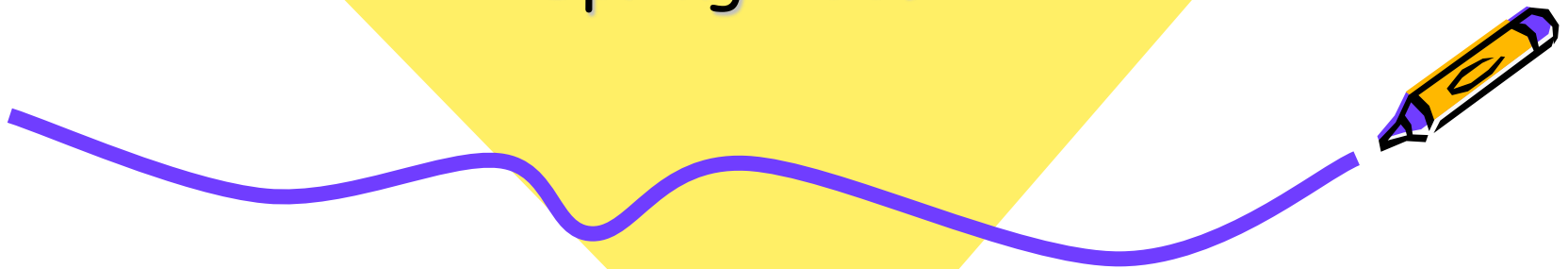# SEAC Parent Survey Summary

Spring 2009

Results

- 656 Respondents
- Representing 73 of the 76 schools
- All 13 disability categories were represented in responses, with the largest response rates from: SLI 25% Autism 23%; SLD -22%; and OHI – 15%

Question #6 – Parents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with statements related to their experience in Special Education.

1) 91% understood the process for determining eligibility for SpEd.
2) 80% satisfied with SpEd services.
3) 78% agree that child has accommodations/ assistive technology needed for their program.
4) 83% agree that the building administrator supports SpEd services for their child.
5) 85% agree that the school communicates regularly with regard to child's progress.
6) 74% agree that their child's needs are understood by general education teachers.
7) 83% agree that their child's needs are understood by SpEd teachers.
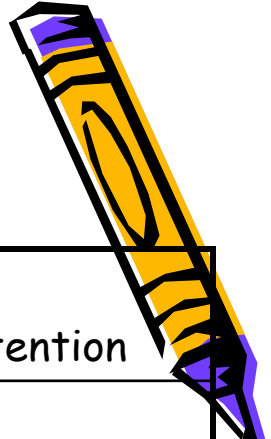8) 82% agree that their child feels apart of the school community.
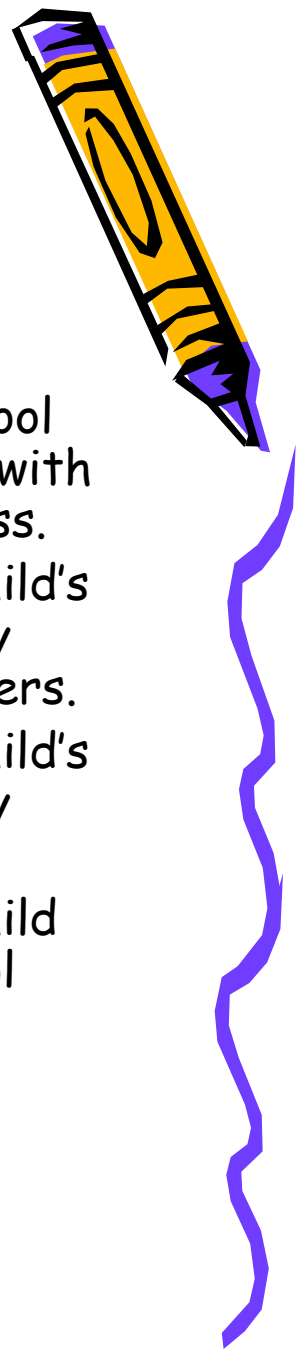
#7 Importance of SpEd Concerns
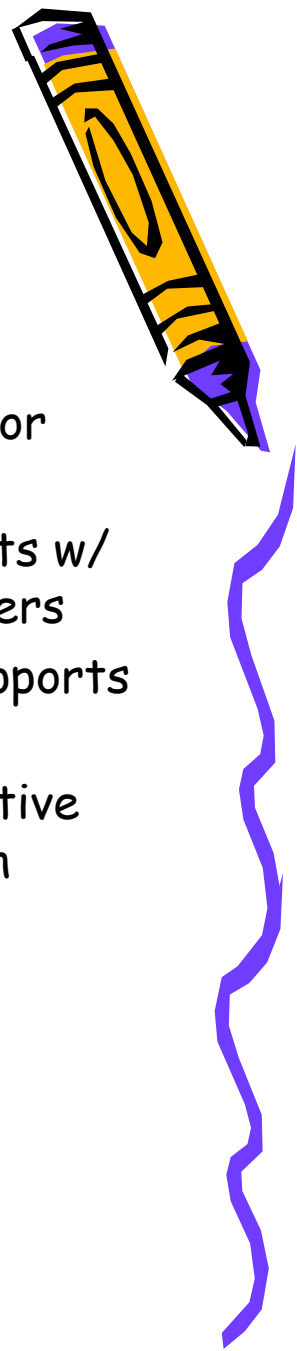
- 89% Recruitment, retention of HQ SpEd staff
- 81% Transition Planning
- 78 % Early Intervention & Awareness Services
- 78% Teacher/staff/parent training re: IEPs
- 76% Supports for behavior management & intervention

- 75% Eligibility process for SpEd
- 73% Inclusion of students w/ disabilities w/ gen ed peers
- 71% Autism Specific Supports & Services
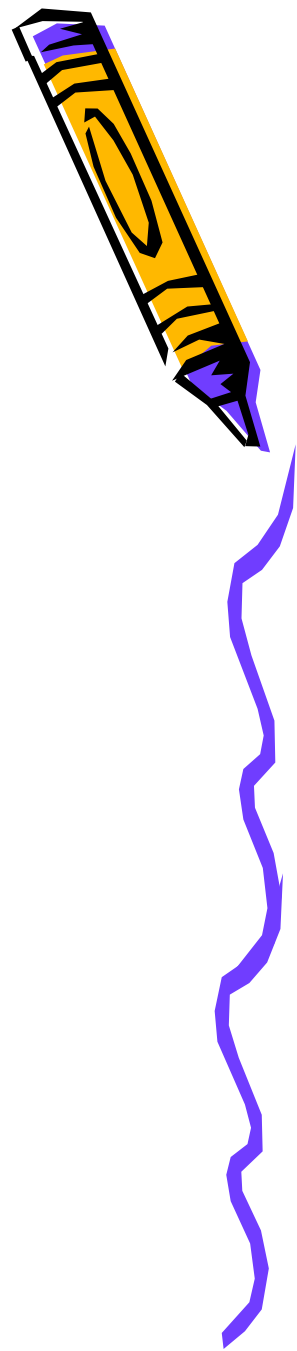- 69% Availability of adaptive equipment/assistive tech

