



# Improving Parent Involvement in the IEP Process

Office of Special Education Programs  
February 2024

# Introduction

- ▶ **Stacy Holzbauer**
  - ▶ Office of Special Education Programs
  - ▶ Alternate Assessment Specialist
  - ▶ Indicator 8: Parent Involvement
  - ▶ [Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us](mailto:Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us) or 605-295-3441

# Training Agenda

- ▶ Four Parent Involvement Areas
- ▶ SD Parent Involvement Survey
- ▶ SD Parent Involvement Survey District Reports
- ▶ Parent Response Rate
- ▶ District Planning

▶ How do we address “Parent Involvement”?

▶ 4 Parent Involvement Areas:

1. Individual Education Plan (IEP)
2. Communication
3. Information
4. Partnership

# Parent Involvement: Four Areas/Scales

- ▶ 4 Areas of Best Practice for Improving Parent Involvement:
  1. **Individual Education Plan (IEP):** Does the IEP meeting address certain issues?
    - ▶ Questions 2, 10 on SD Parent Survey
  2. **Communication:** Does the school adequately communicate with the parent?
    - ▶ Questions 4, 8, 9, 11 on SD Parent Survey
  3. **Information:** Does the school provide information on options parents have to help their child?
    - ▶ Questions 5, 6, 7 on SD Parent Survey
  4. **Partnership:** Does the school encourage parents to be an equal partner?
    - ▶ Questions 1, 3, 12 on SD Parent Survey

# Parent Involvement: Individual Education Plan (IEP)

IEP: Does the IEP meeting address certain issues?

▶ **I am encouraged to participate in writing my child's IEP.**

- ▶ Meeting Notices: Ask parents what dates/times work for THEM for IEP meetings. Send meeting notices in a timely manner.
  - *Here are a few options. What works best for you?*
- ▶ Gather parent input PRIOR TO meetings (such as when you contact parents about the meeting date/time):
  - *Your input is valuable as we write your child's IEP. What improvements have you noticed? What concerns should we address?*
- ▶ Gather parent input DURING meetings:
  - *What else should we be doing at school? What questions do you have? If you think of something we missed, let us know.*

# Parent Involvement: Individual Education Plan (IEP)

- ▶ **My child's school carried out the current IEP as written and discussed.**
  - ▶ The district must follow the IEP services, minutes, accommodations, goals, Behavior Intervention Plans, etc. that are written in each student's Individual Education Plan.
  - ▶ If the district proposes changes to the IEP, the parent must be contacted for their input.
    - *Here is our data. We propose this decrease/increase/change.*
    - *What do you think? Is this okay with you?*
  - ▶ At Parent Teacher Conferences or a quarterly parent check-in:
    - *We have been doing this according to the IEP...What are your thoughts on continuing with this plan?*

# Parent Involvement: Communication

Communication: Does the school adequately communicate with the parent?

- ▶ **My child's school makes sure that I understand the Procedural Safeguards (the rules that protect the rights of parents).**
  - ▶ Give parents the [South Dakota Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards](#) (12 languages)
  - ▶ Offer a printed copy or the on-line link to parents at every annual IEP meeting.
  - ▶ The first page of the IEP has a designated space to document that parents received/reviewed their annual copy.
  - ▶ Explain the purpose of the Procedural Safeguards to parents.
    - *What questions do you have about your Parental Rights?*
  - ▶ Give parents the [Parent Guide to the Special Education Process](#) (English & Spanish) at initial evaluations.



# Parent Involvement: Communication

- ▶ **My child's teachers are available to me (in person, by phone, or via email).**
  - ▶ Greet parents (respecting SPED confidentiality) at Open House, Back to School events, P/T Conferences.
  - ▶ At the beginning of the school year, introduce yourself to each parent via a flyer, email, or phone call. Explain your role and how parents can reach you. Open that line of communication!
  - ▶ Be timely and professional when responding to parents.
    - Prompt Response: *This is a good question. I need to do some checking, and I will get back to you in the next few days.*
    - Delayed Response: *Thank you for your patience with my delayed response.*
    - *If you every have questions about your child's special education program, I am here to help. Please reach out if you need anything further.*
- ▶ Seek/attend professional development regarding effective communication skills

# Parent Involvement: Communication

- ▶ **My child's teachers communicate regularly with me about my child's progress on annual IEP goals.**
  - ▶ At a minimum, IEP goal progress should be reported to parents quarterly via Progress Reports.
  - ▶ Send parents an e-mail or text when Progress Reports are mailed or sent home with the student.
    - *Progress Reports for your child's IEP goals were sent home today. Please reach out if you have any questions.*
  - ▶ At IEP meetings, discuss the annual IEP goals from previous IEP, what progress looked like, seek parent input on what the new annual IEP goals should cover.
  - ▶ At Parent Teacher Conferences, specifically discuss annual IEP goal progress.

