

The following pages contain feedback provided to the Texas Education Agency during focus group meetings held between February 6, 2018 and March 2, 2018 in reference to the Draft Plan posted on the Agency's website on January 17, 2018. The feedback was compiled directly from written input obtained by educators in all 20 education service center regions. The content of the feedback is presented just as it was provided, with only formatting applied for consistency in the publication.

Other feedback opportunities are ongoing, and persons wishing to make initial or additional comments may continue to do so by sending an email to TexasSPED@tea.texas.gov.

Educator Response Request 1

Barriers or Concerns

- More assessment staff if you want more evaluations Recommended researched based RTI programs
- more funding
- Utilizing a developmental delay label until the age of 8, as is done in other states
- Increasing funding for special education
- Required professional development on RTI and researched
- based interventions that can be implemented in general education regarding both academics and behavior
- Funding for specific interventionists to support general education teachers with RTI, CST, data collection, etc. (whether actually conducting interventions or helping teachers problem solve)
- Collaborative school team/committee with representatives from each team to discuss CST for individual cases
- Mandated intervention time built into daily minutes
- Provide alot of financial resources to districts to support the taking on of all the new referrals.
- Provide extended timelines to complete the evaluations and research.
- Support districts in hiring additional staff, which is complicated by hiring difficulties.
- Not identifying kids early enough. Teachers identify struggling students in K ans 1 but are told we cant label kids that early....so they fall farther behind. (Why cant we use a DD label like other states?)
- Identification and testing for special education services varies across schools within districts depending on admin, parents, and LSSPs.
- Time, resource, knowledge to complete interventions for struggling students
- TEA has the wrong stakeholders providing information. Parents of dyslexia only and RtI only students should be the key stakeholders.
- TEA is the original problem for this difficulty when they introduced the CAPs and now they are passing the blame back onto the districts and now districts are responsible for fixing it without providing additional funding while they are taking an additional \$83 million over the course of the next five years for personal funny but without providing support to districts financially.
- Financially, school districts arent able to support correcting TEAs blunder.
- More power should be given to the LEAs.
- Mobility of students; Accurate parent disclosure; Training for parents of special need students - how to advocate for their children; Texas database to identify all students/their needs; Realistic percentages of special needs students
- Concern
 - gray area "severity of disability" how do you identify and define "severity" this is too ambiguous of a term
 - students who are not performing on grade level are given grade level work and expected to complete appropriately while also being constantly pulled out for other small group interventions.
- Current Barriers
 - teachers do not have the physical support and physical resources to identify disabilities across the spectrum
 - teachers need instructional aids, trained professionals, etc. for assitstantce and contact collaboration in the classroom
 - teachers need to be by law empowered to communicate with parents what can be done for students
 - parent/family friendly language by law
- lack of knowledge of protocol to follow

- parent/teacher education of definition of dyslexia, autism, dysgraphia, Asperger's, dyscalcula
 - parents bring these issues to ARD meetings and teachers aren't educated
- Concerns
 - We do not have enough staffing to meet the high number of students needing services.
 - Not enough programs to meet the various needs of all students in SPED.
 - There are not enough physical or types classrooms to serve the number of students with various needs.
 - Inconsistent answers from administrators that do not line up with legislation on a state or national level.
- Decisions being made by administrators based on staffing versus numbers and needs of students.
- The district should be allowed to see the monitoring report prior to being released to public.
- The education of parents on early identification is key to finding children with needs.
- A cap on the enrollment for all the special education and special services. Cap due to lack of funds
- Will there be a change in the testing procedures or qualifications in qualifying for special ed? There is potential for abuse of the system (e.g. students being placed in sped for the sake of test scores). Also, increased numbers of sped students will place a financial strain on districts to provide services.
- Concerns
 - The demographics of different schools across the state will not lend itself to one solution meeting all the districts needs.
- Flat rate percentages don't work across the board.
- How are they going to undo or rebrand RTI, what direction are they going to provide for school districts.
- We all understood that RTI was the avenue/best practice to make sure RTI was utilized to better understand who should/shouldn't be tested.
- There's a breakdowns with the parents and the school because of the branding of it. Parent-school relationships have likely suffered as a result of indicator 10 and the previous process,
- so the barrier is to salvage.
- The funding needed to provide enough staff and services is a concern.
- Is more regulation going to increase anxiety with professionals, and lessen moral.
- High stakes testing does not benefit our special education students. However, in the past exempting special education students was abused.
- A concern is that RTI will not be of major importance anymore.
 - LEAs followed the directive from TEA, so if TEA failed LEAs should not be held accountable for corrective actions.
- Lack of understanding in the community regarding ChildFind.
- Assessment staff
 - One barrier has been not having enough assessment staff in the district to fulfill needs appropriately
- Limitations
 - We are looking to open Special Education to additional students, yet there are percentage guidelines for certain state assessments. How do we effectively assess these students when given limitations?
- Percentages
 - One concern is that the schools are held to a certain percentage, which ultimately results in a penalty to the school. Schools shouldn't have to be watching numbers, they should be able to direct their time toward the students and their academics.
- Staffing
 - How are we going to have enough staff to provide services for things such as evaluations and follow through services. Will extra funding be available to provide staff for these services?
- Effective Services

- At what point can you determine if you're serving the kids in the best environment if there are so many students in an environment, since there is no cap to Special Education classrooms?
- 6 Month time line
 - A concern from the group was that there was a 6 month RTI timeline then a student should be referred for special education testing or at least considered.
 - School Districts need to have the latitude to determine if the student has made growth and whether or not the student NEEDS the special education pieces
- FIE
 - Not all students who receive Section 504 services are in need of a FIE.
- Research Based Intervention
 - Research-based intervention programs are expensive and when they are offered free by state and then taken away; there isn't any grant monies or funding for schools to then purchase the program to continue the intervention
- All districts are under the same corrective action regardless of infractions.
- Intervention Staff deficit
 - The districts do not have enough intervention staff now and if more students are identified needing intervention; where is the \$\$ coming from to provide this extra staff.
- District Level
 - Waiting to fail before intervention occurs.
 - Our concern is there is too much room to interpret the guidelines.
 - Inadequate training for teachers.
- Make sure districts are recognizing outside data.
- If a student is on Tier 3 for a specified amount of time, then the student should be referred for special education testing.
- A universal measure across the state to determine grade level. What are the standards?
- Needs to be an adjustment in the alternative certification program
- Communication needs to be given to general education teachers as well.
- Letters sent out to the parents to ask if they feel their child did not receive services they think they should have. (2) Any communication between the students and the child's doctor that the child needed or was diagnosed that the school did not act upon.
- Criteria to qualify needs to be adjusted.
- Take out the "OR"
 - Take the the OR out of qualifications for SLD
- General education teachers should be trained on disability awareness and "red flags" to watch for in their classrooms.
- The state can develop a survey that goes out to all parents with the purpose of getting parent input on whether or not they think their child should be referred for special education testing.
- Provide districts with Best Practices for RTI
 - Provide districts with timelines for accountability Standardized forms for all districts so that comparisons are done equally and so students who move to different districts have equal opportunity to be evaluated
- Required submission of all referrals compiled in a database that includes referral, action plan, follow up and timeline
- Creation of standardized forms across the state.
- More guidance on the RTI process, standardized RTI program.
- Concerns- Quality control of RTI programs in districts Barriers- How do you quantify that
- Too much pressure for teachers to have sped students pass STAAR
- Gen Ed teachers need better training on disabilities
- Small schools may not have the personnel or appropriate programming needed to serve students.
- Students are very mobile and making sure that each campus offers the needed programming.

- The amount of time it takes to qualify a student for special education services
- Lack of funding for districts to serve students with special education needs. Lack of funding provided from the state as well as the Federal govt., makes it difficult to provide FAPE to all children with disabilities.
- Cultural belief system may impact early identification and assessment of ethnic minorities. Ex: Children from hispanic and African American cultures with Autism tend to be identified at a later age than anglo.
- Misunderstanding of where RtI falls within the identification spectrum for SPED.
- mass referrals...who is monitoring teacher data
- Early age identification of students is very controversial, which creates barriers for students who truly require SPED services.
- Inadequate number of evaluation staff
- Not enough community education regarding child find.
- Although our process isn't perfect, there does need to be a process for referral
- Documentation for referral is repetitive and overwhelming for all staff involved
- Child find for private school students is important, but services provided once they are identified takes funding away from public school students
- Lack of education for parents and educators on how to request testing for students.
- Concern-not knowing who is responsible for Child Find? How does the district ensure that procedures are followed? How are these people going to be identified and who will be responsible for all the evaluations?
- providing teachers with best practices for RTI and reevaluating the current referral process for intervention
- Clearly define the timeline for RTI and holding everyone accountable for following through in a reasonable amount of time
- Address the criteria for qualifying for special ed services (there are students who currently do not qualify for services but have an obvious need - the scores on current assessments do not address all indicators)
- Educating parents on the process of identification (parent responsibility/district responsibility)
- (1)How districts plan on going back to identified students that were originally denied services? Compensatory services? (2) There are no objective framework for how long RTI can continue? (3) How will they provide training to district personal to service students?
- Major manpower issues, don't have enough people or evaluators (there is a state shortage right now). (2) Money, who will pay for this as the state continues to cut funding. (3)
- There will be a significant shortage of assessment staff if students that are in the RTI process are suddenly mass referred for special education testing.
- STAFFING and FUNDING!
- Language barriers may be affecting students being identified. Parents don't understand, don't attend meetings, etc.
- General education teachers struggle with identifying students who need to be referred for RTI and/or special education; or the opposite, over-refer.
- The DNQ's are concerns of the schools. These students are low across the board, yet they don't qualify for SPED services. These are some students that need our services. The eligibility criteria needs to be addressed.
- The vast amount of paperwork is ridiculous. More time spent in paperwork (we feel) than teaching.
- What do we do with the students who don't meet the Sped profile (no strength) but are still struggling in general education.
- who has the right to deny services for the student as far as permission goes?
- There is an unknown at times when a child has a diagnosis...wh n do we move them
- from 504 into SPED.
- Timeframe
- The district needs to respond to the educator. Needs to be a timeline.

- There is no funding for adequate staff to service the incoming students into special education. The teachers already have more students in their classes than they can serve appropriately, there needs to be more help and more classrooms available.
- When looking at the barriers, we need to examine if they are language barriers or an actual disability barrier.
- There is a lack of professional development on any level for special education staff.
- There is a lack of support from the administration.
- There are no barriers in our district. We evaluate and serve 99% of the students referred. The only time we do not test is when the student is on grade level and/or there is not an educational need to test.
- Training school districts about specific characteristics to look for in disability identification
- Medical field training in child find and disability categories
- Improving the identification of transfer students locally or out of state
- RTI process not enough things in process not enough money in the state. The Governor has not issued enough money for the interventions, tutoring, etc. and anything else that goes along with RTI. In this district in particular EPISD RTI is a joke.
- Not enough hours in the day to target all the needs of the students in a given day. There are no specific interventionists.
- There are so many requirements for the RTI process and the paperwork is out of hand and testing continuously so the process is not fluid.
- RTI process is a method of putting off the inevitable. They do not want the students referred for special education. In some cases it takes up to a year.
- In Charter Schools, Diags have to be contracted and the process takes even longer.
- One important barrier in identifying all children with a suspected disability is a lack of assessment staff.
- Another barrier is that there appears to be a divide among special education and general education, and general education does not always understand the testing process, disability categories, etc.
- Finally, another barrier is that many parents are not aware of ECI services or that they can request an evaluation by walking in to their local school.
- We aren't training Gen-Ed well enough.
- Campuses don't provide specifically for SPED. WE are segregated.
- Barriers:
 - Cost, attention from Admin, Audits are not occurring, Regional Centers are not assisting TEA. Little effective data, staffing is an issue,
 - Over-influx of referrals
 - How is the money spent going to benefit the students at the campus level? Cost is big concern.
 - We need more efficient processes for testing.
 - What does the monitoring entail? How is it going to work? More diags are needed testing, etc.
 - Personnel to test
 - Concerns
 - There will be a move towards testing all students regardless of data suggesting disability is present or not.
 - Staffing - How will LSSPs, Diagnosticians, SLP, OT, PT, VI, AI staff manage influx of evaluations in addition to other job responsibilities.
 - Funding for hiring additional evaluation staff is not there
 - Shortage of LSSPs, Diagnosticians, Speech Pathologists, OT, PT, VI, AI to complete additional evaluations.
 - Trickle down effect, more students qualifying means greater need for SPED providers and instructional materials.
 - Dyslexia is defined by law as a specific learning disability - all students currently identified as having dyslexia should theoretically meet SLD criteria.
- There will be an significant increasing referrals and evaluations..