#7 Importance of SpEd Concerns

Concerns	Needs More Attention	Needs Less Attention
Early Intervention & Awareness Services	78%	20%
Autism Specific Supports & Services	71%	30%
Inclusion of students w/ disabilities w/ gen ed peers	73%	26%
Availability of adaptive equipment/assistive tech	69%	31%
Teacher/staff/parent training re: IEPs	78%	21%
Supports for behavior mgt & intervention	76%	24%
Recruitment, retention of HQ SpEd staff	89%	11%
Eligibility process for SpEd	75%	25%
Transition Planning	81%	19%

#8 Summary – What are the **strengths** of the SpEd Program in Loudoun County Public Schools?

Note: These were some of the adjectives parents used to describe their child's staff or services.

- ❖ Knowledgeable
- ❖ Supportive
- ❖ Willing
- ❖ Dedicated
- ❖ Team work
- ❖ Genuinely interested
- ❖ Adaptability
- ❖ Fabulous
- ❖ Encouraging
- ❖ Organized
- ❖ Determined
- ❖ Awesome
- ❖ Caring

- ❖ Partners
- ❖ Resourceful
- ❖ Effective
- ❖ Flexible
- ❖ Concerned
- ❖ Positive
- ❖ Exceptional
- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Attentive
- ❖ Patient
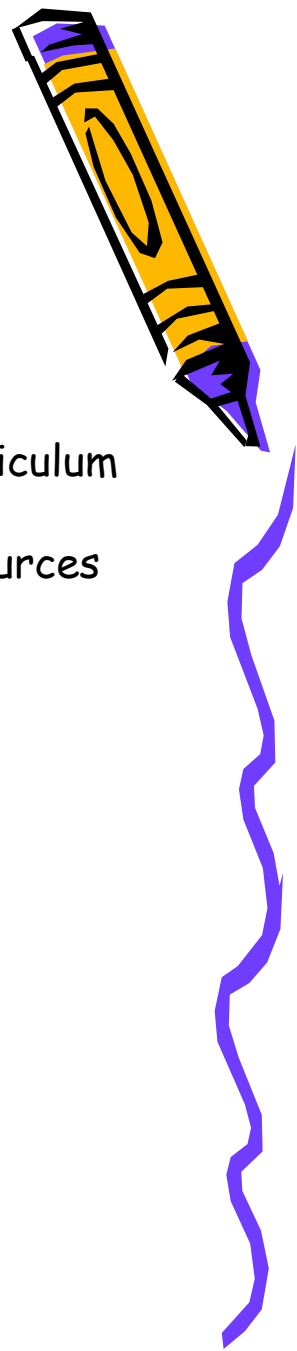- ❖ High quality
- ❖ Understanding
- ❖ Accessible

Summary of Parent Survey Data

June 2009
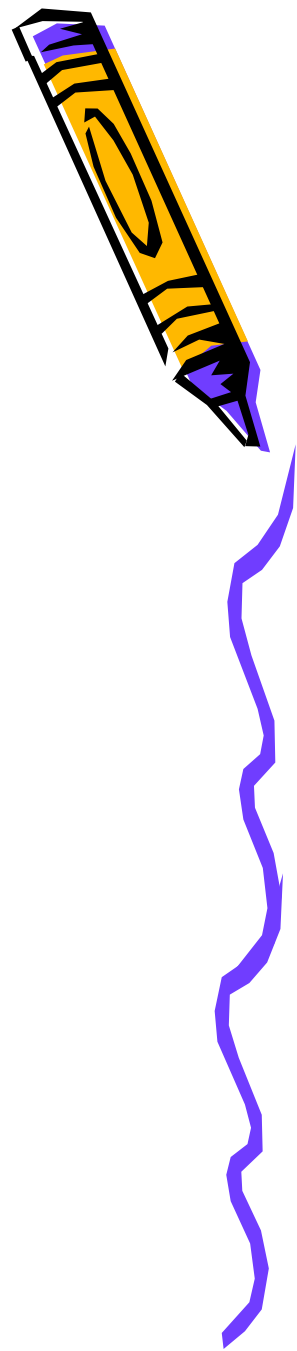
Synopsis of Concerns

- **Disability Training**
- **Home / School Communication**
- **Autism services & supports**
- **Eligibility/ Identification**
- **Retention/ Qualifications of Teachers**
- **Administration**
- **Student Teacher Ratio/ Case Load**

- IEP Accountability
- Reading
- Transitions

- Learning Disabilitiesd
- Access to Grade Level Curriculum
- ADHD
- Intellectual Disability Resources
- Emotional Disability
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Program Relocation
- Visual Impairment
- Community Based Programs
- Inclusion
- Data
- Budget
- Extended School Year
- Transportation

Home/ School Communication
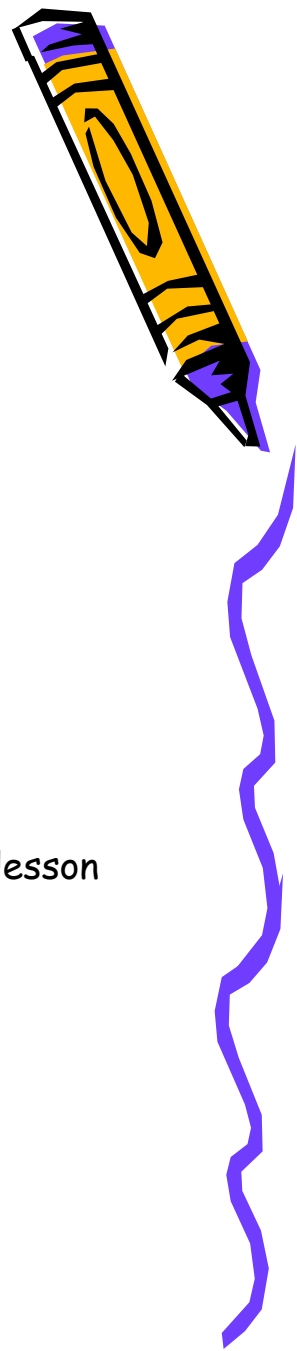
- ## 63 responses