# Parent Involvement: Communication

- ▶ **Information I receive about my child's special education program is written in an understandable way.**
  - ▶ Remember that parents are not special education teachers! Avoid SPED jargon and acronyms.
  - ▶ If the parent is not understanding, then the professional is likely not explaining it the right way.
  - ▶ Even if an IEP process was explained in the past, check in to ensure the parent understands. Re-explain as many times as needed. Never make a parent feel embarrassed to ask questions.
  - ▶ Give extra attention to prior written notices. Ensure all four areas are filled out thoroughly with clear, understandable language. Read it aloud and ask yourself, "Will the parent understand this?"
  - ▶ Call the parent to see if they need help reviewing information.
    - *I mailed the final copy of your student's IEP. It has a lot of information, so please let me know if anything is unclear.*
    - *I mailed a prior written notice to summarize our meeting. What questions do you have?*

# Parent Involvement: Information

Information: Does the school provide information on options parents have to help their child?

- ▶ **My child's school makes sure that I understand my options if I disagree with a decision of the school.**
  - ▶ [Parental Rights/Procedural Safeguards](#) and [Parent Guide to the Special Education Process](#)
    - If you are a SPED Director or Teacher and have not read these documents...READ THEM! You must ensure parental rights are followed in your IEP processes.
  - ▶ [Dispute Resolution](#)
    - IEP Facilitation, Mediation, Dispute Resolution, Due Process Hearing
  - ▶ [Navigator Program](#)
    - Partnership between DOE SEP and SD Parent Connection

# Parent Involvement: Information

- ▶ **My child's school provides information on organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.**
  - ▶ Do not limit families to only what YOU know and can do. Give them resources!
  - ▶ [South Dakota Parent Connection](#): variety of resources for SD families
  - ▶ [Disability Rights South Dakota](#): variety of resources for SD families
  - ▶ [SD School for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) or [SD Services for the Deaf](#)
  - ▶ [SD Department of Social Services](#)
    - [Medicaid](#): may pay for pull ups for children over 3 years old with disabilities
    - [Special Needs Car Seats](#)
- ▶ (Further resources are continued on next slide.)

# Parent Involvement: Information

- ▶ **My child's school provides information on organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities. (continued...)**
  - ▶ [SD Department of Human Services](#)
    - [Family Support 360](#): service coordination and respite funds
    - [Strengthening Families Program](#): reimburse costs of diapers and wipes
    - [Respite Program](#): assists with respite care
    - [Services for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing](#): Hearing Aid/Cochlear Implant assistance
    - [Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#): low birth weight baby or extended newborn hospital-stay
    - [SD Council on Developmental Disabilities](#): funds for training

# Parent Involvement: Information Example

- ▶ My child's school provides information on organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities. (continued...)
- ▶ District Example

## MOBRIDGE-POLLOCK SPECIAL EDUCATION K-12TH GRADE

### *Resources*

**South Dakota Statewide Family  
Engagement Center**  
<https://sdsfec.org/>

**South Dakota Parent Connection**  
<https://sdparent.org/>

**Disability Rights South Dakota**  
<https://www.drSDLaw.org/>

**School for the Blind and Visually  
Impaired**  
<https://sdsbvi.org/>

**SD Services for the Deaf**  
<https://sddeaf.org/>

**South Dakota Department of Social  
Services**  
<https://dss.sd.gov>

**Medicaid**  
<https://dss.sd.gov/medicaid>

**Special Needs Car Seats**  
<http://dss.sd.gov/childcare/childsafetyseat/>

**SD Council on Development Disabilities**  
<https://dhs.sd.gov/cdd.aspx>

**Family Support 360**  
<https://dhs.sd.gov/developmentaldisabilities/familysupport360.aspx>

**SD Department of Human Services**  
<https://dhs.sd.gov/default.aspx>

**Respite Care**  
<https://dhs.sd.gov/developmentaldisabilities/respitecare.aspx>

**Hearing Aid/Cochlear Implant  
Assistance**  
<https://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/deafservices.aspx>

**Disability Determination Services**  
<https://dhs.sd.gov/disabilitydeterminationervices.aspx>

**SSI**  
[https://www.ssa.gov/ssi?gclid=EAtalQobChMlq9p02fOp\\_glVbwStBh3GvAuGEAAAYASAAEgKLYPD\\_BwE](https://www.ssa.gov/ssi?gclid=EAtalQobChMlq9p02fOp_glVbwStBh3GvAuGEAAAYASAAEgKLYPD_BwE)

# Parent Involvement: Information

- ▶ **For parents of students in grades 8 or above: I have been involved in discussion with my child's school related to post-secondary school (college, technical or other settings), employment and/or independent living, and adult service agencies.**
  - ▶ This question had the lowest score of all questions state-wide.
  - ▶ Transition is required before age 16; recommended at age 14 for students with significant cognitive disabilities.
  - ▶ When requesting consent for the transition assessment, thoroughly explain the transition process.
  - ▶ Cover all transition areas and post-secondary goals during IEP meetings.
  - ▶ Seek consent to invite outside agencies and explain why they should be invited.
  - ▶ Ask for student and parent input.
  - ▶ (Further resources are continued on the next slide...)



