

Lexington SEPAC/SEPTA Parent Survey Results

School Committee
Executive Summary
April 8, 2013

Disclaimer

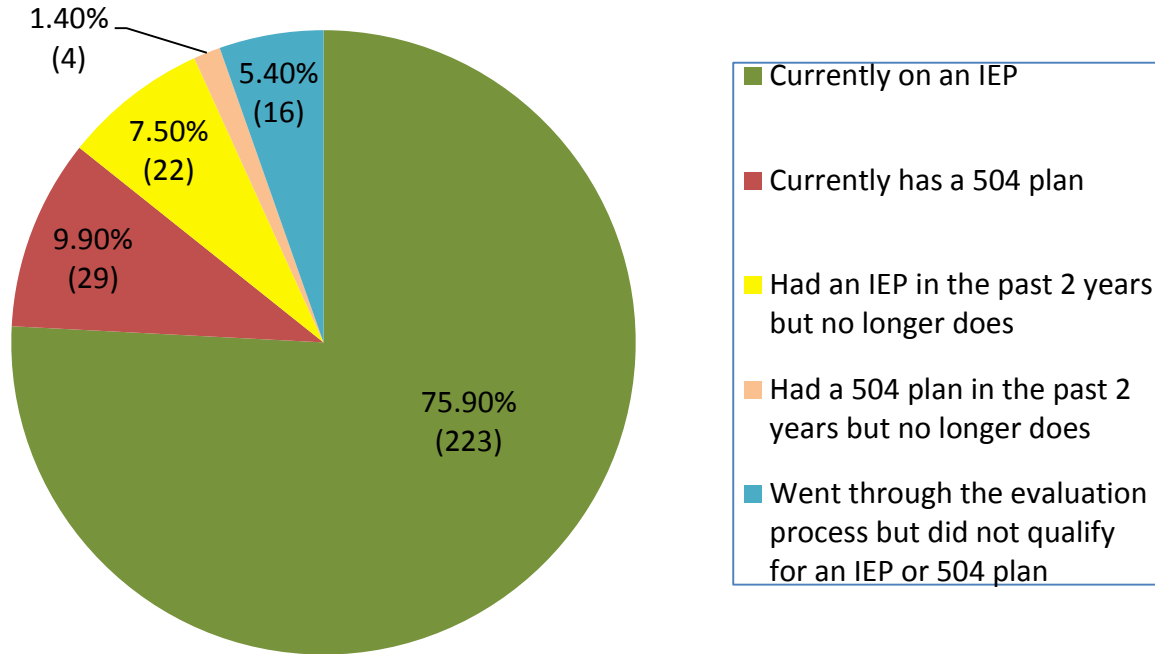
This survey was conducted as an informal, Web-based poll. This was done for the convenience of the Survey Team and the respondents. We believe the results to be a meaningful, if unscientific, representation of the views of Lexington Public School families of students with special needs. The response data in the survey do not reflect or constitute the opinions, endorsement, or position of either the Lexington SEPAC/SEPTA or the Lexington Public Schools. The opinions and responses presented are solely those of the survey respondents. Because the data constitute opinions, different interpretations are possible. The Lexington SEPAC/SEPTA does not assume responsibility for the responses or for the readers' interpretation of, or reaction to, the survey or this presentation.

Background

- The SEPAC/SEPTA Parent survey was discussed as part of the September 20, 2012 SEPAC and School Committee meetings which addressed concerns regarding the behavioral intervention strategies used with students with special needs.
- Per these discussions, the SEPAC/SEPTA leadership team agreed to partner with the School Committee and LPS Administration to launch a parent survey.
- The SEPAC/SEPTA launched an online survey from November 13, 2012 to November 27, 2012.
- Prospective respondents were notified of the survey via the LPS Global Connect email system (which goes out to all parents with children in LPS), various Lexington LISTSERV® email lists, the SEPAC Web site, and via flyers posted in Lexington.
- Survey results have been extensively shared with and reviewed by LPS staff and administration as well as members of the School Committee.

Response Rate

Respondents by IEP/504 Plan Status



Response Rate--Parents of Children currently on an IEP:

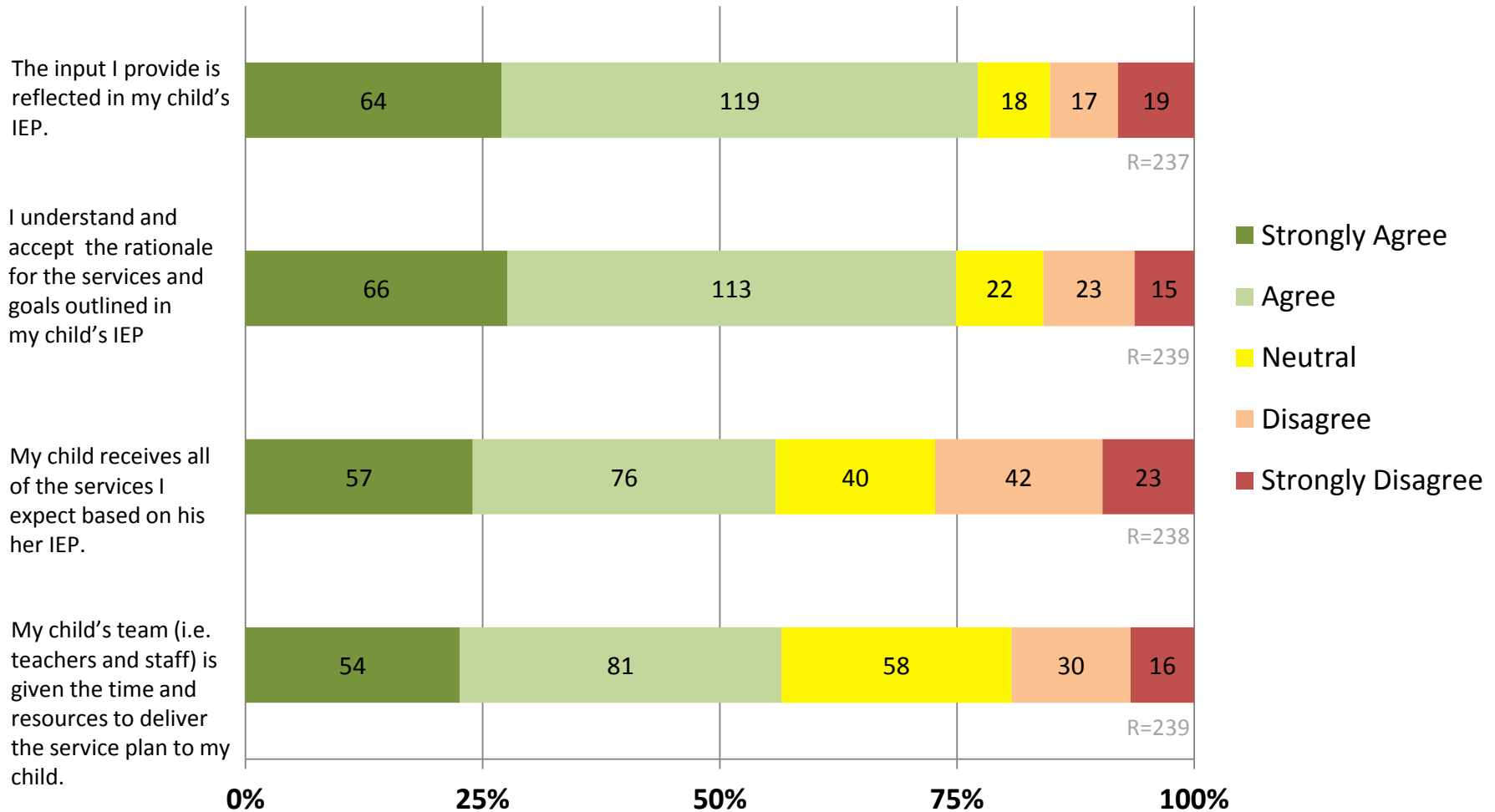
- 1007 students currently on an IEP (December 2012)
- 223 respondents with children currently on an IEP
- **Response rate: 22%**

Response Rate--Parents of Children currently on a 504 Plan:

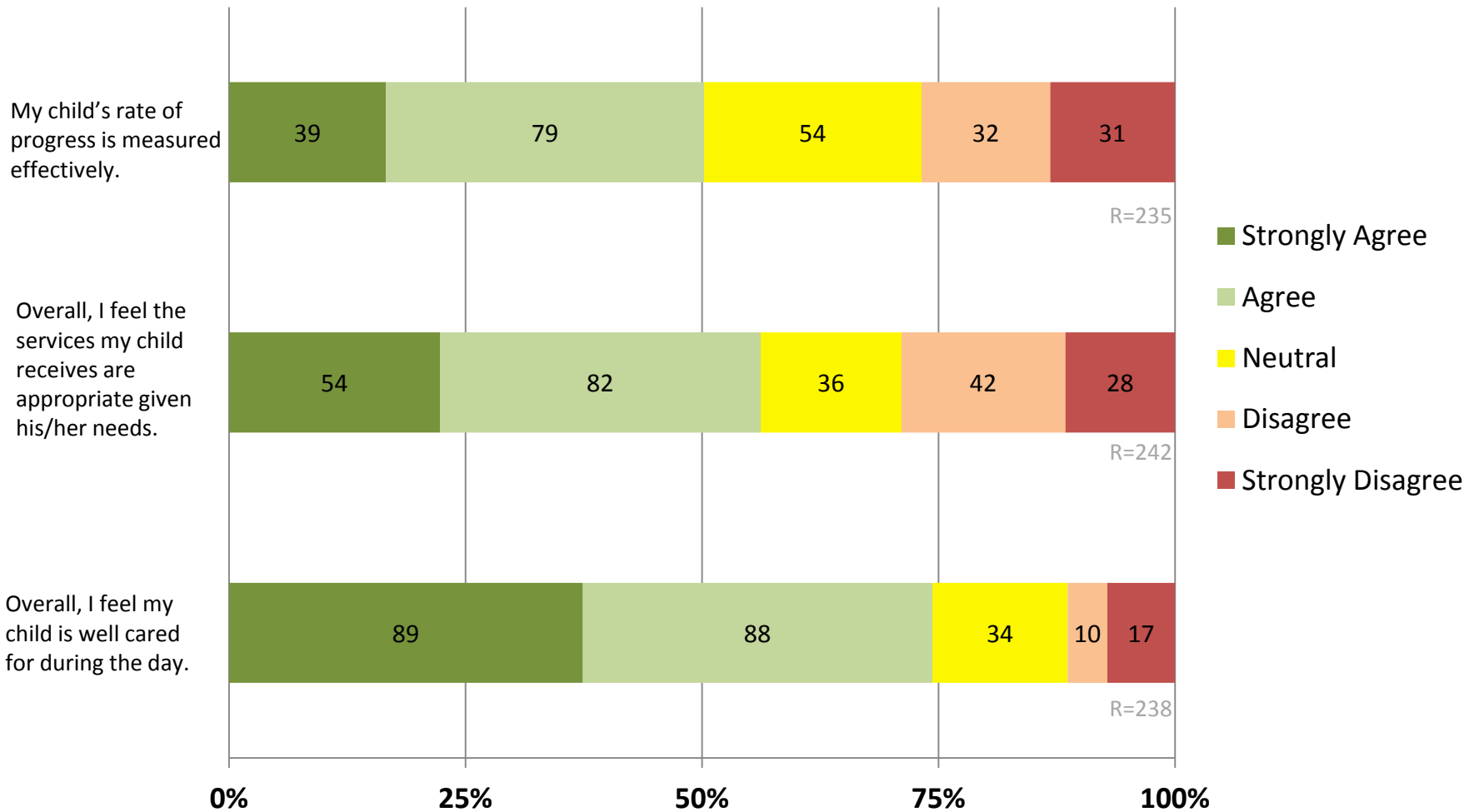
- 105 students currently on a 504 Plan (February 2013)
- 29 respondents with children currently on a 504 Plan
- **Response rate: 27%**

