

MAJOR FINDINGS

- Marginal differences were noted regarding the IEP data provided for the number of minutes related services provided while students are in ECSE and school-age (i.e. Kindergarten) program, with school-age IEPs noting fewer minutes in physical therapy services and social work.
- Data indicate an overall, average increase in minutes on school-age (i.e. Kindergarten) special education IEPs for speech and language services provided for students.
- School-age IEPs also included more than twice the number minutes for services classified as “other,” which include: applied behavior analysis, adaptive physical education, behavior management, Braille instruction, cross categorical, itinerant services, music therapy, nutrition therapy, orientation/mobility, regular education modification, resource room, and vision, than did ECSE IEPs.
- The majority of ECSE administrators/coordinators (68.2%) believe ECSE IEPs contain approximately the “same” number of minutes in special education related services when compared to Kindergarten IEPs.
- However, opinions among ECSE administrators/coordinators are more varied regarding their perceptions of the number of total minutes contained in IEPs for special education in general with regard to the two programs (i.e. ECSE / Kindergarten).
- While related services such as occupational therapy, speech/language and physical therapy were each noted by ECSE administrators/coordinators to impact the educational improvement of students, the related service considered by survey respondents to have the greatest impact on education improvement was speech and language therapy.
- While approximately two-thirds of ECSE administrators/coordinators surveyed believe unlimited funding would result in “about the same” number of related services and overall special education services provided for students, approximately one-third indicated unlimited funding would result in “some more” services.
- According to ECSE administrator/coordinators, little differences in noted in parental participation during IEP meetings among ECSE and school-age (i.e. Kindergarten) programs. However, these same administrators indicate a higher percentage of parents associated with ECSE programs (40.5%) actively participate in IEPs meetings by asking and answering questions than the percent of parents associated with school-age program (32.9%).

- Parents participating in focus group interviews stated they believe differences exist in communication with/among program personnel. While communication was considered adequate with regard to the ECSE program, parents believe there is less communication once children transition to the school-age setting.
- Focus group interview participants indicated they were also concerned with regard to the social context (i.e. school setting, classroom setting, interactions with peers, etc.) in which services were provided as student transition from ECSE program to the school-age environment.