- Funding
 - Allocating money/additional resources for identifying these students.
- The entire RTI process is taking too long. Numbers of students referred to and thru the RTI process are effecting the process, (students are staying too long in TIER 3.
- Campus staff are not taking RTI seriously because it is a secondary duty for staff.
- RTI needs to be a specific assignment, by a trained staff.
- Need to be a centralized system to track students, especially those students that move a lot. Streamlined data base.
- Needs to be accountability that interventions are implemented with fidelity and
- We need more LSSPs RTI
- Consistency between all campuses and districts.
- Transient Students
 - How can we track/follow these students from RTI to general education.
- Speech therapy caseloads will significantly increase with not enough staff.
- Consistency of Services provided for students
 - DNQs, transfer students, etc.
- Does every campus/ district have knowledge of resources available to students.
- Commonly identified disorders (speech, dyslexia) data should reflect normal times for interventions and development, with fluctuations observed in the data.
- In our districts, we do not see concerns or barriers in identifying students with disabilities. We do use RTI for students suspected with a disability and believe it is a necessary and successful tool.
- Consistency of RTI throughout districts
 - Oversight of RTI is vague and districts are left to implement strategies that are not consistent.
- Staffing
 - If we are going to test all of the students that may qualify, we are going to need more diags./funding.
- Funding
 - Vague explanation on how the TEA created funds to support districts will be used.
- Identification Irregularities
 - Implementation of RTI looks different across campuses/grades levels.
- Compensatory Services
 - Lacking key indicators for identification.
- Training
 - Funding for training, monitoring, and follow through are not clear.
- Review and Support Team
- Monitoring once every six years does not seem like an appropriate time frame to ensure proper implementation.
- Finding kids that have already been overlooked will be important and hard to do.
 - What about kids that have already graduated?
- How long will the implementation of the plan be monitored by OSEP.
- How will districts have enough funding and staff to implement and identify when caseloads are at a max already.
- The barriers may include staffing and manpower to go through RTI, children placed in 504 who should have perhaps been referred, children receiving speech only who may be under served.
- The biggest barrier that I've encountered were during ARDs at my previous public ISD was that we were allowed maximum percentage of students per our enrollment/head count. So while some students were in need we were instructed to more or less prioritize based upon those who needed SPED services the most. Therefore, while the teacher see a need for service this stipulation largely impacted where a child was formerly found.

- TEA said too Many in sped,so RTIand interventions were implemented and effective to reduce the numbers
- Barriers may include staffing and manpower needed to look into how long children have been in RtI, those receiving 504 services, and those who are carried as speech only but may require additional services.
- Not enough teachers or time with SPED students. manpower and training
- From our experiences and in discussions with our educators we find that manpower, training are communication with parents is the a barrier that needs to be addressed. Solve this by engaging parents, providing more staff, and training to ALL educators including general ed to help with these kids.
- I would like TEA to consider an oversight board made up of a wide range of stakeholders to ensure actions are taken as defined by the outcome of this process
- The number of Diagnosticians that are employed by a district to evaluate all students suspected of having a disability will be a barrier.
- Parent request for students not in RTI is a concern. When there are numerous referrals, then diagnostic staffing will be an issue for the testing and then instructional/special education staffing in response to the testing will be an issue.
- General public knowledge
- There is a lack of general public knowledge of availability of services or when to seek services.
- Staff to identify
- Schools need increased knowledgeable staff that are able to identify red flags for disability
- Lack of community event
- Nothing in place in many districts to structure the child find, organize an event, etc.
- Evaluation staff
 - We will need additional staff to evaluate any increased influx of students needing to be evaluated
- Language
 - Lack of sufficient testing materials in other language
- Better screening
 - In order to identify disability, you have to first distinguish difference. Better screening instruments in a range of possible disability
- Parent Education
 - Parents are not provided with education/information about services including the difference between RTI, 504, and Special education as well as the difference in special education settings (inclusion, resource, self contained). There is still a stigma about special education in many areas of the state)
- Lack of Awareness
 - General education teachers need increased training in areas of disability
- Dyslexia outside of Sped
 - Dyslexia is a disability in reading. Special education is a service for students with disability with educational need. Why are they separated?
- RTI/dyslexia programs
 - RTI procedures/policies prevent students from being evaluated. They are following the "path" and have to shown significant lack of progress in order to move to a referral
- Trust in public education
 - With corrective actions needed and a push to provide funding for private schools, trust in public education needs to be a focus of restoration
- This results in financial protocols for testing, much less financial burdens on districts to hire substantial personnel.
- Barriers/Concerns

- Our concern is not having enough preparation for site visit and the visit expectations. Our concern is that it will not be collaborative effort by both parties because it will result in a possible citation. We want to grow and ensure compliance not work reactively.
- Red Tape
 - The Reauthorization of IDEA in 2004 is a factor. When the discrepancy model for LD identification was replaced with Response to Intervention, it seemed to complicate drastically the referral process by educators and parents. District Special Education Directors each had their own interpretation and timelines which appeared to be "gate keeping" and used for the purpose of delaying identification. Counselors and others responsible for referrals were told to create Section 504 Plans for anything and everything in order to prevent exceeding the cap that TEA had imposed upon districts.
- Barriers
 - Heart, Emotional, and human aspect are missing. Preconceived notions & ideas are missing from the staff. Under staffed, having to look at more students as potential sped...but with less funding.
- We are laying a blanket accusation on all districts in the state, not considering the fact that there are districts that implement RTI in the way it was intended, which is assisting students so they can be successful without needing to be evaluated for Special Education.
- One barrier would be the inconsistencies of different teams visiting annually that hold different expectations and interpretations. Lack of continuity.
- Guidelines in place for the child find process that require districts to conduct child finds at designated times and post the information in designated places.
- TEA needs to designate certain positions within a school district that can be responsible for child find. That person needs to be communicated to TEA and be involved in a TEA group of child find personnel.
- Team up with other schools
- Allow schools to collaborate services to meet the various needs they are facing.
- Build relationships between school and community
- Schools should be the first point of contact with parents and community. When sending out information, it needs to go to the school first and from the school to the parents.
- Assessment centers
 - Schools could pull resources to develop assessment centers specialized in the assessment of disability
- Language
- Recent Immigrants
- Parent Denial
- Parent Involvement
- Special Education Teachers
 - There are different barriers that fall in the areas addressed of identification, location, and evaluation of students with disabilities. First of all, in the elementary level, the location of students with special needs that are not still in school due to their age all depends on the child find efforts that are available in the district, The lack of communication with the community and the schools to locate these kids is a current barrier, the language barrier here in South Texas can be a barrier between a child being located due to the lack of education on the parents part. We don't see an issue with the evaluating of our students once they are located. We have the properly educated and trained diagnosticians to evaluate these students. The barrier for
- A barrier
 - Awareness for the community Social Stigma
- Barriers
 - The biggest barrier I see is the culture of negativity that surrounds SPED. The culture in Texas seems to highlight SPED as a "bad" place to be and the student, teachers and systems have to fail for a child to end up in SPED. It will take a long time to undo the mindset.

- Sometimes when TEA makes a blanket decision for the whole state it doesn't apply to every LEA or campus and confines the service delivery possibilities.
 - We need funding for assessment teams to help get these students identified. Why did TEA hire more state level employees when schools need those funds to expand and improve?
- Students with severe needs are not being identified because they have been home bound
 - Programs under child find are not being identified in a timely manner ie. Scottish Rite McDonald House
- Students who have been identified as SPED are being tested on the grade level if they are 2- 3 grade level beyond
- Districts having a cap of the number of SPED students on each campus
- Barriers
 - Funding from each district for testing, RTI with sped, service providers, testing diags. and psychs.
 - The students are mobile and we do not receive paperwork about the students if they have been tested, evaluation process, or are in special education. Parents sometimes will move so their child is not labled in special education. It is the same with 504s and RTI as well.
 - How will TEA come in and evaluate when there isn't a standard for all districts with the process?
- Barriers
 - Lack of knowledge from the parents and lack of funding for charter school. (Bilingual staff)
- A main barrier to fixing this issue is manpower. More specialists must be hired to provide the assessments needed for compensatory services.
- Find a more effective and efficient way to identify students that need to be served or were underserved.
- Parental Denials
- No identification done Follow Through Support not enough
- Districts concerns of special education ratio.
- Who is being trained for identification of students.
- Socioeconomic status
 - TEA will encounter individuals/families of all socioeconomic statuses. Prevalent in Region One is an influx of low socioeconomic status. Secondary to the Region (close proximity to the border).
- Language
 - TEA needs to consider the language differences and developmental patterns of each Region.
- Special Education Capacity Concerns
 - Educators/Administrators still believe that there is an established capacity for the special education population per district/school.
- Recent Immigrants -Parent Denial -Parent Involvement more_vert Special Education Teachers Special Education Teachers Their are different barriers that fall in the areas addressed of identification, location, and evaluation of students with disabilities. Fist of all, in the elementary level, the location of students with special needs that are not still in school due to their age all depends on the child find efforts that are available in the district, we dont A barrier A barrier Awareness for the community Social Stigma Parental Denials No identification done Follow Through Support not enough Socioeconomic status Socioeconomic status TEA will encounter individuals/families of all socioeconomic statuses. Prevalent in Region One is an influx of low socioeconomic status. Secondary to the Region (close proximity to the border). Language Language TEA needs to consider the language differences and developmental patterns of Special Education Capacity Concerns Special Education Capacity Concerns add Ideas or Solutions? -Parent forums -Parent forums -Easy to translators -Teacher training/ identification for referral process -More staff - to work on referrals/testing Ideas Ideas Collaboration needed between districts and TEA Support in identification of students
- It is a over identification problem- where will the support in the classroom and for assessment come from? Teachers and assessment personnel are overloaded with students already, there are concerns with monetary resources for programs and testing. TEA and districts are top heavy with personnel that make decisions, who are not in the classroom, when they need to talk with teachers.

