

Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists

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Challenges in Special Education Teacher Evaluation

- Limited research related to special education teacher evaluation
- Few evaluation systems address the unique challenges associated with evaluating special educators (81.4 % indicated that contractual agreements don't allow for modification)
- Accurately measuring achievement growth and connecting that growth to teacher effects
 - Small student samples/Student mobility
 - Use of accommodations/alternate standards
 - Teacher attribution in a co-teaching situation
- Challenges with differentiated compensation



TQ Research & Policy Brief: *Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists*
(<http://www.tqsource.org/publications/July2010Brief.pdf>)

□ Purpose

- Identify the specific challenges in evaluating this population of teachers.
- Determine the current status of state policy and practice.
- Identify promising evaluation practices and instruments.
- Provide guidance and policy recommendations to districts and states.



The Inquiry

- Review of policy/literature
- Survey inquiry →
- Series of interviews with state- and district-level practitioners and researchers
- Data collection period: December 2009–April 2010

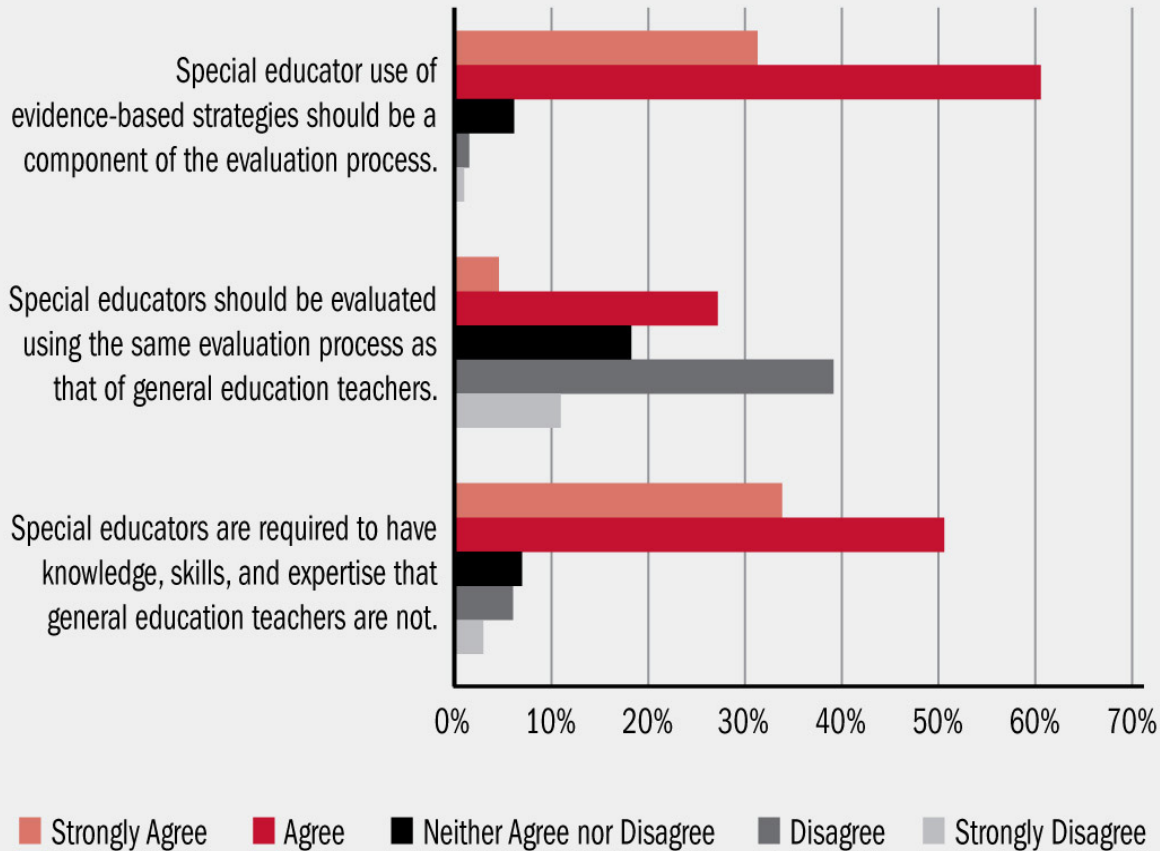
- Designed in collaboration with Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and national experts
- State and local survey
- Respondent pool: state and local directors (identified within CEC's Council of Administrators of special education listserve)

1,143
total respondents



Opinions Regarding Special Education Teacher Evaluation

Strongly Agree or Agree



92%

32%

84%



Evidence-Based Practices

- ❑ Meeting the needs of “diverse” learners may *not* attend to the following:
 - ❑ Special skills (individualized education program [IEP] facilitation, collaboration, secondary transition, social and behavioral interventions, compliance with legal mandates)
 - ❑ Evidence-based instructional methods (direct/explicit instruction, scientifically based reading instruction, learning strategy instruction)



What Works?

