and general education teacher share responsibility for planning and delivering instruction. In the observed classrooms with a co-teaching arrangement, most teams used a support teaching model, in which one teacher is primarily responsible for delivering instruction (typically the general educator), while the other provides assistance or monitors students (typically the special educator). While this is an appropriate starting point, it was expected that co-teaching teams would have moved beyond this model to a more equitable distribution of instructional roles. However, co-teachers were more equitably involved in checking for student understanding and providing feedback to students.

What impact has the phase out of the secondary LCs had on students' academic outcomes?

Data on students' academic outcomes should be interpreted with caution. First, course grades are based on appropriate modifications to assessments, content, instructional strategies, and assistive technology. Additionally, the Mod-MSA, which is designed for students whose regular coursework is modified significantly to address their disabilities, was not available from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) in the spring of 2008. The Mod-MSA will be available for the first time in spring of 2009 for middle school students with disabilities. However, these students took the MSA which was not an appropriate assessment for reporting their outcomes.

The academic achievement of the Grade 6 transitioned students compared favorably to similar students with respect to course grades; their likelihood of earning a C or above was equal to or greater than that of comparison students for four core courses. Further, the transitioned students demonstrated improvement in reading, as indicated by the MAP-R RIT scores.

However, the achievement of transitioned students on standardized tests was weaker than that of students with similar disabilities. Their mean scores were lower than comparison students on the MAP-R reading test and on the MSA tests in mathematics and reading. Also, a higher percentage of transitioned than comparison students scored at the basic level on each MSA test. The discrepancy between course grades and MSA performance existed for both transitioned and comparison students, but no information was available to explain the discrepancy.

To what extent are parents and school staff satisfied with the implementation of the initiative?

Parents who responded to the survey reported a high degree of satisfaction with issues related to their children's school experiences. On the spring 2008 survey, parents' satisfaction was highest with "opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff," "child's safety at school," and "child's independence at transitions during the school day." The areas of lowest satisfaction were the availability of technology to meet their children's needs and the appropriateness of assessments. Additionally, satisfaction with these two items fell over time for the parents of transitioned students, from fall 2007 to spring 2008.

Parents responding to the survey also expressed satisfaction with the support received from their central office case manager, most notably with help dealing with the school when there are problems and attendance at IEP meetings. Classroom professionals were less satisfied with services from the central office case manager, reporting lower satisfaction than with the supports provided by the RTSE or school leadership team. (It should be noted that the intention was for the central office case manager to work with RTSEs to support teachers, rather than working directly with classroom teachers.)

What changes have been made in the secondary LCs to improve outcomes for the remaining students?

Although data were not available to determine the status of classroom strategies or parent satisfaction prior to the transition, classroom observation and parent survey data can be compared between the current LCs and the schools that received transitioned students. Staff in LC classrooms more frequently used appropriate wait time than staff in other types of observed classrooms, and students in LC classrooms more frequently used organizational strategies such as graphic organizers. Similarities among LC classrooms and classrooms with transitioned students included frequent use of multiple modalities by teachers and a lack of differentiated activities. Although very few parents of LC students responded to the survey, they expressed a high level of satisfaction with their children's school experiences.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the evaluation findings:

- Continue ongoing support and training for co-teaching, perhaps including content integration and modeled lessons. Consider assigning special education teachers to a specific subject area so they may become proficient in the content and thus a more equal partner in delivering instruction. Structure planning time so that co-teachers can plan instruction together.
- Conduct follow-up assessments with teachers who attended the co-teaching training in summer 2007. Determine if teachers needed additional support or resources once they began using co-teaching strategies in their classrooms that they may not have anticipated at the end of the summer training.
- Promote efforts to improve differentiation. Very few differentiated activities were observed, although teachers indicated that they had increased differentiation to meet the needs of the transitioned students in their classrooms. Comments from some school staff indicated that the composition of their classrooms with transitioned students now included a wider range of abilities to access the curriculum. Therefore, differentiated activities are more important than ever.
- Provide support for guidance counselors. The majority of guidance counselors who responded to the survey indicated that they received little or no support with the arrival of the transitioned students. They would be especially helpful in addressing the social/emotional needs of transitioning students, such as provision of social skills groups.
- Continue to provide opportunities for parents of transitioned students and students remaining in the secondary LCs to share their concerns with MCPS staff. Parents expressed high satisfaction with the opportunities for involvement and communication at the school level. Additionally, parents of transitioned students expressed satisfaction with the services provided by their central office case manager. It is important to hear from a larger number of parents of both transitioned and remaining LC students to be able to best meet their needs and determine areas of improvement to promote students' success.
- Continue to provide professional development to teachers who have transitioned students in their classrooms. Encourage job-embedded professional development that addresses individual student and staff needs.
- Reexamine the relationship between the state assessment scores and course grades after the Mod-MSA, a more appropriate assessment for this population of students with disabilities, is administered to middle school students for the first time in spring of 2009.

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Appendix A

Developmental Interview Protocols

**Evaluation and Monitoring of the Implementation of the
Transition of the Secondary Learning Centers
School Staff Interview Protocol
2007–2008 School Year**

Interviewee Name/Title: _____

School: _____

Name of Interviewer: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Introduction

The Department of Shared Accountability (DSA) is conducting an evaluation on the implementation of the transition of the Secondary Learning Centers. The focus this year is on the implementation of the transition, and ways in which improvements can be made to increase student success and support teachers.

This interview is an opportunity for you to provide input on your school's experiences in implementing the transition. The information you provide in this interview will help to inform us about what issues should be addressed in surveys of school staff, parents, and MCPS central office staff who are supporting the implementation of the transition.

The interview is designed to take about an hour. If you need to stop me at any point, we can make plans to continue at another time.

I have some specific questions for you, but I also want you to add whatever you feel is important. Neither you nor your school will be identified in any discussion or reporting of the interview data.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Part I – Support for Transitioning Students

I-1. What types of supports do students receive who have transitioned to your school from an elementary or secondary learning center? *(Probe for supports such as: MCPS and school-based case managers, instructional materials, assistive technology, alternative formats, support staff, peer education, adaptive P.E.)*

I-2. Which of these supports have been added specifically to meet the needs of the transitioning students in your school?

I-3. Are there any additional supports, not currently available in your school, which you believe would benefit the transitioning students? If so, what are they? What have been the barriers to obtaining them?

Part II – Implementation of Inclusive Practices

II-1. What professional development did your school's staff receive over the summer to support inclusive practices for the transitioning students? *(Probe for PD for general and special education teachers, paraeducators, counselors, other special education team members.)*

II-2. What job-embedded professional development has occurred during the school year to help staff support inclusive practices for transitioning students?

II-3. What PD activities (including during the summer and during the school year) have been most helpful to staff? What has been least helpful?

II-4. What additional PD do school staff still need? Have staff members made specific requests for PD to help them support the transitioning students? If so, are there plans for additional PD to meet those requests?

II-5. What has MCPS (central office) done to assist your school in supporting inclusive practices for the transitioning students? *(Probe for specific requests made to MCPS central office; how those requests were resolved; need for additional support from MCPS?)*

Part III – Impact on Delivery of Special Education Services

III-1. In what ways have teachers changed their instructional strategies (including integration of assistive technology) to meet the needs of the transitioning students in their classrooms?

III-2. Has the transition impacted the number of classrooms co-taught by a general and special educator, supported by a paraeducator, or self-contained? If so, how has this impacted scheduling, class size, planning time, staffing issues?

III-3. Have there been changes in the composition of the special education team (e.g., counselors, related service providers)? If so, what has changed? How did you determine the need for such changes? If not, what changes do you think are warranted?

III-4. Are there any other ways in which the delivery of special education services have changed as a result of the transition?

Part IV –Parent and Staff Satisfaction

IV-1. What feedback have you received from parents about the implementation of the transition, including:

- Opportunities for parent engagement and communication
- Support for transitioning students, including access to appropriate instructional and assistive technology
- Transitioning students' access to the general education classroom and the comprehensive Core of Courses
- Transitioning students' overall adjustment to your school
- Parents' understanding of the transition
- Other areas of satisfaction or dissatisfaction

IV-2. Are school staff satisfied with the support they receive to help transitioning students to be successful? If yes, what supports have been most helpful to them? If no, what additional supports do they feel they need?

Part V – Summarizing

V-1. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about the implementation of the transition, that I haven't already asked?

**Evaluation and Monitoring of the Implementation of the
Transition of the Secondary Learning Centers
MCPS Central Office Staff Interview Protocol
2007–2008 School Year**

Interviewee Name/Title: _____

Department: _____

Name of Interviewer: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Introduction

The Department of Shared Accountability (DSA) is conducting an evaluation on the implementation of the transition of the Secondary Learning Centers. The focus this year is on the implementation of the transition, and ways in which improvements can be made to increase student success and support teachers.

This interview is an opportunity for you to provide input on your experiences in implementing the transition. The information you provide in this interview will help to inform us about what issues should be addressed in surveys of school staff, parents, and MCPS central office staff who are supporting the implementation of the transition.

The interview is designed to take about 45 minutes. If you need to stop me at any point, we can make plans to continue at another time.

I have some specific questions for you, but I also want you to add whatever you feel is important. You will be identified in any discussion or reporting of the interview data.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Part I – Support for Transitioning Students

I-1. What types of supports are available to students who have transitioned to their home or consortia schools from an elementary or secondary learning center? (Probe for supports such as: MCPS and school-based case managers, instructional materials, assistive technology, alternative formats, support staff, peer education, adaptive P.E.)

