



**Haddonfield School District
Special Education Program Review**

Prepared by the Chester County Intermediate Unit

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Introduction

At the request of the Haddonfield School District, the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) completed a systemic review of the Haddonfield School District's special education program. In order to review the overall operation and effectiveness of the special education services provided to the students and families, the process consisted of a series of on and off-site activities. Those activities included a comprehensive review of the following components within the special education program:

- Child Find procedures (pre-referral, intervention, evaluation)
- Individualized Education Program (IEP) development, management and progress monitoring
- Continuum of special education programs
- Professional development
- Special education procedures
- Supervision of special education services
- Litigation
- Budget
- Transition services

In order to gather information regarding the special education services, the CCIU team used the following sources of information:

- Focus group interviews/surveys
- Review of special education program & procedures
- Classroom observations
- Review of student data

As shown in the graphic below, the CCIU team synthesized the quantitative and qualitative data gathered in the program review activities to determine emerging themes that represent the strengths and areas for future growth for the Haddonfield School District.



Focus Group Interviews/Surveys

A total of 16 focus groups were held between the dates of October 11, 2018 and January 4, 2019. The following stakeholders were interviewed as part of this process:

- Parents
- Professional staff
- Building administration
- Administrative support staff
- Paraprofessional staff
- Central office administration
- Contracted staff
- Legal counsel

See appendix for the specific schedule.

The semi-structured format for the focus groups was consistent across all groups. That format consisted of an introduction of the representatives from the CCIU, a brief description of the program review goals and process, a review of the purpose of this project, and the following three questions:

- What are the strengths of the special education programs?
- What are the weaknesses of the special education programs?
- What are the obstacles or barriers to change within the special education programs?

In addition to the scheduled focus groups, professional staff in the district were also sent an anonymous electronic survey regarding the special education services within the district on November 1, 2018 with a closing date of November 9, 2018. The survey was open-ended and included the same three questions noted above.

All of the participating groups were eager to share their perspectives and experiences at Haddonfield School District. While the overall intention of this process is to address identified areas of need, it is worth mentioning that there is an obvious sense of pride and accomplishment among the participants who contributed to the focus groups. We are grateful for their participation in this project and their commitment to the Haddonfield School District community.

The CCIU team reviewed the responses from the focus groups and electronic survey and consolidated responses into emerging themes. The following section of the report provides a summary of these themes. Later in the report, these responses, perceptions, and themes are explored in greater detail in order to verify strengths on which to build upon as well as identify areas of improvement. For each identified area of need, the CCIU team offers recommendations for remediation.

What are the strengths of the special education program?

The Haddonfield School District Parents

- Families are very invested in education and are very involved in the success of the school community.
- Parents hold high expectations for their children and likewise have high expectations for the staff.
- Parents communicate regularly and clearly with instructional and administrative staff regarding all aspects of the district's operation.

The Haddonfield School District Staff

- Haddonfield is a small and resourceful community. The school staff members have a sincere regard for their students and have a great deal of respect for the parents and the community. Staff members have an in-depth understanding of their students and work very hard to address all areas of student needs, including those outside of the traditional academic arena.
- Staff have a great deal of expertise and willingness to be collaborative with their colleagues, parents and related support networks on behalf of their students.
- Staff members prioritize parent communication and extend their availability outside the typical work hours.
- The special education department has improved accountability for student progress and has implemented new progress monitoring tools to demonstrate student growth. This has allowed teams to make more informed decisions based on student-specific data.
- There is momentum within the district to support change within the special education department. Many participants referenced the willingness of the district to voluntarily conduct an independent audit as a positive step. Additionally, participants referenced new leadership at the central office and building levels as a positive change.

Special Education Programming

- The Haddonfield School District has implemented a number of positive changes over the past 5 years. The district is expanding the continuum of services available to students in the least restrictive environment, including programming for students with low incidence disabilities, and the district is consistently improving curricular programs and research-based interventions. These changes have a logical and thoughtful sequence and pace, adequate supports, and resources to ensure successful implementation and sustainability.

Professional Development Opportunities for Instructional Staff

- As the district has implemented curricular programs and improved progress monitoring tools, staff development in terms of formal training and ongoing technical support have been, and continue to be, available to the staff.

Inclusive Culture

- The co-teaching model provides additional support for students so they can participate in the general education curriculum alongside their peers in the least restrictive setting.
- There is a small and friendly community atmosphere. Everyone knows one another even if they are not assigned to a teacher and there is a strong sense of community.

What are the weaknesses of the special education program?

Special Education Staff Technology

- Although the district has taken steps to modernize the creation, storage, and sharing of special education documentation, special education staff have limited access to effective and efficient technology, which directly undermines these efforts. Special education staff members in Haddonfield are mobile throughout the school buildings and the district and therefore require easy-access to student records and email communication. Currently, special education staff do not have computers assigned to them. Many special education teachers use the equipment assigned to the regular education teachers. It is widely reported by both regular education and special education staff that the district technology is slow and cumbersome and the equipment often does not work properly. Some special education teachers have reported bringing in their own laptops and devices to complete their professional duties. Unfortunately, these staff members are unable to access the district printers from their personal devices. These inefficiencies are resulting in poor utilization in professional staff members' time throughout the work day.

Collaboration Between Regular and Special Education

- The Haddonfield School District is fully committed to a co-teaching inclusive model in grades Kindergarten through 12. Inherent in that model is a need for collaboration between the regular and special education departments. Practically speaking however, there is very limited or no common planning time between the instructional staff.
- While there are certainly strong and beneficial outcomes that are a direct result of co-teaching, there also appears to be a dependency on the special education personnel for students to "receive services". The overall impression from both the regular education and special education staff is that the general education teacher can only meet the needs of the regular education students **or** the special education students. They cannot be expected to meet the needs of **all** students unless there is a professional or paraprofessional special education staff member present.
- Collaboration between regular education and special education at the administrative level is limited. Curricular initiatives, professional development and staff supervision operate separate and apart from one another, rather than with a sense of shared ownership and responsibility.

Child Study Team (CST) Caseloads

- There is currently a full-time equivalency of 6.0 staff on the CSTs. As of January 23, 2019 caseloads for the CST members range from 63 students to 78 students with the average number being 74 students. This does not include pending evaluations. Given the demands of these positions and the expectations from parents and school teams, the current level of support does not appear to be adequate and staffing should be adjusted so that caseloads average between 60 – 65 students per CST member.

Conformity of Services

- The district has created a chart that outlines the services typically provided to students when they have a demonstrated need in reading, math or writing. In general, the recommended levels of service correspond with the suggested times and frequencies called for by the published programs such as Wilson Reading, Foundations, Just Words, etc. This chart provides direction to the team about readily available resources and may be helpful for the administrative staff in managing caseloads and staff assignments. While this chart is clearly intended to be a guide, there appears to be an over-reliance on the recommended mandates and support levels rather than a data-driven decision based on individual student needs.

Data-Based Decision Making

- Generally speaking, there appears to be a limited amount of student performance data available to clearly inform IEP teams on the types, frequency and intensity of modifications, accommodations and adaptations (specially designed instruction) needed in order for students to access the general education curriculum and make meaningful progress. As an unintended outcome, some students are being provided with more supports than they may require. This has the potential to unrealistically enable students rather than have them independently perform to their highest potential. Some examples of this include:
 - Unnecessarily enrolling special education students in co-taught classrooms and providing special education services to them when there is no identified or documented need.
 - Providing 1:1 and/or access to paraprofessional support throughout the entire school day rather than documented areas of difficulty.
 - Providing modifications, accommodations or adaptations where data does not identify a need and/or failing to plan for the successful fading or elimination of the supports over time.