- Barriers and concerns
 - The biggest barrier is funding. If they are identified, then where is the funding for more staff to service them and the training for both general Ed and spec Ed teachers to service more identified students
- Over identifying. Bigger caseloads. Not enough staff at the local level.
- TEA has only provided additional staff at TEA level. TEA has not considered staff limitations at district level to test the sheer number of students who would be targeted as at risk. RTI in Texas has been left to districts to create which has resulted in poor quality ineffective programs. No money and not enough assessment staff in Texas to test a
- Identification
 - There seems to be a flaw in the identification process where, in some cases, students that are in need of services are not qualifying while those who are just not making an effort are qualified for the program.
- Staffing
 - Staffing- not enough staffing to implement what TEA wants- effectively
- Barriers
 - Screening, RTI process. Teachers not feeling comfortable stating or collecting data for the process. Teachers do not have the proper training for collecting data. The process around the state is very inconsistent.
- Funding at local level,
 - Personnel at local level
- Identification and outreach to students who have already dropped out of school because of lack of services,
- Funding of compensatory services to student's who were not identified,
- Will timelines be increased for identification process I.e. completion for evaluation
- Students who are both ELL and need special ed. services. They can't get either RII nor IDEA, nor Section 504, nor any other Special ed. services.
- In the state, we don't have enough certified LSSPs, Diags, and SLPs to complete the testing. We don't have enough graduating or enough programs.
- The accountability system (PBMA) will affect child-find i.e. getting ding on the number of Asian students with Autism. The action plan currently does not take into account educational need for aspecially designed programs. The 504 plan are not being monitored with no w
- Time delay in identification and testing, despite paperwork and documentation.
- There is a lack of training for general education teachers on how to properly utilize inclusion teacher.
 - General education teachers are not aware of the RTI process. There is not enough staff to support special education students.
 - Our campuses do not have enough programs to support our SPED students.
 - Administrators do not have proper training to support SPED department.
- Concerns more with students who are borderline, not with students who are more on the severe end.
- RTI model is inconsistent and lacks the clear process, non-negotiables, interventions, and progress monitoring needed for students to make progress in the curriculum
- Amount of paperwork and time required for that paperwork- not enough personnel.
- More time/ priority given to "high-risk" or "high-profile" cases compared to students that do not cause daily classroom issues
- There is still a pervasive mindset that special education students belong solely to special education and therefore do not receive quality first teach instruction or intervention to make progress in the general curriculum
- There is a lot of confusion between dyslexia and students with a learning disability in reading
- Students already under the SPED umbrella are not the top priority for address appropriate setting or new labels, compared to students receiving initial evaluations, because they already have one SPED label.

- Number of campus and district staff to provide services is not increasing as number of students who are identified increases, so we aren't catching up and further gaps are resulting
- Concerns
 - The action plan does not discuss servicing the children: availability of services, quality of services.
- Personnel
 - The credentials and background of the personnel
- It's difficult to find all disabilities unless input is received from medical personnel. We are relying on this process to go through classroom teachers to evaluators to the final decision maker. Also, our district evaluation staff is limited and stretched to meet the needs of a widespread district.
- District failure to identify, investigate, acknowledge parent request
- Where is the money to support the students, and not just the district? For example, more therapists, evaluation personnel, teachers, etc.
- Passion
 - It is not lack of personnel or money in the districts, its the lack of initiative and motivation from each of the employees of SPED.
- Failure to communicate at the campus level between the registration process and the Special Ed Dept(Dept. Chair) and pass on information to other staff such as co- teacher, clerks, TA,
- Districts need more evaluation staff if we are to test more students. Money needs to be given to districts for evaluation staff.
- District Administration
- What is the role of 504, RtI, and Dyslexia going forward if they have been seen as barriers to SpEd services?
- Some rural districts have a lack to adequate appropriately trained personnel.
- Administrators not addressing student's needs.
- Student may be ready to advance ARD committee not getting all information on the student from admin or staff.
 - Improperly educated administrators. Myths about SPED that old school administrators still follow and don't want to change.
- Barriers
 - Barriers and concerns in the area of compliance with identification and evaluation is time and personnel. Having to wait for the students to progress through the Rti process even though data shows that the student continues to struggle with interventions before being able to recommend these students for further testing. Not having adequate staffing to provide testing and evaluations slows down the process tremendously prolonging the wait for students with needs to be able to access specialized instruction or more intense interventions .
- I have worked in districts that tend to move very slowly when responding to parent/teacher requests for evaluations; this is frustrating for all. The placement after evaluations can be difficult resulting in frustration for the students and educators. Many of our resource students have been placed in regular academic classes with negative results; average students and special needs students are suffering as a result. Our resource students seem to be functioning at a much lower
- Rural school districts should not have to rely solely on a Coop for guidance with special education.
- The eligibility
- Lack of qualified individuals to test students with possible disabilities
- Money
 - Districts are limited to personnel to go out in community to find children who might need services.
- Not just a SPED issue
 - The responsibility for locating students is not solely left to the SPED department.
- RTI

- Districts have students receiving RTI services --TIER 3 for years. We are told the student does not qualify for Special Ed. testing due to absences, behavior, etc...
- movement of student's from district to district
- Our district was heavily hit by ASATR and as a result is already extremely short on funding. Therefore our concerns mostly get back to availability of funds for the necessary staffing for testing, servicing, and identifying. Another concern is what constitutes special education umbrella, i.e., currently although 504 and dyslexia are under IDEA, at the local level these programs Specifically, not all encompassed under SPED and therefore not consistently managed and facilitated. Specifically, moving forward for the purpose of the CAP, should districts consolidate all these programs under SPED to mainstream and unify management, facilitation, identification, documentation, etc.?
- Child Find needs to be more than an ad in the paper.
- The eligibility of NCEC
 - The eligibility of NCEC does a disservice to both the students and parents of children with autism who need to accept their diagnoses and begin services. Too many children are labeled speech only because they rationalize they can give them a more accurate diagnosis at age 6. In the mean time, that child missed out on crucial intervention time, because their needs were marginalized.
- RTI program
 - RTI process need to be better defined. We are currently learning about it from a district that was reprimanded by TEA and so are getting on track. Not servicing student correctly impedes placement/prolongs the process/extends time student under served.
- SPP Indicators
 - What will PBMAS look like now? Will there be indicators to monitor this?
- Define Terms
 - LEA Portfolio "regularly through
- Student impact
 - How does increased staff @TEA improve a district's ability to "identify, locate, and evaluate..." While the idea of having across the board, consistent help from a state agency, that does not put staff or money into the LEAs who are feeling the brunt of this corrective action.
- Length between visits
- Define the length between visits. Our numbers change from every year. How fast is the data going to be reviewed? We do not like sitting around talking about data that is not current.
- A RTI team at each campus level would be beneficial. This way students are referred with information that drives the evaluation, instead of evaluation staff starting from scratch and eliminating the areas of disability. This would specify the suspected area of disability and speed up the assessment process.
- Often the RTI process is purposely prolonged and feedback about the next steps is not given to the classroom teachers, resulting in reluctance to spend the time and energy bringing another student through the process.
- teacher input
 - We need to give more validity to teacher input for referrals
- Define "students who deserve special education services"
 - Deserve is not a term that should be used. You are eligible or you are not. You meet the IDEA definition or you don't. What will this look like? How will LEAs locate these students that might "deserve" SPED services? Look for DNQs? Retest? This does not make sense and it is NOT a good use of our extremely limited resources.
- IDEA and 504 have different methods of qualifying for services. Two should not be mixed.
- Past training
 - Training in the past as been "No to teacher input", "No to referrals because of numbers", no one knows what the rules are any more.
 -

Ideas or Solutions

- districts need to accept medical diagnoses (reputable private facility) from outside sources in collaboration to provide students
 - instructional should be commensurate with ability
 - teachers need the law to support communicating to families in friendly language that they understand
 - LOWER CLASS SIZES and the student:teacher ratio
 - the time line of SPED testing in the districts needs to be SIGNIFICANTLY reduced so that students actually receive results and assistance ASAP as intervention is effective in the younger grades
 - trained professional/satellite teachers that rotate within the districts according to need. For example - a trained dyslexic professional to come alongside teacher for 2-6+ weeks working with the student and training the teacher at the same time, modeling, and working with side by side
 - raise funding to provide pay for additional positions (instructional aids for each grade level and/or classrooms, more SPED teachers on campus to delegate students between teachers)
- parent/teacher training
- funding
- more dyslexia/sped teachers
- Training
- Direct training from TEA regarding ARD paperwork addressing the needs of students in IEPs. Decisions in ARDs are be overturned by administrators both in meetings and after meetings and changes are being made to IEPs with no contact being made with parents and/ or service providers.
- Funds---need to assign appropriate funds to meet the needs and mandates. Fund separately ---dyslexia, speech, OHI
- There can't be any outside influences (capitalism), but rather simply you test and provide services as needed rather than pressure of numbers.
- Consider having atleast one alternative to the state assessment for students with special needs.
- A locally made test, or a portfolio assessment that was submitted and approved by TEA.
- Coaching rather than advising, or coming down on the professionals. Teach a better way rather than "coming down" on the team.
- Improved advertising and reach outs in the community for Child Find, in multiple languages, with specific steps to follow and what to look for to determine if needs to call.
- With identification as a primary focus, it's difficult to understand why the meetings are geared towards current special education students, as compared to non- identified students.
- Improved communication in the public on what special education is and how it can help.
- Classroom Cap
 - Classroom caps should be implemented for Special Education classroom to ensure students are getting specialized instruction in their least restrictive environment.
- Students Needs
 - We need to be able to focus on the benchmark and RTI results, as opposed to watching the percentage of kids identified.
- Another idea is that we implement a social/emotional program into schools, with corresponding funding, that meets the needs of more students, with the hope that there would
- Hire more diagnosticians to help with the overload of support staff. We need to be more open to more testing.
- SLD Qualifications/ID Qualifications
- Federal government/state government need to revisit the way an SLD or ID student qualifies based on current research and how the student is identified in the medical community
- Can we use a screening process instead of a comprehensive evaluation?

- Refine the RTI process to require more comprehensive data and interventions being used in the classroom.
- Can we request additional funds from federal government?
- Getting Regional Center's assistance.
 - Regional Centers providing surprise audits, of RTI and 504 evaluations and IEP spotchecks.
 - Comprehensive trainings for both Gen Ed and SPED together and separate.
 - Providing effective and efficient data collection solutions. Find a campus that does with well and have them model and allow Instructional Rounds for SPED
 - Parent training for how to support and provide support to students
 - Regional Centers Provide regular focus groups with ISD staff for continued corrective action, without the fear of retaliation.
- Can TEA provide money to local school districts to provide extra assessment staff. If not, can TEA provide guidance for LEA's as far as restructuring goes? If the amount of referrals are increased, then maybe TEA can consider having the diagnosticians as just assessment staff, and ARD Facilitators can be hired The ARD Facilitator can be trained extensively on law and paperwork, cutting down on errors/mistakes.
- Make the RTI process more specific and less murky.
- Less money spent on TEA monitoring rather spent on staff with clear regulations.
- We look at all of our students individually and do not worry about going over the numbers.
- Training to school districts, parent organizations and community resources
- There needs to be professional development that actually applies to special education.
- We need to examine the positions within the districts, specifically the superintendent's leadership team. There are positions that are not needed but are filled taking up valuable funding.
- Truly look at the classroom settings and placing students appropriately instead of making the student fit the classroom.
- Training and communication
- Go back to the old methodologies and let teachers teach. Let them do what they know what to do. Teachers are not allowed to teach any longer. Time limits on the RTI process. More staff, less politics
- Every school should have all services, tutoring, pull out services push in services, but money is needed for this and also staff is needed and there is no money to hire more staff.
- State need needs to give the schools more money. The red tape to hire another teacher is too much when the need is there.
- Solution
 - Provide clear criteria for LEAs to follow in determining who should and should not be evaluated.
 - Provide LEAs with additional funding (Contract or otherwise) to support completion of evaluations.
 - See # 2
 - TEA support universities in recruiting students to training programs. TEA support universities in creation of re- specialization programs.
 - See # 2
 - Absorb Dyslexia program into SPED with additional evaluation.
- RTI
 - Providing a clear and consistent RTI process that allows for monitoring
 - RTI coordinators need training on the overall process.
 - Raising the bar for teachers-- what can they do for these students before they refer for special education.
 - Training for general education teachers--- what is special education and what are the special education categories. If they don't qualify, how can gen ed help them.
- Our LSSPs need smaller caseloads. This would require a larger budget to employ more psychologists.
- Hire teachers with dual certification.