I-2. Are there any additional supports, not currently available to transitioning students, which you believe would benefit the transitioning students? If so, what are they? What have been the barriers to obtaining them?

Part II – Implementation of Inclusive Practices

II-1. What professional development did schools' staff receive over the summer to support inclusive practices for the transitioning students? (Probe for PD for general and special education teachers, paraeducators, counselors, other special education team members.)

II-2. What job-embedded professional development has occurred during the school year to help staff support inclusive practices for transitioning students?

II-3. What additional PD do school staff still need? Have staff members made specific requests for PD to help them support the transitioning students? If so, are there plans for additional PD to meet those requests?

II-4. What has MCPS (central office) done to assist schools in supporting inclusive practices for the transitioning students? (Probe for specific requests made to MCPS central office; how those requests were resolved; need for additional support from MCPS?)

Part III – Impact on Delivery of Special Education Services

III-1. In what ways have teachers changed their instructional strategies (including integration of assistive technology) to meet the needs of the transitioning students in their classrooms?

III-2. Has the transition impacted the number of classrooms co-taught by a general and special educator, supported by a paraeducator, or self-contained? If so, how has this impacted scheduling, class size, planning time, staffing issues?

III-3. Have there been changes in the composition of the special education team (e.g., counselors, related service providers)? If so, what has changed? How did you determine the need for such changes? If not, what changes do you think are warranted?

III-4. Are there any other ways in which the delivery of special education services have changed as a result of the transition?

Part IV –Parent and Staff Satisfaction

IV-1. What feedback have you received from parents about the implementation of the transition, including:

- Opportunities for parent engagement and communication
- Support for transitioning students, including access to appropriate instructional and assistive technology
- Transitioning students' access to the general education classroom and the comprehensive Core of Courses
- Transitioning students' overall adjustment to your school
- Parents' understanding of the transition
- Other areas of satisfaction or dissatisfaction

IV-2. Are school staff satisfied with the support they receive to help transitioning students to be successful? If yes, what supports have been most helpful to them? If no, what additional supports do they feel they need?

Part V – Summarizing

V-1. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about the implementation of the transition, that I haven't already asked?

Questions for MCPS Case Managers

1. How do case managers work with schools and with families to support transitioning students?
2. In what ways have teachers changed their instructional strategies (including integration of assistive technology) to meet the needs of the transitioning students in their classrooms?
3. What else do you see the schools doing to support inclusive practices for transitioning students?
4. Are there any other ways in which the delivery of special education services has changed as a result of the transition?
5. What feedback have you heard from parents about the implementation of the transition?

Appendix B

Classroom Observation Protocol

Learning Centers Transition Classroom Observation Protocol Spring 2008

Observer Name:	School:
Date of today's observation:	Length of today's class period:
Teacher Name:	# of Students in Class Today:
Classroom Environment: <input type="checkbox"/> General <input type="checkbox"/> Co-taught <input type="checkbox"/> Supported <input type="checkbox"/> Self-contained	
Subject Area: <input type="checkbox"/> English <input type="checkbox"/> Math <input type="checkbox"/> Social Studies <input type="checkbox"/> Reading Grade Level:	
Educators in the Classroom (check all that apply):	
<input type="checkbox"/> General education teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Special education teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Paraeducator <input type="checkbox"/> ESOL teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	
If this class was co-taught, please indicate the co-teaching strategies used (descriptions attached):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Team teaching (both teach simultaneously) <input type="checkbox"/> Needs groups (1 reviews, other instructs) <input type="checkbox"/> Shadow teaching (1 teaches, other follows-up) <input type="checkbox"/> Interest groups (students choose topics) <input type="checkbox"/> Support teaching (1 leads, 1 gives assistance/fb) <input type="checkbox"/> Station groups (students rotate stations) <input type="checkbox"/> Parallel groups (separate groups, same lesson) <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)	
General description of the lesson (Please summarize the major parts of the lesson and indicate if any reading or math interventions were used.)	

Please indicate the ways in which the curriculum was made accessible to students.

	Number of times observed		
	Not Observed	Once or Twice	Throughout Lesson
1. Staff present or demonstrate multiple modalities to students (e.g., written, oral, demonstrations, movement, models).			
2. Staff make connections to prior learning or background knowledge.			
3. Staff make explicit connections among concrete, pictorial, and abstract concepts.			
4. Staff demonstrate use of technology (e.g. calculator, computer, Alphasmart, Kurzweil)			
5. Staff use instructional strategies (e.g., manipulatives, drawings, demonstrations, think alouds, graphic organizers) to enhance instruction or promote student engagement.			
6. Staff provide individual or small group assistance to students.			
7. Staff provide frequent and specific feedback to students.			
8. Staff use appropriate wait time (at least 3 seconds after asking a question or after a student answers).			
9. Staff provide differentiated activities (e.g., different activities, formats, or outcomes).			
10. Staff ask questions at a variety of levels (i.e., recall, comprehension, inference).			
11. Strategies (e.g., writing process, decoding process, etc.) are visually displayed in the room or verbally referenced by the teacher.			
12. Students work in cooperative groups or pairs.			
13. Students use technology (e.g. calculator, Alphasmart, Kurzweil, computer)			
14. Students use multiple modalities (e.g., verbal, writing, drawing, demonstration).			
15. Students have the opportunity for repeated practice (may be in small groups, differentiated instruction).			
16. Students use graphic organizers or other organizational strategies (e.g., webs, color coding, agenda books)			

Evidence of a positive classroom environment:

	Not Observed	Observed	Comments
1. Teachers provide individual constructive feedback and positive messages publicly or privately.			
2. Teachers provide constructive feedback and positive messages in the classroom or to the entire class.			
3. Teachers provide consistent and equitable expectations and classroom management strategies.			
4. Students readily ask questions/ask for help and receive assistance.			

If co-teaching is observed:

(Note: Co-teaching is defined as 2 certified teachers in the classroom, not a teacher and a paraeducator.)

	Not Observed	Observed	Comments
1. Both teachers are involved in presenting instruction.			
2. Both teachers are involved in checking for understanding.			
3. Both teachers demonstrate knowledge of the lesson's content.			
4. Both teachers share responsibilities for classroom management.			
5. Both teachers respond to student requests for assistance.			
6. Students ask both teachers for assistance.			
7. Both teachers provide feedback to students.			
8. The names of both teachers are displayed in the classroom/on the door.			

Appendix C

School Staff Survey Instruments

Evaluation of the Secondary Learning Centers Transition Spring 2008 Survey for Classroom-based Professionals

Introduction

The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) is conducting an evaluation of the transition of students from the secondary Learning Centers (LCs) to their home or consortia schools. You have received this survey because you have former LC students or candidates in one or more of your classes. (Throughout this survey, we refer to these students as “transitioned students.”)

This survey is an opportunity for you to provide input on your experiences with the transitioned students in your classroom. Please answer the questions in reference to the class period in which you have a transitioned student(s).

Other stakeholders—parents of transitioned students and other students receiving special education services, principals, guidance counselors, and resource teachers for special education—will receive related surveys. The information from the surveys will determine the status of the transition, ways to further support students and teachers, and opportunities for additional professional development. Your participation can help to ensure that the results are truly representative.

It should take you about 15 minutes to complete the survey. The information you provide is anonymous. You do not need to provide your name, school, or other personal information. Your responses will only be reported as part of the total of all of the completed surveys.

Please complete this survey by (DATE).

If you have any questions about this survey or the evaluation, please contact:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
Office of Shared Accountability
Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org
301-279-3863

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey!

Support for transitioned students in your classroom

1. Please indicate which supports are used in your classroom to make the curriculum accessible to the transitioned students (check all that apply):

- A paraeducator assigned specifically to the transitioned student(s)
- A paraeducator assigned to your classroom
- Small group instruction
- Preferential seating
- Pull-out for assessments
- Pull-out for other purposes (e.g., instruction)
- Assistive technology (e.g., Kurzweil, SOLO, Soliloquy, Write Out Loud, Franklin Speller, Touch Mate, Alpha Smart)
- Materials rewritten at an appropriate reading level(s)
- Specific reading or mathematics interventions (e.g., Fastt Math, Corrective Reading)
- Modified content of assignments or assessments
- Modified format of assignments or assessments
- Extended time
- Other supports (please specify)

2. In what ways have you modified your teaching strategies this year to meet the needs of the transitioned students?

- Increased differentiation
- Co-teaching with another general or special education teacher
- Increased use of instructional technology (e.g., Promethean board)
- Increased use of assistive technology (e.g., Kurzweil, SOLO, Soliloquy, Write Out Loud, Franklin Speller, Touch Mate, Alpha Smart)
- Increased work with small groups
- Increased hands-on activities
- Varied modalities for delivering instruction
- Other (please specify)
- I have not modified my teaching strategies this year.

3. In what other ways (if any) has the inclusion of the transitioned students in your classroom changed the ways you deliver instruction?

Preparation to meet the needs of transitioned students

4. If you are a Grade 6 teacher, did you attend the summer (2007) professional development on co-teaching?

- Yes, I attended
- No, I did not attend
- I do not teach 6th grade

5. What other professional development activities have you attended to help you prepare for the inclusion of the transitioning students in your classroom?