# Parent Involvement: Information

- ▶ For parents of students in grades 8 or above: I have been involved in discussion with my child's school related to post-secondary school (college, technical or other settings), employment and/or independent living, and adult service agencies. (continued)
  - ▶ Give students and parents transition resources through the [SD Department of Human Services](#):
    - [Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\)](#) and [Project Skills](#)
    - [Native American VR](#): on six SD reservations
    - [Guardianship Establishment Program](#)
    - [Independent Living Choices](#)
    - [Western Resources for Independent Living](#)

# Parent Involvement:

## Transition Example

- ▶ For parents of students in grades 8 or above: I have been involved in discussion with my child's school related to post-secondary school (college, technical or other settings), employment and/or independent living, and adult service agencies. (continued)
- ▶ District Example

## MOBRIDGE-POLLOCK SPECIAL EDUCATION 8TH-12TH GRADE

### *Transition Resources*

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation**

<https://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/vr.aspx>

#### **Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

<https://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/navr.aspx>

#### **Independent Living Choices**

<https://www.ilchoices.org/>

#### **Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired**

<https://dhs.sd.gov/service-to-the-blind/default.aspx>

#### **Communication Services for the Deaf**

[www.c-s.d.org](http://www.c-s.d.org)

#### **SD Benefits Specialist Network**

<https://bsnsd.org/contact/>

#### **Mental Health Centers**

<http://dss.sd.gov/behavioralhealth/community/mentalhealth.aspx>

#### **SD Parent Connection**

[www.sdparent.org](http://www.sdparent.org)

#### **Division of Developmental Disabilities**

<https://dhs.sd.gov/developmentaldisabilities/csplist.aspx>

#### **Assistive Technology**

<http://www.dakotalink.net>

#### **Legal Guardianship**

<http://dhs.sd.gov/guardianship/default.aspx>

#### **Job Corps Program**

<http://www.jobcorps.gov/home.aspx>

#### **Transition Service Department of Human Services**

<http://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/il.aspx>

#### **Project Skills**

<https://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/projectskills.aspx>

#### **Guardianship Establishment Program**

<https://dhs.sd.gov/guardianship/establishmentprogram.aspx>

#### **Western Choices for Independent Living Choices**

<https://wril.org/>

#### **Social Security Administration**

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

#### **Centers for Independent Living**

<https://dhs.sd.gov/rehabservices/il.aspx>

#### **Department of Labor & Regulations**

<https://dr.sd.gov/default.aspx>

#### **Disability Rights South Dakota**

[www.drdsdla.org](http://www.drdsdla.org)

#### **Family Support 360 Program**

<http://dhs.sd.gov/developmentaldisabilities/familysupport360.aspx>

#### **Post-Secondary Schools**

[www.tsip.org](http://www.tsip.org)

#### **Community Support Providers**

<http://dhs.sd.gov/developmentaldisabilities/csp.aspx>

# Parent Involvement: Partnership

Partnership: Does the school encourage parents to be an equal partner?

- ▶ **I am treated as an equal partner with my child's teachers and other professionals in planning his/her special education program.**
- ▶ **My child's school gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education.**
- ▶ **Overall, I am satisfied with the extent to which teachers and other professionals encourage my involvement as a parent.**
- ▶ Everything suggested on previous slides contributes to the feeling of partnership.
  - Use open ended questions when gathering information.
  - *You are a partner in your child's education. Your input is valuable. You know your child best.*
  - Do not just say it with words...show it with actions!

- ▶ Now we understand the four parent involvement areas.
- ▶ How do I know which parent involvement area(s) my district should focus on improving?
- ▶ SD Parent Involvement Survey

# South Dakota Parent Involvement Survey Process

- ▶ Current Process:
  - ▶ In July, DOE provides printed surveys, envelopes, and the on-line survey link to all districts for the coming school year.
  - ▶ Throughout the school year, districts distribute the Parent Survey to parents of students in special education.
  - ▶ Before April 30, districts should have distributed the Parent Survey to every parent in their district.
  - ▶ Before May 31, Parent Surveys must be completed online or mailed to the survey vendor.
  - ▶ In September, Parent Survey reports/results for each district are available on [SD-STARS](#).
  - ▶ In September, DOE informs any districts who did not meet parent involvement or response rate targets and asks them to complete a plan to improve outcomes: [Indicator 8 District Reflection](#).

# South Dakota Parent Survey Resources

- ▶ [2023-2024 Indicator 8 Overview](#) summarizes the Parent Survey process.
- ▶ The DOE SPP Website at <https://doe.sd.gov/sped/SPP.aspx> provides further Parent Survey resources:

Indicator 8 - Parent Involvement
<a href="#">2023-2024 District Flyer</a>
<a href="#">Indicator 8 District Reflection</a>
<a href="#">Improving Parent Involvement in the IEP Process</a>
<a href="#">2022-2023 Indicator 8 State Results</a>
<a href="#">2023-2024 Indicator 8 District Letter</a>
<a href="#">2023-2024 Indicator 8 Parent Letter and Parent Survey</a>
<a href="#">2023-2024 Indicator 8 Overview</a>

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This is a survey for families with children receiving special education including speech language services. This is your opportunity to provide *CONFIDENTIAL* input to improve services and results for children and families in South Dakota. Your responses are extremely important to us. Please take the time to complete this brief survey and return it using the stamped, addressed envelope that is provided.