- Hire more Speech-Language Pathologists, LSSPs, and Diagnosticians.
- Transient Students
- Database to track students, goals, intervention, worked on and progress monitoring.
- Needs to be accountability that interventions are implemented with fidelity and documentation of success or failure.
- RTI needs to be students focused not resource driven/limited.
 - Needs to be small group interventions, (reading)
- Pre-screens for any suspected disability. Need to hire more SLPs.
- Consistency of Services provided for students
- Following TEA guidelines to qualify and being able to access the most current information.
- Good RTI process in place that is consistent across the district
- MTSS needs to be more structured and efficient.
- Referral Process
- The paperwork for referrals should be streamlined. Response to Intervention pieces should definitely be included, as mandated federally, but it should not take years of data collection to prove a student needs to be served by special education services. Parents should not be told when making the request for evaluations that they have the right to begin the process, but a referral is not guaranteed.
- Provide funding for districts to hire needed personnel to keep up with the demand of providing services.
- Provide more funds! Solutions
- Parent involvement. Guidelines across the school district RTI, 504 and SPED. Making sure all one accord.
- Ideas
 - Set guidelines for RTI for the districts and charter schools Same software (ex. ESPED) would be helpful in the state and even include RTI in the software system.
- Funding- State should give us the funding that was raised via taxes and not decrease from the general funds.
- State Policy should be created- Medicaid funds that are charged should be returned to special education.
- Provide more on-site training for RtI!
- Provide strict guidelines for RtI that state a finite time frame for students moving through the process. 18 week max before being referred to SpEd?
- Better training for teachers and counselors for RtI.
- Stop using the same intervention for every child. iStation is not cure all.
- Better train administrators on IDEA so they stop pressuring SPED staff into uniform implementation. They disregard the "I" in IEP.
- Improve Child Find program in order for the program to identify, locate and evaluate severe disability
- Ideas and solutions
 - If a teacher recognizes a student who continues to struggle with RTI interventions, classroom strategies and interventions, they should be able to request further testing and/or evaluations and have them be able to be completed in a timely manner instead of having to wait months/entire year before inquired about. More trained staff or agencies available to provide such testing to the school districts would greatly increase the number of identified students.
- Let the local school district/campus have more input into who should be tested. The teacher knows the student better than anyone else.
- ESC need to develop programs to certify more diags and to educate teachers what to look for
- Local school district could also go to Head Start programs to identify struggling students.
- Loa
- Work more closely with daycare personnel on identifying student
- State agencies and federal programs need to work together on Child Find
- Look at states that have a good process in place

- ECI reevaluating the child before referring to the LEA would assist with 1/2 of the ECI referrals that are DNQ. This would allow more staff time for screening at PreK level and for child find.
- Districts need more special education teachers for self contained and inclusion classes. The funding for special ed. should be used for these areas.
- Have an RTI Team that helps to implement the process and training is required to teach what TIER 2 and TIER 3 is and how it should be implemented. When a parent has a problem, then problem solve instead and stating "Write a letter for a Special Education evaluation and they can help you."
- Classroom teachers need more support from special education personnel.
- Mess with them, not us
 - Focus on the districts that were called out and the ones that showed a huge decrease in numbers. I work in a district that has ignored this cap. We have always been around 12%. Why force us to go through these audits, visits, etc. when we are not a part of the problem. This will cost LEAs money that we DON'T have. We would like to spend our money on our kids, not on "bureaucratic" paperwork for compliance of more regs.
- Funding for the local level has to be increased to facilitate the requests being made. SPED is already a deficit area in terms of staffing, professional development, and services for those in need. Funding at the local level is imperative for success of the program.
- Each district should be required to have a qualified special education director, especially in rural districts.
- Campus Coordinator/Liason
- Consider having one professional on each campus to be the liason between the newly created positions at TEA and the things that are going on. Communication is key. We like to be informed.
- Solutions would include: better training/educating of teachers (gen ed/spec ed) to explain the process, train on strategies to assist with differentiated learning styles, making parent involvement a priority of the district from the beginning of the process, and clearly defining process/expectations to all parties involved.
- Training
 - Universal training for staff across districts including general education and special education.
- PBMA's Indicators
 - Indicators do not need to be held to a percentage or numerical value for special education population.
- Vertical Alignment
 - The district needs extensive training on the RTI Process so that we are vertically aligned.
- Review and Support Team
 - More frequent visits to ensure compliance.
- RTI
 - The RTI process takes long time, by the time we get to testing the students are they away behind.
- How will parent concerns be verified?
- Acquire input from all stakeholders and screen all of them for intentions and truth.
- How will we perfect rti and make sure it does not stall the identification of kids needing sped support?
- How will we make sure that kids whose parents don't understand or know about the process still get thwart they need?
- Balancing the abuse of the system by parents that are the availability of testing and potential services to apply a burden on schools.
- State mandated PD that ensures that ALL teachers and school staff members are thoroughly knowledgeable about sped law and have resources to support them in difficult cases.
- Getting information from other schools.
 - It is hard to receive information about other students in a timely manner. There have been times when information has not be shared for a whole semester.
 - Receiving information from other schools

- It is a struggle to receive info I.E.P.s from other districts. We have gone without getting transcripts over a semester. The students continue to fall behind without receiving proper services.
- Does Pearson have a hand in this
- RTI appears to work effectively
- We need better train for SST groups considering RtI. Clearer MOU with ECI and the ECI leadership.
- We also need clearer, more quantifiable eligibility criteria.
- Where will the money come from for additional testing, protocols and kits.
- Hire more Para's and SPED Teachers
- Proper staffing to ensure each child receives one on one attention.
- Clearly define limits on RTI Process
- More DIAG
- More DIAG
- They need more to compensate for the influx
- Provide written notification in advance with specifications and purpose of visit. So, it allows for the opportunity to address any situations and work proactively.
- Personnel and money to hire additional personnel are needed.
- Solutions
 - More training, more staff with teachers and paras trained together.
- Monies available from TEA to for contracting and assisting with the influx of testing requirements/requests. Promotion of incentives for Special Education teachers to be trained, certified, mentored and paid accordingly.
- Revamp PBMAS to eliminate penalties to districts for the large percentage of students identified with a disability. Also, to stop evaluating students with disabilities with the same state assessment used to evaluate students without disabilities.
- Allow for us to choose the teachers to be interviewed. (For example not choosing teachers with poor evaluations and write-ups) Create a pool of choices
- Same team for subsequent visit.
- Parent forums
- Easy to translators
- Teacher training/ identification for referral process
- More staff - to work on referrals/testing
- Develop a check and balance system to provide support to evaluators,
 - Provide a traveling contract assessment team to assist districts in performing evaluations (when a high testing need is identified),
- Remove redundant paperwork
- Ideas
 - Collaboration needed between districts and TEA Support in identification of students
- Special Education Teachers
 - In regards to location of students in need out in the community, we propose an increase in involvement
- Special Education Teachers
- In regards to location of students in need out in the community, we propose an increase in community involvement in churches, community centers, social media in both English and Spanish Languages. In regards to the lack of proper training for the general education teachers, we propose that training needs to be done in the elementary, middle school, and high school levels during staff development meetings in the beginning of the school year. These meetings must be intentional and provide a checklist that teachers must be aware of and follow if any child is suspected of having a disability or struggling.
- Collaboration between TEA and districts

- Each campus needs someone to oversee and monitor assessments and ensure the "plan" is being followed, ensure proper identification
- TEA should create a statewide RTI model. TEA or state legislature needs to fund more teachers and assessment staff. A triage system needs to be used. Select at risk students. Gather specificity quantitative data to determine when children identified through this process will be tested. If all students get consents timelines cannot be met. TEA needs to pick a SLD identification method and provide training to ensure the we have a consistent and reliable process. XBASs is under identifying and uninformed staff rely on it as a calculator. Also new assessment instruments are over identifying ID. There is insufficient funding (cuz plan is giving all funding to TEA) to buy protocols, staff, and other costs of implementing this plan that will result in over identification of students to sped.
- Instead of all the district creating process, programs, tools, etc. why does TEA. Plus TEA received the funding. Also, TEA needs to supply more funds for local districts to hire additional staff
- Districts need to hire more staff (raise salaries, get discipline under control) to entice more people into teaching and put funding into the classrooms. There needs to be a better process for bridging the gaps before referring to special education, Special education should be the last resort.
- Solutions
 - Training for teachers at the district level. Teachers need to identify early to ensure the student is receiving services. Caution should be taken with attendance needs to be addressed during RTI and students should not be denied testing due to attendance.
- Common RTI
 - We are in agreement that there needs to be a more standardized RTI process across the state. This way students transferring from district to district will not not fall through the cracks.
- CCISD needs to stop making campuses hire coaches/dual contract, then ICS teachers are off two periods (planning and coaching), and gone for tournaments, which leads to less support for Sped students
- Since the majority of the ELL are Spanish speaking, it should be easy to a translator for students and their parents. For others, Google Translate could be used if the translator is not available.
- State provide tuition assistance and additional cohort opportunities for current teachers to become certified LSSPs, Diags, and SLPs.
- More training and technical assistance for follow up and supporting implementation of the appropriate way to do RTI
- Intermediate services available the time during documentation/testing phases.
- More officials that understand the process to address the number of caseloads for testings.
- Follow federal guidelines in terms of Child Find. The 8.5% cap and disproportionality prevents school districts from identifying with true disabilities.
- Clearer expectations and resources to ensure all districts and campuses understand quality first teach and progress monitoring so students make progress
- Designated RTI role that is consistent across campuses and districts. Then interventionists and coaches can focus on their job and RTI can be fully supported and not a small piece.
- Create a required course for all educators to take at the beginning of every year to understand quality instruction and specially designed instruction
- Gather data across all the school districts to identify the number of students per case manager, number of ESC staff to support campuses, etc. to help identify the lack of equity across districts
- Provide more staffing for SPED .
 - Administrators should be trained in SPED placement process to hold department accountable for students.
- More money to the districts to hire more instructional, evaluation, and therapy staff.
- Personnel
- Clear guidance between the roles of 504, RtI, Dyslexia, and SpEd
- Define appropriate ratios of therapy staff to students for more appropriate service delivery
- Uniformity

- All levels of SPED; LS, PPCD, Resource, etc are not on the same page. These programs need to meet together as a whole district team to make sure everyone is on the same page.
- We need clearly defined guidance between the roles of 504, RTI, Dyslexia, and SPED. This will eliminate duplicated efforts from all areas.
- More training of staff in proper inclusion practices
- Investigate all inquiries and all parent request
- Develop a systematic method of communicating to all "need to know" staff when a student in SPED is registering
 - Revamp SPED beginning with Administrators who understand the legality of SPED.
- More special education teachers and fewer students.
- Hire more co-teachers
- IEP means Individual Education therefore there is a lot of structure and redundant paperwork with no implementation as it is presently stated.

Anything Else?