- Training on co-teaching (other than summer 2007)
- Training on inclusive practices
- Training on assistive technology
- Training on disability characteristics
- Training on acceptance of students with disabilities
- Training on differentiation
- Training on behavioral strategies/techniques
- Other (please specify)

6. How prepared are you to implement assistive technology in your classroom?

- Well prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Not at all prepared
- I don't know

Why do you say that?**7. How prepared are you to implement co-teaching strategies in your classroom with transitioned students?**

- Well prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Not at all prepared
- I don't know
- I do not co-teach

Why do you say that?**8. How prepared are you to provide differentiated instruction in your classroom with transitioned students?**

- Well prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Not at all prepared
- I don't know

Why do you say that?

9. How prepared are you to understand the characteristics of the disabilities in your classroom with transitioned students?

- Well prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Not at all prepared
- I don't know

Why do you say that?**10. How prepared are you to implement behavioral strategies/techniques with transitioned students?**

- Well prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Not at all prepared
- I don't know

Why do you say that?**11. In what way, if any, has your planning time changed this year?**

- I have been provided with more planning time
- I have been provided with less planning time
- My planning time has stayed the same.

Support for teachers of transitioned students

12. Please indicate which of the following supports have been provided by the *special education resource teacher (RTSE)* in your school (check all that apply):

- Serve as a liaison between school and parents
- Provide specific information about students' characteristics/needs
- Train on instructional strategies
- Train on assistive technology
- Locate resources to meet specific student needs
- Model lessons in my classroom
- Provide content support
- Attend IEP meetings
- Meet with grade level teams
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

13. Please indicate your overall satisfaction with the support you have received from the *RTSE* (check one):

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- I don't know/not applicable

14. Please indicate which of the following supports have been provided by your school's leadership team (e.g., administrators, staff development teacher, literacy coach, reading specialist, math content specialist) (check all that apply):

- Serve as a liaison between school and parents
- Provide specific information about students' characteristics/needs
- Train on instructional strategies
- Train on assistive technology
- Locate resources to meet specific student needs
- Provide common planning time
- Model lessons in my classroom
- Provide content support
- Attend IEP meetings
- Meet with grade level teams
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

15. Please indicate your overall satisfaction with the support you have received from your school's leadership team (check one):

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- I don't know/not applicable

16. Each of the transitioned students was assigned a central office case manager from the Department of Special Education. Please indicate which of the following supports have been provided by the *central office case manager* (check all that apply):

- Serve as a liaison between school and parents
- Serve as a liaison between building administrators and teachers
- Provide specific information about students' characteristics/needs
- Train on instructional strategies
- Train on assistive technology
- Locate resources to meet specific student needs
- Model lessons in my classroom
- Attend IEP meetings
- Meet with grade level teams
- I don't know
- Other (please specify)

17. Please indicate your overall satisfaction with the support you have received from the *central office case manager* (check one):

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- I don't know/not applicable

18. Are you a (choose one):

- General education teacher
- Special education teacher
- Paraeducator
- Related service provider

19. In which type of school do you teach (choose one)?

- Middle or elementary school
- High school

20. What are the most significant issues you are facing with the transitioned students in your classrooms? How are you addressing these issues?

21. Based on your experiences, what are the most significant issues the transitioned students are facing this year (e.g., academic, social, behavioral)? How are you addressing these issues?

22. What have been the greatest successes achieved in your classroom with transitioned students this year?

23. In what ways, if any, do you believe the needs of the transitioned students significantly differ from other students receiving special education services in your school?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Evaluation of the Secondary Learning Centers Transition Spring 2008 Survey for Guidance Counselors

Introduction

The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) is conducting an evaluation of the transition of students from the secondary Learning Centers (LCs) to their home or consortia schools. You have received this survey because you have former LC students or candidates in one or more of your classes. (Throughout this survey, we refer to these students as “transitioned students.”)

This survey is an opportunity for you to provide input on your experiences with the transitioned students in your caseload. Other stakeholders—parents of transitioned students and other students receiving special education services, principals, teachers, paraeducators, and resource teachers for special education—will receive related surveys. The information from the surveys will determine the status of the transition, ways to further support students and teachers, and needs for additional professional development. Your participation can help to ensure that the results are truly representative.

It should take you about 15 minutes to complete the survey. The information you provide is anonymous. You do not need to provide your name, school, or other personal information. Your responses will only be reported as part of the total of all of the completed surveys.

Please complete this survey by (DATE).

If you have any questions about this survey or the evaluation, please contact:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
Office of Shared Accountability
Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mepsmd.org
301-279-3863

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey!

1. What are the most significant issues the transitioned students are facing this year (e.g., academic, social, behavioral)? How are you addressing these issues?
2. What have been the greatest successes achieved in your school with transitioned students this year?
3. What new resources or supports were added to your school this year to meet the needs of the transitioned students (e.g., staff, programs, assistive technology)?
4. In what other ways has the inclusion of the transitioned students changed your school this year?
5. What supports or training has your school-based leadership team offered to teachers who have received the transitioned students in their classrooms (e.g., internal co-teaching walk-throughs, classroom observations with feedback, monitoring implementation of accommodations, technology integration, paraeducator training)?
6. What supports or training have you received to prepare for the inclusion of the transitioned students in your school?
7. In what ways, if any, do you believe the needs of the transitioned students significantly differ from other students receiving special education services in your school?
8. In which type of school do you work (choose one)?
 - Middle or elementary school
 - High school

Evaluation of the Secondary Learning Centers Transition Spring 2008 Survey for Principals

Introduction

The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) is conducting an evaluation of the transition of students from the secondary Learning Centers (LCs) to their home or consortia schools. You have received this survey because you have former LC students or candidates in one or more of your classes. (Throughout this survey, we refer to these students as “transitioned students.”)

This survey is an opportunity for you to provide input on your experiences with the transitioned students in your school. Other stakeholders—parents of transitioned students and other students receiving special education services, teachers, paraeducators, guidance counselors, and resource teachers for special education—will receive related surveys. The information from the surveys will determine the status of the transition, ways to further support students and teachers, and needs for additional professional development. Your participation can help to ensure that the results are truly representative.

It should take you about 15 minutes to complete the survey. The information you provide is anonymous. You do not need to provide your name, school, or other personal information. Your responses will only be reported as part of the total of all of the completed surveys.

Please complete this survey by (DATE).

If you have any questions about this survey or the evaluation, please contact:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
Office of Shared Accountability
Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org
301-279-3863

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey!

1. What are the most significant issues teachers are facing with the transitioned students in their classrooms? How are you addressing these issues?

2. What are the most significant issues the transitioned students are facing this year (e.g., academic, social, behavioral)? How are you addressing these issues?

3. What have been the greatest successes achieved in your school with transitioned students this year?

4. What new resources or supports were added to your school this year to meet the needs of the transitioned students (e.g., staff, programs, assistive technology)?

5. In what other ways has the inclusion of the transitioned students changed your school this year?

6. What supports or training has your school-based leadership team offered to teachers who have the transitioned students in their classrooms (e.g., internal co-teaching walk-throughs, classroom observations with feedback, monitoring implementation of accommodations, technology integration, paraeducator training)?

7. What supports or training did you receive to prepare for the inclusion of the transitioned students in your school?

8. In what ways, if any, do you believe the needs of the transitioned students significantly differ from other students receiving special education services in your school?

9. In which type of school do you work (choose one)?
 Middle or elementary school
 High school

Evaluation of the Secondary Learning Centers Transition Spring 2008 Survey for Resource Teachers for Special Education

Introduction

The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) is conducting an evaluation of the transition of students from the secondary Learning Centers (LCs) to their home or consortia schools. You have received this survey because you have former LC students or candidates in one or more of your classes. (Throughout this survey, we refer to these students as “transitioned students.”)

This survey is an opportunity for you to provide input on your experiences with the transitioned students in your school. Other stakeholders—parents of transitioned students and other students receiving special education services, principals, teachers, paraeducators, and guidance counselors—will receive related surveys. The information will determine the status of the transition, ways to further support students and teachers, and needs for additional professional development. Your participation can help to ensure that the results are truly representative.

It should take you about 15 minutes to complete the survey. The information you provide is anonymous. You do not need to provide your name, school, or other personal information. Your responses will only be reported as part of the total of all of the completed surveys.

Please complete this survey by (DATE).

If you have any questions about this survey or the evaluation, please contact:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
Office of Shared Accountability
Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org
301-279-3863

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey!

1. What are the most significant issues teachers are facing with the transitioned students in their classrooms? How are you addressing these issues?

2. What have been the greatest successes achieved in your school with transitioned students this year?

3. What new resources or supports were added to your school this year to meet the needs of the transitioned students (e.g., staff, programs, assistive technology)?

4. In what other ways has the inclusion of the transitioned students changed your school this year?

5. What supports or training has your school-based leadership team offered to teachers who have received the transitioned students in their classrooms (e.g., internal co-teaching walk-throughs, classroom observations with feedback, monitoring implementation of accommodations, technology integration, paraeducator training)?

6. What supports or training have you received to prepare for the inclusion of the transitioned students in your school?

7. In what ways, if any, do you believe the needs of the transitioned students significantly differ from other students receiving special education services in your school?

8. In which type of school do you work (choose one)?
 - Middle or elementary school
 - High school

Appendix D

Parent Survey Instruments

Evaluation of the Secondary Learning Centers Transition Fall 2007 Survey for Parents

The Department of Shared Accountability (DSA) is conducting an evaluation to find out how the transition of students to their current school placement is going, and identify changes that could improve student outcomes. Since your child is directly involved in the transition, your opinions are very important.

This survey asks for information about your experiences with your child's school, and how your child's learning and social needs are being addressed. There will be a follow-up survey of parents in the Spring of 2008.