Placement/Services Delivery for Children with an IEP (Question 6)

Placement/Services Delivery for Children with an IEP



Placement/Services Delivery for Children with an IEP



Placement/Services Delivery for Children with an IEP

Parent Comments--Common Themes

Strengths

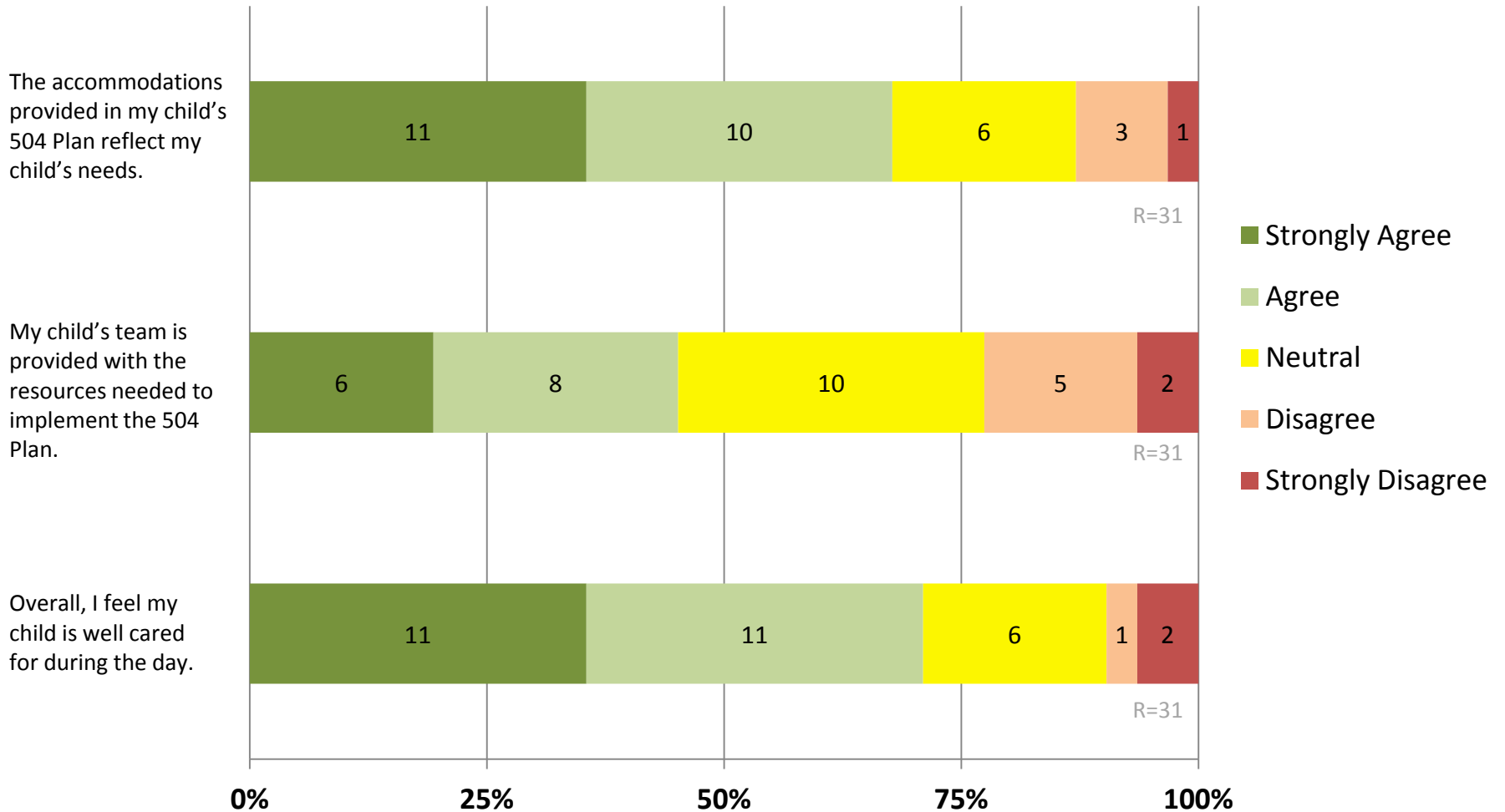
- Supportive teams and school cultures
- Effective interventions
- Flexible approaches

Areas for Improvements

- Student placement approaches/length of time required to access services
- Methods for monitoring student progress.
- Communication with parents about evaluations, placements, and student progress
- Conflict resolution strategies when parents and staff disagree

Placement/Services Delivery for Children with a 504 Plan (Question 7)