- Universal tracking systems for
 - such as Esped similar to TREX so that records are electronically transmitted to new school.
- Involve community medical, staff, therapists and daycare, with Child Find information to educate the public.
- Shortened RtI process
- Refine the referral process. All documentation should be electronic instead of gen ed staff receiving paper documentation for SPED staff to input.
- Better partnerships between large schools and small schools; sharing of resources including personnel.
- Allow a person with sped background to be in charge of the referral process and meetings.
- More staff needed for evaluation.
- Parents who choose to enroll their students in private schools should be required to enroll them in public school in order to receive services.
- Streamline the process.
- Districts putting in place specific procedure for the Child Find Process. Putting together a "Child Find Checklist"
- TEA is forcing districts to cap the number in special education/referrals.
- TEA not training or informing on what services they can provide for support
- If a child has been identified late, what help will the child have to ensure they catch up to their grade level.
- Corrective action one
 - Visiting districts once every six years is not enough for true change to happen Six years is half the amount of time, a student is in public education.
- TEA needs to advocate for fair teacher and assessment staff pay. Base salaries have increased but staff with experience are no longer paid consistent considering years of service and inflation. We need experienced staff. Paperwork requests have increased exponentially and take incredible time.
- We need more teachers to implement these directives.
- Alternative curriculum for our struggling SPED students. Ex. Vocational route, life skills math and reading to better prepare our students for real world.
- TEA has not provided specific guidance on SLD identification or provide a process for RTI.
- TEA
 - Number one. Educators at all levels are not receiving good quality professional development. Sitting listening to others in this room, everyone has different interpretation of the rules, policy, and procedures; therefore hard to follow the law if we can't define it. Also if your case load is so large that you can't service them, they are not receiving FAPE.
- Barrier for supervisory and monitor

- Money to pay for these monitoring positions and the amount of time required to go through the process.
- ELL students makeup 17.9% of Texas students but only 15.4% get special ed. services. Today 8.5% special ed. students only 7.3% ELL services. NCLB, ESSA, ESEA and IDEA laws include both ELL and Special Ed. accommodations.
- Once students are evaluated, they should not be held accountable on state assessments as general ed students are.
- Consider the districts on an individualized basis and needs. Only a small percentage of districts were represented; generalizing plans to the entire state may not be appropriate.
- Is TEA providing funds to hire more staff?
- Students moving around a district several times (multiple relocations) between school, so losing ground on documentation and interventions each time students move. Different requirements about moving during RTI and identification process so we do not lose as much ground on the identifying and.
- Individualized assessment procedures.
- Consider a true range of services for SpEd students: inclusion, content mastery, resource classes, and specially designed classes (i.e., Life Skills). Inclusion only does not adequately support all students' needs.
- Money
 - The local schools need the money and resources Districts can provide professional development to help with the Special Ed. process. TEA has met our students needs. We are the professionals who know what is best for our students and community.
- Funding
 - increased funding for schools to provide sufficient help, professional education opportunities,
- Expand the Call Center in Region 10 instead of developing a new call center. Not outsource.
- TEA should develop template for LEA's to identify students instead of a contractor. Use our professionals.
- My district uses special education staff to monitor and assist regular ed. classes; this significantly interferes with ongoing special ed. programming
- Additional staff for assessment. Assessment staff required to complete all the evaluation and all ARDs extends the time of evaluation and staff are pushed to the Initial referral timeline limit. Staff or secretaries that could assist with clerical work that assessment staff are completing would give extra time to focus on assessment and not making copies and mailing Notices.
- FED Cap on Alt
 - Essentially, this cap is exactly linked to the FED cap on alternate assessment. What is the plan to address this? A cap is cap and this one needs to go as wel.
- More
 - Re-evaluate the diags, LSSPs, and psychs to ensure they are properly trained and prepared.
- TEA should ensure the sped departments are funded properly.
- Staff properly trained
- More funding and effective educating/training for teachers, Administrators & parents
- For districts who are above 11.5%, is it possible for them to not be required to go back and test everyone who has been in RTI for 6 months?
- Special Education students should receive their services, but also be included regular ed RTI process because they are general education students first.
- Include ALL disciplines like OT SPEECH, and AIDES so we are ALL on the same page.
- Positive Goal Oriented Direction from leadership vs retaliatory and negative
- Child Find Public Education
- Establish one online iep/ard program statewide. Then TEA could save on travel money, and monitor iep's, fies, etc from a desk, instead of traveling to
- TEA says we need to provide procedural safeguards in the students language yet only Spanish is offered.
- allocation of money to make necessary changes

- Get more input from appropriate stakeholders. This should not be done in such an extremely abbreviated fraction.
- Need for seamless services as students transition from elementary to middle school and then to high school
- every campus needs a sensory room
- every campus needs a behavior specialist
- Teachers hands are tied because we are expected to follow the directives set by ISD administrators. We are unable to make
- decisions that meet the needs of students without asking permission from administrators.
- more people, not more programs
- We need a special ed curriculum
- Need special training in addition to certification. Dyslexia needs CALT, LDT
- We need a plan for special ed students that are too low to qualify for services.
- Pressure to include students in the general education setting; however, there is not enough personnel to properly serve the student in the general education environment. Yet having a higher staff to student ratio affects campus standing.
- That is just another barrier to properly serve kids, and provide them FAPE.
- Ideas/Suggestions: We have to have a true continuum of services, without fear of being penalized. We need more options, and we need freedom to serve them appropriately without fear of campus suffering. Otherwise, student and staff suffer as they're not being served correctly.
- Common sense structuring of services.
- Demographics we can't fix; however, we can fix staffing, and placement, and continuum of services.
- We can't truly provide FAPE if we have regulations forcing them into two boxes (general education/life skills).
- We need flexibility to provide the continuum of services.
- not be as many students that would need specialized services.
- Teach students more tolerance and more coping skills.
- FIE
 - The FIE consideration should be academic based. Some students, such as a student with a 504 for allergies, does not exhibit a need for academic special education services. It is not always appropriate to put a student through the FIE process if there is not a concern and/or need.
- Only the districts who were guilty of under-identifying students should be held to corrective action.
- Subsidizing Funds for Intervention
 - The federal government and state legislature should provide the districts with the funding to:
 - purchase intervention tools
 - hire more interventionists (RtI)
 - hire more special education teachers and paraprofessionals
 - hire more assessment personnel
- Clearer guidelines on when a student receives an FIE or dyslexia testing.
- Early Step through Medical Professionals
 - Pediatricians and family practice doctors should provide a more consistent referral for babies and young non-school age children for educational referrals.
- Testing
 - Students be put into a category for standardized testing by their need, as there is not a test that is indicative of their abilities.
- Modified
 - If we are looking so closely at student who struggle to learn, why is there not a modified assessment to measure their abilities? We are able to provide them modified curriculum, yet not a modified a state assessment. Then, the district gets deductions for not enough students passing the assessment.

- Developmentally Appropriate
 - Some of the standards are not developmentally appropriate for the age group and everyone wants a sp. ed. referral when the students are struggling.
- Assessment Staff
 - Are we getting more assessment staff?
- Include teachers on the evaluation team.
- I wonder why the district where the private school is located is responsible for child find rather than the district where the child lives.
- I feel that students who were in need of evaluations were referred and tested at my districts.
- Putting a cap on the number of SPED students is very stressful for districts.
- focus on low socioeconomic schools
- Something to consider is environment and the economy of the areas served. Not every area fits the mold of a certain percentage of students in Special Education
- Consider other state eligibilities that are not recognized in the state of Texas.
- Consider the amount of testing that will be needed if specially designed instruction is going to need to be ruled out. There will be prolonged wait times in between referral submitted and testing completed
- It's important for our general education teachers and admin to have a better understanding of spec ed in general. We need to all be on the same page when it comes to the special education process as a whole.
- There needs to be more funding for staff. We barely get by with the staff we have now.
- Compensatory Services
 - How will we identify which students needed services since everything will be based on current testing?
- Critical to get gen ed teachers trained on process, strategies, and special needs. Make time in special education personnel's schedule so they have the time to actually manage the student caseloads (meet with gen ed teachers, etc).
- Once these students are referred, who is going to test them.
- Diags are already overworked and in Stuart supply. And once the students are identified who's going to teach them
- there are not enough special education teachers to go around
 - there overworked your paperwork is burdensome and their workload is incredible.
- Where is the money for all elements going to come from? We NEED federal funding and an increase to state funding to make this possible.
- Please understand that this failure has directly affected the lives of Texans in a negative way.
 - In some instances the lack of identification has ruined lives and that may never be able to be repaired.
- Diags are already overloaded
- As with response 1, how far do we go back? Will there be sufficient manpower and funding? Do we need a better, updated definition of FAPE? How do we gain trust when we, at the district level, were following a set protocol?
- Who is going to determine how much compensatory services are appropriate?
 - We will need a concise, clear guideline to address this.
- Currently students in RTI, Section 504 and Dyslexia continue to be delayed from initial evaluation which causes delays of identification from year to year. Students continue to have to go through the tier process before referrals are acknowledged.
- Will there be restrictions to who receives the letter on all children can be tested according to parental request? What about students who have previously been tested and did not qualify who are currently being served under other programs: dyslexia, 504, RTI interventions, etc? Will we be required to retest?
- How will TEA address the funding to help seek these missing students? How do we hold parents accountable to help us not only identify these students but to also help them?

- Sending a letter to all parents of RTI, 504, etc. students saying we have failed to provide FAPE opens up local districts to legal issues with parents

Educator Response Request 2

Barriers or Concerns

- Number of TEA monitors
 - Are there enough monitors for TEA to truly supervise and monitor all ISDs in the state
- Appropriate Testing Materials
 - Testing materials for younger students to accurately identify if they meet eligibility requirements or if it is just immaturity and age.
- Making Parents Happy
 - Districts retaining students or not placing in the appropriate education setting in order to make the parents happy. (i.e. retaining or only placing in what parents consider LRE even though it is not the appropriate placement
- TEA was monitoring fine
 - Monitoring was not the issue. The issue was with a bad regulation that was not backed by science or any evidence. TEA monitored the bad regulation very well.
- We don't need monitoring we need action
- Having someone to come and monitor will take away from the many assessments that we need to do.
- Funding
 - Lack of funding or funding not applied correctly to have truly highly qualified staff.
- We need help
- Most educators I know run their hardest from sun up to sun down. Asking them to run more is not possible. We are on the verge of losing great people in education.
- There are only 11.5 TEA monitors currently monitoring the entire state. Where will additional money and resources come from to increase this number? To adequately and effectively look at a district, monitors will need to spend a sufficient amount of time in that district to really see what they are looking at.
- Too many "hoops" to jump through for kids to be admitted to special education--RTI, dyslexia or services had to be shown in order for students in question to even be considered for sped.
- Kids that need OT/PT are denied because cognitive levels may not be low enough.
- Movement of students in and out of districts makes tracking of progress or non-progress difficult. Are we comparing apples to apples when students are screened within different districts with various testing protocols?
- Concern: Have we given parents an indicator check list and built their capacity on understanding characteristics of disabilities.
- How will districts be identified with a significant gap between students who are identified and those who should have been previously identified? What determines a significant gap?
- Barrier: Parents understanding when an evaluation is truly needed.
- Influx in misidentified students in regards to Dyslexia. K-1 is too early to assess.
- We want every kid to take the same assessment but yet identify all those disabilities.
- Reduction of TEA staff due to decrease in funding and DEC visits were eliminated
- Over categorizing?
- Do you think that there will be a rise in referrals because some students were under identified and districts want to cover themselves.
- In order to provide an appropriate education to the students there needs to be enough manpower and professionals and paraprofessionals to provide the required minutes.
- There should be a maximum caseload for special ed teachers
 - is not an appropriate education for student of this nature to be in a group of 25 they may be legally getting their minutes but they're not getting the most appropriate education for their needs.

- Who ensures that ratios from the AU supplement are complied with?
- The lack of enough SPED teachers and/TA's on a campus is a large barrier to students being served according to their needs.
 - For example, one year I along with an inclusive SPED teacher had 13 SPED students in my general ed inclusive homeroom. Two of those students were severely cognitively challenged.
- Testing
 - Those testing considering emotional disturbances affect the results causing over qualifying
- Audit control
 - In order to maintain accurate and effective monitoring of kids and FAPE it shroud fall to a watchdog type of group that can be depended upon to ensure compliance. It would be a mistake to self monitor at this time
- FAPE
 - Not all districts denied FAPE, especially districts above the "recommended percentage of special education students."
 - In our districts, we have never factored in the % of special education students into whether or not we test a kid for special education. TEA has been monitoring through indicator submission.
- Child Find
 - Districts are inconsistent with utilizing child find
- RTI
 - Some districts will deny RTI to students based on a sole norm chart. Teachers aren't clear on requirements and cannot provide individualized data.
- TEA failed to effectively education the District/Campus leadership teams in the importance of effectively meeting the needs of diverse learners, thus at the campus level; not supporting and specifically training individual in the areas of specific campus needs.
- Concerns
 - Monitoring visits are disruptive to the overall educational process.
 - Focus will be on sheer numbers of students who need to be evaluated and NOT on ensuring FAPE for these students (quality teaching and best practices).
- clearly defined criteria for each Tier of RtI to ensure consistency across regions and within regions consistency between districts
- Over identifying and under identifying speech students
 - medical vs educational model
- How are we going to provide the compensatory services with not enough staff.
 - Even more paperwork than we have now.
- Following ASHA (American Speech and Hearing Association) guidelines for speech services time
 - Every district writes speech therapy service times differently.
- If TEA were to come in to monitor and audit more than they already do, this will bring even more stress to our campuses. Our district are already stressed due to being under staffed and under budgeted.
- Spending too much money for additional TEA staff.
- Size of Texas
 - TEA's monitoring would entail a large area with a lot of rural areas that do not have the resources.
- Outside Home Health Agencies serving students (OT, PT, Speech) in the school setting in addition to the school therapist.
 - Students are missing instruction to the home health agencies that are coming into the schools to service their students.
 - Some students are leaving school early to attend their private therapy and therapy in the school setting is effected.