Professional Development & Technical Support (Related Service Staff)

- The district's related service staff (psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech therapists, etc.) receive very little discipline-specific professional development directly from the district. Over the past 5 years, the main focus of the professional development in the special education department has been targeted at curricular initiatives and legal and regulatory compliance with regard to the IDEA and N.J.A.C. 6A: 14. As a result, related service staff members

have paid out of pocket to pursue training that will allow them to enhance their clinical skills and obtain the required continuing education units (CEUs) needed to maintain their professional licensure.

- The director of special education is directly responsible for the supervision of the related services staff. While this satisfies the requirement of the school code, access to discipline-specific clinical consultation for complex cases is needed.

Transitions Between Grade Levels and Buildings:

- Staff reportedly are not prepared with the necessary information (504 Plans, IEPs) to implement student programming at the start of the school year.

Staff Utilization:

- The district is overly reliant on using formal IEP meetings as a mode of communicating student progress with parents. Additionally, annual IEP meetings reportedly run in excess of an hour. These meetings take place during the scheduled work day and often result in staff missing instructional time with students.
- Itinerant staff are not assigned parking spots and as a result, staff members have increased amounts of unproductive time during which they are unable to provide direct student service.

Paraprofessional Staff Access to Student Information/Training:

- District employed paraprofessional staff reportedly have limited or no access to confidential student information (e.g. evaluation, reevaluation, IEP, etc.) for the students they are assigned to support. Confidentiality under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is cited as the reason staff cannot view these documents. However, these staff members clearly have a legitimate educational interest to access this information and therefore, their review of such documents is legally permissible. Additionally, the absence of this information could make implementing services with fidelity a challenge for the staff. Finally, staff assignments are adjusted without input from the paraprofessional staff and changes are made with very little notice.

Review of Child Find Procedures and Eligibility Rates

Child Find is the legal requirement that school districts actively find all children who have disabilities that may be entitled to special education services. Such activities include pre-referral screening, intervention, evaluation and identification of children with disabilities that ultimately require special education provisions. In order to identify the strengths and areas of improvement related to Child Find procedures in the Haddonfield School District, the CCIU team completed the following:

- Examination of eligibility data over four consecutive years
- Administration and staff interviews
- Parent focus groups
- Review of I & RS procedures

- Student file reviews
- Review of previous board reports
- Review of professional development trainings provided by either administrative staff or the district's legal counsel
- Review of special education department scheduling and planning documents

The purpose of the data review was to compare local eligibility data with that of the State. Four consecutive years of data from the New Jersey Department of Education's NJ Standards Measurement and Resource for Teaching (NJ SMART) Education Data System was used for this purpose. According to the NJDOE, NJ SMART is a comprehensive statewide longitudinal data system solution that serves multiple purposes: staff/student identification, data warehousing, data reporting, and analytics.

The data review for this project proved to be particularly challenging due to the disparity in the data from the available reporting systems. The New Jersey Department of Education reports state and district special education data. To date, data is available from 2002 through 2015. However, when the data published by the NJDOE is compared with the backup files available in NJ SMART as well as the backup data in the district's web-based special education software system, the number of eligible students, as well as total enrollment numbers, simply do not match. In order to complete an analysis, it was important to have a system of record for multiple years. Therefore, the NJ SMART data was used because of the consistent reporting process and the available backup data that supported the reported totals.

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 in the appendix provide a summary of both the district's eligibility data by disability category as well as the eligibility data for the state of New Jersey. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 in the appendix provide a count of students in the district across 11 disability categories over four years (2015 through 2018). This data and these graphs were used to identify trends in the data. Some general impressions of the reported data are as follows:

- Overall identification rates for the district have remained stable across the four years.
- Overall, the Haddonfield School District has consistently identified children with disabilities at a rate higher than the state average.
- Of particular note, the Multiply Disabled and Other Health Impairment eligibility rates for the district are at least 5% greater than the state average.

Strengths

Compliance with Special Education Timelines

- Haddonfield consistently meets all legal timelines including responding to parent referrals, obtaining consent for evaluations and reevaluations, completion of evaluations and reevaluations, drafting and implementing IEPs.
- Haddonfield has adopted a web-based special education software system for the creation, storage and tracking of special education documents including evaluation

and reevaluation reports, IEPs, and progress reports. The department clerks are well-versed in the software system and regularly review and verify the student information for accuracy.

Speech Evaluations are Thorough and Professional

Ten speech and language evaluations for students between four and seven years of age were reviewed. Eight of the ten referrals were due to articulation concerns. The remaining two referrals were due to articulation and language concerns.

- The majority of the speech and language evaluations included informal observations regarding the student's voice, fluency, and pragmatic skills as well as the impact of the students' needs on their participation in the classroom.
- Standardized articulation and language assessments were utilized to assess the area of concern and one of the evaluations included both a classroom and home observation which was appropriate given the referral concern. In addition, all but one of the evaluations included an informal assessment of the oral mechanism.
- Finally, four out of the five evaluators described in their narrative what the assessments administered by the therapists were designed to measure and noted if a student was stimulable (a student can produce a sound in isolation given a model) for sound which they did not produce during the standardized assessment.

Tenure of CST Members

In the Haddonfield School District, CST members have considerable influence over the special education programming for students with disabilities. These individuals are responsible for the entire process of evaluation, placement, and writing of reports and IEPs for all students who are referred to or classified as having a disability and requiring specially designed instruction.

- The CST at Haddonfield is comprised of six individuals, including two school psychologists, two social workers, and two learning disabilities teachers. Five of the current six CST members have been with the district for at least eleven years, the most senior of which has been with the district for 24 years. They bring invaluable experience and steadfast commitment to their positions. However, given their current caseloads, CST members struggle to interface sufficiently with their students in order to make informed and meaningful placement and programming recommendations.

Implementation of Evidence-based Pre-referral Intervention for Reading and Spelling

Haddonfield has adopted a multi-tiered system of support incorporating Wilson Foundations, Wilson Just Words, and Wilson Reading.

- Students are uniformly screened and there is a graded level of support based on student performance data.
- Staff appear to be implementing the program with fidelity and staff "buy in" or acceptance of the program is strong across all buildings.

Overuse of Multiply Disabled Eligibility

The Haddonfield School District has identified students as Multiply Disabled at a rate nearly twice the state average and the rate continues to trend upward. Criteria for Multiply Disabled can be found in N.J.A.C. 6A: 14-3.4 (c) 6, however for the purpose of this review, two key statements have been pulled from the disability criteria.

- "...means the presence of two or more disabling conditions, the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a program designed solely to address one of the impairments."
- "The existence of two disabling conditions alone shall not serve as a basis for a classification of multiply disabled."

In order to identify possible reasons for the overidentification, 17 sampled student records (out of 86 total) were reviewed. Of the 17, only two of the students exhibited educational needs severe enough to require a self-contained special education program. The other 15 students predominantly receive learning support programming with supplementary services and modifications. Furthermore, seven of the 17 students do not receive any related services, indicating that their current educational needs do not require focused expertise and intervention provided by a specialized practitioner, such as a speech pathologist or an occupational therapist. This suggests that evaluation teams are identifying students as "Multiply Disabled" when there are two or more identifiable conditions, but not considering severity or programming. This has led to an overuse of the Multiply Disabled classification and a possible underrepresentation of students in other discrete classifications such as Autism and Emotional Disturbance. Increased accuracy and reliability with respect to eligibility classifications is needed in order to make informed decisions regarding resource allocations, professional development needs, and curriculum.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◇ CST staff should be retrained in eligibility determinations specifically focusing on eligibility criteria for Multiply Disabled. The Director of Special Education should review evaluations for students identified as Multiply Disabled to ensure consistency of the application of the criteria for this disability category.◇ Currently, the CST is comprised of two school psychologists, two school social workers, and two learning disability teachers. Given the knowledge, expectations and demands of the district's parent base as well as the volume of independent evaluations and requests for independent educational evaluations and in consideration of the results of this report, the district should consider hiring experienced staff that are formally trained and certified as school psychologists when adding CST staff or filling CST vacancies.