Placement/Services Delivery for Children with a 504 Plan



Placement/Service Delivery—504 Plans

Parent Comments—Common Themes

Strengths

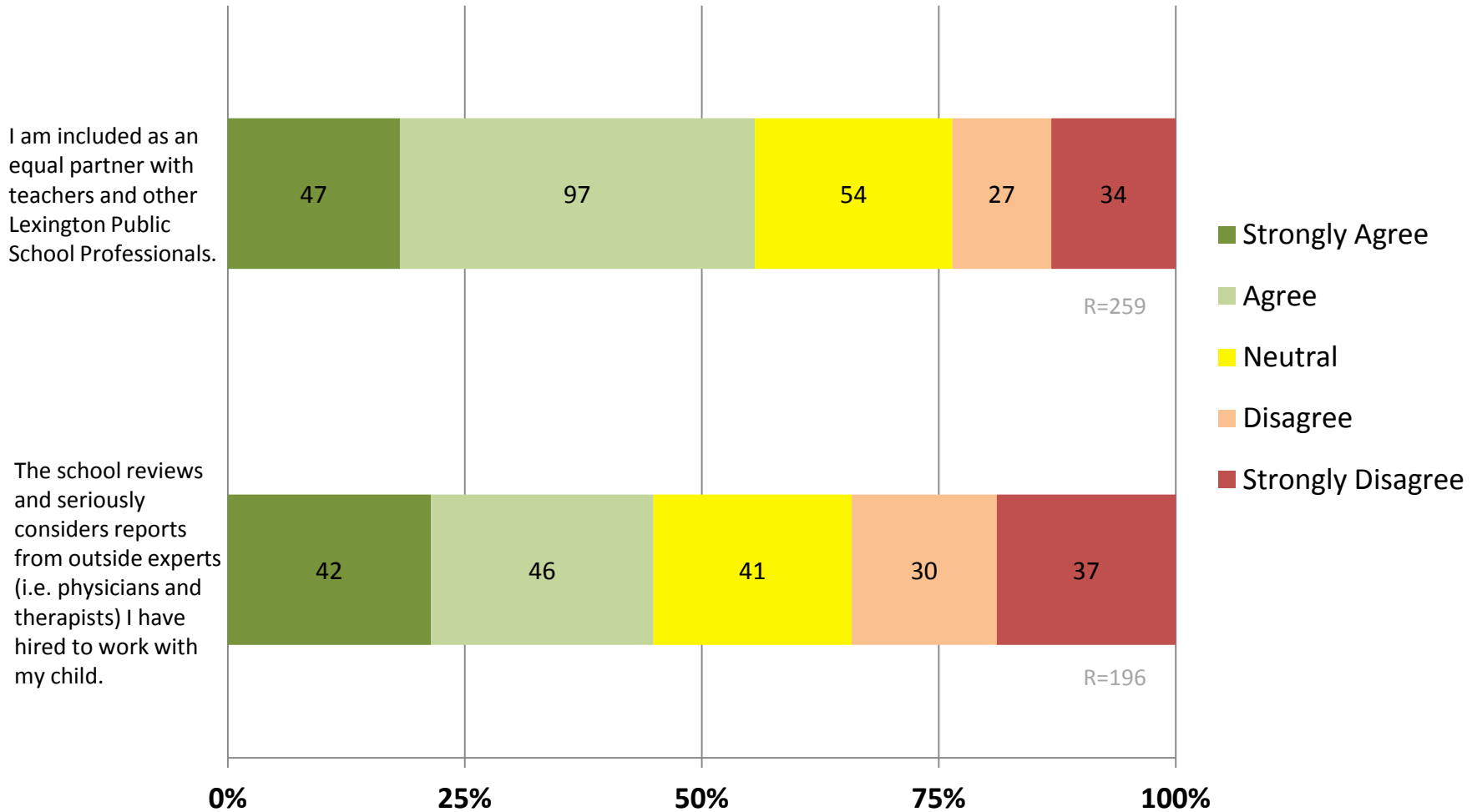
- Strong staff
- Strong school support

Areas for Improvements

- Communication with parents
- Staff resources and education

Partnering with Parents/Outside Experts (Question 9)

Partnering with Parents/Outside Experts



Partnering with Parents/Outside Experts

Parent Comments– Common Themes

Strengths

- Strong collaboration with staff
- Effective communication

Areas for Improvements

- Collaboration with parents regarding best practices for working with outside experts
- Coordination with parents regarding use of outside expert reports and recommendations
- Conflict resolution strategies

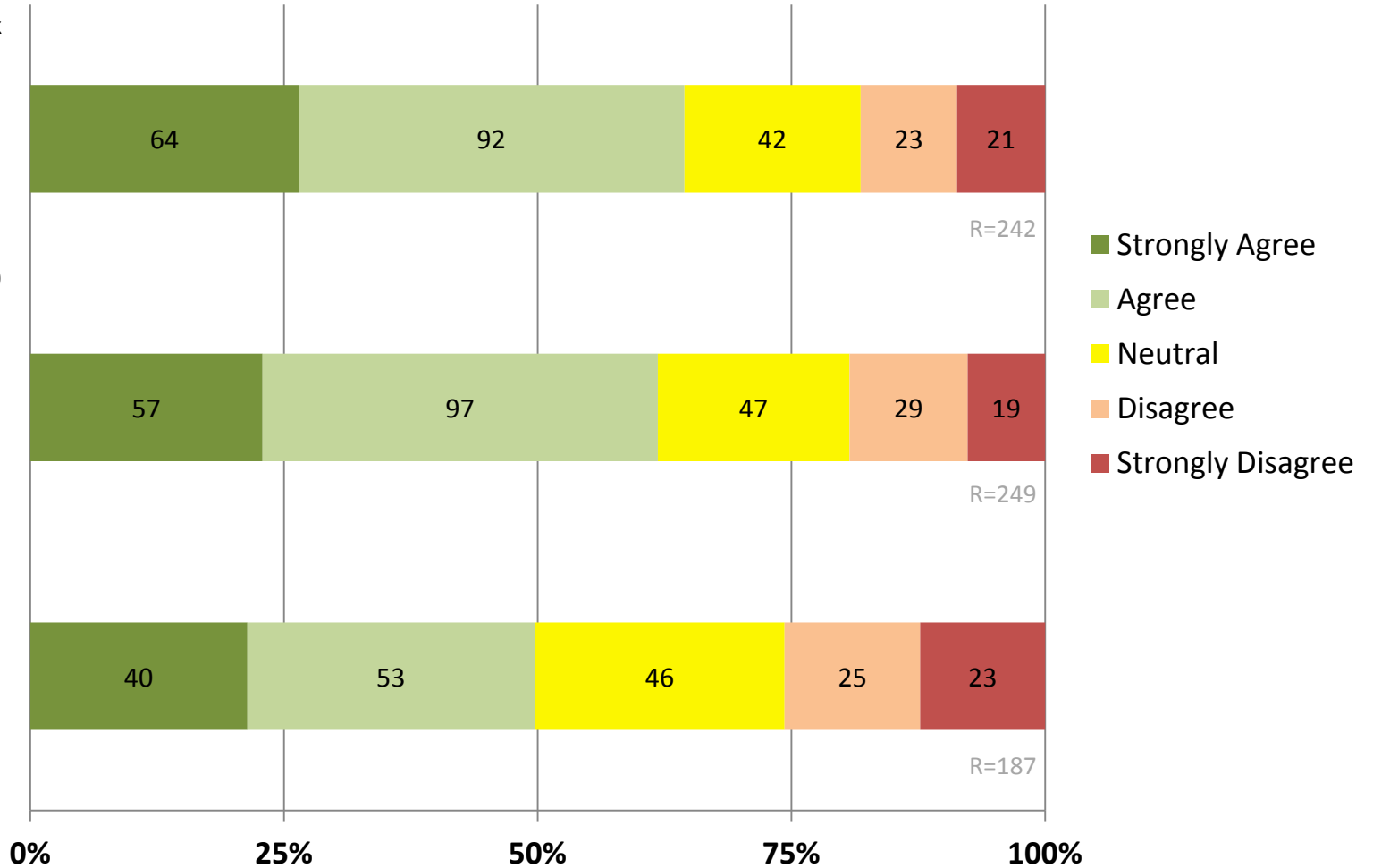
Staff and Training (Question 10)