- Too many special education students and not enough staff. Sometimes there is only one teacher to service all the students. Many school systems go ahead and cut sped teachers before the school year has even ended without knowing the numbers for the upcoming year and FAPE has been denied to so many students.
- TEA is not listening and school admin is not listening as well.
- A lot of corruption with certain Administrators in this district. District is very large.
- This particular district keeps promoting the people who were involved in the corruption and do not understand why.
- It would be helpful if TEA would come in and help the schools BEFORE they are out of compliance and not once the districts are in trouble and everything from TEA is negative. Help before it is too late!
- TEA should provide training through Region centers to continue education of district personnel about special education eligibility and related services to student's with disabilities
- In order for the service to be appropriate the school district needs to have manageable classroom sizes, the staff needs to be highly qualified and given ample opportunities for professional development.
- The administration level needs to be held accountable.
- RTI is not very regulated across districts. What one district does for RTI is not what another may do. IF RTI is being used there needs to be less room for interpretation.
- Staff needs more training on what to look for and what questions to ask
- too much focus on IR schools rather than focusing on what the cause of IR is. unidentified students due to %
- Sheer numbers and size of State of Texas
- The past staging and PBMAS standards regarding SPED students has made campuses leary of requesting testing for SPED.
- It will be very difficult to determine what FAPE has been denied to a student. For instance, what timeline would be implemented as far as missed services. How will necessary compensatory services be determined?
 - Because student needs are very individual, it would difficult to determine what FAPE was denied to each child.
- More monitors
- Improve the perception of TEA and their monitors; facilitators rather than monitors
- instead of corrective action...improvement plan
- There is confusion about ADHD/Dyslexia and what qualifies as SPED and when should they be served through 504/Dyslexia programs.
- hire local people; grassroots...understanding of culture
- TEA has a reputation of being an "Evil Stepmom" and most educators are wary of interactions with the agency. Lack of open communication creates barriers for accurate monitoring.
- Possibly, instead of spending so much on specialized monitoring staff, send the funds to the districts to spend on evaluation staff and support.
- Unidentified Population
 - We have concern about students, for example, that have IQ's in the 72-77 range. They are functioning at their level of ability and do not meet criteria for learning disability, nor do they meet criteria for an intellectual disability; thus, they do not meet criteria for special education. There is no way, typically, they can meet the requirements to graduate; yet they are also not eligible for any kind of modified graduation plan. These students are not receiving FAPE.
- The Cap
 - TEA set the cap at 8.5% and that encouraged districts to under-identify students for fear of penalty.
- Misunderstanding of RtI/Sp Ed at ground zero

- The group feels that both federal and state legislators and to a degree those in TEA do not understand how RtI and Special Education works at the school level.
- Things we are seeing include:
 - training of intervention staff
 - provision of intervention staff
 - provision of special education staff
 - provision of intervention curriculum
- Supervision
 - How does TEA plan to supervise the districts? Will other stipulations be placed on district staff that takes away from other tasks that more directly impacting students?
- Concerns
 - Interventions for different diagnosis should not all be considered special education, ex. dyslexia.
 - Dyslexia students who are also under the special ed umbrella are being pulled from dyslexia intervention and being serviced under special ed and Orton Gillingham systematic, explicit, cumulative instruction is not being given with fidelity.
- District Issues
 - Knowledge from the top down on how these program work and where they struggle.
 - There doesn't seem to be unity and continuity between trainings, superintendents, principals to the teachers and assessment staff
- Funding/Staff
 - Will there be an increase in funding and staff to support the appropriate education that each student requires?
- Limited number of staff qualified to administer evaluations to meet the demands of this mandate. Also how do schools address students receiving 504, dyslexia and/or RTI who were already evaluated for special ed and did not qualify. Concern about compensatory services in regards to funding and determining what and how much.
- Money and lack of understanding of the differences of disabilities and the understanding of the disabilities and the education of each one.
- Funding
 - It is difficult to provide an appropriate education for students with disabilities when the accommodations they require are difficult to provide due to lack of funding for staff and other services.
- Staff need adequate training and support in order to provide appropriate public education.
- Not enough certified teachers to work with student population; TEA funding for mandates-that covers classroom teachers/materials
- Barriers
 - students:teacher ratio
 - fidelity with ongoing interventions
 - concerns
 - if monitors are coming yearly for 2-5 days, how are they receiving the big picture on the student's success? how can you monitor "student success" if every child's success is different?
- if they monitor, it needs to be effective monitoring...not just looking at the paperwork
 - TEA must be in our classrooms, not just talking to administrators. Administrators say one thing is being done when speaking with TEA , but different directives are being given to service providers.
- More local control, less micro-managing from TEA
- Using LRE as an excuse for not providing students with their actual FAPE. LRE does not mean inclusion for every student. It seems like more and more data us required to show that students need services. Meanwhile, we put students in environments where they are failing because it is easier, cheaper, etc.

- Unrealistic expectations for standardized testing that are not in the best interest of the students.
- Increased expectations without the support and funding to make it happen.
- money, funding is lacking, yet we'll need additional staff, classroom space, etc.
- Gen ed is doing great things with kids and not getting credit for "serving" students through interventions and accommodations
- FUNDING
- level of paperwork for teachers is taxing
- self reporting only goes so far if there isn't any kind of sufficient checking
- Concerns with bullet point 3: not every child on the list needs special education, cost of personnel to test students, time to complete evaluations.
- Why does TEA feel that a third party is necessary. A third party will likely not be familiar with special education law, or may possibly escalate the situation.
- Does TEA feel that dyslexia will go under the special education umbrella. If so, what does this mean for our dyslexia therapists?
- Another concern is that if there is more outreach, then this will cause an increase in referrals, which will require more assessment and special education staff (not just due to the increased referrals, but also due to the likely increase in children identified with a disability/needing specially designed instruction).
- Another concern is that TEA has in its draft plan that it will lead a series of trainings on conducting assessments that provide specific guidelines around a formal process for these students. What does this mean? Is this for a parent who is unhappy with our testing results? This may cause many parents to request unnecessary evaluations or reevaluations.
- Money for the call center and the third party could instead go towards more assessment and special education staff.
- Finances? Hiring the right people.
- Lack of Oversight on service provision documentation. Lack of supervision on service provider staff and ensuring they are on campuses doing their job.
- Insufficient evaluation staff involved in initial referrals; staff not reporting specific functional concerns to the diagnosis for appropriate referrals.
- Lack of education on SPED qualifiers.
- "conducting assessments for any parent or appropriate party who requests it" There is no way there will be enough resources for this to happen as staffing is currently exists.
- There are not enough qualified people and resources to implement best practices for RTI and referrals.
- We don't need more monitoring, we need more guidance.
- The lack of qualified staff working for TEA to monitor all the LEAs.
- Money issues on district level- how to allocate funds
 - The manpower to "implement" this monitoring is absurd. \$84,000,000 could be used more efficiently. We have proper monitoring and supervision already from our SPED Director. The problem was the 8% cap put in place.
 - More time and effort going into ensuring the processes are followed and not focusing on the student.
- Districts are not making general education teachers follow IEPs. There is little knowledge of the ramifications of not following the IEP.
- Texas SPED needs to recognize Dyslexia.
- Staffing guidelines- diagnosticians
- Providing services in rural, small school districts. How will that be handled?
- As a special education teacher, finding the time to handle the paperwork, teach the classes, pulled out of class to attend ARDS. This contributes to burn out of SPED teachers. We DO NOT NEED MORE PAPERWORK OR MORE MONITORING! We need to be able to teach and work with them!
- Too many chiefs and not enough Indians in SPED. Different people will give you different advice on varying questions.

- FAPE for dyslexia looks differently in general education than it looks in special education. See dyslexia handbook for how to identify and re-mediate.
- Class sizes are too big to really provide services and help the students show significant progress.
- Manpower and training will have to be provided for competence.
- Concerns
 - Will/ how will everyone be held to the same standards?
 - The Cap is what created the problem. If there is no longer a cap, it will be easier. TEA can look at the districts who did not follow the "cap" and know they were following the federal law.
 - More funding for charter school
 - TEA didn't fail to ensure. They imposed an artificial limit on the LEAs. Now they are trying to deflect the responsibility. They need to consult educators, ground level educators, before making policy decisions.
- More funding for proper staffing and contracted services.
- FAPE
 - We are not aware of students who have been denied FAPE in typical public schools, but have awareness that some charter schools deny students with severe behavioral, medical and educational handicapping condition. The full range of continuum of services appears not to be guaranteed in charter schools.
- Children with severe learning disabilities are included in the classroom environment for social experiences but at the expense of them receiving instruction to enable their maximum academic capacity. In other words even when a child is entered into Sp. Ed their time in Sp. Ed is severely limited.
- Specific programs are designed to accommodate severe behavioral students, but these students are not being serviced with social skills training. The units are not teaching these students to ret
- RTI is a poor substitute for our struggling students. I have a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership yet I have to send my struggling readers to a paraprofessional for their RTI services.
- Parent Education
 - Parents / public don't realize that identifying a disability is not a medical label.
- Lack of personnel to supervise and monitor LEA's.
 - Lack of consistency between district, region service centers in their procedures and providing FAPE
- Teachers who seek help on behalf of their students are often made to feel inadequate
- An increase in resource/sped classrooms with special education trained staff. Move away from strictly "inclusion" campuses where the special education students are not being properly instructed and the general education teacher are not properly trained to work with students with disabilities
- No leadership in special education in rural districts. Having to rely on a co-op in a different town.
- SPED programs across the state are submersed with responsibilities and severely understaffed and underfunded. The greatest challenge in ensuring FAPE for all students lies in the necessity to appropriately staff and train as well as funding for necessary services for ALL SPED children. Particularly in smaller districts where resources are limited and already consolidated to the county level to serve all districts within the county and still not enough specific individual programs and services exist to meet individual student needs, i.e., students with various degrees of autism all being lumped together to alleviate separate / specialized services needed from multiple staff based on individual needs.
- Furthermore, there has to be more parent / community outreach and education regarding SPED, 504, dyslexia as the terminology used alone is confusing and overwhelming for parents not in education and even more so for those that come from ELL homes. Parents do not know what to even look for or ask and fear approaching the issue.
- Students should be placed in the appropriate setting based on their needs (self contained, inclusion etc) not based on a number.(PBMAS) When this occurs students are placed in areas that are not appropriate for their learning style, abilities, sensory issues, etc.