If you would prefer to complete the survey online, please access using this link or scan the QR code:

<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7323513/SDI8>



<b>What is being asked?</b>	Information on your experience and family involvement with your child's special education services.
<b>Who is asking for this information?</b>	South Dakota Department of Education and the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs.
<b>Why am I being asked to complete this survey?</b>	To help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. The survey will be summarized for the state as a whole and broken out by individual school district. The summary information will be provided to each school district and also the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs in order to fulfill a federal requirement regarding parent feedback.
<b>How will my answers be kept anonymous?</b>	Your responses are completely anonymous. There is nothing on the forms that will identify you other than what district the survey is from. Questionnaires will be mailed to Technical Assistance for Excellence in Special Education (TAESE) for analysis. Only summary data concerning district-wide data will be shared with the district and South Dakota Department of Education.
<b>What do I need to do?</b>	Complete the enclosed survey, insert it in the addressed envelope provided and drop it in the mail (no postage necessary) by May 31, 2024.

**If you have any questions, need an alternate format, or assistance completing the survey, contact:**

South Dakota Department of Education  
Special Education Programs  
605-773-3678

*Thank you for your participation,*

Division Director of Special Education and Early Learning  
Linda Turner

**SOUTH DAKOTA PARENT INVOLVEMENT SURVEY – SPECIAL EDUCATION 2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR**

This is a survey for families of children receiving special education services. Your response will help guide efforts to improve services and results for children and families. Please select one answer for each question. **Thank You!**

**A. My Child:**

**1. Grade during current school year (2023-2024)**

Pre-K	Kinderg arten	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
-------	------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----

**2. PRIMARY Disability (Circle One)**

1 Autism	2 Deaf-Blindness	3 Deafness	4 Emotional Disturbance	5 Hearing Impairment	6 Cognitive Disability	7 Multiple Disabilities
8 Orthopedic Impairment	9 Other Health Impairment	10 Specific Learning Disability	11 Speech/ Language Impairment	12 Traumatic Brain Injury	13 Visual Impairment including Blindness	14 Developmental Delay

**3. Ethnicity (Circle One)**

1 Hispanic or Latino	2 Not Hispanic or Latino
----------------------	--------------------------

**4. Race (Circle all that apply)**

1 American Indian or Alaska Native	2 Asian	3 Black or African American	4 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5 White	6 Two or more races
------------------------------------	---------	-----------------------------	---	---------	---------------------

Strongly Disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly Agree

**B. My Participation:**

1. I am treated as an equal partner with my child's teachers and other professionals in planning his/her special education program.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am encouraged to participate in writing my child's IEP.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My child's school gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My child's school makes sure that I understand the Procedural Safeguards (the rules that protect the rights of parents) .	1	2	3	4	5
5. My child's school makes sure that I understand my options if I disagree with a decision of the school.	1	2	3	4	5
6. My child's school provides information on organizations that offer support for parents of students with disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
7. For parents of students in grades 8 or above: I have been involved in discussion with my child's school related to post-secondary school (college, technical or other setting), employment and/or independent living, and adult service agencies.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My child's teachers are available to me (in person, by phone, or via email).	1	2	3	4	5
9. My child's teachers communicate regularly with me about my child's progress on annual IEP goals.	1	2	3	4	5
10. My child's school carried out the current IEP as written and discussed.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Information I receive about my child's special education program is written in an understandable way.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Overall, I am satisfied with the extent to which teachers and other professionals encourage my involvement as a parent.	1	2	3	4	5

**Comments:**

If you would like to be more involved or more actively participate in your child's education, what could the school do to support you?

*If you have questions or would like more information about special education programs in your district or at the state level, please contact the South Dakota Department of Education (<http://doe.sd.gov>).*