Evidence-based Practices in Special Education Research Foundations From Meta-Analysis

Treatment

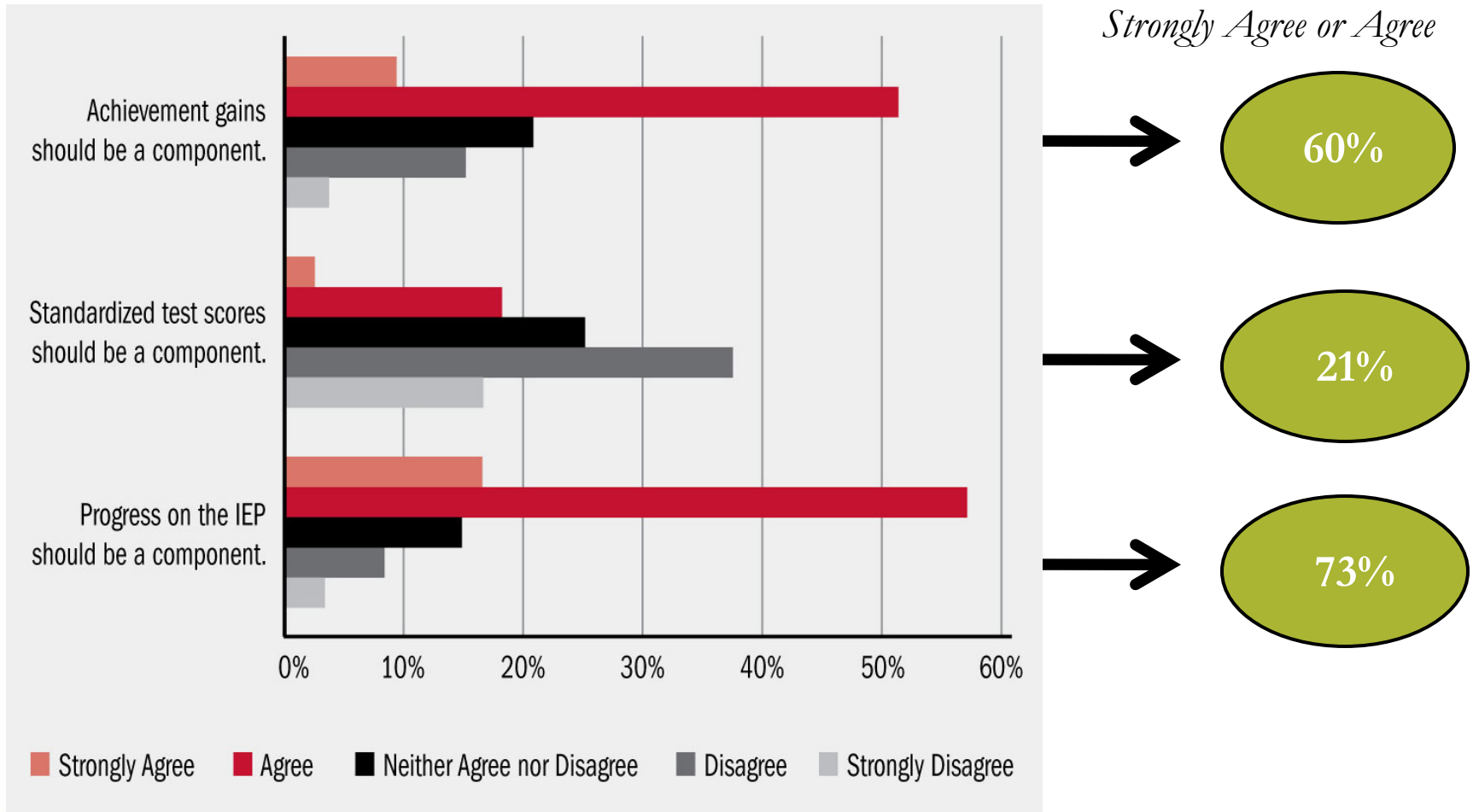
Treatment	Effect Size
• Applied Behavior Analysis	+ 1.00
• Formative Evaluation: Curriculum-Based Measurement+Graphing+Decision Rules+Reinforcement	+ 1.00
• Explicit Instruction and PS	+ .70 to 1.50
• Comprehension Strategies	+ 1.00
• Mathematics Interventions	+.60 to 1.10
• Writing Interventions	+.50 to .85
• Matching instruction to learning styles?	0.00

Note: These effect sizes are stable across cultural groups.