Staff and Training

Special education professional staff work effectively with my child (this includes special educators, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, Social Workers, and Behavioral Specialists.)

General education staff members (regular classroom teachers) effectively work with my child.

Instructional aides (including SSIs) are trained to effectively work with my child.



Staff & Training

Parent Comments

Strengths

- Quality, dedication, and enthusiasm of special education staff
- Quality of general education staff

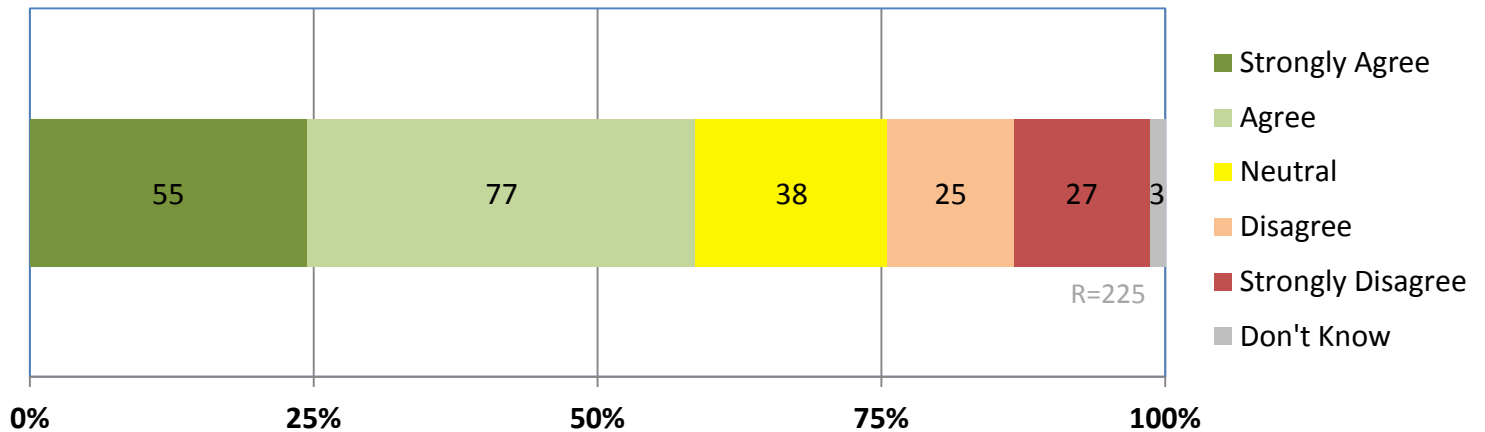
Areas for Improvements

- Instructional Aide (IA) training and retention
- Consistency of staff quality

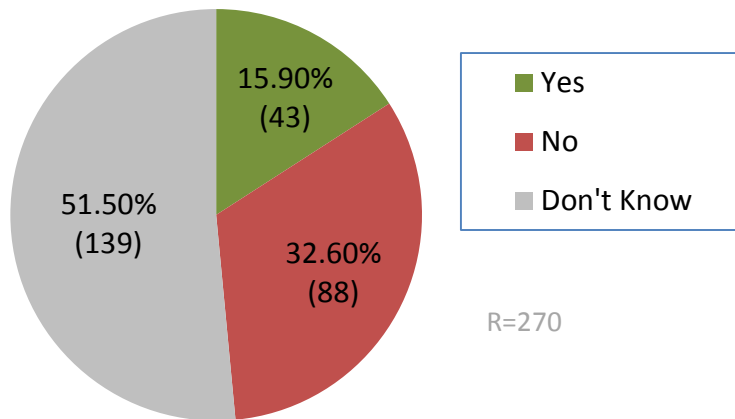
Behavior Interventions (Questions 11--15)

Behavior Interventions--Collaboration

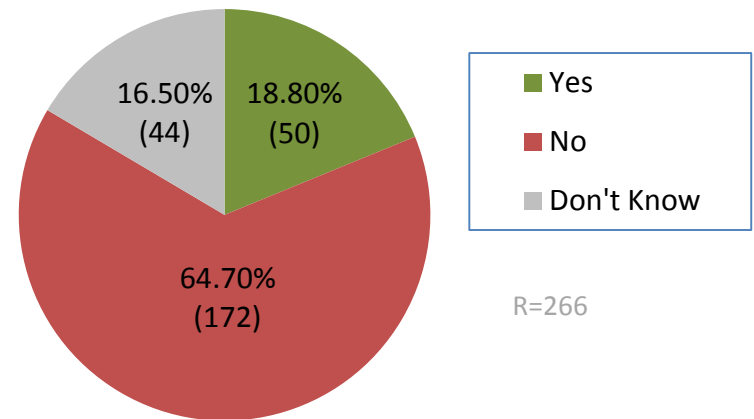
Staff members collaborate with me on behavior interventions, strategies, and supports for my child in school.