- Lack of timely feedback
- Student input should be considered (MS/HS)
- Parental concerns disregarded
- Unwilling to provide regular feedback or data on student performance
- Need for collaboration with Administration, Gen Ed and SpEd
- Collaboration between Gen Ed and SpEd staff for curriculum modification and lesson plans
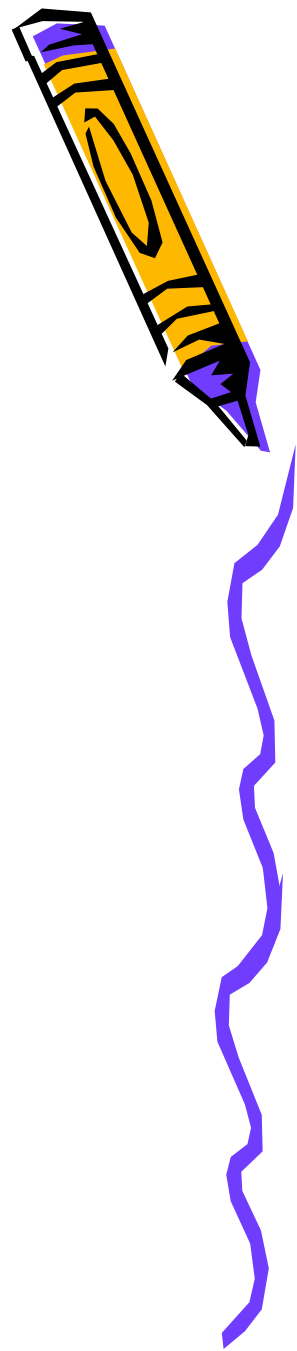- Parent responsibility

Disability Training
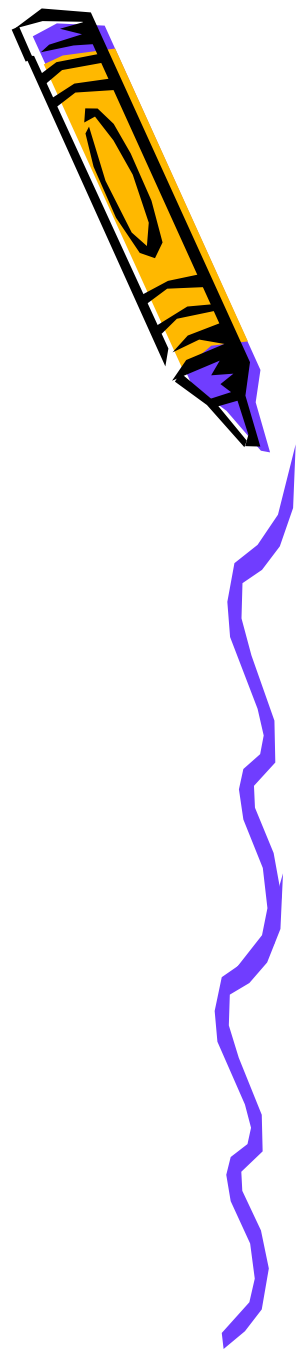
- ## 58 responses

  - Inclusion
  - Curriculum modification
  - Support for Staff
  - Support for Parents
  - General Education
  - Special Education
  - Twice Exceptional misunderstood by staff
  - Behavioral strategies for different disabilities
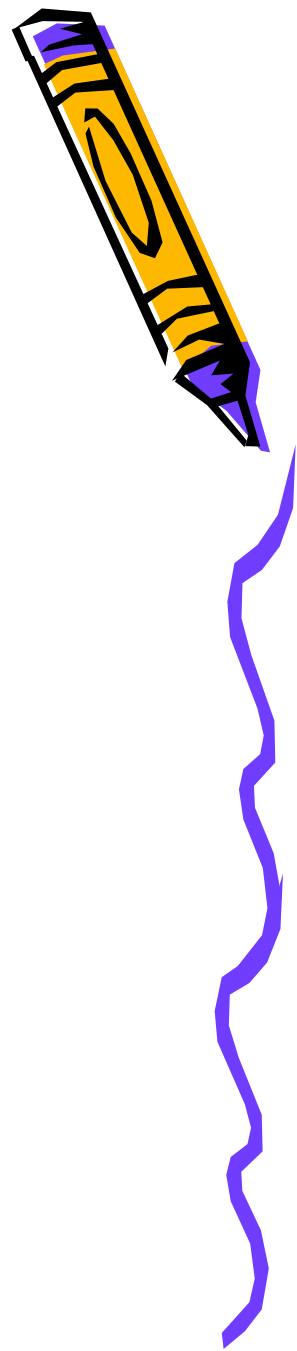 - Availability

Eligibility/ Identification

- ## 44 responses

  - Early Intervention
  - Length of process
  - Perceived attitude of eligibility staff - condescending
  - PRC follow up to smooth transition
  - Reinforce information provided after eligibility meeting - overwhelming
  - Follow up support for parents
  - Push back on parent requested testing
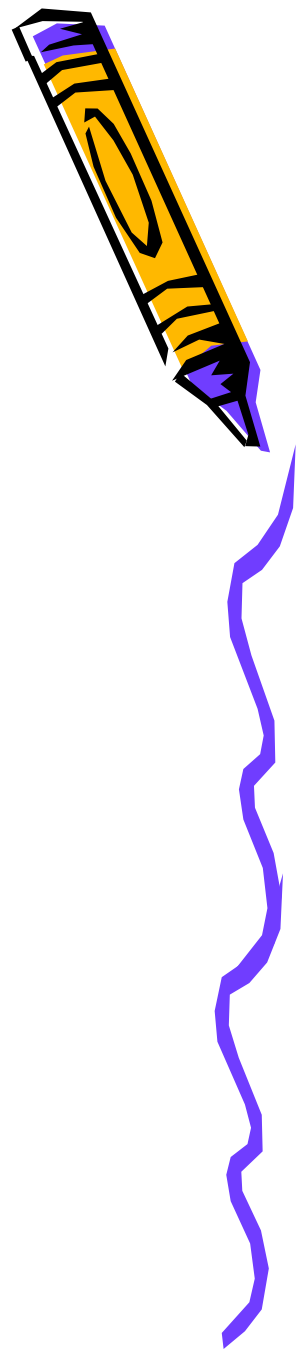 - Administration acceptance of teacher request for testing