- There is no reason at this time for any PPCD program to not include non-disabled peers. Those kiddos with special needs are not provided FAPE when their self-contained classroom does not have any neurotypical classmates
- Funding
 - We know that there were 2 reasons for the cap. Cost avoidance and over representation. Research tells us that students who live in poverty and underdeveloped communities will have a higher rate of disabilities. Why are we so concerned with how many of these students were born, or live within our district zones? We need to stop focusing on those numbers and start focusing on OUTCOMES. We are SO far behind the rest of the nation in this area. We are going around in circles and it is time to stop.
- The general education teachers in our district consider special students just a special education issue. They do not understand the co-ownership and they need to invest into the student as well as special education staff. They also do not want to implement the accommodations and think a special education teacher needs to be in the class and do this job.
- RTI
 - The plan talks about students in RTI for 6 or more months. We have a population of students that are being served T2 and/or T3 that are making progress. We have loads of data that shows this. Why in the world would we send a letter to parents with all this information that they won't understand?? RTI is working. They are making measurable progress and being successful within the gen ed curriculum. If it's not broke - don't fix it.
- School admin that only have the legal framework of how special education should be implemented in their classroom, but no realistic vision are of no value to special education staff
- Dyslexia
 - Texas needs to catch up and use dyslexia as an eligibility. But, the state has to FUND IT. Doing this with NO additional funding is a suicide mission.
- Money
 - Resentment about "sharing" gen ed money with sped department after years of strict separation of the two
- Reduce the number of programs per campus, but increase the number of campuses with self-contained classrooms. Therefore not ensuring FAPE is being available evenly across district. Students should not be on the bus for hours just to get to a program meeting "FAPE" that is too full of students to be considered a truly specialized SLC program.
- Staffing at district, campus is not at a level that can provide FAPE
- Self contained programs needed
- Lack of training and resources to ensure FAPE
- Many districts, despite the requests to their district, do not have staff that can model, coach, and monitor campuses to implement FAPE..
- No Training. RTI before Sped. evaluation should be stopped
- SLC classrooms are being evaluated and appraised from a general education lense as being effective.
- There is still a pervasive mindset that special education students belong solely to special education and therefore do not receive quality first teach instruction or intervention to make progress in the general curriculum
- positive behavior supports modeling, coaching, and monitoring is lacking despite ESC staff attempts.- trouble with site based management and not enough ESC staff to support
- Schools are not being held accountable for identifying students with disabilities.
 - There should be more staffing to provide
- There are no inclusion or resource teachers available that speak Spanish so no service is provided to our students
- rise in litigations have caused campuses to over service students too early and then students become dependent on supports and staff that cause them to get further behind, unemployable, etc.

- Addressing the lack of FAPE, is how do you keep the system from being bogged down with requests for evaluation without merit.
- having campus personnel to ensure compliance is occurring and uniform
- Personnel issue- TEA needs to make identification more consistent across the state.
- TEA has not given specific guidelines for RTI. Other states have a site for consistent RTI. TEA has not given specific guidance on SLD identification.
- Staffing
 - The biggest barrier is having the staff to cover the percentage of students that we have in our program.
 - Need more staff and a standardized procedures. More local personnel
- Special education staff should be required to have more specific education and continuing education on working with special education students. Also districts should be required (not optional) to hire outside special education behavioral and developmental consultants to help train and educate staff who work with special needs students.
- High student to teacher ratio
- Training staff
- Lack of accountability
 - Too much time invested in the referral to RTI.....leading to 504 services and eventually referred to Special Ed.
- School Personnel denying entrance due to a lack of understanding of FAPE.
- Lack of accountability and supervising of these students to ensure they are given an appropriate education.
- The lack of enough personnel hired to meet each students IEP minutes.
- Compromising of students schedules to perform and pass STAAR levels without the needed assistance or accommodations.
- General education needs to take ownership of these students because they do count. Classrooms need to be monitored randomly by SPED to make sure they are being serviced on a regular basis, but that requires more man power.
- School Personnel not prepared to work with special needs population.

Ideas or Solutions

- Educate the district to educate the school administrators to eventually educate the teachers
Administration educates the teachers and eventually bring awareness to parent/guardian
- Educate/Inform all school personnel about IDEA/FAPE/Sped Law to ensure that education is available to all at no cost and regardless of disability/manifesting behaviors.
 - recommended teacher:student ratio
 - on going trainings for staff
- give the district the funding they need to hire the amount of professional staff needed to meet each individual students IEP without compromising their schedules.
- general education teachers need to be trained and willing to work with our students regardless of their disability.
- Give the special education teachers the option and discretion to request the appropriate help they need to meet their students demands. We are always told there is no money and we have to meet a student to teacher ratio to grant another assistant. This is putting a blanket statement on the help and individual needs of each child and their disability
- Staff is delivering the "services" properly and uniformly. Students are receiving proper needed services

- TEA and or legislature needs to fully fund cost of protocols and additional staff to correct. This will an issue for compensatory services. If TEA at fault then they should fund compensatory services. District already funds reduced as additional administrators working to create and monitor ineffective RTI and building new schools. Sped funds in this district is much less. Much less trInibg. Complaints no money protocols. Sped funds in Cisco
- Budgeti Budgeti
 - In order to service programs such as this, there needs to be a greater allotment of money across the state.
 - People (who are actual teachers) need to make and have more input into the laws that govern public education. The lack of the ability to discipline is causing gaps for other students.
 - Don't penalize districts for discipline. Provide more time for teachers during the school day.
- Budgets
 - Monies must be provided to ensure low caseloads to ensure each student receives a FAPE.
- A system to rank evaluation requests will have to be created.
- All ISD and schools need a check list that documents parents notifications
- More trained to stay in the program. What can we do to keep the highly-qualified teachers in the program?
- Create a sample range for expected process for campus staffing, case management ratios, and number of district staff to support campuses based on number of campuses and specialty needs
- Clearer expectations and resources to ensure all districts and campuses understand quality first teach and progress monitoring so students make progress
- different, updated evaluation process
- Criteria for evaluating SPED classroom that is appropriate compared to Gen. Ed. appraisals and appraisers.
- Continue regional service center supports- their training and support is vital to districts...provide money to districts so that district staff can attend trainings
- Stipends for special education teachers
 - incentives such as tuition assistance to get a special ed cert and degree
- education programs should train teachers better on research based practices and preparing for an Annual ARD- writing the PLAAFP that describes the students impact and needs, goals that are challenging but help bridge the gap, and selecting accommodations based on need, due to disability or weaknesses
 - Ensure districts are provided with resources to ensure appropriate staffing
- Training for teaching, acceptable grading policies, clear definition of inclusion and resources with clear number of minutes students qualify for
- There should be a cap for general ed and special ed classes.
 - Texas is the only state that separates dyslexia and speech impairments, this should be corrected.
- Investigate all areas of concern --investigate all reasons for a student needed to be referred such as students living in petrol chemical area suffer from respiratory illness, causing hearing problems which might mask as something else.
- Better training for teachers to become better identifiers with tools/knowledge for the types of disabilities
- Paraprofessional salaries need to correlate with the experience that we expect them to have to service our special ed/or gen ed,
- I recommend more self contained classes for students in need of this type of isolated environment. Staffing should be sufficient so that physical aggression does not result in injury to students or staff. These understaffed classes, and including these students in the general population, are resulting in a very negative environment for schools.
- Local school districts should be trusted with the educational needs of our students. TEA has failed and taken our most vulnerable students and left them defenseless for years. Teachers are the ones who repeatedly show concern for their students. Let teachers have more input and control.

- Hire more personnel to monitor but also to assist LEA's in developing compliant procedures. Not a "gotcha" attitude. More support.
- LEA's tend to be reactive instead of proactive. Having a staff who knows how to react makes the difference.
- allow schools to place students where the student will best be successful, not where all the other students go. If a student needs to be in a more restricted environment so be it. Don't penalize the school district for trying to provide what the child needs instead of what the school and state want to see.
- less paraprofessionals running intervention classroom or content mastery type classroom
- Look back at lessons learned from the past and not recreate the same pattern.
- Computers should be removed from RTI or Special Ed. classrooms. When you have a classroom that you can work with a small group of students at a time the teacher should be working with the students not putting the student on a computer.
- New terminology
 - The word disability as it is used, strikes fear in parent's hearts and heads, it implies a medical or mental deficit . Perhaps a new term could be coined
- There needs to be a bigger stick in the STAAR for special education students. There needs to be an accountability beyond what we have. Subbing Sped into a separate group removes accountability from the GE teacher wanting to implement the IEP and provide needed services in the GE classroom.
- Increase funding! We need more self contained classes for specific student needs, more funding for staffing for implementation and management of services / programs, and more staffing to allow for differentiation of instruction and support staff in self contained and inclusion classes. Remove para's from the instructional setting for inclusion support as well. Although they are a gold mine and angels for their service, they are not educated / highly qualified to adequately provide the needs for our students instructionally or in recognizing the characteristics of many of our SPED students, for example an autistic child demonstrating stemming behavior that if recognized early would allow early intervention to prevent escalation and hopefully keep the students in the classroom and on track academically.
- State Guidance on Continuum of Services
 - Consider more research and development in this area for LEAs. Many LEAs in this Region (5), are still using content mastery as a model. We are so far behind in research and best practice. We need to start catching up.
- Monitoring
 - Hold campuses responsible for denying the inclusion of all students. Many of our students are not getting their therapies as directed by IEP's based on the fact funding is limited and personnel not readily available. This affects their FAPE.
- Ideas
 - FAPE is available to all students and we believe that people thought they were following FAPE. Administrations should be certified or at least have a certain number of hours in sped to understand the FAPE process and requirements.
 - There needs to be certification requirements for all school administrators and teachers that work with SPED populations.
- If funding is addressed for charter school & additional training this would help with solving some of the issues
- Provide a uniform and organized process for identification and referral that all districts must comply with the same way. (RtI, SpEd referral, evaluation, identification, and oversight).
- TEA needs to be more in touch with educators. Scheduling this Focus group at 2:45 on a Tuesday is a prime example of how out of touch TEA is with professional educators.
- This should be held after-school or on the weekend and offer child-care? You should provide that for parents, as well.
- Consult with districts prior to making decisions that directly effect those that actually serve the students
- Present a standard across the board and be consistent.

- Increased monitoring and accountability for the RTI process.
- Statewide database for students going through the referral process.
- TEA liaison at the district or campus levels.
- Stop giving the school districts CAPS.
- Give us resources instead of scrutinizing us, wanting to look at files, do audits, pop up and just get a quick glance at our students. That does not provide an accurate look at the progress that student is making. The STAAR Test is not an accurate look at the progress the student is making.
- Adjust the criteria for identifying students for a disability.
- Developmentally appropriate TEKS so that students are able to perform at grade level.
- Adequate district funding so that districts may be in compliance with expectations.
- We need more staffing on each campus.
- An special education instructional coach
- Require a curriculum that implements best practices (not just teacher created lessons available to teachers).
- Schools districts need more guidance/guidelines on RTI and consistency from year to year.
- Consistency across all districts from TEA. Knowing what is expected and guidelines provided for each district.
- Educate. Educate. Educate. Everyone.
 - Consider ALL areas on initial evaluations, so that nothing is missed.
- Ensure Call Center staff are knowledgeable and include ALL service discipline personnel. OT SPEECH
- AUDIT documentation logs to ensure they match IEP.
- Instead of a third party, a mediator could get involved.
- educate parents/public about RTI and what gen ed is offering to meet FAP
- random file audits for compliance
- reduce monitoring from TEA, more local control
- Providing problem solving and solutions for how to meet expectations vs monitoring when we don't meet those expectations - use the money that was allocated for hiring additional monitors for consulting / support and hire consultants with recent backgrounds in education.
- When schools are not meeting expectations, the solution can't be to have teachers follow the same script room to room, school to school with the threat of being fired. Teacher turn over is high across the profession, but this is especially true for low performing schools. We need incentives for experienced teachers to work at and stay at these schools.
- protecting teachers
 - Safeguards must be put in place for teachers, therapists, paraprofessionals, and etc. when speaking out or ask questions. They must be protected from any and all retaliation.
- 15:1 pupil:certified teacher ratio for all special education classes including tutoring
- Survey the people who are working directly with students about specifics. IE Are you able to work one one one with students who need that level of support? Do you have all the equipment you need to meet the needs of students? Do you have enough staff in your classrooms and campuses to meet the needs of students? Can you request and receive needed materials for students? These questions would replace broader questions such as: Are you supported by your district?
- staffing
 - Properly trained staff that is able to meet the physical, mental, and educational needs of all students. Teacher input needs to be considered in these areas as well. Teachers have no say in who is working in their classrooms. Support staff lack of knowledge and training and mistakes are being held against the teachers.
- focus on districts who are at 8.5% or less...not those who are/were serving every student regardless of the district percentage
- parents need to be involved in the monitoring process
- staff uses