My child's district name or code \_\_\_\_\_

# South Dakota Parent Survey PAPER VERSION

# South Dakota Parent Survey

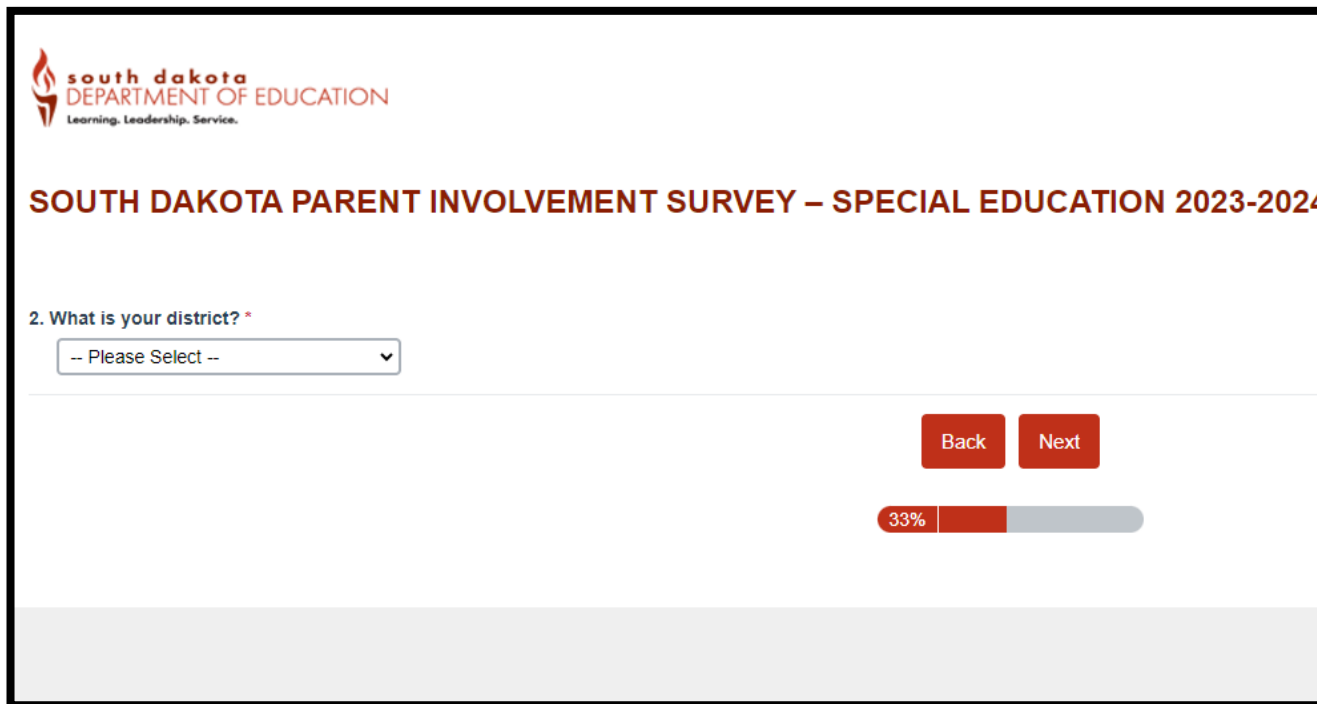
## Paper Version

- ▶ The paper version of the Parent Survey and envelopes are printed and distributed by DOE.
- ▶ DOE places a district code on the bottom right corner of each survey to ensure validity of district data.
- ▶ Please DO NOT use left over surveys from prior years.
- ▶ Please DO NOT make copies of current surveys.
- ▶ Envelopes are addressed for the survey vendor to compile the district data.
- ▶ The paper version is available in 12 languages:
  - ▶ English, Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, Creole, German, Karen, Kuanyama, Nepali, Somali, Swahili, and Tigrinya
- ▶ To request that additional surveys be printed, or surveys in various language, SPED Directors can e-mail [Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us](mailto:Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us).



# South Dakota Parent Survey Online Version

- ▶ The survey is also available on-line in English and Spanish at <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7323513/SDI8>



The screenshot shows the survey interface for the South Dakota Department of Education. At the top left is the logo for South Dakota Department of Education with the tagline "Learning. Leadership. Service.". Below the logo is the title "SOUTH DAKOTA PARENT INVOLVEMENT SURVEY – SPECIAL EDUCATION 2023-2024". The main question is "2. What is your district? \*". Below the question is a dropdown menu with the text "-- Please Select --" and a downward arrow. At the bottom of the question area are two red buttons labeled "Back" and "Next". Below the buttons is a progress bar showing "33%" completion.



# South Dakota Parent Survey

## Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ **Do parents of students in out of district placements get the Parent Survey?** Yes, provide the Parent Survey to parents of students in out of district placement because those students are included in the district child count.
- ▶ **If parents are separated, but both are actively involved, who do we give the Parent Survey to?** Both parents can be given a Parent Survey to have the opportunity to respond (two separate surveys).
- ▶ **WHY do districts do the Parent Survey? Who looks at the results? What happens with the results?**
  - ▶ District Level – District SPED directors and SPED teachers review district results to understand how parents feel about their local SPED department. Districts identify which areas to celebrate and which areas to improve on. Districts develop local resources or programming to improve parent involvement. Districts know their parents best!
  - ▶ State Level – District data combines to create the statewide Indicator 8 Parent Involvement data. DOE is required to submit that statewide data on the annual federal State Performance Plan. DOE presents the data to various statewide stakeholder groups (parents and teachers). DOE analyzes results to identify areas that DOE should develop statewide resources or programming to assist district and parents statewide. DOE identifies districts that need assistance with increasing their parent involvement or response rate scores.