Overidentification of Articulation Disorders in Preschool

At the time of this writing, 39 students in the Haddonfield School District, ages 3-5, receive special education services. The criteria for this classification can be found in N.J.A.C. 6A: 14-3.4 (c) 10. As reported by multiple staff members, a number of preschoolers are referred each year to the CST due to parental concerns regarding difficulties with speech articulation, or the production of sounds in speech. Historically, school districts struggle to discern the threshold at which articulation errors rise to the level of a delay in communication development. A review of student records indicates variability among eligibility decisions and suggests Haddonfield may be over-identifying preschoolers on the basis of articulation-only concerns.

An example:

Student (3 years 5 months) was referred for the Child Study Team by his parents due to articulation concerns. Testing was completed by a certified speech/language pathologist, which included clinical observation, informal measures, an oral peripheral exam, and a standardized assessment of articulation (*Goldman Frisloe 3 Test of Articulation*). Results of the standardized assessment indicated the youngster demonstrated average articulation skills (Standard Score= 95; 37th percentile). The speech/language pathologist further stated that the child's sound errors are within developmental expectations and that the child was showing emerging skill development within certain contexts.

The child described has been found eligible for special education services as a "Preschool Child with a Disability." However, based on the available assessment data, the child does not present with either a) a developmental delay as described in the school code or b) a disabling condition that adversely affects learning or development.

Recommendations
◇ A developmental screening instrument or a comprehensive developmental inventory should be completed as part of all initial evaluations to determine the eligibility of preschool aged children. This would accurately capture a delay in communication development if present.

Lack of Consistency Across Speech Evaluations

Ten speech and language evaluations for students between 4 and 7 years of age were reviewed. Eight of the 10 referrals were due to articulation concerns. The remaining two referrals were due to articulation and language concerns.

- The speech and language evaluations lacked consistency in the type of assessment information that was provided. Important assessment information such as parent input, language samples, and data regarding the student's hearing, was inconsistently included in the reviewed reports. While the student's needs were

often implied in the reviewed reports, neither strengths nor needs were explicitly stated for the reader.

Recommendations
<p>◇ The Director of Special Education should work with district speech and language pathologists to establish a consistent and comprehensive assessment battery that establishes a minimal standard of evaluation components. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) recommends the following components to a school-based, comprehensive speech-language pathology assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Case history, including medical status, education, socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds and information from teachers and other related service providers- Student and family interview- Review of auditory, visual, motor, and cognitive status- Standardized and/or non-standardized measures of specific aspects of speech, spoken and non-spoken language, cognitive-communication, and swallowing function, including observations and analysis of work samples- Identification of potential for effective intervention strategies and compensations- Selection of standardized measures for speech, language, cognitive-communication, and/or swallowing assessment with consideration for documented ecological validity and cultural sensitivity- Follow-up services to monitor communication and swallowing status and ensure appropriate intervention and support for individuals with identified speech, language, cognitive-communication, and/or swallowing disorders

Limited Discipline-Specific Training

There are few opportunities for CST members to participate in appropriate and relevant professional development. It is critical that these professionals take part in ongoing professional development on topics such as effective skills for collaboration with parents and families, best-practices with regards to assessments and IEP development, and other topics relevant to their specific discipline.

Recommendations
<p>◇ The district would benefit from discipline-specific supervision, consultation, and professional development. The professional development should focus on current trends in the field, relevant district</p>

needs, including those identified in this report, as well as the observed strengths and weaknesses of the professional staff.

- ◇ The CST staff would also benefit from additional time to collaborate, taking advantage of each other's areas of expertise regarding student assessment data and eligibility determinations.

Implementation of Evidence-Based Pre-Referral Intervention (I & RS)

- The purpose of I & RS teams is to provide timely evidence based interventions to students who demonstrate developmental delays that are impacting performance in the general education setting. If interventions are not successful, the student may then be referred for further evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services. Although Haddonfield has adopted a multi-tiered system of support for reading, evidence based pre-referral interventions for students exhibiting developmental delays outside of reading (i.e. behavior, social, fine motor, math, etc.) are not fully present at this time. Additionally, data was not readily available at the central office level related to student movement through the I&RS process (i.e. How long have they been receiving the intervention?, How much progress have they made?, etc.). This limits the district's ability to determine the efficacy of pre-referral interventions. It also potentially exposes the district to claims that they failed to meet their Child Find obligations if a student is left in I & RS not having made progress for too long.

Recommendations

- ◇ The district would benefit from a more formal structure to the I & RS process. Ongoing analysis of interventions used, the effectiveness of these interventions, numbers of students who are ultimately referred for further evaluation, and the numbers of students who are ultimately found eligible for special education services will inform both general education and special education practices in the district and help to foster shared ownership among the general education and special education staff members.
- ◇ Building administrators and representatives from guidance, special education, and general education should meet quarterly to analyze data, review cases and progress, and to review the I & RS process for possible adjustment or revision.
- ◇ The district should expand evidence-based pre-referral interventions for students exhibiting difficulties not related to reading.
- ◇ The district should also expand its use of universal screening tools to include additional areas such as, writing mechanics, and behavioral and

emotional development, as early intervention is vital to student success and there are costly outcomes associated with delaying intervention.

IEP Development, Management, and Progress Monitoring

Once a child is found eligible for special education services, an IEP is developed to meet the child's unique educational needs. Federal and state regulations dictate the necessary components of the IEP, however the content of each student IEP should be developed through a collaborative team effort that includes contributions from evaluators, general and special education teachers, parents, and if applicable the student. In general, an IEP should be able to convey to the reader the strengths and needs of the student, what goals the team will target, what supports the student will need in order to make progress towards the identified goals, and how the team will measure and communicate student progress. In order to identify strengths and areas of improvement related to IEP development and management, the CCIU team completed the following:

- Administration and staff interviews
- Parent focus groups
- Student file reviews
- Review of special education department scheduling and planning documents

Strengths

Progress Monitoring

The district continues to expand the types of academic assessments and progress monitoring tools used to inform instruction and measure incremental student growth.

IEP Goals

In general terms, IEP goals are well-written. The goals are specific to the student and contain a clear criteria and method for measuring goal attainment and include data monitoring roles and responsibilities.