- Special Education paid support staff is being used to run ISS, lunch duty, cool-down rooms for general education students. They are being taken away from their duties that support the special education students.
- Money and Training
 - Fund scientific research based training to educate teachers in each disability.
- Assessment
 - Students with disabilities need to have appropriate assessments for their individual abilities.
- Incentivize for Intervention/Special Education
 - Districts should provide incentives for highly qualified and experienced interventionists, assessors and special education staff to work and stay in the district.
 - The state should provide additional monies earmarked to the districts for this purpose.
 - The Federal Government should provide additional monies earmarked to states for this purpose.
- New Category
 - There needs to be an identifying category, with corresponding testing and services, that meets these kids needs. The testing needs to correspond to their level of ability.
- Solutions
 - Teacher training to address FAPE.
 - More education to know what is appropriate.
 - More staff to provide public education.
- Private School/Charter Responsibilities
 - If vouchers are going to be given to attend private schools; private schools should have to provide assessment and services to students with special needs. The local district should not have to provide those services if the parents prefer another setting.
- Federal/State assessment
 - Just as there is a continuum of abilities and different qualifiers for special education, 504 and other intervention programs; there needs to be assessment available to show growth in these students i.e. the slow learner; the sped student who is not capable of passing a standard state assessment) (comparable to the STAAR M, or A.
 - This has to come from the federal level and many students are not receiving appropriate assessment for their abilities and needs.
- More disability expertise staff for TEA.
- Educate school districts on newly hired positions of Regional Service Center Liaisons.
- Less emphasis on paper monitoring and more on onsite visits.
- An alternative to onsite visits could be Face Time Meeting during teacher's conference times. Such as sending a randomly selected student's file to TEA prior to the Face Time Meeting. Then TEA could ask the teacher questions regarding the student during the Face Time Meeting.
- More frequent visits from TEA monitoring team, one visit within six years is not enough. The suggested action plan is insufficient. We would need more visits/assistance.
- Guidelines for SPED should be more direct and consistent throughout the state.
- Sped monitoring should be conducted by those very familiar with special education procedures and laws. Peer reviews?
- TEA should be viewed as ready to provide support to districts rather than being viewed as a "gotcha" if your numbers are high, etc.
- like the idea of the "call center"
 - chat feature similar to AT&T on TEA website
- Increased number of liaisons for each region to create a more inviting partnership between TEA and ISDs.
- consortium or group of local area educators that facilitate through the area; utilize your local "experts" ; pay a stipend

- Same as previous answer
- Our school district has an open door policy
- Monitor school districts and their policies regarding special education evaluation
- Teachers need more professional training to implement the appropriate RTI strategies that follow a state guideline.
- There needs to be a serious discussion as to what classroom size and mix looks like. How can a teacher truly serve a student with special needs in a classes that are over crowded, no parprofessional help.
- Stop being so reactive and stop the spending through TEA in reaction to these findings and put the money into hiring staff.
- Solutions
 - Provide rubric for LEAs to self monitor annually that must be submitted to TEA. TEA spot checks in areas of concern self-identified by rubric via district sending one rep with requested data to TEA or LEA sends requested data to TEA for compliance monitoring. Districts hire compliance officer to be a liaison between LEA and TEA.
 - As part of rubric mentioned above, it should also contain data collection regarding education/ instruction being provided to students and training provided to service providers.
- More funding and staff to student ratio.
 - Minimize amount of paperwork.
- Related services should follow caseload vs workload model
- Data needs to support individual interventions are working, reconsider and change interventions as needed.
- Processing Disorders need 2 years on interventions with targeted milestones if not accomplished within their TIER, then either evaluate the interventions or students needs to be referred to Special Education to rule out a learning disorder.
- Have a system in place where LEAs and TEA are in a partnership. Compliance officers are a great idea!
- Area in school improvement plan that specifically addresses pedagogical issues (TAC and TEC)
- Needs to be a main database in the district.
- Study other states that have efficient programs.
- Do not use numbers to factor into the decision to test student.
- General Education Instruction
 - Instructional practices are needed to improve learning gaps in RTI tiers.
- Increase SPED staff at every campus in Texas by 300% minimum.
- Monitor RTI in comparison to referrals
- Competitive pay
- Standardize the pay across districts or agencies if held to the same standard
- Hire qualified adults
- There should be more money in special education program to reduce to student to teacher ratio
- Those children would have been served better in the same environment if they'd been divided into two groups on a different rotation with the same inclusive plan.
- Of course this requires more funding. Therefore I hope this means the state will greatly increase the amount of manpower to a level that can serve all children Regardless of the amount of service they require/need.
- Solutions
 - A group made up of professionals from parents to district to TEA to own the monitoring of this. I also feel strongly that some kind of appeals process be established to handle cases on both sides where kids have not only failed to be identified but those that feel there were identified in error
- There needs to be a more effective system of monitoring rather than looking at current situations. Rather than spending time and resources trying to undo the past, we should be held accountable for how we should proceed forward.

- Ensure that LEAs have access to other testing instruments so that diagnosticians get a wider picture of the student.
- Parent indicator check list, specific information and training about evaluations and disabilities. (Formal and collaborative process)
- The monitoring team needs to be well versed in special education test protocols, SpEd law, and eligibility requirements. The same teams need to monitor the same districts.
- Guidelines
- Checklist/guidelines from TEA that must be submitted for electronic monitoring.
- Fund public education
- Although we are spending "more" on education than we have ever spent, we receive less funding per student. We need to have public education funded.
- Monitor data
 - It will be important to make data based decisions. What data are we missing or not monitoring?

Anything Else?

- Community parents taking advantage of services as they are considered residents of a low socio-economic area
- School districts want to provide the services to the students that need it. It comes down to money and manpower and CAPS given to us.
- Accommodations
 - needs to be clear definitions of each accommodations.
- Identification of students and gaps is not a problem. The process of testing identified students and the referral process in general is at the mercy of the co-op of which schools belong.
- Nothing else noted.
- Consider state-wide stipends for special education instructors, as well as aides, so those providing services are held at a higher standard.
- districts need to talk to one another better. Getting the correct or any paperwork identifying a student at all is so hard.
- Educating district personnel on state policies and provide parent training also as to what FAPE looks like
- do not think there is under-identification in our area of the state
- Special education students should be included in count for gen ed curriculum materials and supplemental supplies. There is a severe shortage of ancillary curriculum available for special education teachers/students.
- Solutions:
 - instead of having teams of humans that have never seen our campus before, what about a process for educators like a "whistler blower act" to create transparency
 - what if we uploaded documentation with technology so that it's ongoing? (SeeSaw, ESGI)
 - assessment based monitor
 - monitoring should be done by someone in the district - the monitoring should be done by professionals who collectively know the whole child
 - lower class sizes - how about 15 -1?
 - provide QUALITY professional development for educators on research based interventions and disabilities
 - provide teachers with quality collaboration with other trained professionals (SPED professionals, professionals trained in dyslexia, autism, ADHD, behavior therapy)
 - get REAL FOOD in the cafeteria
- what is the criteria for "success?"
- CAN YOU ACTUALLY TELL US THE PURPOSE AND effectiveness OF STANDARDIZED TESTING?

- modifications need to be broadened to accommodate all learners
- What if these children were your children? this changes our perspective
- dialogue
 - I wish there was more open dialogue and visits with TEA.
- create an open dialogue between TEA and educators.. who are in the fight day in and day out!
- Timelines for testing massive number of children with limited assessment staff is not possible.
 - Setting assessment staff up for failure. A triage system is needed.
- Also, can we give PWN for testing requests for identified students who do not show an educational need. Teachers in gen Ed need training for differentiated instruction and scaffolding as teachers are focused on students in bubble for staar not those left behind. Funding social workers mandated for Title one Schools.
- Inundated with social needs. What is Texas doing to meet social needs of students that result in over identification of SLD and ohi and ED.
- Timelines statewide
- What is the proportion of money spent on admin of sped as opposed to teachers...teaching kids requires TEACHERS!!!! This plan increases TEA funding that could go to direct service providers. Even this district is putting more money into admin and buildings over training and staff.
- Need more money for interpreters. Caseloads of 4 and five students who are deaf and hard of hearing in one general Ed class with one interpreter is hard to meet their communication needs
- The arbitrary 6+ month sole identifier might not be valid because other factors are at play. For example fidelity of implementation of RTI.
- Training system for all teachers and administrators so we know how to grade Sped. inclusion. Students need more bilingual, special ed teachers or assistants.
- 504 Needs guidelines. Everyone is being dumped into this category.
- Failing these students by evaluating them through the regular STAAR test. There has to be a more appropriate assessment for these students than just the STAAR test.
- Create different plans based on % of students who are identified, some of us are above 10% but need help with technical assistance to support campuses in ensuring students access and make progress- that is the dilemma
- The chain of command does not respond to ideas and complaints of SPED.
- too many new positions within TEA
- I believe teachers are becoming extremely frustrated and are not successful in maintaining a positive learning environment because of poor supervision and support from administration.
- Department heads/instructional leaders need to know our students and spend time in our classrooms so that they can understand and facilitate positive changes for teachers and students. Students want to feel safe in their classrooms. Teachers want to feel safe in their classrooms.
- RTI needs to be reevaluated. The RTI students are not making gains that could be made if given a good reading/math teacher.
- Educators who are found to not provide FAPE should be held accountable.
- Quality special education teachers should be rewarded in any way (emotionally, etc..) possible. Too many are burnt out and leave and you are left with vacancies
- Trust Me
 - I am a professional special educator with a Master's in SPED. I am highly trained and qualified. When did this disappear in the face of the public and governing agencies. We know what our kids needs and what will work best. The issue is over monitoring, micromanaging, and grossly underfunding us.
 - Trust us. Listen to us. Let us work. Let us do what we were TAUGHT be PROFESSIONALS to do.

- College programs for incoming teachers need to take a required course about implementing SPED services in GE. More training and emphasis needs to be made to GE teachers about implementing the IEP and servicing all students through differentiating instruction.
- Perception
 - The focus should be on the Appropriate part of FAPE. Accessing public education does not require districts or campuses to be "Superlative" in their provision of services.
- Perception
 - The focus should be on the Appropriate part of FAPE. Accessing public education does not require districts or campuses to be "Superlative" in their provision of services.
- Funding constraints that may hinder implementation; identify core areas that are data driven and can be placed into SIP
- Appropriate amount of time for interventions needs to be relevant to the child developmental level
 - Expectations of child skill acquisition should be accomplished with their peers. Students should be constantly exposed to interaction with their peers not pull out programs.
- Increase of service times due to advocate request.
- Parents should be taught how to embrace a language rich environment and implement that at home.
- Presence of advocates capitalizing on TEA complaint.
- This is all general education question. Nothing happens till sped is given a referrals.so general education needs to be monitored
- Not every child evaluated will need specialized instructions
- Concerning a Free inappropriate education for the students the state of Texas needs to reconsider the requirements for the stars them. It is obscene and in moral for every student to be required to take the same test when they have been cognitively shown to perform below grade level informing the students every year that they have failed this test despite their best efforts is demoralizing and will permanently damage their self-esteem please rethink this policy
- Concerning a fair and appropriate education, we need to quadruple funding for itinerant staff and training for all teachers on best supports for kids with all range of needs.
- Where is the money for addition sped teachers
- Districts aren't using SHARS money for special education but putting money in the general fund
- FAPE NEEDS TO BE DEFINED AND EXEMPLIFIED AND UPHOLD WITH CONSEQUENCES FOR ANYONE PURPOSEFULLY AVOIDING PROVIDING IT.
- Staar Testing
 - We should find a solution to sped students taking the staar. It is not fair for students take a test that we know they won't pass. It definitely effects how hard they will work in the class.
- Other considerations
 - Be open to outside professionals input when coming to FAPE for all the kids in Texas