

# SPECIAL EDUCATION EVALUATION SURVEY ANALYSIS

Prepared for Alexandria City Public Schools

November 2016



In the following document, Hanover Research provides key findings to accompany the data supplement containing full results of the Special Education Evaluation Survey for Alexandria City Public Schools.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

## INTRODUCTION

In the following document, Hanover Research provides key findings and open-ended word clouds for the Special Education Evaluation Survey conducted on behalf of Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). This document is accompanied by a data supplement containing full results of the survey, both in the aggregate and segmented by school level, position, years in role, and years at ACPS. The data supplement also contains verbatim responses to the “other” and open-ended questions.

## KEY FINDINGS

- **Respondents find issues related to special education instruction more important than issues related to compliance with state and federal standards.**
- **Instruction-Related Issues**: Respondents indicate that during an evaluation of ACPS special education programs it is **most important to examine behavioral supports and interventions, communication between special education and general education staff, and specially designed instructional strategies, such as IEPs.**
  - In contrast, respondents feel that post-secondary transition and instructional interventions (FastForWord, Achieve 3000, etc.) are comparatively less important.
- **Compliance-Related Issues**: Respondents indicate that from a compliance standpoint, it is **most important to examine student eligibility and placement, Individual Education Plan (IEP) implementation, and referrals for special education eligibility.**
- **Disabilities and Special Needs**: The disabilities and special needs that respondents think are **especially important to evaluate during the special education evaluation are emotional disabilities, autism, and intellectual disabilities.**
  - When comparing by school level, **emotional disabilities are significantly more important at the high school level** than at the elementary school level, while **autism is more important at elementary school level** than the high school level.
- **Evaluation Methods**: According to respondents, the most useful methods for evaluating ACPS’s special education programs include **staff focus groups/interviews, classroom observations, case studies of individual student outcomes, and data analysis of aggregate student outcomes.**
  - Respondents indicate that parent and student focus groups, interviews, and surveys would be the least useful.



**Figure 2: "Other" - Compliance issue(s) that are important to examine in an evaluation of ACPS's special education programs**



n=26







## PROJECT EVALUATION FORM

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