Areas of Improvement

IEP Meeting Management

In an effort to meet the high parent expectations, the Haddonfield School District reportedly spends excessive time in IEP meetings with families. Meetings frequently occur more than once a year for many families and can run well over one hour in length with full team in attendance throughout the duration of the meeting. So far this school year, over 54.7% of the meetings scheduled (or 139 meetings) have been non-mandated, IEP Review meetings which require the attendance of the case manager, special education teacher(s), and regular education teacher(s). In some cases, quarterly IEP reviews have been made an entitlement and are written into student IEPs as part of the district's offer of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Recommendations

- ◇ While parent communication, collaboration and training are all critical components of successful student programming, the district should consider ways to maintain strong parent communications while simultaneously improving staff utilization and efficiency. Some suggested strategies include:
 - Staggering the date of the IEP meeting so that instructional time is maximized. For example, if there are six annual IEP dates that fall in the same month for the same grade level, team or teacher, spread the IEPs out across several months. As long as the meetings occur on or before the annual due date, the district will be in compliance.
 - Block one hour for each meeting. There will be some families and situations that call for more time. However, one hour is appropriate for most IEP meetings.
 - Train the staff in running efficient meetings. There is an art to running an effective meeting. This includes having a strong structure. Stating the time frame at the start of the meeting, having an agenda, tabling discussions that are off topic or circular, limiting the social conversation while the whole group is present, not reading the document out loud to the team are some examples that support building this structure.
 - Sending a draft IEP document for parent review in advance of the scheduled meeting is good practice to reduce meeting time. While it is true the parents are members of the IEP team and should be involved in the development of the document, a large portion of the information is expected to be provided by the professionals working with the student (ex. present levels of academic and functional performance, progress toward past IEP goals, proposed goals, etc.). Information such as type of support, level of support, frequency of related services, post-secondary goals, Extended School Year (ESY) eligibility should be left blank in the draft. If the document is well-written and there is ongoing communication with the family, review of this information at the meeting can be as quick as asking the parents if they have any questions or concerns about the information provided. It is important to clearly communicate that the document is in draft form and it should include a watermark with the word “draft” when it is sent to the parents or a letter explaining the status of the document.
 - Not everyone needs to attend in-person or stay for the entire meeting. Team members can submit their input in writing and reach out to the parent outside of (before) the IEP meeting. They can also be excluded from the meeting with parental

permission if their discipline or area is not being discussed. Once a contributing IEP team member presents his/her information and the parents are satisfied with the present education levels, proposed goals and frequency/type of service, there may not be a need for them to stay for the rest of the meeting.

- Use phone and video conferencing to participate remotely and to reduce travel time for related service staff.
- While a parent is entitled to ask for an IEP meeting at any time, the district should attempt to limit the annual reviews to once per year, as appropriate.

Transition Between Buildings and Grades

Feedback from the focus groups indicated that staff are not always familiar with student identification under the IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and their corresponding services at the time of transition between grade levels and between buildings. Furthermore, feedback from the paraprofessionals indicated that they do not receive timely notification of their assignments or have access to student educational records. Paraprofessional staff also reported that they do not receive any formal training in how to “work with” newly assigned students.

The district has a very clear procedure for verifying staff access to student educational records. That procedure includes:

- Assigning the students to the regular and special education teacher’s roster in the student information system, Genesis.
- Flagging the student as eligible for special education services or a 504 plan.
- Requiring staff to electronically sign that they have read and understand the documents.
- Printing out an access log verifying the staff accessed the electronic records.

It is important to note that the staff were not required to complete this activity until September 28, 2018. The first day of school for the 2018-2019 school year was September 5, 2018.

Recommendations

- ◇ While the referenced process is clear and has a built-in accountability component, verifying anything other than the staff compliance with opening the documents is difficult to accomplish. In addition to the existing procedure, it would be beneficial to have meetings or collaboration time between past and current providers of service. This may be practically hard to accomplish given limited staff availability and collaboration time.

- ◇ The compliance date for completing document reviews should be moved to the first day of the school calendar.
- ◇ Paraprofessional staff should be given an opportunity to provide feedback regarding changes in their assignment. Staff should have access to relevant educational records in order to understand and implement the services and supports as designed.
- ◇ Paraprofessional staff should receive training on the intervention strategies for the students they are assigned to support.

Review of Continuum of Special Education Programs and Services

Within the state of New Jersey, there is a significant history surrounding the education of children with disabilities within the least restrictive environment and the need to provide a full continuum of services for students with disabilities. Most notably, a federal lawsuit was filed against the New Jersey Department of Education and New Jersey Board of Education by disability advocates in 2007 that argued that school districts in New Jersey unnecessarily segregated students with disabilities and limited their access to accommodations, aids, and services needed within the general education environment. Following lengthy litigation, New Jersey entered into a settlement agreement focused on the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education. The terms of this settlement agreement include increased state oversight and monitoring. Overall, the CCIU team found that, in accordance with federal and state law, Haddonfield provides a continuum of services to allow for students with disabilities to be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). In the 2018-2019 school year, 95% of students with disabilities in the Haddonfield School District are educated, at least in part, within the regular education classroom. More specifically, 92% of students with disabilities are educated in the general education environment for 80% or more of their school day.

In order to identify strengths and areas of improvement related to the Continuum of Special Education Programs in the Haddonfield School District, the CCIU team completed the following:

- Administration and staff interviews
- Student file reviews
- Classroom observations

Co-Teaching

The Haddonfield School District has made a strong commitment to inclusion and co-teaching. At the elementary level and as a matter of routine scheduling, co-teaching occurs in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math at every grade level. At the middle school level, co-teaching occurs for all core content areas (Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies). And finally, at the high school level, co-teaching occurs in all content areas that

are required courses for graduation. For foreign languages, Spanish is the only co-taught course. The co-taught sections alternate each year between Spanish I and Spanish II.

Replacement and supplemental instruction occurs at each level (elementary, middle, high) for Wilson Reading. Additionally, the middle school and high school programs have separate courses that provide remedial instruction for Language Arts and Math. These courses generally follow the regular education curriculum but are modified and adapted based on the individual needs of the students.

Strengths

- Both the regular and special education staff appear comfortable with the content of the courses and are familiar with the classroom routines and procedures.
- The regular and special education staff work with all students and the students appear comfortable with both instructors.
- Differentiation is evident in small group activities at the elementary level.

Areas of Improvement

- The current staffing model for co-teaching is resource intensive and does not allow for efficient utilization of staff. The co-teaching model, as it currently exists is not sustainable for Haddonfield. While having two classroom teachers may appear to be optimal, there is no clear evidence that the resources applied are having the intended outcome. Therefore, we do not feel the current co-teaching model is a responsible use of district's resources. For example, courses are routinely scheduled as co-taught sections without any regard or consideration for the student composition/need for additional support for students to be successful in that course. This is particularly true at the secondary level. Despite the addition of a special education teacher, there was little evidence of differentiation of instruction at the secondary level.
- Training in co-teaching during the 2018-2019 school year occurred with only the special education teachers.
- The role was obvious during some of the observed sessions with the regular education teacher as the "lead" and special education teacher as the "support".
- Planning appears to have been done primarily by the regular education teacher and/or separately from each other.

Recommendations
◇ The district should consider doing a thorough analysis of the co-taught sections starting with the high school and working down through the middle school.
◇ The district should consider implementing an itinerant or consultative model starting at the high school level. This consultative model should

allow for dedicated special education teacher time to support the regular education teacher in adapting, accommodating and modifying course content. These adaptations, accommodations and modifications should be individualized and based on student performance data. The special education teacher should work closely with the regular education teacher to thoughtfully plan out assessment and instruction and they should actively work toward building student independence. In order to achieve this, regular education and special education staff will require common planning times built into their schedules.

- ◇ When redesigning the model at the high school level consideration will need to be given to how the district will phase out services that are outlined in student IEPs and are included as part of their offer of FAPE.

Supplemental Reading Instruction- Wilson Reading System

The Haddonfield School District has implemented the Wilson Reading System as a focused reading intervention. This required a significant commitment from the district, including professional development, resource allocation, and the purchase of instructional materials. All Haddonfield staff are either in the process of getting certified or have already achieved certification as Level I or Level II teachers. The Wilson Reading System compliments other multisensory programs that address decoding and encoding used throughout the district, namely Foundations and Just Words.