Sources: Kavale, 2005



Opinions Regarding Use of Student Achievement for Special Educators



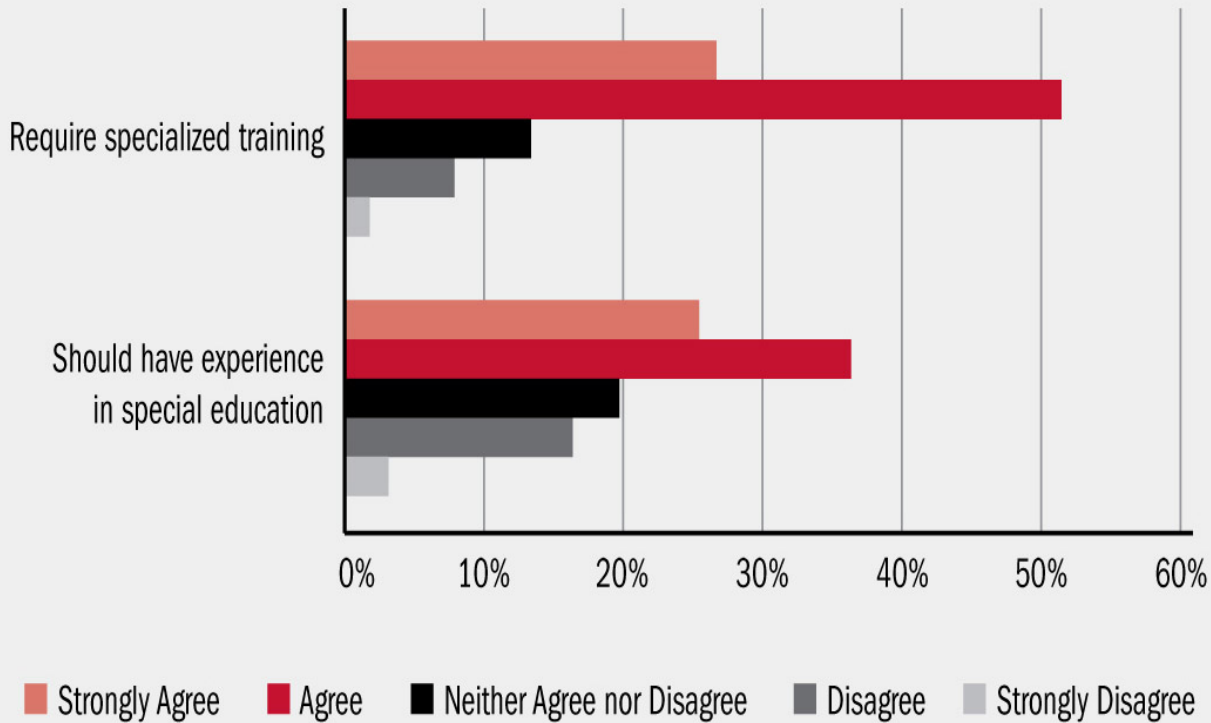
Student Growth Measures

Practical Examples

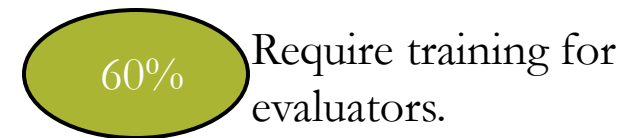
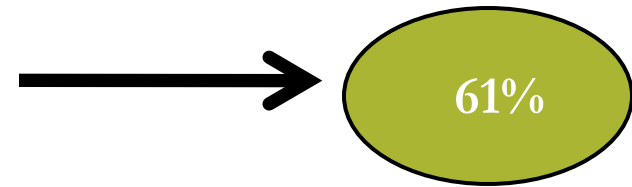
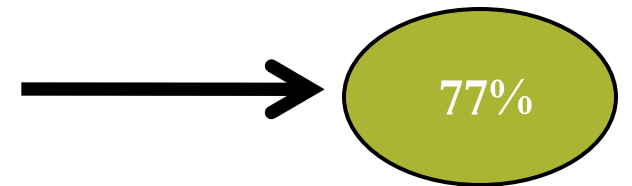
- ❑ Austin Independent School District, Texas
 - ❑ Student Learning Objectives
 - ❑ One is targeted toward classroom performance.
 - ❑ One is targeted toward particular skills or subgroups of students.
- ❑ Norwell Public Schools, Massachusetts
 - ❑ Progress on the IEP is factored into evaluation of special educators.
- ❑ Both districts are heavily dependent on teacher training and support.