A functional behavioral assessment (FBA) has been completed for my child.



My child has a written behavior plan at school (to reduce problem behaviors or increase positive behaviors).



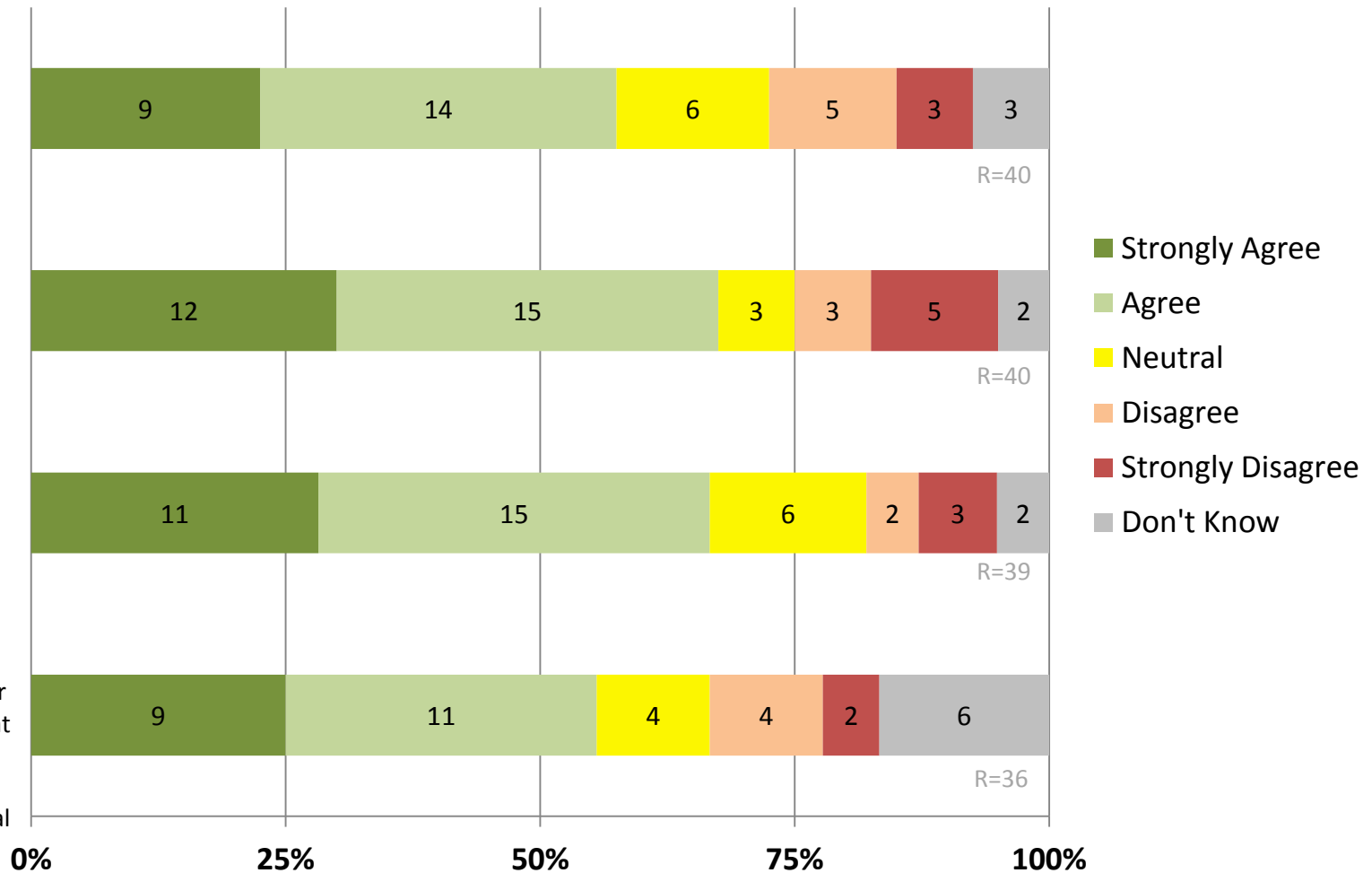
Functional Behavioral Assessments

The functional behavior assessment included the collection of descriptive data and linked the observed data to hypotheses about the observed data.

While the FBA was in progress, I was contacted and asked for my input regarding my child's behavior.

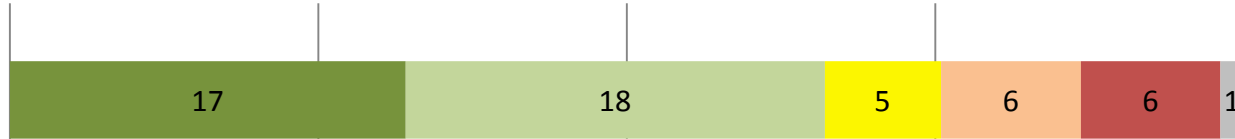
The results of the FBA were shared with me, and any questions that I had regarding the assessment were answered.

If needed, a behavior plan was created that was linked to the results of the Functional Behavioral Assessment.



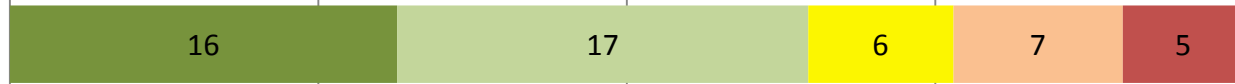
Behavior Plans

I was given the opportunity to provide my own perspective/feedback about the plan.