Strengths

- The Haddonfield School District has contracted with Wilson Language Training to provide professional development with a properly credentialed Wilson trainer. The professional development plan addresses staff members that are new to the program through Level II certification.
- Haddonfield teachers have job-embedded professional development and clinical supervision in the Wilson Reading System leading to both Level I and Level II certification.
- In addition to formal professional development sessions and clinical supervision, staff have unlimited and timely access to the certified Wilson trainer if they require technical assistance or require case consultation.
- There is evidence that staff members communicate and collaborate regularly with one another as an additional system of support.
- Both building and central office administration were present for the formal workshops and have a working knowledge of the program.
- The district administration has established universal expectations and procedures that meet the published standards for implementation.
- Staff has access to all of the required materials.

Areas of Improvement

- The initial screener, used by the district for all students, only calls for the administration of the Word Identification and Spelling Test (WIST), encoding section. This portion of the WIST only measures students encoding or spelling skills. Administration of the decoding section of the test would provide better diagnostic guidance for the instructional staff.
- Some portions of the observed lesson were not implemented with fidelity. For example, inconsistencies were observed during parts 7 & 8 of the lesson plan, the instructional spelling block of the lesson. These inconsistencies involved not using the syllable cards for two syllable words as well as not following the procedure for multi-syllabic spelling for either two or three syllable words. It is important to note that this is a common error, particularly given this teacher's level of exposure to the program.

Recommendations
◇ Administer the decoding section of the WIST for students who perform at or below the 35th percentile rank on the encoding section of the assessment.
◇ The staff should receive coaching support from the Wilson trainer on parts 7 & 8 of the lesson plan, the spelling block.

Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC)

The Early Childhood Learning Center program serves students in Kindergarten who are eligible for special education services. These students have been identified by their IEP teams as needing additional special education instruction in addition to attending an inclusive Kindergarten program in their neighborhood school. The program is located in Central Elementary School. Currently there are eight students enrolled. The current staffing model includes a special education teacher, a district-employed paraprofessional, as well as contracted behavioral support and 1:1 paraprofessional support as indicated in student IEPs.

Strengths

- The learning environment is developmentally appropriate with appropriate seating options, visually engaging materials, and the classroom is organized and has an easily navigated physical arrangement.
- Wilson Foundations is implemented with fidelity. Foundations is a systematic program that teaches the foundational skills needed for reading. Emphasis is placed on phonics and the study of word structure. This is a well-supported, research-based reading and writing program for early learners.

- Positive, pro-academic student behavior is reinforced with the use of a token board and verbal and physical praise (e.g. high fives)
- Students were actively engaged in instruction that is similar to the instruction expected in the general education setting.
- Instruction was differentiated with the use of supplementary aids and modifications based on students' needs.
- Low student-to-staff ratio and small class size allows for greater individualized attention.

Areas of Improvement

- Currently, the contracted behavioral staff (Behavior Consultant and Clinical Associates) are operating in isolation. For example, treatment plans and data collection used by contracted behavior support staff do not correspond with behavior interventions that are listed in students' IEPs.
- There appears to be a lack of shared ownership among the staff members with regard to responding to challenging behavior. Currently, this responsibility primarily falls to the contracted 1:1 paraprofessional behavioral support staff.
- Based on classroom observation, the current level of staffing and support seems to exceed the students' needs within the program.

Recommendations
<p>◇ The roles and responsibilities of the district and contracted instructional and behavioral staff should be clarified. Ideally, behavior consultation services should include a person with expertise and training in functional assessment and intervention. That person's role is to train the staff in behavioral protocols that include preventative strategies, instruction of replacement behavior, and reactive strategies. Additionally, one of the main responsibilities of the consultant is to ensure that all staff working with the student are implementing the strategies with fidelity. The consultant should be working with the team to analyze student data and his or her response to the interventions. The shared goal of goal of the district and the contracted provider with regard to behavioral consultation should be to build capacity with the district staff.</p> <p>◇ The roles and responsibilities of the of the 1:1 paraprofessionals should be clarified. Typically, these individuals assist in the implementation of the strategies so that fidelity of the interventions occur at a high rate. The shared goal of the contracted 1:1 paraprofessional staff and the district should be to build student independence and fade these services so that students begin to access the naturally occurring supports within the classroom.</p>

- ◇ Regular observation by both the contracted clinical supervisor and district administration (ex. Principal and Director of Special Education) should occur to ensure expectations of roles and responsibilities are being met.
- ◇ The students' IEPs should be the sole source of documentation that directs both the contracted and Haddonfield School District staff. The district should capture the behavioral services provided as part of their offer of FAPE.

Intensive Service Preschool

Generally, students in the intensive service preschool program present with more complex needs, including significantly delayed academic and adaptive development. There are two main instructional components to this class. One component is instruction similar to that within a typical preschool setting. This service is provided by a Haddonfield School District special education teacher and paraprofessional. A second component is Intensive Teaching (IT) sessions. IT is a prescribed, structured approach to instruction that includes key components of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and requires a significant amount of professional development and supervision to be implemented with integrity. These IT sessions are provided directly to the students through contracted behavioral consultants and clinical associates which is very costly to the district.

Strengths

- The learning environment is developmentally appropriate with appropriate seating options, visually engaging materials, and the classroom is organized and has an easily navigated physical arrangement.
- IT occurs within the classroom setting.
- Staff are paired as conditioned reinforcers for the students and are generally positive, enthusiastic, and responsive to students.
- Students were observed to be actively engaged in, and positively responding to, instruction that is similar to that expected within a typical preschool program.
- Students are engaged in a language-rich learning environment that allows for active participation.
- The behavioral consultant facilitates guided practice and case-specific consultation to the clinical associates within the classroom on a regular basis.

Areas of Improvement

- Observed IT sessions lacked structure, fidelity, and clarity with respect to prescribed ratios of reinforcement, prompting, pacing and other protocols specific to this instructional approach.
- Haddonfield staff do not receive any formal training from the contracted provider, limiting their ability to build instructional capacity and consistency.

- Although the district has allocated considerable resources for these services, the outcome of the consultation is similar to that of the ECLC program listed above. Like the ECLC program, the services provided in the classroom operate separate and apart from one another. Also, the documentation used to assess students' behavior and collect data regarding their progress is not incorporated into the students' IEPs.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ The roles and responsibilities of the district and contracted instructional and behavioral staff should be clarified. There should be an expectation that the contractual staff provide professional development and technical assistance that will result in building capacity of the district instructional staff and fading the ongoing need for direct student services provided by contracted staff. ◇ Regular observation by both the contracted clinical supervisor and district administration (ex. Principal and Director of Special Education) should occur to ensure expectations of roles and responsibilities are being met. ◇ The students' IEPs should be the sole source of documentation that directs both the contracted and Haddonfield School District staff. The district should capture the behavioral services provided as part of their offer of FAPE.

Transition Planning

As outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A: 14-3.7 (e) 12, the IEP for a student who will turn age 16 during the school year, and every IEP for that student thereafter, must include evidence that the IEP team has developed a multi-year plan for promoting movement from school to the student's desired post-school goals. The student's needs, strengths, interests and preferences must be considered and responsibilities should be shared among participants (student, parent, school staff, outside agencies, employers, etc.). Based on experience and insight provided by focus group participants, as well as a student record review, the following impressions were made regarding transition planning and services:

Strengths

- There is evidence to show that IEP teams are consistently compliant in meeting the basic requirements of transition planning as outlined in the school code.
- Transition services address the importance of self-advocacy of persons with a disability.
- Student input is included in transition planning, including the completion of a self-assessment of individual strengths and challenges.

- Career inventories, such as those found in the district-purchased Naviance college and career preparation program, are completed in order to inform and guide career exploration.