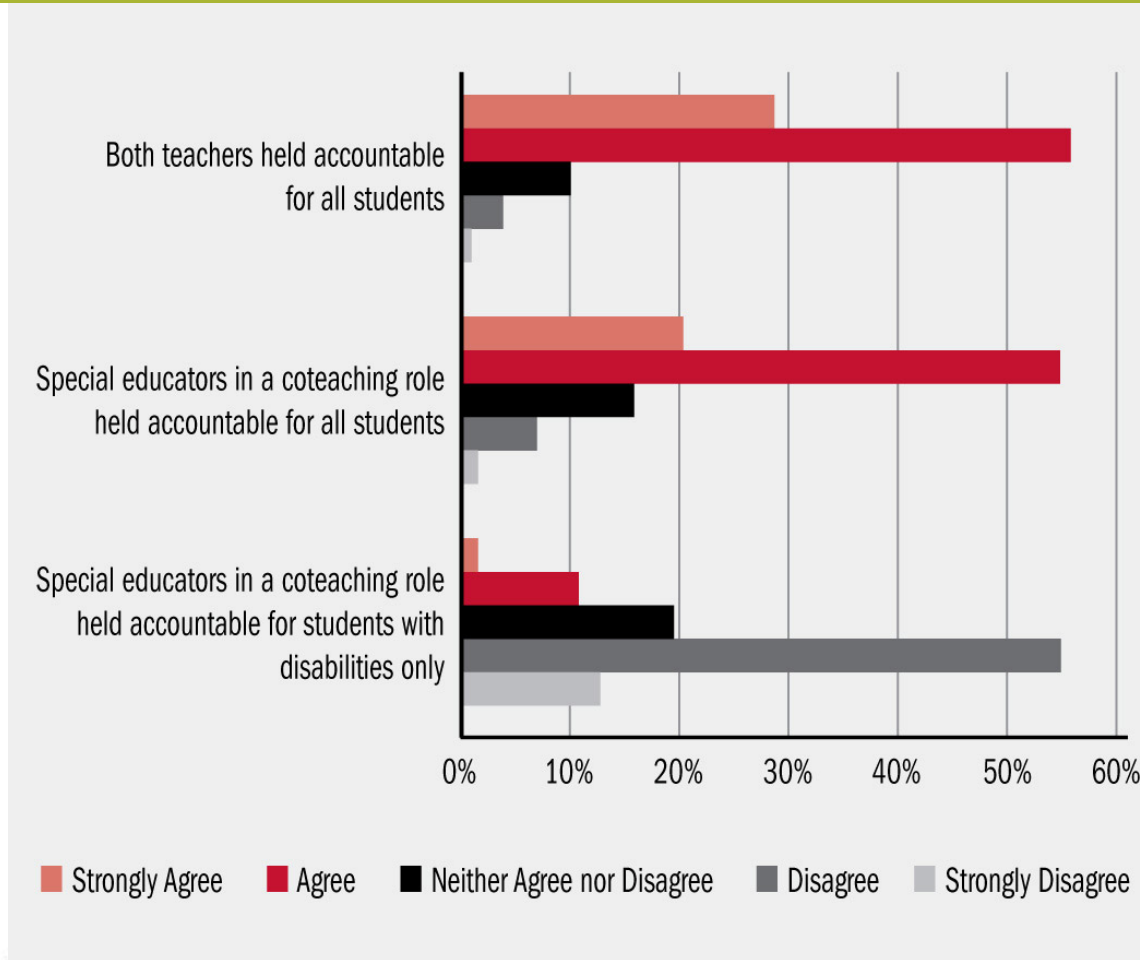
Expert Opinions Regarding Evaluators



Strongly Agree or Agree



Opinions Regarding Attribution in Coteaching Setting



Strongly Agree or Agree



85%



75%



13%



Practical Example: District of Columbia IMPACT

Special Education

- Individual Teacher Value-Added Scores
- Non-Value-Added Achievement 10%
- Teaching and Learning Framework 50%
- Commitment to the School 5%
- School Value-Added Scores 5%
- Core Professionalism
- **IEP Quality Plan** 15%
- **IEP Timeliness** 15%



Policy and Practice Recommendations

- Include special education administrators when revamping/designing evaluation frameworks.
- Identify a common framework that defines effective teaching for all teachers, differentiating for special educators as appropriate.
- Integrate evidence-based practices for students with disabilities into evaluation models.



Policy and Practice Recommendations

- ❑ Ensure that evaluator training includes:
 - ❑ evaluators of special educators and/or
 - ❑ a model of peer-to-peer observations or model in which evaluators are matched to specific disciplines
- ❑ In addition to - or, in some situations, in the absence of - appropriate standardized assessment data:
 - ❑ incorporate other reliable evidence of teachers' contributions to student learning into the teacher evaluation system





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