Your responses to this survey will be confidential, and will not be linked to you or your child. **Please complete and return it within one week in the attached postage-paid envelope.** All questions about this survey or the evaluation should be directed to:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
Montgomery County Public Schools
Department of Shared Accountability
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 11
Rockville, MD 20850
[Suzanne R. Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org)
301-279-3863

If you need assistance in a language other than English, contact Suzanne Merchlinsky who will access Language Line Services (LLS). The service provides over-the-phone interpretation in 140 languages.

Thank you for your time in completing the survey.

1. Were you able to attend your child’s annual review meeting (**Spring 2007**)?

_____ Yes (Please answer Question 2 and skip Question 3).

2. **If you attended** your child’s Annual IEP Review Meeting (**Spring 2007**), please indicate your experiences using the scale below. (Please check one box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know/ Not Applicable
The meeting time and location were convenient for me to attend.					
I had enough information about my child’s progress to fully participate in the IEP meeting.					
I participated in the development of my child’s IEP (e.g., goals and objectives, accommodations).					
I was treated as a respected member of the IEP team.					
My opinions about my child’s needs were valued.					
There was enough time during the meeting to address the IEP goals.					
I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date.					

_____ No (Please answer Question 3).

3. **If you were unable to attend** your child’s Annual IEP Review Meeting (**Spring 2007**), please indicate your experiences using the scale below. (Please check one box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know/Not Applicable
I had the opportunity to give information about my child before the meeting.					
I gave permission for the IEP team to proceed without my attendance at the meeting.					
School staff attempted to find a time I could attend the meeting.					
I had the opportunity to ask questions before the meeting.					
I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date.					
I was offered an opportunity to contact the school for additional information.					

Additional comments on Question 2 or 3:

4. Were you able to attend your child’s 30-day periodic review meeting (**Fall 2007**)?

_____ Yes (Please answer Question 5 and skip Question 6).

5. **If you attended** your child’s 30-day Periodic Review Meeting (**Fall 2007**), please indicate your experiences using the scale below. (Please check one box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don’t Know/Not Applicable
The meeting time and location were convenient for me to attend.					
I had enough information about my child’s progress to fully participate in the meeting.					
I participated in the review of my child’s IEP (goals and objectives, accommodations).					
I was treated as a respected member of the IEP team.					
My opinions about my child’s needs were valued.					
School staff communicated the status of my child’s progress.					
There was enough time during the meeting to address the IEP goals.					
I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date.					

_____ No (Please answer Question 6).

6. **If you were unable to attend** your child’s 30-day Periodic Review Meeting (**Fall 2007**), please indicate your experiences using the scale below. (Please check one box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/Not Applicable
I had the opportunity to give information about my child before the meeting.					
I gave permission for the IEP team to proceed without my attendance at the meeting.					
School staff attempted to find a time I could attend the meeting.					
I had the opportunity to ask questions and give information before the meeting.					
I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date.					
I was offered an opportunity to contact the school for additional information.					

Additional comments on Question 5 or 6:

7. Please indicate your satisfaction with each of the following, **during the current school year:**
 (Please check one box in each row.)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know/Not Applicable
Accessibility (e.g., time, format, physical layout) of middle/high school orientation (over the summer)					
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives					
Appropriateness of assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, assignments)					
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum					
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs					
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs					
Accessibility of technology to support your child's needs					
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress					
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff					
Your child's transportation to and from school					
Staff's understanding of your child's social/emotional needs					
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs					
Your child's safety at school					
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch)					
Your child's overall adjustment to a new school					

Additional comments on Question 7:

8. Please indicate what changes you have noticed in your child **this school year** (Please check one box in each row.)

	Improved	Stayed the same	Declined	Don't Know/Not Applicable
Motivation to learn				
Confidence in abilities				
Relationship with teachers				
Academic performance				
Relationship with classmates				
Independence during the school day				
Attendance				

Additional comments on Question 8:

Thank you for your time and cooperation in completing this survey.

Your responses to this survey will be confidential, and will not be linked to you or your child. **Please return the completed survey within one week in the attached postage-paid envelope.** All questions about the survey or the evaluation should be directed to:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
 Montgomery County Public Schools
 Department of Shared Accountability
 850 Hungerford Drive, Room 11
 Rockville, MD 20850
Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org
 301-279-3863

Parent Survey

Purpose of this Survey:



- The Office of Shared Accountability (OSA) is conducting this survey to find out what is working well and what could be improved for students receiving special education services in different school settings.
- Parents of students who receive special education services in their home schools and in secondary learning centers will receive the survey.
- Your answers to this survey will be completely confidential, and will not be linked to you or your child.
- The survey results will identify changes that could improve your child's school experiences.

How to Complete the Survey:



- Complete the enclosed survey and return it in the attached postage-paid envelope by **May 2, 2008**.
- If you would prefer to complete this survey online, please go to: http://tpilot.mcps.k12.md.us/tpilot/departments/accountability/LCparent_casemgr_08.tp3?USER_ID=casemgr. **If you choose to complete the survey online, please do not complete this paper survey.**
- If you need assistance completing the survey in a language other than English, contact Suzanne Merchlinsky who will access Language Line Services (LLS). The service provides over-the-phone interpretation in 140 languages.
- If you received surveys in multiple languages, please complete the one most comfortable for you.

Next Steps:



- Survey results will be available online at:
<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/sharedaccountability/>

For more information, contact:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
Montgomery County Public Schools
Office of Shared Accountability
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 11
Rockville, MD 20850
Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org
301-279-3863

Thank You

1. Please indicate your satisfaction with each of the following, **during the current school year**: For any item which you indicated “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied,” please indicate your reasons in Question 5.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives					
Appropriateness of assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, assignments)					
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs					
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs					
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress					
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum, determined by the IEP (e.g., resource, speech, occupational, or physical therapy)					
Availability of technology to support your child's needs, determined by the IEP (e.g., Kurzweil, Alphasmart)					
Opportunities for your child to participate in general education classes					
Staff's expectations for your child's achievement					
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff					
Your child's transportation to and from school, determined by the IEP					
Staff's understanding of your child's social/emotional needs					
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs					
Your child's safety at school					
Opportunities for your child to work on social skills at school, determined by the IEP					
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch)					
Your child's opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, dances, plays)					
Your child's overall adjustment to this school					

2. Please indicate what changes you have noticed in your child **this school year**:

	Improved	Stayed the same	Declined	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Motivation to learn				
Confidence in abilities				
Relationship with teachers				
Academic performance				
Relationship with classmates				
Independence during the school day				
Attendance				
Participation in extracurricular activities (e.g., sports, dances, plays)				

3. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements about your child's Central Office case manager: **(Only for parents of 70 transitioned students who have Central Office case managers.)**

My child's Central Office case manager:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Contacts me to find out how my child is doing in school					
Provides me with information about resources to help my child					
Helps me to work with the school when there are problems					
Attends my child's IEP meetings					
Responds to my concerns in a timely fashion.					
Provides a level of support that meets my needs					

4. What has been going well with your child's school experiences this year?

5. What has not been going well with your child's school experience this year?

Thank you for your time and cooperation in completing this survey.

Your responses to this survey will be confidential, and will not be linked to you or your child. Please complete and return it in the attached postage-paid envelope by **May 2, 2008**. All questions about the survey should be directed to:

Suzanne Merchlinsky, Evaluation Specialist
Montgomery County Public Schools
Office of Shared Accountability
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 11
Rockville, MD 20850
Suzanne_R_Merchlinsky@mcpsmd.org
301-279-3863

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Appendix E

Classroom Observation Data

Table E-1a
Types of Grade 6 Classroom Environments Observed

Type of Classroom Environment	Number of Observations	% of Observations (N=37)
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher)	18	49
Supported (teacher and paraeducator)	13	35
Self-contained (all students have IEPs) in a non-LC school	6	16

Table E-1b
Types of Grades 7–11 Classroom Environments Observed

Type of Classroom Environment	Number of Observations	% of Observations (N=26)
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher)	3	12
Supported (teacher and paraeducator)	0	0
Self-contained (all students have IEPs) in a non-LC school	11	42
Self-contained secondary LC classroom	12	46

Table E-2a
Grade 6 Subject Areas Observed

Subject Area	Number of Observations	% of Observations (N=37)
Mathematics	12	34
English	10	27
Social Studies	6	16
Science	8	22
Reading	1	3

Table E-2b
Grades 7–11 Subject Areas Observed

Subject Area	Number of Observations	% of Observations (N=26)
Mathematics	11	42
English	9	35
Social Studies	4	15
Science	1	4
Reading	1	4

Table E-3
Grade Levels Observed

Grade Level	Number of Observations	% of Observations (<i>N</i> =63)
6	37	59
7	13	21
8	3	5
9	5	8
10	3	5
11	2	3

Table E-4a
Grade 6 Staff Present or Demonstrate Multiple Modalities to Students
(e.g., written, oral, demonstrations, movement, models)

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	6	28	67
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	0	31	69
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	0	0	100
Total (<i>N</i> =37)	3	24	73

Table E-4b
Grades 7–11 Staff Present or Demonstrate Multiple Modalities to Students
(e.g., written, oral, demonstrations, movement, models)

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	0	33	67
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school setting (<i>N</i> =11)	0	36	64
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	0	17	83
Total (<i>N</i> =26)	0	27	73

Table E-5a
Grade 6 Staff Make Connections to Prior Learning
or Background Knowledge