R=53

In my child's behavior plan, the specific behaviors, consequences, and behavior-change tools are clearly defined and communicated to me.



R=51

The behavior plan was reviewed with me, and any questions that I had regarding the plan were answered.



R=51

The behavior plan includes positive reinforcement for positive behaviors.



R=51

I receive regular updates regarding the effectiveness of the behavior plan in reducing challenging behaviors and increasing positive behaviors.



R=49

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

Behavior Interventions Parent Comments—Common Themes

Strengths

- Collaborative process
- Quality of services and staff

Areas for Improvements

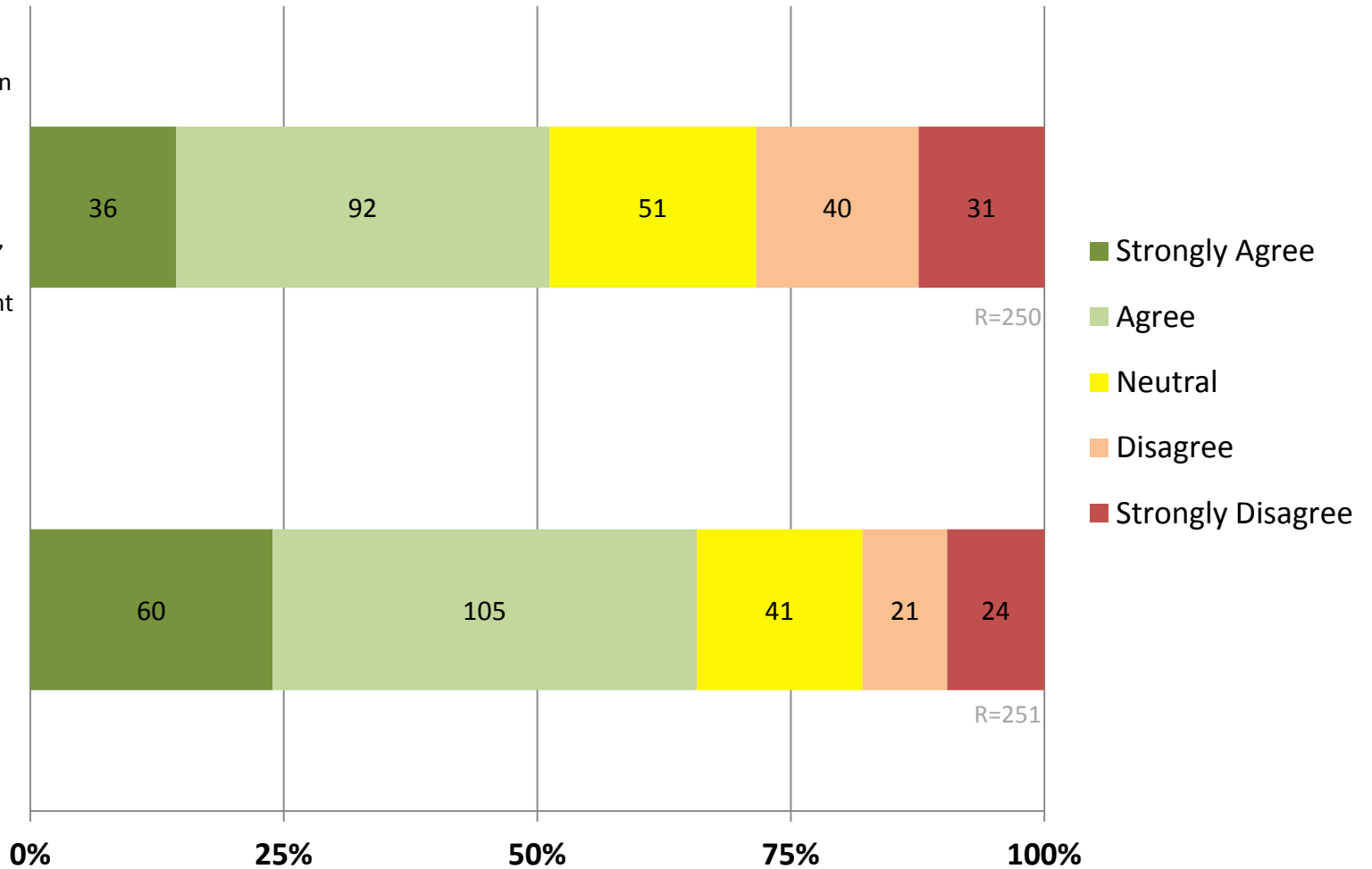
- Communication with parents regarding behavior plans and progress monitoring
- Consistency of staff quality and response time

Communication (Questions 16--17)