Areas of Improvement

- Transition goals are often general and do not become more specific as the students move into higher grades.
- Many transition goals reflect a hope, desire, or interest (Example: Student has interests in the following careers: photography, videography, and fashion.), rather than a measurable goal that is specific to post-secondary life (Example: Student plans to be competitively employed as a Computer Technician following technical training).
- Transition responsibilities are shared among parents, students, and school staff. Outside agency involvement is limited. Examples of possible agency involvement: Vocational Rehabilitation Services, NJ Division of Developmental Disabilities, county mental health agencies, disability specific agencies, etc.
- Activities and strategies listed in the IEP are over-reliant on academic opportunities within the High School, rather than purposeful instruction in the areas to be addressed within a transition plan such as self-advocacy, executive functioning, social skills, etc.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Provide the staff responsible for completing and implementing IEPs at the secondary level with professional development in writing post-secondary transition plans that includes all of the required components. ◇ The district should include more comprehensive assessments that inform transition plans. These assessments should include, as appropriate, career and college exploration, functional vocational evaluation, assessment of adaptive living skills, skills assessment, as well as an assessment of the likelihood that the student is able to access these goals given their individual strengths and needs.

Community-Based Instruction

The Haddonfield School District has partnered with Kingsway Learning Center & Services to provide a transition program within Haddonfield Memorial High School for students in grades 9 through 12. While the staff in this program are primarily employed by Kingsway, the class is fully incorporated into the HMHS school community. Currently, there are seven students enrolled in this class. The following disability categories are represented in this group: Autism, Multiply Disabled, Communication Impaired, and Other Health Impairment. Not all students spend all of their core content classes in this class. Some students go out to

more traditional resource room programming. All students present with needs related to the functional skills required for independent living and employment.

Strengths

- Assessments
 - Ongoing assessments inform person-centered programming
 - Career exploration and career planning completed regularly, utilizing the New Jersey Career Assistance Navigator (NJCAN), which is an internet-based system for comprehensive post-secondary planning. This system provides resources for school district personnel and has student-user utilities and an online portfolio for saving information specific to the student's completion of activities related to career planning and decision-making.
 - In addition to interest surveys and inventories, reality checks are implemented in order to help set realistic post-secondary planning goals
 - Post-secondary planning is initiated early and adjusted according to student progress and interests

- Curriculum and Instruction
 - Comprehensive curriculum that integrates classroom and pre-vocational instruction with on-the-job training.
 - Work experiences vary in length and intensity depending on student ability, past experience, and student/employer match and are available throughout the Haddonfield borough and community.
 - Driver's Education instruction available as well as employment-related travel training instruction.
 - Comprehensive, functional reading and math curricula used with fidelity and reinforced with community-based instruction
 - Technology is incorporated into most classroom activities with each student using personal devices that complement their motor and cognitive skills
 - Extensive evidence of differentiated instruction, prompting and assistance, based on student ability and family input in all academic and social/emotional content areas
 - Classroom expectations clearly outlined and understood
 - Transitions between activities are natural and efficient
 - Students were enthusiastic and engaged in their learning

- IEPs and Data Collection
 - IEP goals are well-written, individualized, and set appropriately high expectations for student progress
 - Student progress is regularly measured and graphed
 - Staff are able to articulate individual students' goals and progress
 - Community-based instruction is regularly implemented on a weekly basis, with greater frequency as weather permits

Areas of Improvement

- Based on available data, there are no identified areas of improvement or recommendations regarding district procedures.

Review of Special Education Department Procedures

Special education is a highly regulated and procedurally driven service. It is best practice to have clear and consistent procedures in order to implement services according to the established federal law and state regulations. When appropriate, board policies should direct and support the district's written procedures. Careful attention should be paid to how procedures are developed to ensure systematic change. Ideally, procedures should be written in easily understood terms, should be updated in real time, and should be easily accessible to all staff electronically. Guiding documentation for parents, such as information related to the referral process, department contact information, and their parental rights in the special education process should also be regularly updated and available on the district's website and by request.

In order to identify strengths and areas of improvement related to the Haddonfield Special Education Department Procedures, the CCIU team completed the following:

- Administration and staff interviews
- Review of department resources
- Review of district website

Strengths

- Staff receive regular training and feedback with regard to changes in the procedures.
- Staff are motivated and committed to meeting the expectations of the established district procedures.
- Key district personnel have a strong understanding of federal law and state regulations that guide special education services.
- The CST webpage includes instructions for parents to access their child's IEP, 504 Plan, and/or progress report through Genesis.
- The CST webpage also includes a description of the referral process that includes expected timelines from referral to evaluation to eligibility determinations.

Areas of Improvement

- Currently, department procedures are shared with staff and personnel via email communication, announcements, and department meetings. Procedures are not centrally organized, which can result in misinformation or reference to outdated procedures.

Recommendations

- ◇ The district would benefit from uniform, written procedures that detail necessary activities, roles and responsibilities, accessible to all staff members through a shared drive.

Review of Special Education Litigation

New Jersey has consistently ranked as one of the top 5 states nationally for frequency of special education litigation. Zirkel, P., & Skidmore, C.A. (2014). National trends in the frequency and outcomes of hearing and review officer decisions under the IDEA: An empirical analysis. *Ohio State Journal on Dispute Resolution*, 29, 525–576. Other states in the Mid-Atlantic with similar socio-economic profiles, including Pennsylvania, New York, and the District of Columbia, similarly rank in the top 5. In 2015-2016 (the most recent year where state data is available) 1,234 due process complaints were filed statewide. Only 67 of those complaints (5.4%) proceeded to a hearing. The vast majority of due process complaints statewide are resolved through settlements prior to a hearing.

In order to identify the strengths and areas of improvement related to the district's management of special education litigation, the CCIU team completed the following:

- Interview with district legal counsel
- Interview with special education director
- Review of active settlement agreements
- Review of past litigation published on the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) website

Strengths

- The current legal counsel has a long history with the district and they are familiar with the innerworkings of the district and the needs of the community.
- Legal counsel has provided targeted professional development when requested by the district.
- When the district is involved in litigation, staff reportedly present as credible and knowledgeable. The documentation is generally well designed and defensible.
- Given the district's demographic and the propensity of litigation in this region, the district's volume of settlement agreements may appear to an outside observer as high, it is our opinion that it falls within the expected range.

Areas of Improvement

- District administrative staff do not have regularly scheduled meetings with their legal counsel to proactively look at common themes in past litigation, as it relates to

current programming or to review and effectively manage potential or pending litigation.

- The district's current counsel is seemingly uncomfortable making recommendations regarding the legal aspects of programming.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◇ The district administration should hold regularly scheduled meetings with their legal counsel. These meetings should occur monthly and should include relevant members of the school team. As previously stated, these meetings should proactively look at common themes in past litigation, as it relates to current programming or to review and effectively manage potential or pending litigation◇ The district should expect recommendations from their legal counsel regarding the legal aspects of programming.

Review of Special Education Department Budget

The total planned budget for the 2018-2019 Haddonfield School District's special education program (minus personnel costs) is \$2,759,756.26. The personnel costs for the special education department equal \$5,890,721.52, bringing the total budget for special education to \$8,650,477.78. When analyzing this year's budget, the three main expenses outside of salaries and benefits are for the Kingsway program equaling \$322,000.00, private school tuition equaling \$1,078,656.26 and purchased professional services equaling \$1,496,500.00.

The total enrollment for Kingsway is currently at 7 students putting the average student cost for those services at \$46,000.00 annually. The quality and intensity of the services provided, as stated above, make this arrangement appear to be a worthwhile expense.