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	6	56	39
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	8	46	46
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	0	33	67
Total (<i>N</i> =37)	5	49	46

Table E-5b
Grade 7–11 Staff Make Connections to Prior Learning
or Background Knowledge

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	0	67	33
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	0	36	64
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	8	25	67
Total (<i>N</i> =26)	4	35	62

Table E-6a
Grade 6 Staff Make Explicit Connections among
Concrete, Pictorial, and Abstract Concepts

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	39	22	39
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	13	31	54
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	50	0	50
Total (<i>N</i> =37)	32	22	46

Table E-6b
Grades 7–11 Staff Make Explicit Connections among
Concrete, Pictorial, and Abstract Concepts

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	33	67	0
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	27	73	0
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	25	33	42
Total (<i>N</i> =26)	27	54	19

Table E-7a
Grade 6 Staff Demonstrate Use of Technology

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	89	11	0
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	100	0	0
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	83	17	0
Total (<i>N</i> =37)	92	8	0

Table E-7b
Grades 7–11 Staff Demonstrate Use of Technology

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	67	33	0
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	91	9	0
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	84	8	8
Total (<i>N</i> =26)	85	12	4

Table E-8a
Grade 6 Staff Use Instructional Strategies to
Enhance Instruction or Promote Student Engagement

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	11	22	67
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	0	46	54
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	0	0	100
Total (<i>N</i>=37)	5	27	68

Table E-8b
Grades 7–11 Staff Use Instructional Strategies to
Enhance Instruction or Promote Student Engagement

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	33	33	33
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	0	64	36
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	17	25	58
Total (<i>N</i>=26)	12	42	46

Table E-9a
Grade 6 Staff Provide Individual or Small Group Assistance to Students

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	0	11	89
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	0	23	77
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	0	0	100
Total (<i>N</i>=37)	0	14	86

Table E-9b
Grades 7–11 Staff Provide Individual or Small Group Assistance to Students

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	0	67	33
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	9	18	73
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	0	25	75
Total (<i>N</i>=26)	4	27	69

Table E-10a
Grade 6 Staff Provide Frequent and Specific Feedback to Students

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	0	22	78
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	0	15	85
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	0	0	100
Total (<i>N</i>=37)	0	16	84

Table E-10b
Grades 7–11 Staff Provide Frequent and Specific Feedback to Students

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	%	
		Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	0	33	67
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	0	18	82
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	8	17	75
Total (<i>N</i>=26)	4	20	77

Table E-11a
Grade 6 Staff Use Appropriate Wait Time

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	17	22	61
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	8	46	46
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	0	0	100
Total (<i>N</i> =37)	11	27	62

Table E-11b
Grades 7–11 Staff Use Appropriate Wait Time

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	0	33	67
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	9	36	55
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	8	8	84
Total (<i>N</i> =26)	8	23	69

Table E-12a
Grade 6 Staff Provide Differentiated Activities

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	67	28	6
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	77	15	8
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	83	0	17
Total (<i>N</i> =37)	73	19	8

Table E-12b
Grades 7–11 Staff Provide Differentiated Activities

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=3)	33	67	0
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=11)	73	27	0
Self-contained LC (N=12)	92	8	0
Total (N=26)	77	23	0

Table E-13a
Grade 6 Staff Ask Questions at a Variety of Levels

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=18)	6	50	44
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (N=13)	0	23	77
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=6)	17	0	83
Total (N=37)	5	32	62

Table E-13b
Grades 7–11 Staff Ask Questions at a Variety of Levels

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=3)	0	67	33
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=11)	0	45	55
Self-contained LC (N=12)	8	25	67
Total (N=26)	4	39	58

Table E-14a
Grade 6 Reading, Writing, or Mathematics Strategies are Visually
Displayed in the Room or Verbally Referenced by the Teacher

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=18)	33	50	17
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (N=13)	77	15	8
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=6)	17	33	50
Total (N=37)	46	35	19

Table E-14b
Grades 7–11 Reading, Writing, or Mathematics Strategies are Visually
Displayed in the Room or Verbally Referenced by the Teacher

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=3)	67	0	33
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=11)	45	55	0
Self-contained LC (N=12)	66	17	17
Total (N=26)	58	31	12

Table E-15a
Grade 6 Students Work in Cooperative Groups or Pairs

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=18)	61	17	22
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (N=13)	54	15	31
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=6)	50	33	17
Total (N=37)	57	19	24

Table E-15b
Grades 7–11 Students Work in Cooperative Groups or Pairs

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=3)	67	33	0
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=11)	82	0	18
Self-contained LC (N=12)	75	8	17
Total (N=26)	77	8	15

Table E-16a
Grade 6 Students use Technology

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=18)	39	22	39
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (N=13)	92	8	0
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=6)	50	0	50
Total (N=37)	60	13	27

Table E-16b
Grades 7–11 Students use Technology

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=3)	33	0	67
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=11)	55	27	18
Self-contained LC (N=12)	66	17	17
Total (N=26)	58	19	23

Table E-17a
Grade 6 Students use Multiple Modalities

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=18)	0	33	67
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (N=13)	8	23	69
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=6)	0	0	100
Total (N=37)	3	24	73

Table E-17b
Grades 7–11 Students use Multiple Modalities

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=3)	0	33	67
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=11)	0	64	36
Self-contained LC (N=12)	8	17	75
Total (N=26)	4	39	58

Table E-18a
Grade 6 Students Have the Opportunity for Repeated Practice

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (N=18)	6	22	72
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (N=13)	23	31	46
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (N=6)	17	0	83
Total (N=37)	14	22	65

Table E-18b
Grades 7–11 Students Have the Opportunity for Repeated Practice

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	33	0	67
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	9	64	27
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	25	8	67
Total (<i>N</i> =26)	19	31	50

Table E-19a
Grade 6 Students use Graphic Organizers or Other Organizational Strategies

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =18)	17	33	50
Supported (teacher + paraeducator) (<i>N</i> =13)	8	69	23
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =6)	0	33	67
Total (<i>N</i> =37)	11	46	43

Table E-19b
Grades 7–11 Students use Graphic Organizers or Other Organizational Strategies

Type of Classroom	% Not observed	% Observed once or twice	% Observed throughout the lesson
Co-taught (1 general and 1 special education teacher) (<i>N</i> =3)	33	67	0
Self-contained (all students with IEPs) in a non-LC school (<i>N</i> =11)	27	55	18
Self-contained LC (<i>N</i> =12)	8	50	42
Total (<i>N</i> =26)	19	54	27

Table E-20
Co-teaching Strategies Observed

Co-teaching Strategies	% of Grade 6 Co-taught classrooms (N=18)	% of Grades 7-11 Co-taught classrooms (N=3)
Both teachers are involved in checking for understanding.	94	67
Both teachers provide feedback to students.	94	67
Both teachers demonstrate knowledge of the lesson's content.	83	100
Both teachers respond to student requests for assistance.	94	33
Students ask both teachers for assistance.	83	33
Both teachers share responsibilities for classroom management.	72	33
Both teachers are involved in presenting instruction.	50	0
The names of both teachers are displayed in the classroom/on the door.	22	0

Appendix F

School Staff Survey Data

Table F-1
Types of Respondents: Survey of Classroom Professionals

Type of Respondent	% of Respondents N=207
General Education Teacher	47
Special Education Teacher	37
Paraeducator	14

Table F-2
School Level of School Staff Survey Respondents

Type of School	% Elementary or Middle School	% High School
Classroom professionals	79	21
Principals	79	21
RTSEs	76	24
Guidance Counselors	93	7

Table F-3
Support for Transitioned Students in the Classroom: Survey of Classroom Professionals

Which supports are used in your classroom to make the curriculum accessible to the transitioned students? (check all that apply)	% of Respondents N=207
Extended time	89
Preferential seating	82
Small group instruction	67
Modified content of assignments or assessments	61
Pull-out for assessments	58
A paraeducator assigned to your classroom	55
Modified format of assignments or assessments	54
Assistive technology (e.g., Kurzweil, SOLO, Soliloquy, Write Out Loud, Franklin Speller, Touch Mate, Alpha Smart)	47
Pull-out for other purposes (e.g., instruction)	42
Specific reading or mathematics interventions (e.g., Fastt Math, Corrective Reading)	40
A paraeducator assigned specifically to the transitioned student(s)	31
Materials rewritten at appropriate reading levels	29
Other supports	21

Table F-4
Professional Development Activities Attended by Respondents:
Survey of Classroom Professionals

What other professional development activities have you attended to help you prepare for the inclusion of the transitioned students in your classroom? (check all that apply)	% of Respondents N=207
Training on differentiation	38
Training on assistive technology	34
Training on inclusive practices	32
Training on co-teaching (other than summer 2007)	31
Training on behavioral strategies/techniques	29
Training on disability characteristics	20
Training on acceptance of students with disabilities	12
Other professional development activities	13

Table F-5
Respondents' Preparation for Transitioned Students: Survey of Classroom Professionals

How prepared are you to:	% Well prepared	% Somewhat prepared	% Not at all prepared	% I don't know
Implement assistive technology in your classroom? (N=203) ^a	21	56	18	5
Implement co-teaching strategies in your classroom with transitioned students? (N=172) ^a	49	45	3	2
Provide differentiated instruction in your classroom with transitioned students? (N=200) ^a	44	47	8	1
Understand the characteristics of the disabilities in your classroom with transitioned students? (N=203) ^a	46	47	6	1
Implement behavioral strategies/techniques with transitioned students? (N=200) ^a	44	47	8	1

^a Not all respondents answered each of these questions. Therefore, the Ns vary.