- ▶ Now we understand the Parent Survey process.
- ▶ Where do I find my district's Parent Survey data and results?
- ▶ Indicator 8 District Reports

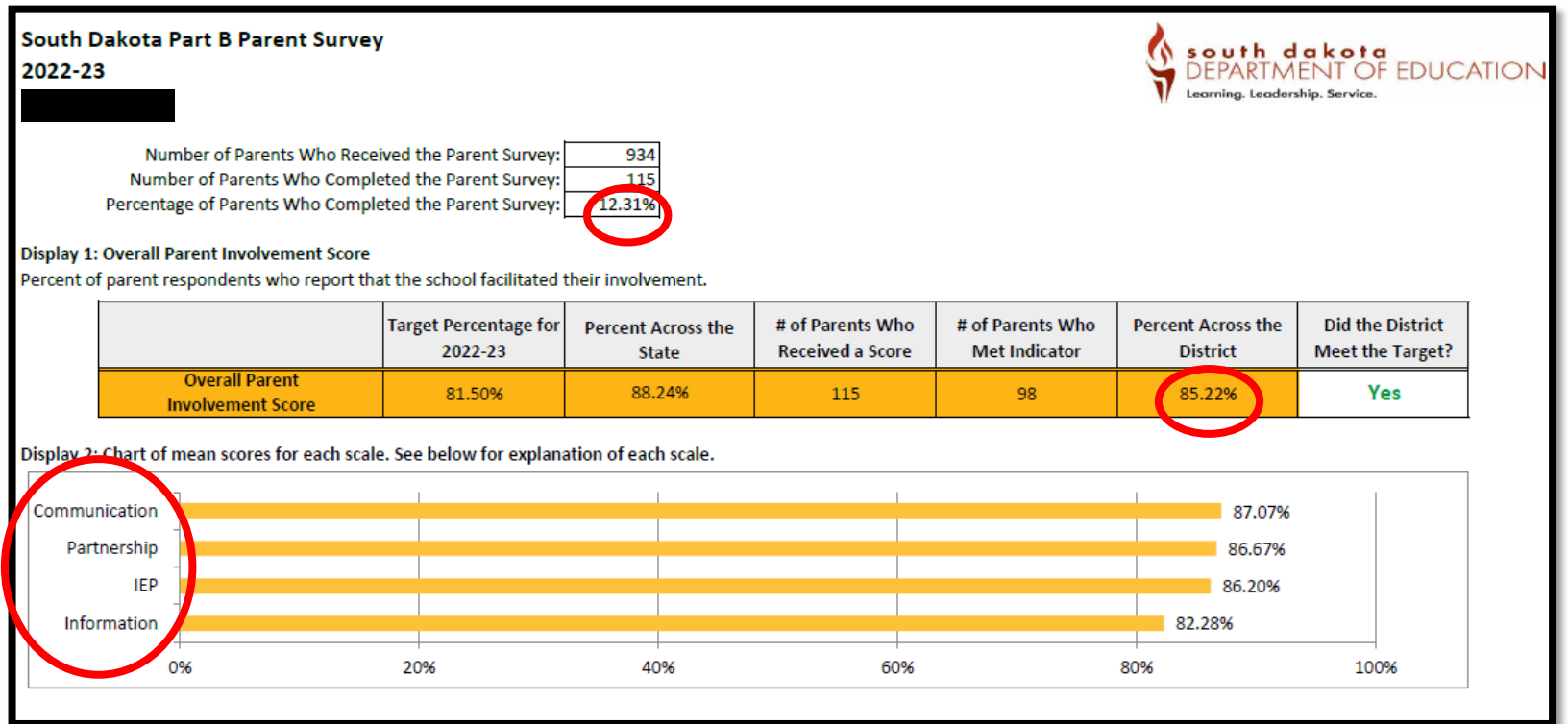
# District Survey Results

- ▶ In September, districts can view their previous school year results on their district Indicator 8 Report on [SD-STARS](#) / Special Education Community/Special Education Reporting PDF/scroll down to Indicator 8.
- ▶ District Reports show scores for the two targets:
  - 1. Parent Involvement Score** - Percent of parents who report that the school facilitated their involvement.
    - ▶ 2022-2023 Target: 81.50% - outlined on federal State Performance Plan (FFY2022)
  - 2. Response Rate** - Percentage of parents who completed the parent survey (responded)
    - ▶ Target: 10.00% - set by DOE
- ▶ The SD Parent Survey provides districts with meaningful district results/data on how district parents feel about the district's facilitation of positive parent involvement!

# District Survey Results

First page of District Report shows the current scores for:

- ▶ Response Rate
- ▶ Parent Involvement
- ▶ Scores in Four Scales:
  - ▶ Communication
  - ▶ IEP
  - ▶ Partnership
  - ▶ Information



# District Survey Results

Further tables/graphs in District Report show:

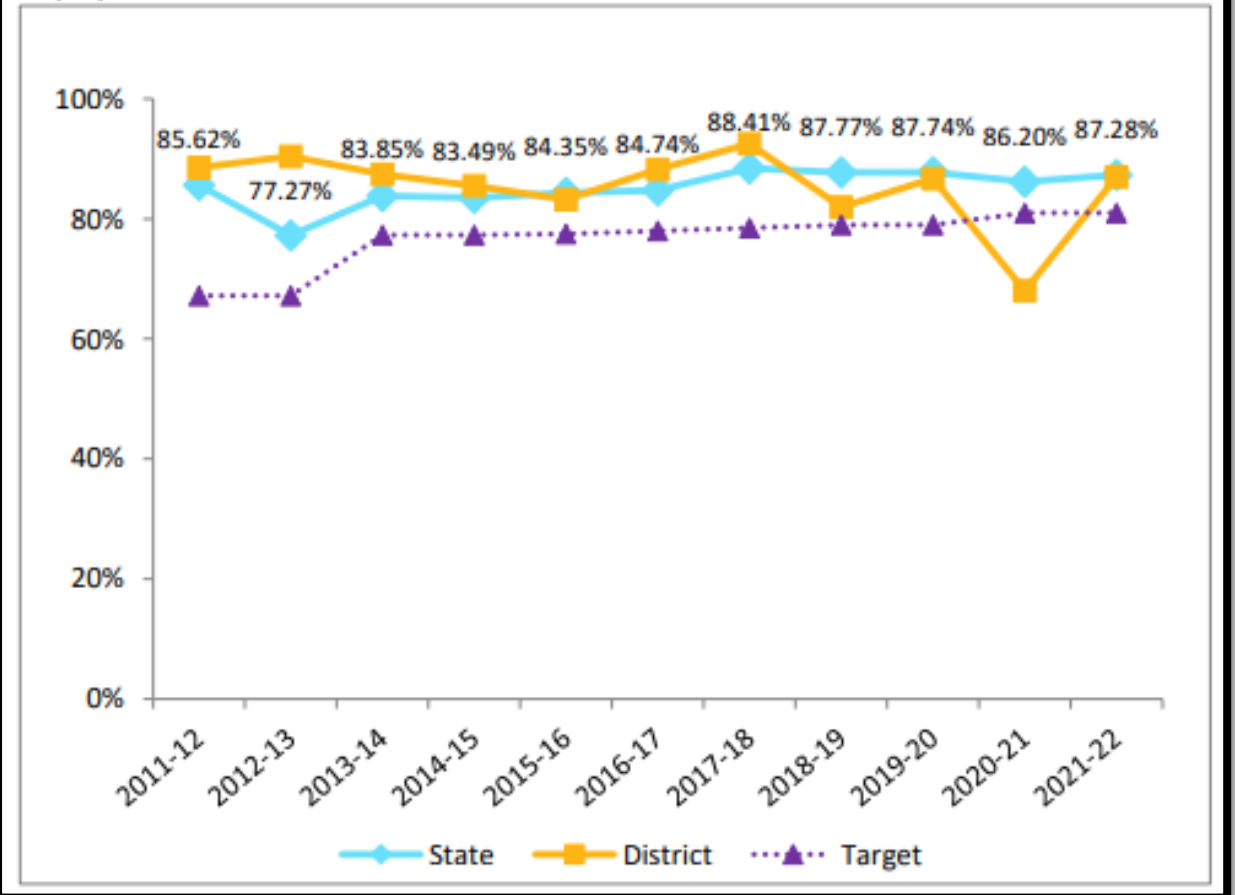
▶ **Current Data:**

- ▶ Scores on each survey question
- ▶ Scores of the four scales
- ▶ Response rates by demographics

▶ **Comparisons Over Time:**

- ▶ Scores on each survey question
- ▶ Parent Involvement Score
- ▶ Response Rate
- ▶ Scores of the four scales

Display 9: Overall Parent Involvement Score - Over Time



# Using District Survey Results

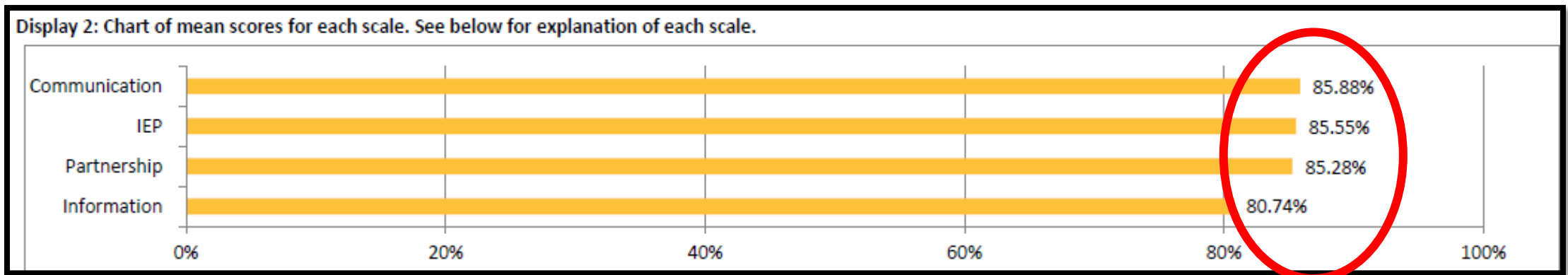
- ▶ Results are available for each survey question/statement, showing the percent of parents who agree/strongly agree with each statement.