Given the size and the demographics of the district, the number of students placed in private schools at public expense and the costs associated with those programs falls within the expected range. Continuation of this initiative may result in a slight decrease in out-of-district tuition costs over time. However, those savings should be weighed against the costs to operate the programs in-house and the requirement to provide a full continuum of services to students with disabilities. A file review of students who are currently placed in private schools (ex. LARC, YALE Cherry Hill, Kingsway, etc.) was completed. These students range in age from six years old to twenty-one years old. All students, with the exception of one, have been identified as students with Autism or Multiple Disabilities. There is evidence in many of these students' histories that in-district programming was attempted. However, due to the complexity of the students' needs and, in a number of cases, challenging behaviors, the students' IEP teams determined that the students' needs exceeded the supports available within the district schools and out-of-district placements

were recommended. As part of this review, the CCIU team reviewed districts of similar size and demographics and concluded that the percent of students placed by their IEP team in a private school falls within the norm.

The largest percentage of the purchased professional service expenses are with Brett DiNovi & Associates, LLC contract. The purchased services include behavioral consultation at a rate of \$95.00 per hour and a 1:1 or paraprofessional support rate of \$32.50 per hour. The total planned budget for these services is \$850,000.00 annually. The hourly rates for the above services is commensurate with the local market. However, the total amount for the contracted services warrants further investigation given the district currently employs and incurs expenses for 48 paraprofessionals (FTE of 38.55).

Strengths

- Both the business manager and director of special education communicate regularly with one another regarding expenses. Planning is done in a thoughtful and collaborative manner and both departments seem to have a reasonable appreciation for what can at times be competing demands.
- The Haddonfield School District has invested in the professional development in the area of Wilson reading.

Areas of Improvement

- The contract with Brett DiNovi is very informal and simply sets the rates and provides a brief description of the services provided. For example, the contract does not include components that would typically be present such as mutual indemnification clause, renewal timelines and obligations, billing parameters, etc.
- Brett DiNovi is the sole provider of contracted services for paraprofessional support and behavioral consultation. Currently, Brett DiNovi completes functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) for students. These assessments and the behavioral consultants that complete them, lead the recommendation for the need for ongoing behavioral consultation and/or the need for paraprofessional support. This relationship is inherently flawed as it has the potential to be self-serving.

Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◇ Given the total costs of services, the Haddonfield School District should place the paraprofessional support and behavioral consultation services out to Request for Proposal (RFP). This will allow the district to better negotiate the quality and cost of services.◇ Consider contracting with more than one agency for behavioral consultation and paraprofessional support in order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

- ◇ Given the concerns stated in the sections addressing Intensive Service Preschool and the ECLC, expectations should be established with contracted behavioral consultation providers to build capacity within district staff and eliminate or reduce the need for contracted services over time. Data related to amount, type and cost of services should be provided by the contracted providers and reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- ◇ Have legal counsel review contracts for purchased professional services.
- ◇ Given the overall budgetary restrictions as well as the stated areas of improvement described in the co-teaching section of this report with regard to staff utilization coupled with the total number of district and contracted paraprofessional staff, a comprehensive time study should be conducted to analyze and maximize staff operation.
- ◇ The district should also evaluate the costs and the associated benefits of contracting with private providers to implement Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) home programming to families as part of their FAPE offer and to satisfy the parent training component of the IDEA. RDI does not meet criteria as an evidence based intervention.
- ◇ As a matter of practice, the district administrative staff should evaluate stated staff inefficiencies, such as: access to parking for itinerant staff, inadequate technology available to special education staff, etc.
- ◇ As previously mentioned, the majority special education staff are highly mobile and thus should be assigned individual laptops. Chromebooks could be an inexpensive, durable, and low-maintenance solution as long as the district infrastructure can support them and the applications required by the special education staff are all browser-based. If not, the district should purchase the type of laptops that can be best supported by the district technology staff.
- ◇ As previously mentioned, it is recommended that an additional 1.0 FTE CST member be added to the district budget. An additional CST member would bring the average caseload to 60 - 65 students. While still a full caseload, this is a more manageable number and will allow the CST members to provide the quality of care and expertise expected within the district.

Conclusions and Considerations

By all accounts, the Haddonfield School District is a high performing suburban school district. The district, its board and the administrative team should be commended for their willingness and openness to take an honest look at the level and quality of special education services provided to their students and families.

The staff at CCIU have completed several program reviews to date. While there are a number of recommendations for improvement included within this report, the overall tenor of the program and services should be viewed as positive. Meeting the mandates of the IDEA is challenging for all districts regardless of their available resources. Community stakeholders identified the following barriers to meeting the needs of students with disabilities while simultaneously meeting the competing community expectations of high student achievement and fiscal responsibility.

- Time
- Budgetary restrictions
- Student and staff schedules
- Professional development time
- Staff “buy in” or support with change
- Legalities associated with special education

The district is prime for change given the change in leadership, the support from the board of directors and the strong community and staff support. One of the greatest challenges for a school district is acceptance of students with disabilities. This is one of Haddonfield’s greatest accomplishments. Not only are students with disabilities accepted but they are celebrated.

The recommendations from this report should be reviewed by the key stakeholders of the Haddonfield School District. Information gathered in this reports should be verified further by the school teams due to the short nature of our involvement. Recommendations the team chooses to act upon should be prioritized and consideration of the necessary steps and pace needed for successful implementation should be outlined in a formal action plan so the expected outcomes are achieved.

Appendix

Focus Groups

Date:	Name/Department:	Number of Attendees:
10/11/2018	Parents	4
10/11/2018	Special Education/Tatem	4
10/11/2018	General Education/Tatem	7
10/16/2018	Parents	5
10/16/2018	Related Service Personnel	6
10/16/2018	Paraprofessionals/Cross District	6
10/17/2018	General Education/HMS	7
10/18/2018	General Education/Haddon Elementary	2
10/18/2018	Special Education/ Haddon Elementary	2
10/19/2018	Child Study Team/Cross District	4
10/19/2018	Principals/Central Office	6
10/22/2018	Child Study Administrative Assistants	2
10/26/2018	Business Manager & Assistant Manager	2
10/26/2018	Paraprofessional/Tatem	1
10/30/2018	General Education/HMHS	7
01/04/2019	Special Education Director	1

Survey

Date Range:	Name/Department:	Number of Attendees:
11/01/2018 – 11/09/2018	General Education/Cross District	6
11/01/2018 – 11/09/2018	Special Education/Cross District	2
11/01/2018 – 11/09/2018	Related Service Personnel/Cross District	2
11/01/2018 – 11/09/2018	Child Study Team/Cross District	1