Table F-6
 Supports Provided by the RTSE, School Leadership Team,
 and the Central Office Case Manager: Survey of Classroom Professionals

Which of the following supports have been provided (check all that apply)	By RTSE (% of Respondents)	By School Leadership Team (% of Respondents)	By Central Office Case Manager (% of Respondents)
Attend IEP meetings	73	31	36
Provide specific information about students' characteristics/needs	54	21	29
Serve as a liaison between school and parents	49	24	30
Meet with grade level teams	33	30	18
Locate resources to meet specific student needs	29	16	10
Train on instructional strategies	20	23	11
Train on assistive technology	18	17	6
Provide content support	12	14	NA
Model lessons in my classroom	4	5	1
Provide common planning time	NA	20	NA
Serve as a liaison between building administrators and parents	NA	NA	15
Other supports provided	4	3	5
I don't know	13	19	39

Table F-7
 Survey Question: What supports or training has your school-based leadership team offered to teachers who have the transitioned students in their classrooms?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Principals N=21 ^b	% of RTSEs N=25 ^b	% of Counselors N=15 ^b
Little or none	4.8	8.0	13.3
Co-teaching training/support	19.0	36.0	33.3
Walk-throughs	19.0	28.0	20.0
Technology training (Promethean, Kurzweil)	23.8	32.0	13.3
Differentiation training	0.0	8.0	6.7
Meetings about student progress/ suggestions/best practices	14.3	0.0	6.7
Support from central office case manager	9.5	28.0	6.7
Training on specific reading/math interventions (e.g., READ 180, Understanding Math)	0.0	4.0	6.7
Classroom observations with feedback	38.1	40.0	6.7
Monitoring implementation of accommodations	33.3	20.0	6.7
Inclusion training	14.3	4.0	0.0
Paraeducator training	14.3	20.0	0.0

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table F-8
 Survey Question: What supports or training did you receive to prepare for the inclusion of the transitioned students in your school?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Principals N=22 ^b	% of RTSEs N=23 ^b	% of Counselors N=24 ^b
Little or none	31.8	34.8	70.8
Support from central office case manager/ OSESS	45.5	43.5	12.5
Co-teaching training	9.1	13.0	0.0
Technology training	0.0	4.3	4.2
Attendance at IEP meetings	4.5	8.7	4.2
Specific information about transitioning students	0.0	8.7	4.2

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table F-9
Modification of Teaching Strategies: Survey of Classroom Professionals

In what ways have you modified your teaching strategies this year to meet the needs of the transitioned students (check all that apply)	% of Respondents N=207
Modified pace of instruction	66
Increased differentiation	61
Increased work with small groups	59
Increased reteaching activities	54
Varied modalities for delivering instruction	51
Co-teaching with another general or special education teacher	44
Increased use of assistive technology (e.g., Kurzweil, SOLO, Soliloquy, Write Out Loud, Franklin Speller, Touch Mate, Alpha Smart)	36
Increased hands-on activities	36
Increased use of instructional technology (e.g., Promethean board)	22
Other teaching strategies	9
I have not modified my teaching strategies this year.	3

Table F-10
Survey Question: What new resources or supports (such as staff, programs, assistive technology) were added to your school this year to meet the needs of the transitioned students?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Principals N=23 ^b	% of RTSEs N=24 ^b	% of Counselors N=26 ^b
Assistive technology	17.4	29.2	15.4
Reading or math interventions (e.g., Corrective Reading, Read 180, FASTT Math)	21.7	8.3	7.7
Additional paraeducator time	30.4	25.0	19.2
Additional teachers	4.3	8.3	3.8
Resource period for students	4.3	4.2	0.0
Staff training	4.3	4.2	0.0
Central office case manager	13.0	29.2	11.5
None	13.0	16.7	34.6
Hours-based staffing	13.0	16.7	0.0
Additional (unspecified) staff	13.0	8.3	7.7
Peer/ social skills groups	0.0	0.0	3.8
Self-contained classes	0.0	0.0	3.8
Additional guidance counselor	0.0	0.0	3.8

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table F-11
 Survey Question: In what other ways has the inclusion of the transitioned students changed your school this year?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Principals N=19 ^b	% of RTSEs N=23 ^b	% of Counselors N=21 ^b
More differentiation/accommodations/adaptations	15.8	13.0	9.5
More tracking of student progress/grades	0.0	4.3	4.8
No changes	21.1	4.3	23.8
Acceptance by the school community	5.3	4.3	9.5
Greater awareness of students' disabilities/needs	5.3	17.4	14.3
Increased pressure on limited resources	10.5	8.7	19.0
Greater collaboration between general and special educators	10.5	4.3	0.0
Resentment/frustration/stress on teachers	0.0	13.0	19.0
Teachers changing instruction/more experience meeting students' needs	5.3	13.0	4.8
Readjustment of master schedule	15.8	4.3	0.0
Increased use of co-teaching	5.3	4.3	0.0
Increased use of paraeducators	5.3	0.0	4.8
More visits/attention from central office staff	5.3	0.0	4.8

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table F-12
 Respondents' Satisfaction with Supports Provided by the RTSE,
 School Leadership Team, and Central Office Case Manager: Survey of Classroom Professionals

Overall satisfaction with the support received from:	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied
RTSE (N=191) ^a	32	34	15	19
School leadership team (N=178) ^a	14	44	26	16
Central office case manager (N=130) ^a	17	28	34	22

^a Not all respondents answered each of these questions, or they indicated "I don't know/not applicable." Therefore, the Ns vary.

Table F-13
 Survey Question: What have been the greatest successes achieved in
 your classroom/school with transitioned students this year?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Teachers/ Paraeducators N=153 ^b	% of Principals N=21 ^b	% of RTSEs N=25 ^b	% of Counselors N=27 ^b
Academic achievement	31.4	42.9	28.0	40.1
Social acceptance/making friends	25.5	42.9	32.0	30.0
Adjustment to secondary school (e.g., lockers, changing classes)	4.6	0.0	12.0	11.1
Increased differentiation by teachers	2.0	0.0	4.0	0.0
Cohesion of staff teams	0.7	0.0	8.0	0.0
Attendance at home school	0.0	0.0	12.0	3.7
Participation in Outdoor Ed/ extracurricular activities	1.3	9.5	12.0	7.4
Exposure to more rigorous curriculum	5.2	4.8	4.0	3.7
Self-advocacy	3.3	4.8	4.0	0.0
Development of supports/ accommodations/individualized programs	5.2	4.8	20.0	7.4
Support from central office case manager	0.0	0.0	8.0	0.0
Increased independence/self-esteem	14.4	4.8	8.0	3.7
Positive parent involvement/ feedback	3.3	28.6	0.0	0.0
Participation/acceptance in school community	1.3	14.3	0.0	18.5
Overall successful adjustment/ transition	9.8	14.3	0.0	0.0
None/generally unsuccessful transition	5.2	0.0	0.0	7.4
Decreased suspensions/discipline referrals	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.7
Improved participation in class/ completion of classwork	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table F-14
Survey Question: What are the most significant issues teachers and paraeducators are facing with the transitioned students in their classrooms?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Teachers/ Paraeducators N=164 ^b	% of Principals N=23 ^b	% of RTSEs N=25 ^b
Behavior problems/issues	11.0	8.7	8.0
Social issues	7.3	0.0	8.0
Academically below grade level/ lack of background knowledge	23.2	21.7	36.0
Lack of time to address needs of transitioned students	3.7	8.7	4.0
Curriculum not appropriate/too fast for transitioned students	25.0	0.0	28.0
Support needed by transitioned students detracts from other students in class/large class size	15.2	17.4	4.0
Lack of planning time	9.1	4.3	4.0
Need to differentiate activities	3.7	13.0	12.0
Need for accommodations	6.1	4.3	0.0
Lack of resources/support to address needs	13.4	13.0	24.0
No issues	4.9	13.0	4.0
Grading issues	3.7	4.3	0.0
Lack of understanding about specific disabilities	0.6	8.7	0.0

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table F-15
Based on your experiences, what are the most significant issues
the transitioned students are facing this year?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Teachers/ Paraeducators N=163 ^b	% of Principals N=23 ^b	% of Counselors N=29 ^b
Behavior problems/issues	25.8	8.7	24.1
Social issues	44.2	34.8	44.8
Academically below grade level/ lack of background knowledge	69.3	52.2	65.5
Pace of curriculum is too fast for transitioned students	2.5	0.0	3.4
Organization skills/changing classes	1.8	4.3	6.9
Bullying/teasing/peer pressure	5.5	0.0	0.0
Class size is too large/need smaller classes/ need self-contained classes	5.5	0.0	13.8
Lack of confidence in their abilities/low self- esteem	3.7	0.0	0.0
Don't complete classwork/homework	2.5	4.3	3.4
No issues/successful transition	0.6	26.1	6.9

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table F-16

Survey Question: In what ways, if any, do you believe the needs of the transitioned students significantly differ from other students receiving special education services in your school?