Autism

- 42 responses

  - Peer groups
  - Social Skills curriculum & training for staff
  - Use ABA in classrooms
  - Need for more Board Certified Behavior Analysts
  - Behavioral training for teachers and instructional assistants
  - Asperger's Specialist
  - Gen Ed disability training
  - Appropriate diagnostic label should be given earlier
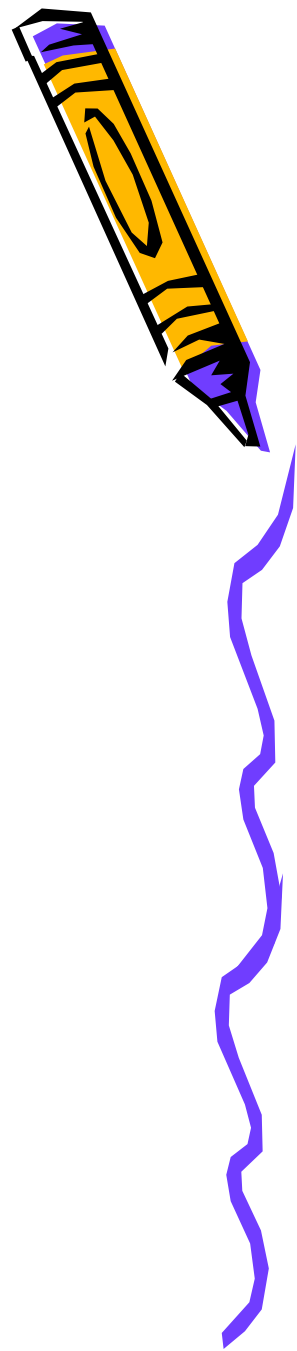 - Qualified substitute teachers for ASD students

Student Teacher Ratio/ Caseload

- ## 40 responses

  - Staff Shortages
  - Substitute teacher qualifications
  - Continuity (teacher looping with student)
  - Level of service available with caseload demands
  - Teachers bogged down by paper work

IEP Accountability

- ## 36 responses

- Collaboration between Gen Ed and SpEd
- Diagnostic label
- Training of staff on goal development and data collection
- Consideration of input from instructional assistant
- Appropriate placement
- AT Accommodations
- OT, PT, Speech service delivery
- Attendance of related service providers at IEP meetings
- Team support
- Parent training to better understand process
- Paperwork overwhelming and time consuming
- Implementation of services as outlined in IEP

Qualification of Teachers/ Retention

- ## 27 responses

- Higher standards of teachers – may have the degrees but not the experience with a particular disability
- Substitute teachers need SpEd experience and training
- Aides – provide them with the training needed to support the student
- Teachers share best practices with each other
- Training new case managers – need for strong mentor program.
- Qualifications
- Retention of great teachers, aides, support staff, etc.

Administration

- ## 26 responses

- School support staff
- Creating a climate for successful inclusion
- Communication
- Perception that parents need to escalate up the chain of command to resolve issues
- Knowledge of programs available within LCPS
- Accountability for implementation of IEP services
- Placement of students – teacher selection in Gen Ed
- Disability training
- Behavior training – Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Testing request delayed

Inclusion
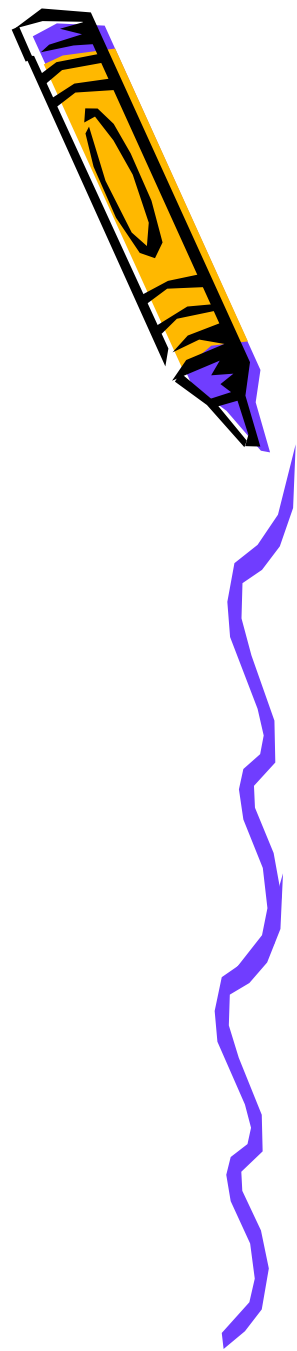
- ## 25 responses

  - Appropriate placement and options
  - Behavior Management – supports must be in place for success
  - After school programs
  - Collaboration between Gen Ed and SpEd
  - Buddy program
 - Mentor programs
  - Social opportunities

Budget

- ## 13 responses

- Salaries – need to retain and attract highly qualified teachers and teacher assistants
- After school programs for students with disabilities
- Inadequate space for special education classrooms ('Phone   Closet' classroom)
- Reduction in services that are required by state for special education
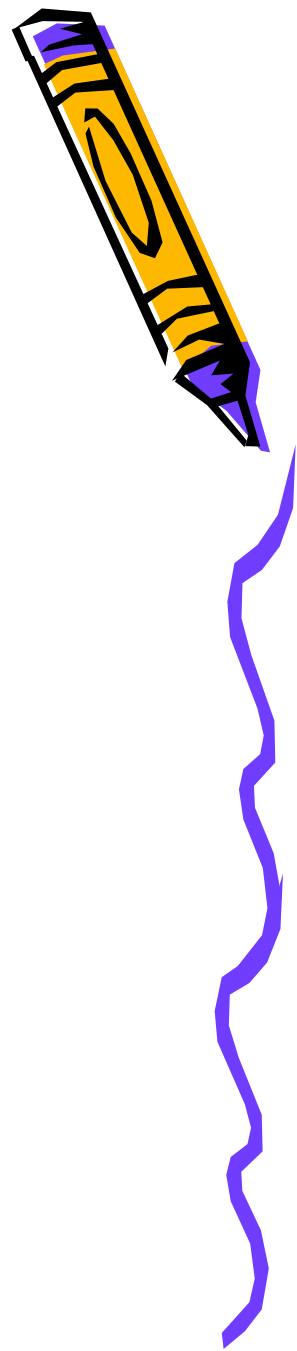- Over crowding of classrooms