Figure 1.1

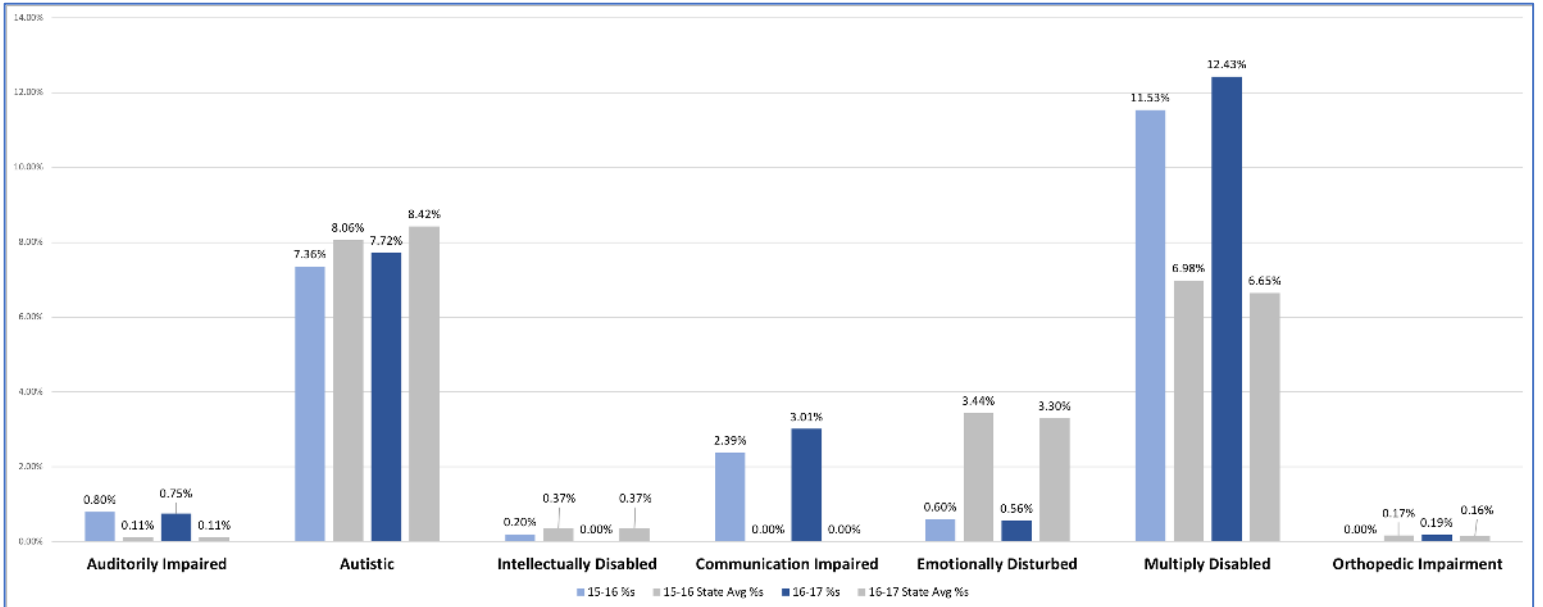


Figure 1.2

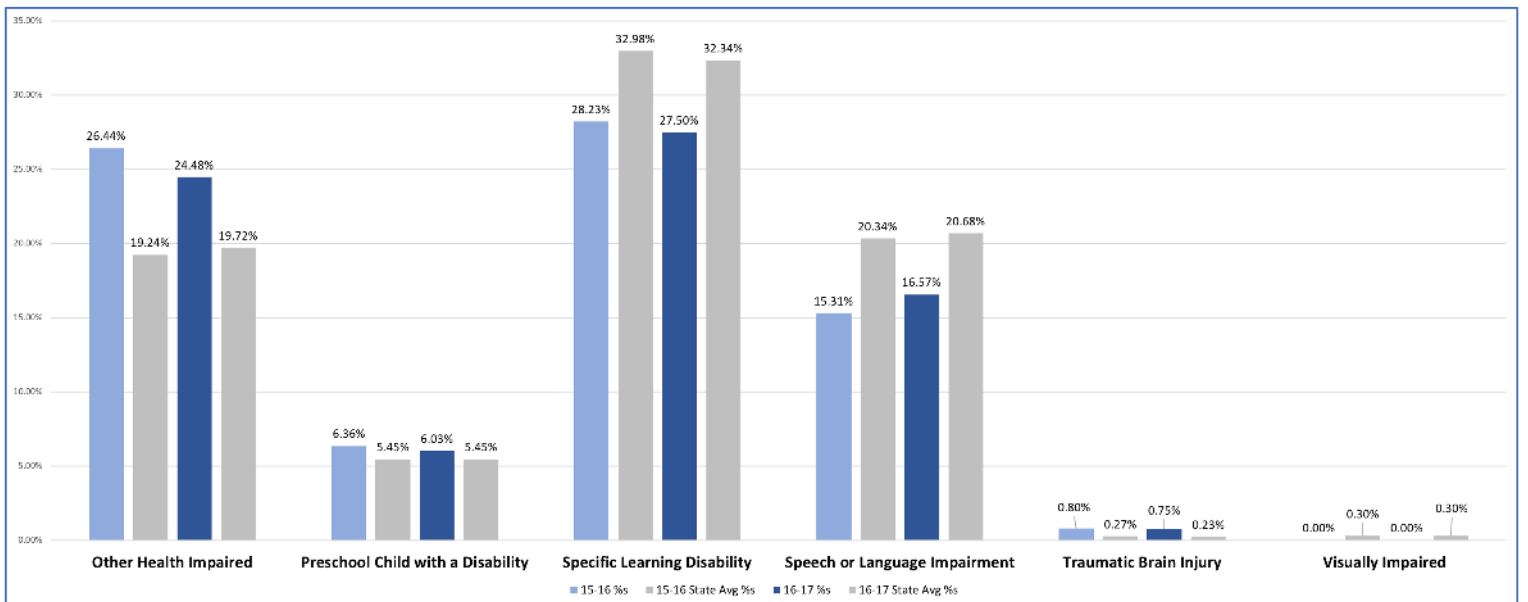


Figure 2.1

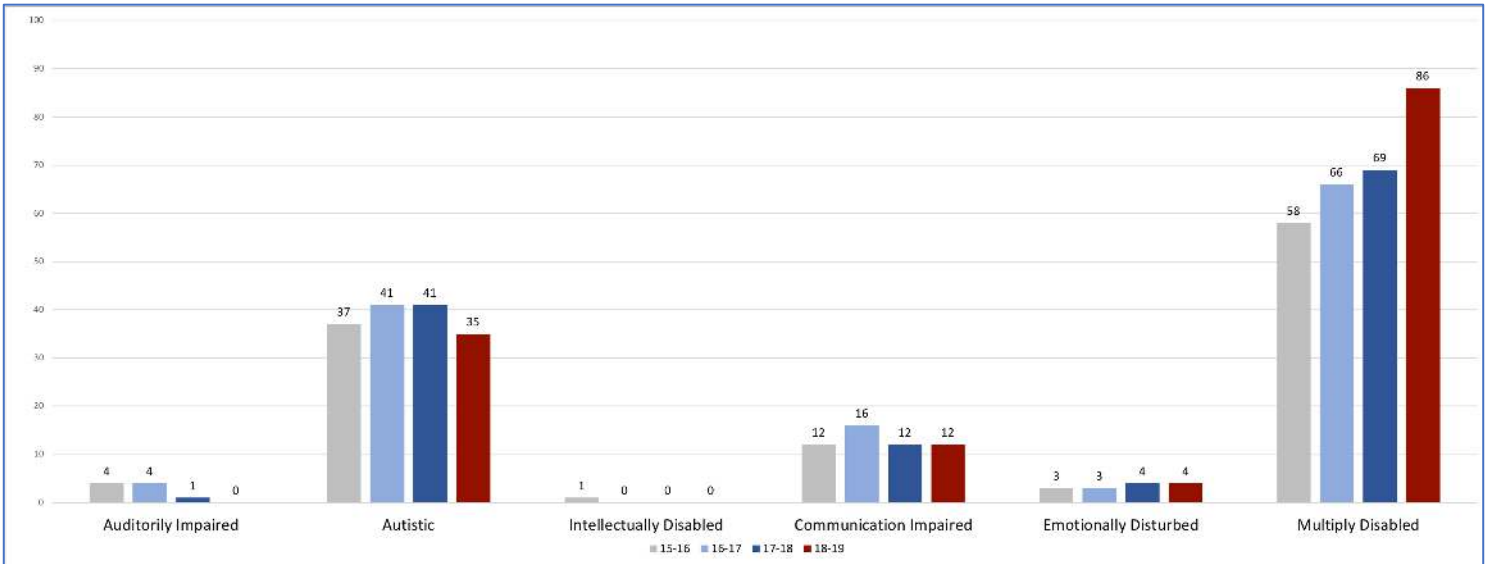


Figure 2.2