Coded Responses ^a	% of Teachers/ Paraeducators N=146 ^b	% of Principals N=21 ^b	% of RTSEs N=25 ^b	% of Counselors N=27 ^b
Need greater individual/small group support	40.0	47.6	36.0	18.5
Greater academic needs/ lower ability level/ missing prerequisite skills/knowledge	33.6	38.1	40.0	33.3
Behavior issues	4.8	0.0	8.0	7.4
Little or no difference	13.0	14.3	20.0	14.8
Need materials/curriculum adapted at lower level	6.2	4.8	12.0	14.8
Need organizational skills	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Need slower pace/more repetition/reteaching	3.4	4.8	8.0	0.0
Need greater assistance navigating the school (lockers, changing classes, large building)	2.7	0.0	4.0	7.4
Socially/emotionally immature/ need assistance for socialization	13.0	4.8	12.0	29.6
Greater difficulties with processing/retention/language	4.1	0.0	4.0	0.0
Physical differences	0.7	4.8	0.0	3.7

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

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Appendix G
Parent Survey Data

Table G-1
Respondents' Experience With Their Child's Annual IEP Review Meeting (Spring 2007)

If you attend your child's Annual IEP Review Meeting (Spring 2007), please indicate your experiences using the scale below.	%	%	%	%	%
	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't Know/ Not Applicable
The meeting time and location were convenient for me to attend.	61.5	38.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
I had enough information about my child's progress to fully participate in the IEP meeting.	46.2	42.3	11.5	0.0	0.0
I participated in the development of my child's IEP (e.g., goals and objectives, accommodations).	46.2	50.0	3.8	0.0	0.0
I was treated as a respected member of the IEP team.	57.7	42.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
My opinions about my child's needs were valued.	53.8	38.5	7.7	0.0	0.0
There was enough time during the meeting to address the IEP goals.	57.7	38.5	3.8	0.0	0.0
I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date.	64.0	28.0	0.0	4.0	4.0

Table G-2
Respondents' Experience With Their Child's 30-Day Periodic Review Meeting (Fall 2007)

If you attended your child's 30-day Periodic Review Meeting (Fall 2007), please indicate your experiences using the scale below.	% Strongly agree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Strongly disagree	% Don't Know/ Not Applicable
The meeting time and location were convenient for me to attend.	60.9	39.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
I had enough information about my child's progress to fully participate in the meeting.	56.5	39.1	4.3	0.0	0.0
I participated in the review of my child's IEP (goals and objectives, accommodations).	60.9	39.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
I was treated as a respected member of the IEP team.	69.6	26.1	0.0	0.0	4.3
My opinions about my child's needs were valued.	69.6	26.1	0.0	4.3	0.0
School staff communicated the status of my child's progress.	65.2	34.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
There was enough time during the meeting to address the IEP goals.	65.2	30.4	0.0	4.3	0.0
I received the IEP documents within 10 days after the meeting date.	68.2	22.7	0.0	0.0	9.1

**Table G-3
Parent Satisfaction by Group**

Survey Item	% of Parents of Transitioned Students: Fall 2007^a N=24	% of Parents of Transitioned Students: Spring 2008^a N=24	% of Parents of Current Learning Center Students: Spring 2008^a N=34	% of Parents of Other Students Receiving Special Education Services: Spring 2008^a N=121
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives	87.0	83.4	87.9	82.6
Appropriateness of assessments	82.6	72.7	78.7	82.1
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs	83.3	83.3	88.3	79.0
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs	79.2	78.2	85.3	79.9
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress	87.5	79.2	82.3	76.5
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum, determined by the IEP	83.3	87.5	73.6	72.3
Availability of technology to support your child's needs, determined by the IEP	87.5	68.2	82.3	60.5
Opportunities for your child to participate in general education classes	N/A	91.6	73.5	88.2
Staff's expectations for your child's achievement	N/A	72.8	84.4	87.3
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff	95.9	95.6	85.3	83.1
Your child's transportation to and from school, determined by the IEP	95.7	82.6	84.8	58.7
Staff's understanding of your child's social/emotional needs	87.5	78.3	91.1	74.8
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs	83.3	82.6	88.2	73.7
Your child's safety at school	91.3	95.6	94.1	83.9

(continued)

Table G-3
Parent Satisfaction by Group (continued)

Survey Item	% of Parents of Transitioned Students: Fall 2007^a N=24	% of Parents of Transitioned Students: Spring 2008^a N=24	% of Parents of Current Learning Center Students: Spring 2008^a N=34	% of Parents of Other Students Receiving Special Education Services: Spring 2008^a N=121
Opportunities for your child to work on social skills at school, determined by the IEP	N/A	65.2	61.8	59.0
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch)	83.3	91.3	94.1	73.1
Your child's opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities	N/A	83.3	70.6	72.5
Your child's overall adjustment to this school	91.7	87.5	87.9	85.8

^a Percentage of parents who indicated "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied."

Table G-4
Satisfaction of Parents of Transitioned Students, Spring 2008

Survey Item	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied	% Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives (N=24)	29.2	54.2	16.7	0.0	0.0
Appropriateness of assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, assignments) (N=22)	13.6	59.1	22.7	4.5	0.0
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs (N=24)	37.5	45.8	16.7	0.0	0.0
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs (N=23)	39.1	39.1	21.7	0.0	0.0
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress (N=24)	29.2	50.0	16.7	4.2	0.0
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum, determined by the IEP (N=24)	37.5	50.0	12.5	0.0	0.0
Availability of technology to support your child's needs, determined by the IEP (N=22)	45.5	22.7	18.2	0.0	13.6
Opportunities for your child to participate in general education classes (N=24)	33.3	58.3	4.2	0.0	4.2
Staff's expectations for your child's achievement (N=22)	27.3	45.5	22.7	0.0	4.5
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff (N=23)	39.1	56.5	4.3	0.0	0.0
Your child's transportation to and from school, determined by the IEP (N=23)	39.1	43.5	4.3	0.0	13.0
Staff's understanding of your child's social/emotional needs (N=23)	26.1	52.2	17.4	0.0	4.3
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs (N=23)	26.1	56.5	13.0	0.0	4.3
Your child's safety at school (N=23)	39.1	56.5	4.3	0.0	0.0
Opportunities for your child to work on social skills at school, determined by the IEP (N=23)	21.7	43.5	17.4	0.0	17.4
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch) (N=23)	21.7	69.6	4.3	0.0	4.3
Your child's opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (N=24)	20.8	62.5	12.5	4.2	0.0
Your child's overall adjustment to this school (N=24)	37.5	50.0	12.5	0.0	0.0

Table G-5
Satisfaction of Parents of Transitioned Students, Fall 2007

Please indicate your satisfaction with each of the following, during the current school year.	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied	% Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff (N=24)	54.2	41.7	4.2	0.0	0.0
Your child's transportation to and from school (N=23)	52.2	43.5	0.0	0.0	4.3
Your child's overall adjustment to a new school (N=24)	37.5	54.2	4.2	4.2	0.0
Your child's safety at school (N=23)	34.8	56.5	4.3	0.0	4.3
Accessibility of technology to support your child's needs (N=24)	45.8	41.7	0.0	8.3	4.2
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress (N=24)	41.7	45.8	4.2	8.3	0.0
Staff's understanding of your child's social/emotional needs (N=24)	33.3	54.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives (N=23)	52.2	34.8	8.7	0.0	4.3
Accessibility (e.g., time, format, physical layout) of middle/high school orientation (over the summer) (N=24)	54.2	29.2	4.2	8.3	4.2
Appropriateness of assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, assignments) (N=23)	39.1	43.5	8.7	8.7	0.0
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum (N=24)	50.0	33.3	12.5	4.2	0.0
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs (N=24)	50.0	33.3	8.3	4.2	4.2
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs (N=24)	33.3	50.0	8.3	4.2	4.2
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch) (N=24)	37.5	45.8	4.2	4.2	8.3
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs (N=24)	41.7	37.5	12.5	4.2	4.2

Table G-6
Satisfaction of Parents of Current Learning Center Students, Spring 2008

Survey Item	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied	% Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives (N=33)	27.3	60.6	6.1	0.0	6.1
Appropriateness of assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, assignments) (N=33)	21.1	57.6	15.2	3.0	3.0
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs (N=34)	41.2	47.1	11.8	0.0	0.0
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs (N=34)	44.1	41.2	14.7	0.0	0.0
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress (N=34)	38.2	44.1	17.6	0.0	0.0
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum, determined by the IEP (N=34)	26.5	47.1	14.7	0.0	11.8
Availability of technology to support your child's needs, determined by the IEP (N=34)	14.7	67.6	2.9	0.0	14.7
Opportunities for your child to participate in general education classes (N=34)	35.3	38.2	5.9	0.0	20.6
Staff's expectations for your child's achievement (N=32)	37.5	46.9	3.1	3.1	9.4
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff (N=34)	41.2	44.1	8.8	0.0	5.9
Your child's transportation to and from school, determined by the IEP (N=33)	54.5	30.3	3.0	3.0	9.1
Staff's understanding of your child's social/emotional needs (N=34)	38.2	52.9	5.9	2.9	0.0
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs (N=34)	35.3	52.9	11.8	0.0	0.0
Your child's safety at school (N=34)	26.5	67.6	2.9	2.9	0.0
Opportunities for your child to work on social skills at school, determined by the IEP (N=34)	20.6	41.2	11.8	2.9	23.5
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch) (N=34)	44.1	50.0	5.9	0.0	0.0
Your child's opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (N=34)	29.4	41.2	20.6	0.0	8.8
Your child's overall adjustment to this school (N=33)	42.4	45.5	6.1	0.0	6.1

Table G-7
Satisfaction of Parents of Other Students Receiving
Special Education Services in Receiving Schools, Spring 2008