Grade Level Curriculum
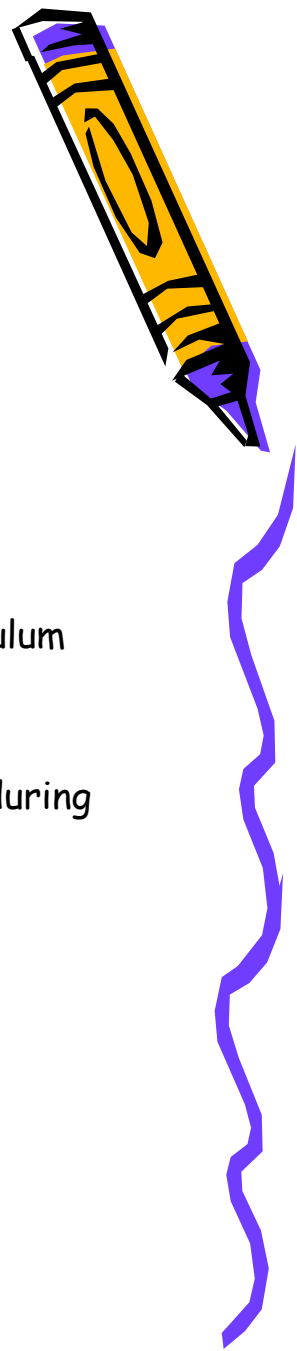
- ## 12 responses

  - More training on curriculum modification to ensure individual needs are met
  - Access for students based in "self contained" classrooms to grade level curriculum
  - VGLA test due before Standard SOLs
  - Set the bar high for students
  - General education curriculum supported by Related Services staff; crossover during the day to reinforce curriculum
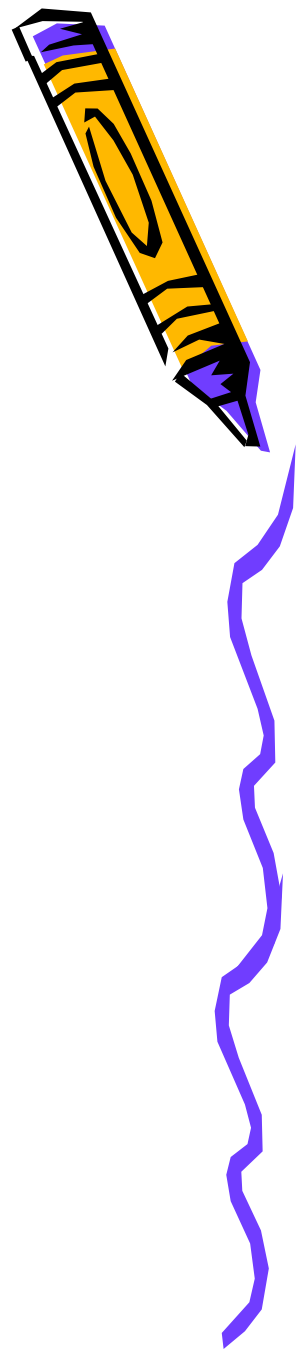
Program Relocation/ Boundaries

- ## 12 responses

  - Out of county services – offer programs in county
  - Boundary adjustments
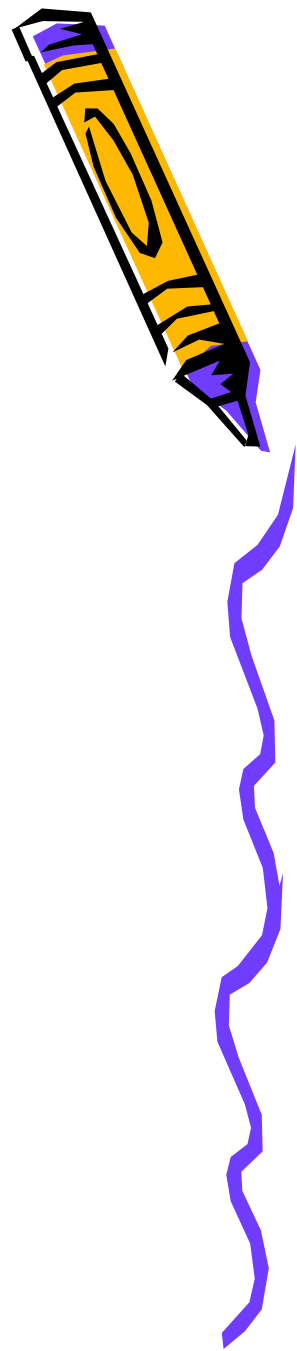 - Availability of services to different areas of county

Transitions

- ## 10 responses

- Better coordination of transition from Elementary to Middle and Middle to HS
- Elementary staff need to understand middle school environment to assist them in planning
- Frequency of career and transition guidance to HS students
- Transition process should be more formalized, and not dependent on individual teacher efforts
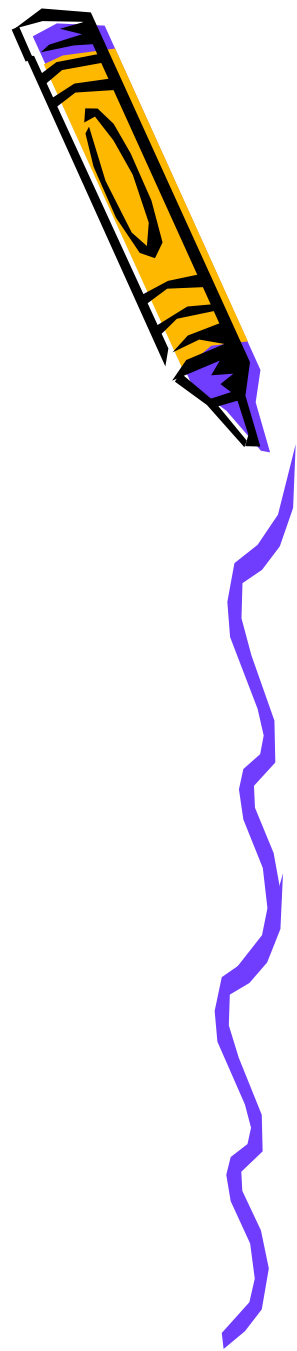
Learning Disabilities