Timeliness of Communication

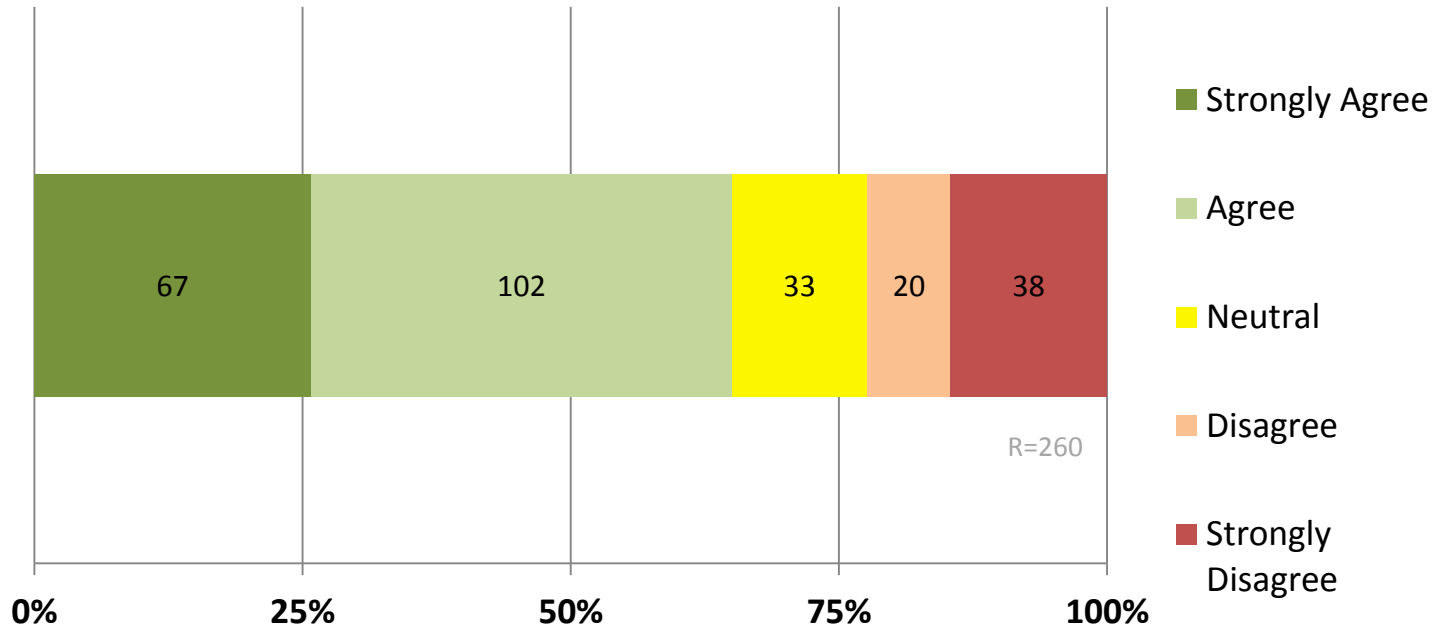
I get timely, thorough, and helpful information about the services provided under my child's IEP or 504 Plan (for IEPs this may include type of service, implementation of the current IEP, and current level and rate of progress on goals).

When I raise a question, problem, or concern, I get a response from the LPS administration/staff.



Communication—Concerns & Questions

I feel comfortable raising concerns and questions with LPS administration/staff.



Communication

Parent Comments—Common Themes

Strengths

- Clear, responsive communication
- Defined points of contact

Areas for Improvements

- Consistency of response time and follow-through
- Parents' experience of vulnerability when raising concerns/questions

What aspects of special education in the district do you think are the most effective for your child's development?

Common themes:

- Quality of staff
- Service Delivery
 - District-wide programs
 - Out-of-District placements
- Communication

“The concept that we all work together as a team to create the best education plan for my child. Staff’s flexibility to modify given material to fit my child’s needs.”

“The fact that my child is in a district-wide program is critical for my child’s success, because the program puts in place an effective baseline of services that can be individualized for my child.”

“Having a SPED teacher who is caring and demonstrates a positive attitude and will work as team with parents...Thank you for helping our child.”

“Small classroom size, one-on-one instruction, properly trained special education staff.”

What are one or two changes to special education that could be made to better meet the needs of your child?

Common themes:

- Communication
- Service Delivery
- Administration
- Staff Training/Resources

“An administration that works better with the parents in representing the student’s best interests. An IEP process where everyone was comfortable in representing the student’s best interests.”

“My child had an IEP in place, but the services were sporadic and not actually given. The IEP was only on paper and not implemented.”

“Hire qualified and subject-specific IAs. Educate general education teachers about students on an IEP.”

“More effective communication between staff and parents.”

“Give teachers and counselors appropriate time to do what the IEP stipulates.”

Initial Recommendations

Provide staff and parent education on:

- Conflict resolution
- Evaluation and service delivery processes and timelines
- 504 Plan processes and procedures
- Instructional aide roles, training requirements, and communication guidelines
- Behavior intervention strategies

Establish (or continue) initiatives that focus on:

- Ensuring consistency of service delivery across all domains.
- Defining communication paths and methods consistently across schools and school levels.
- Improved monitoring and measuring of student progress, program placements, and behavioral interventions.
- More effective partnering with parents and outside experts.

Ongoing Program Improvement Continuing Collaboration with the Lexington SEPAC/SEPTA

Program Evaluations 2013

- Elementary (Care and PALS Programs)
- Middle School (Compass Program)
- High School (Multi Disciplinary Support Team MST)
- Intensive Learning Programs (Middle and High School)
- Developmental Learning Programs (Elementary and Clarke)

Behavior Interventions District- Wide

- A new behavior specialist was added to the staff district-wide.
- A new process has been implemented to improve communication with staff and parents regarding behavior plans.
- 150 staff were trained or recertified in Crisis Prevention Institute– more will be trained by the end of the year.
- ABA coordinator and behavior specialist are working with all schools to improve building-based responses to potentially escalating behavioral issues.
- 60 Instructional Assistants have been trained in effective behavioral interventions.
- Mandatory annual training for Instructional Assistants.

Ongoing Program Improvement

Continuing Collaboration with the Lexington SEPAC/SEPTA

Best Practices—Ongoing Work

- A review of practices and procedures regarding transition services at the middle school and high school levels has been completed.
- A Transition Task Force made up of parents and staff has been established.
- Communication Pathways have been developed at all levels.
- On November 1, 2013: Lexington Public Schools hosted a ETS round table with SEPAC/SEPTA.
- February 1, 2013: Lexington Public Schools hosted a parent coffee entitled “Referral and Evaluation Process.” A second parent coffee is in the planning stages.
- The Special Education Manual is in the process of being updated.
- District-wide committees are looking at service delivery models across all domains.
- The Guidance Department is currently completing work on a 504 Procedural Manual and has instituted new procedures accordingly.
- The Student Services Web site is being rebuilt.
- Home/Hospital Tutoring Protocol is near completion.
- Guidance/ Program/Curriculum to begin this summer (2013).
- Coordinated Program Review Self Assessment from the DESE is currently being completed.