Survey Item	% Very Satisfied	% Satisfied	% Dissatisfied	% Very Dissatisfied	% Don't Know/ Not Applicable
Matching of instruction with your child's IEP goals and objectives (N=115)	28.7	53.9	7.0	4.3	6.1
Appropriateness of assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, assignments) (N=117)	23.1	59.0	7.7	2.6	7.7
Staff's understanding of your child's academic needs (N=119)	29.4	49.6	8.4	7.6	5.0
Staff's ability to meet your child's academic needs (N=119)	30.3	49.6	9.2	6.7	4.2
Amount of teachers' feedback about your child's progress (N=119)	22.7	53.8	13.4	8.4	1.7
Appropriateness of the supports/services your child receives to access the curriculum, determined by the IEP (N=119)	24.4	47.9	10.9	3.4	13.4
Availability of technology to support your child's needs, determined by the IEP (N=119)	16.0	44.5	2.5	7.6	29.4
Opportunities for your child to participate in general education classes (N=119)	37.8	50.4	2.5	1.7	7.6
Staff's expectations for your child's achievement (N=118)	33.9	53.4	6.8	1.7	4.2
Opportunities for parental involvement and communication with school staff (N=118)	27.1	56.0	7.6	5.1	4.2
Your child's transportation to and from school, determined by the IEP (N=121)	28.1	30.6	0.0	0.8	40.5
Staff's understanding of your child's social/emotional needs (N=119)	28.6	46.2	5.9	10.9	8.4
Staff's ability to meet your child's social/emotional needs (N=118)	27.1	46.6	5.9	10.2	10.2
Your child's safety at school (N=118)	35.6	48.3	6.8	4.2	5.1
Opportunities for your child to work on social skills at school, determined by the IEP (N=117)	18.8	40.2	10.3	3.4	27.4
Your child's independence at transitions during the school day (e.g., between classes, at the locker, after lunch) (N=119)	28.6	44.5	5.0	1.7	20.2
Your child's opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities (N=120)	25.8	46.7	4.2	6.7	16.7
Your child's overall adjustment to this school (N=119)	38.7	47.1	7.6	4.2	2.5

Table G-8
Reported Changes by Parents of Transitioned Students, Spring 2008

Indicate changes you have noticed in your child this school year:	% Improved	% Stayed the Same	% Declined	% Don't Know/Not Applicable
Motivation to learn (N=24)	50.0	33.3	16.7	0.0
Confidence in abilities (N=24)	54.2	33.3	12.5	0.0
Relationship with teachers (N=24)	41.7	50.0	4.2	4.2
Academic performance (N=24)	45.8	41.7	8.3	4.2
Relationship with classmates (N=24)	41.7	50.0	0.0	8.3
Independence during the school day (N=24)	45.8	41.7	8.3	4.2
Attendance (N=24)	45.8	45.8	8.3	0.0
Participation in extracurricular activities (N=24)	25.0	45.8	12.5	16.7

Table G-9
Reported Changes by Parents of Transitioned Students, Fall 2007

Please indicate what changes you have noticed in your child this school year.	% Improved	% Stayed the Same	% Declined	% Don't know/not applicable
Attendance (N=23)	47.8	47.8	0.0	4.3
Independence during the school day (N=24)	62.5	29.2	8.3	0.0
Motivation to learn (N=23)	65.2	26.1	4.3	4.3
Confidence in abilities (N=24)	50.0	37.5	12.5	0.0
Relationship with teachers (N=23)	56.5	30.4	13.0	0.0
Relationship with classmates (N=24)	33.3	45.8	16.7	4.2
Academic performance (N=24)	41.7	29.2	25.0	4.2

Table G-10
Reported Changes by Parents of Current Learning Center Students, Spring 2008

Indicate changes you have noticed in your child this school year:	% Improved	% Stayed the Same	% Declined	% Don't Know/Not Applicable
Motivation to learn (N=34)	41.2	50.0	8.8	0.0
Confidence in abilities (N=34)	41.2	50.0	5.9	2.9
Relationship with teachers (N=33)	27.3	66.7	0.0	6.1
Academic performance (N=33)	36.4	57.6	6.1	0.0
Relationship with classmates (N=34)	26.5	58.8	14.7	0.0
Independence during the school day (N=34)	52.9	41.2	0	5.9
Attendance (N=34)	23.5	67.6	5.9	2.9
Participation in extracurricular activities (N=34)	11.8	58.8	11.8	17.6

Table G-11
Reported Changes by Parents of Other Students Receiving
Special Education Services in Receiving Schools, Spring 2008

Indicate changes you have noticed in your child this school year:	%	% Stayed	%	% Don't Know/ Not Applicable
	Improved	the Same	Declined	
Motivation to learn (N=120)	55.8	30.8	10.0	3.3
Confidence in abilities (N=119)	59.7	33.6	4.2	2.5
Relationship with teachers (N=119)	46.2	37.0	11.8	5.0
Academic performance (N=119)	54.6	34.5	7.6	3.4
Relationship with classmates (N=114)	51.8	31.6	9.6	7.0
Independence during the school day (N=120)	53.3	35.0	0.8	10.8
Attendance (N=120)	40.8	51.7	0.8	6.7
Participation in extracurricular activities (N=120)	35.8	40.8	5.0	18.3

Table G-12
Experiences with Central Office Case Manager:
Responses From Parents of Transitioned Students, Spring 2008

Survey Item	%	%	%	%	% Don't Know/ Not Applicable
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	
Case manager contacts me to find out how my child is doing in school (N=18)	33.3	38.9	22.2	0	5.6
Case manager provides me with information about resources to help my child (N=18)	38.9	44.4	11.1	0	5.6
Case manager helps me to work with the school when there are problems (N=19)	42.1	52.6	5.3	0	0
Case manager attends my child's IEP meetings (N=19)	57.9	36.8	0	0	5.3
Case manager responds to my concerns in a timely fashion (N=17)	35.3	52.9	0	0	11.8
Case manager provides a level of support that meets my needs (N=18)	50.0	33.3	16.7	0	0

Table G-13

Survey Question: What has Been Going Well with Your Child's School Experiences This Year?

Coded Responses ^a	% Parents of Transitioned Students N=19 ^b	% Parents of LC Students N=23 ^b	% Parents of Other Students Receiving Special Education Services N=91 ^b
Improved grades/academic achievement	36.8	13.0	17.6
Received awards (e.g., Honor roll, student of the month, etc.)	5.3	0.0	2.2
Making friends/socialization	15.8	13.0	14.3
School is closer to home	10.5	0.0	0.0
Improved self-esteem/confidence	10.5	4.3	9.9
Increased independence	10.5	8.7	12.1
Caring/good teachers	5.3	26.1	18.7
Communication with teachers	5.3	17.4	5.5
Organizational skills/time management	0.0	0.0	2.2
Improved English language skills	0.0	4.3	5.5
Participation in extracurricular activities	10.5	0.0	12.1
Improved self-advocacy	10.5	4.3	2.2
Communication/assistance from case manager	5.3	8.7	1.1
Increased motivation/interest in school/class participation	10.5	8.7	18.7
Effective adaptations/modifications	0.0	4.3	4.4
Small classes	0.0	4.3	0.0
Unspecified/general positive school experiences	21.1	34.8	28.6

^a Multiple responses were permitted.^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

Table G-14
What has not Been Going Well With Your Child's School Experiences this Year?

Coded Responses ^a	% Parents of Transitioned Students N=14 ^b	% Parents of LC Students N=17 ^b	% Parents of Other Students Receiving Special Education Services N=74 ^b
Poor grades	14.3	5.9	13.5
Bullying/teasing/safety issues	14.3	11.8	17.6
Non-compliance with IEP/accommodations	0.0	5.9	16.2
Lack of communication from school	0.0	5.9	20.3
Lack of social skills opportunities/poor social skills	7.1	5.9	14.9
Poor time management/organizational skills	7.1	0.0	6.8
Lack of motivation	7.1	17.6	5.4
Not appropriately challenged academically	14.3	11.8	2.7
Weak teachers	7.1	5.9	4.1
Classes are too large/not enough individual attention	7.1	5.9	0.0
Lack of involvement of case manager	7.1	0.0	0.0
Low expectations	7.1	0.0	1.4
Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem	7.1	0.0	2.7
Lack of appropriate technology/materials	7.1	11.8	2.7
Lack of focus	7.1	5.9	5.4
Content/expectations too high	7.1	11.8	0.0
Difficulty navigating the school building	0.0	11.8	0.0
Grading policy inappropriate for students with disabilities	0.0	5.9	0.0
Disruptive students in classes	0.0	11.8	0.0
Lack of self-advocacy/does not ask for help	0.0	0.0	2.7
Unspecified/general negative school experiences	14.3	0.0	12.2

^a Multiple responses were permitted.

^b Number of respondents who answered this question.

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Appendix H

Course Grades

Table B
2007–2008 End-of-Year Grades by Course and Student Group

Course and student group	Group <i>N</i>	A %	B %	C %	D %	E %
English 6						
Transition	47	8.5	27.7	48.9	8.5	6.4
Comparison	508	6.3	28.3	44.1	16.7	4.5
Science 6						
Transition	45	6.7	28.9	46.7	15.6	2.2
Comparison	491	6.7	33.6	36.0	17.3	6.3
Social studies 6						
Transition	45	2.2	40.0	44.4	11.1	2.2
Comparison	471	8.1	26.5	39.1	18.5	7.9
Math 6 (Math A)						
Transition	47	0.0	17.0	53.2	21.3	8.5
Comparison	511	6.8	27.6	37.8	22.9	4.9