- ## 10 responses

  - Hire teachers who have extensive experience with dyslexia
  - Ensure continuity of service to ensure needs are met year to year
  - Teacher training in multi-sensory teaching methods
  - More training for Gen Ed teachers on learning disabilities and how to modify curriculum and support a student with LD in the classroom
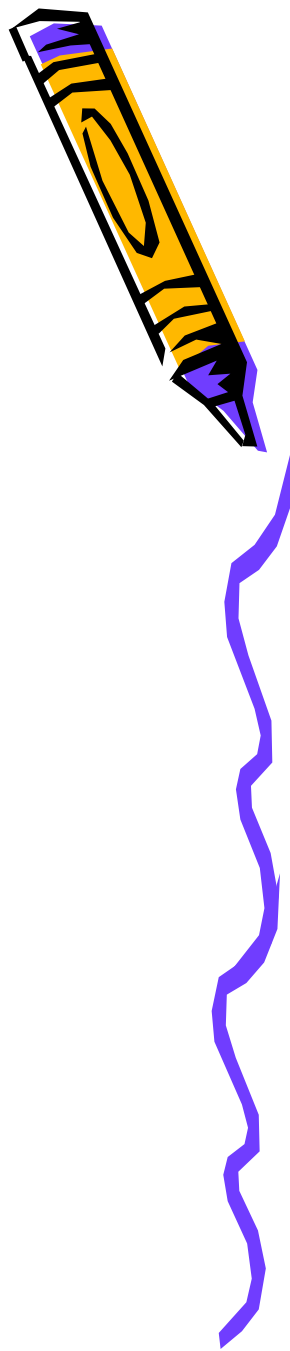
Extended School Year

- ## 9 responses

- One size does not fit all. More options should be available to meet individual.
- Don't disrupt the gains made during school year with a long break in services.

Data

- ## 9 responses

  - Monitor progress
  - Best practices
  - Consistent collection procedures
  - Utilize data to support behavior plan
  - Perceived resistance to data collection

Reading

- ## 5 responses

  - Teacher training on multi-sensory reading programs
  - Identification of reading program to meet *unique* needs of student
  - Need for *intense* remediation for students who are below grade level
 - Close the achievement gap early
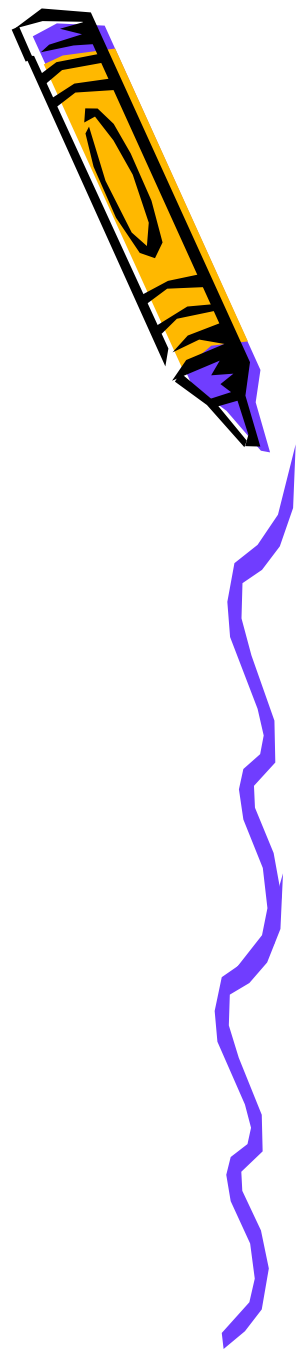
Emotional Disability

- ## 4 responses

- Placement options for students with ED
- Consistency of approach to behavior management
- Limited resources
- MANDT training should be *used* in all schools
- Create an environment within the school system that can support students with ED
- Disability training for *all* staff (Gen Ed & SpEd) who work with a student w/ ED

ADHD

- ## 3 responses

- Behavior modification training specific to ADHD
- Parents providing tremendous support to their child which results in his/her success – then staff want to reduce service level
- Appropriate placement options for ADHD students
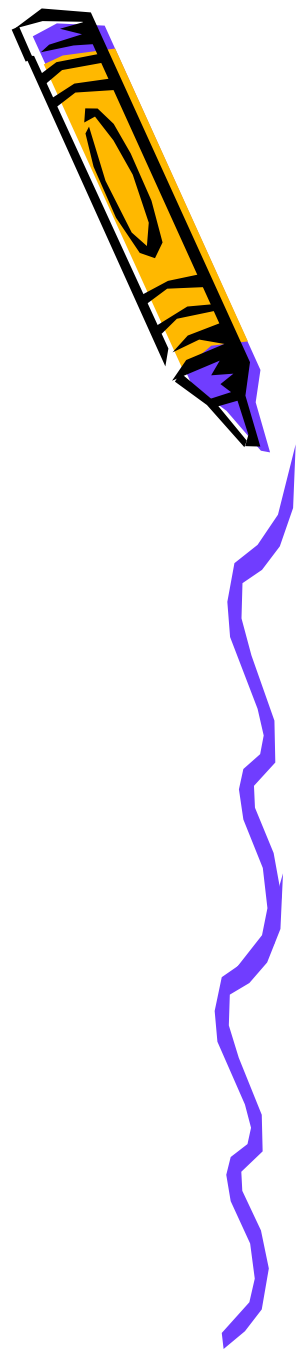
Transportation

- ## 3 responses

  - Transportation to after school programs or daycare
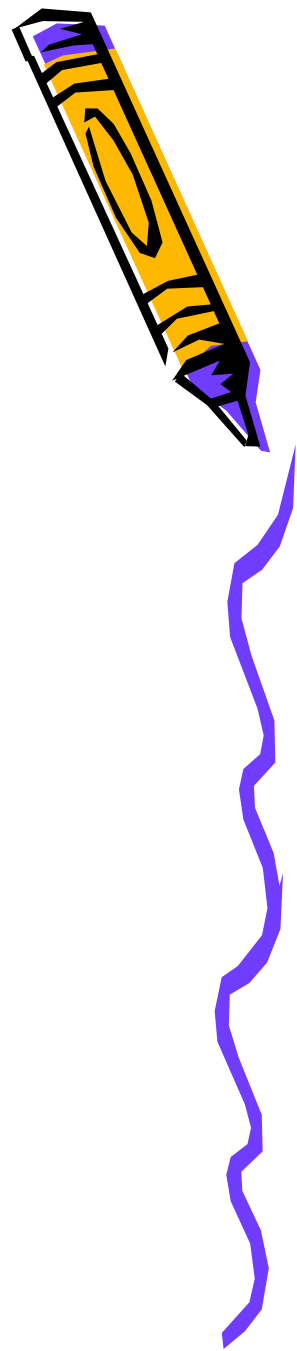 - Long bus rides for students who aren't attending their "home" school
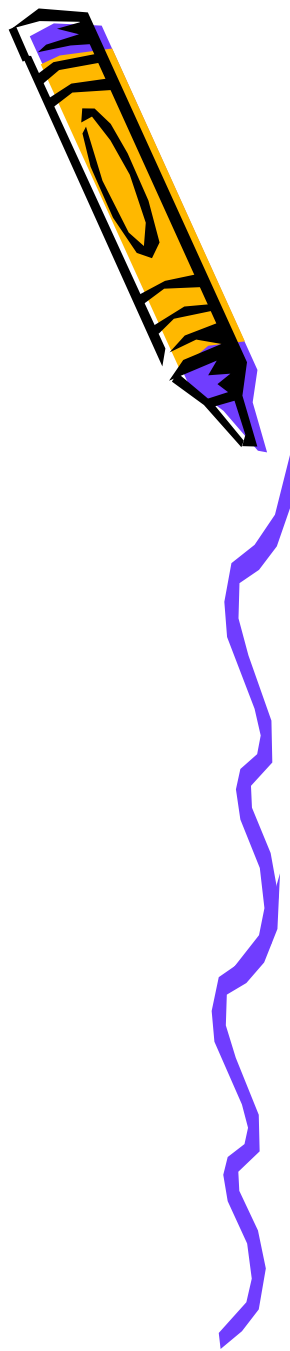
Community Based & After School Programs

- ## 2 Responses

- Transportation to after school daycare, activities or therapy for SpEd students.
- Access of SpEd students to school based after school clubs/activites.
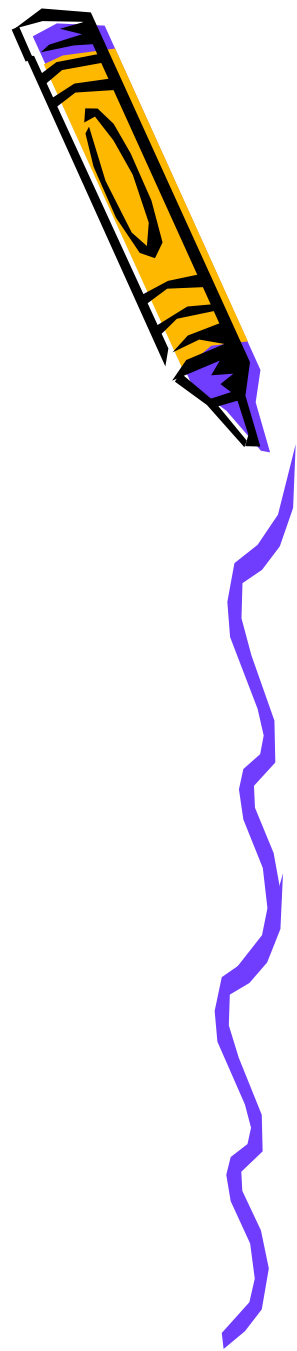
Intellectual Disability

- 1 response

  - Share best practices for inclusion
  - Specialists for ID are needed to support SpEd staff

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- 1 response

  - Provide more variety of programs in deaf education.
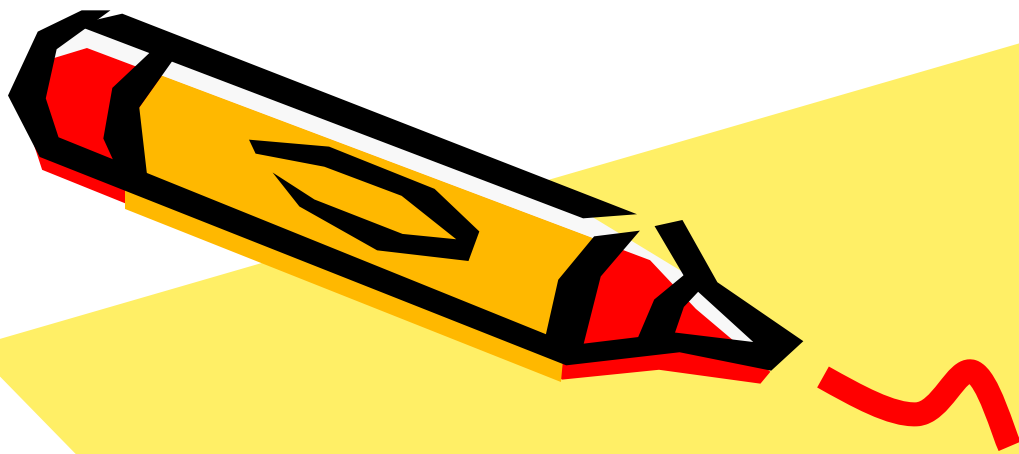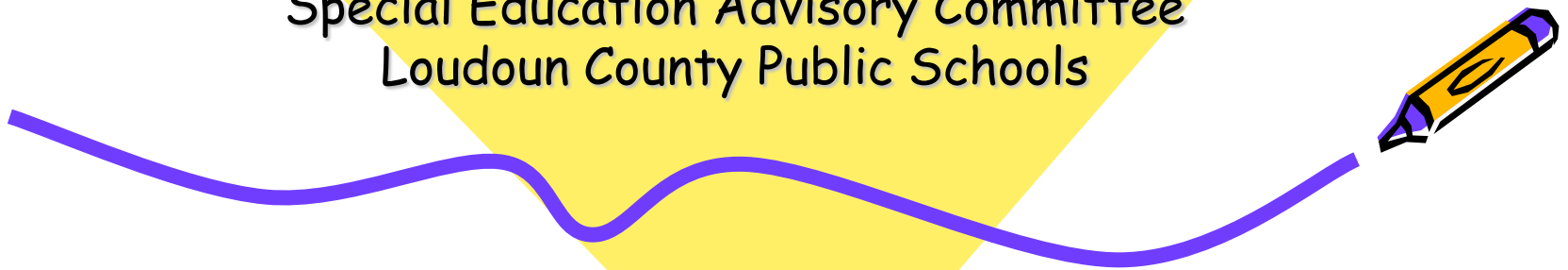 - Need teachers certified in ASL.

Visual Impairment

- ## 1 response

- Loop teacher with student

- Better coordination of textbook and supplemental materials for low vision students
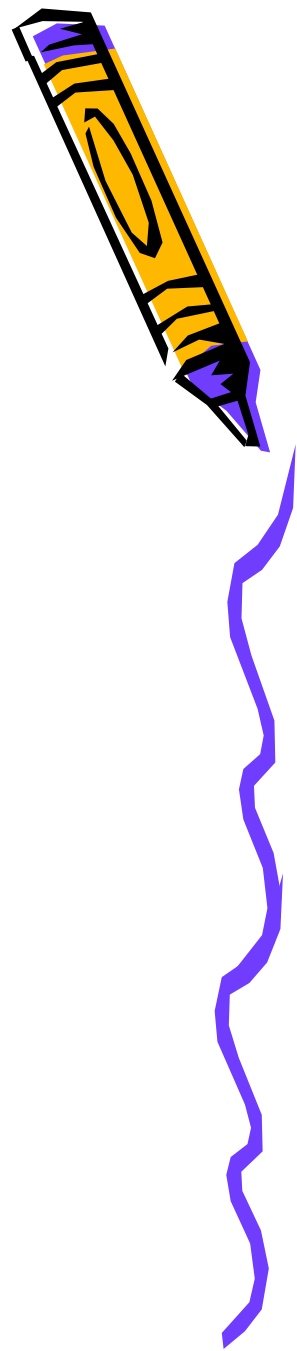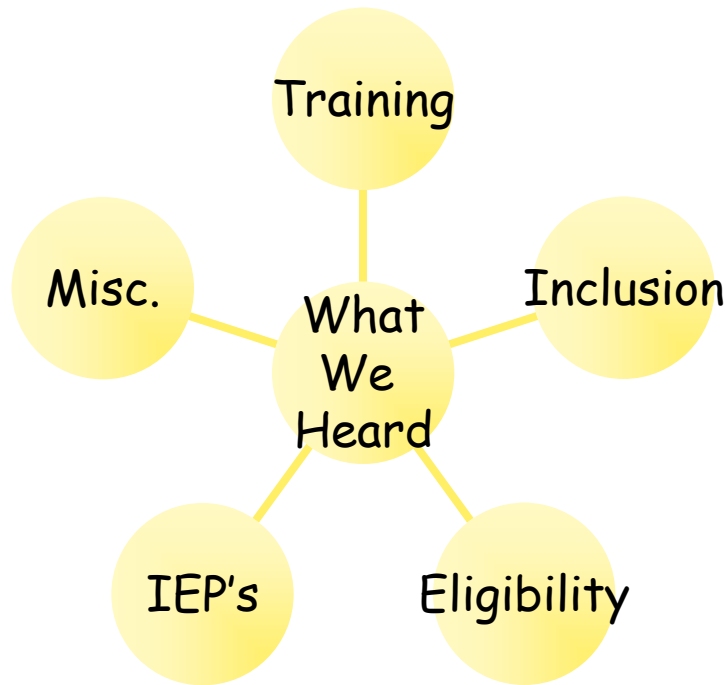
Town Hall 2009

Summary of Concerns
Special Education Advisory Committee
Loudoun County Public Schools

Main Themes from Parent Feedback

Training

1. Training needed for general education teachers on disabilities, behavior etc.
2. Staff and parents unaware of services that are available.
3. Better training for case managers.
4. More training for assistant principals.
5. Better training for basic skills for teachers.
6. Low expectations for SPED students.
7. Staff need better training on ESY.

Inclusion

1. Increase number of elementary team taught classes.
2. Inclusive athletics at the HS level.
3. Program relocation.
4. Rush to place students in self-contained classrooms.
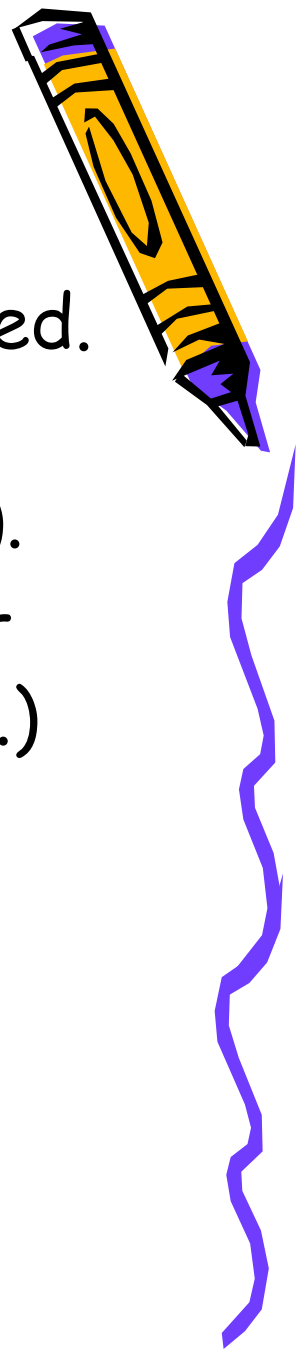5. Certified ASL interpreters needed for deaf/hh students.

Eligibility

1. Problems with Child Study process.
2. Need for mental health screening as part of preliminary assessments.
3. Eligibility documents not ready on time for review prior to meeting.
4. Eligibility delays.
5. Denial of eligibility.
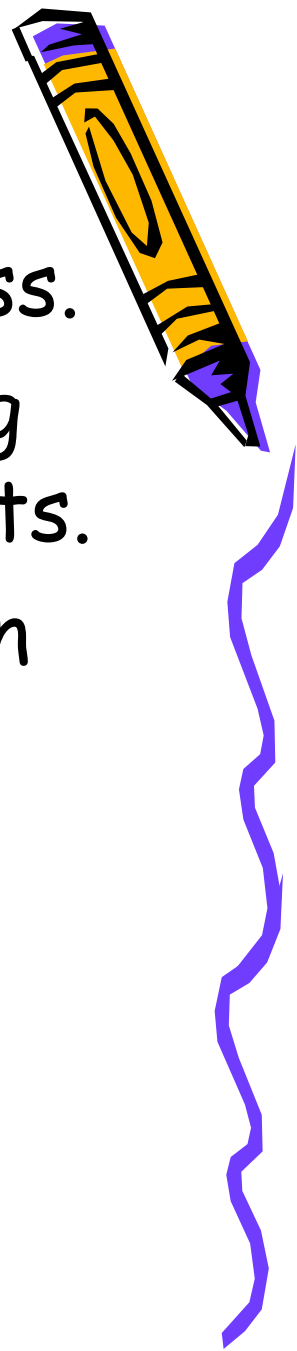
IEPs

1. IEPs not being implemented as designed.
2. Need to partner with county/private resources (CSB, In-Step, Psych Svc's).
3. Utilize available resources throughout the year (i.e. behavior specialists, etc.)

Miscellaneous Concerns

1. Deaf programs need to teach ASL.
2. Concern that budget is affecting service delivery to SPED students.
3. Lobbying for mandated insurance bill covering Autism therapy.
4. Qualifications & training of ESY staff; accountability for implementing ESY goals.
5. Need for better communication between parents and LCPS re: ESY programs.
6. Appearance of no variation of ESY services to meet individual needs. Only summer school setting being offered.