Display 3: Individual Item Results

My Participation	# Answered	% Answered	Percent who said:					Strongly Agree	Agree, Strongly Agree
			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree			
1. I am treated as an equal partner with my child's teachers and other professionals in planning his/her special education program.	77	100.0%	4%	0%	1%	32%	62%	95%	
2. I am encouraged to participate in writing my child's IEP.	77	100.0%	4%	3%	4%	30%	60%	90%	
3. My child's school gives parents the help they may need to play an active role in their child's education.	77	100.0%	4%	4%	3%	35%	55%	90%	
4. My child's school makes sure that I understand the Procedural Safeguards (the rules that protect the rights of parents).	77	100.0%	4%	1%	3%	36%	56%	92%	
5. My child's school makes sure that I understand my options if I disagree with a decision of the school.	77	100.0%	4%	4%	5%	34%	53%	87%	

# Using District Survey Results

- ▶ The four scales, and the 12 questions included in the scales, outline best practices for parent involvement in the IEP process. The scales identify areas the district can celebrate, as well as areas to improve.
- ▶ For example, if the “Information” scale has the lowest scale score, the district should review the survey questions related to “Information,” use the [Indicator 8 District Reflection](#), and develop a plan to improve “Information”.
- ▶ Note: The percent of parents who met the target (overall Parent Involvement Score) is calculated differently than the average scale scores.





# Using District Survey Results

- ▶ [Indicator 8 District Reflection](#) is a tool available for districts to stimulate thinking and discussion among school personnel.
- ▶ In the fall, DOE requires districts to complete it when district was below the overall Parent Involvement target:
  - ▶ District can choose their lowest score(s) to address what they will improve.
- ▶ In the fall, DOE requires districts to complete it when district was below the Response Rate target:
  - ▶ Specific section for response rate.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

When reviewing district survey results in the below four areas, consider the following questions:

### 1. Individual Education Plan (IEP) – Reflect on current district processes:

- *What are the district methods for gathering parent input before, during, and after IEP meetings?*
- *How does the district encourage parents to participate in writing their child's IEP?*
- *How does the district ensure that IEPs are carried out as discussed and written?*

**District Response: How will the district improve IEP input/involvement this school year?**

### 2. Communication – Reflect on current district processes:

- *How does the district distribute and explain the Parental Rights and Procedural Safeguards to parents?*
- *How do teachers and administrators make themselves available and approachable for parent questions/concerns?*
- *What are the methods and timelines for communicating annual IEP goal progress to parents?*
- *How does the district ensure that teachers are writing documents with wording/explanations that parents can understand?*

**District Response: How will the district improve communication with parents this school year?**

# Using District Survey Results

- ▶ District SPED Directors should:
  - ▶ Share results with SPED teachers. Results helps SPED teachers understand “why” they administer the Parent Survey. It helps teachers see that their efforts in collecting Parent Surveys is worthwhile and produces meaningful data. Staff cannot change what they do not know.
  - ▶ Analyze district data to identify areas to improve.
  - ▶ Develop parent involvement policies or resources that can assist all SPED teachers across grades and disability categories.
- ▶ At the local level, District Survey Reports can be:
  - ▶ Presented at staff meetings or in-services.
  - ▶ Presented to the district school board.
  - ▶ Posted on the school district website.

- ▶ Now we understand WHY the Parent Survey is important and HOW districts can utilize the results.
- ▶ How can my district increase our parent response rate?
- ▶ Parent Survey Response Rates

# Survey Response Rate

## 10% Target

- ▶ EVERY parent in the district with a child on an IEP should be given the opportunity to respond!
- ▶ DOE requires that each district response rate on the 2023-2024 Parent Survey be 10% or higher.
- ▶ In April 2024, DOE will notify any district with a to-date response rate under 10%, so that district can make efforts to increase responses prior to May 31, 2024.
- ▶ In September 2024, if a district's response rate was less than 10%:
  - ▶ DOE will require an [Indicator 8 District Reflection](#) from the district.
  - ▶ DOE will monitor that districts response rate throughout the next school year.
- ▶ Current average statewide response rate is 26%. The response rate requirement for the 2024-2025 school year Parent Survey will increase to 20%. This helps ensure that respondents of various demographics (age, disability, race/ethnicity) are being represented, as federally required in the State Performance Plan.

# Survey Response Rate !NEW! District Flyer

- ▶ DOE developed a [2023-2024 District Flyer](#) to help district SPED staff and parents understand the “WHY” of the Parent Survey.
- ▶ The flyer wording can be used as a “script” read by the SPED teacher when providing a Parent Survey to a parent!
- ▶ The flyer contains the link and QR code to the online survey.
- ▶ Districts are encouraged to distribute the flyer this spring 2024 to gather district-wide responses from parents who have not completed their 2023-2024 Parent Survey.

**south dakota**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Learning. Leadership. Service.

## PARENTS / GUARDIANS:

*How is your school's  
Special Education  
department doing?*

The SD Parent Involvement Survey is given to all SD families with children receiving special education and related services. This is your opportunity to provide **CONFIDENTIAL** input about your local school district's special education program! Survey data will be summarized for the school district and the SD Department of Education to improve services for children and families in your school and across South Dakota!

If you have not completed this survey on paper or on line, complete the brief survey at the below link or QR code by May 31, 2024.  
<https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7323513/SDI8>

Created for the 2023-2024 SD Parent Involvement Survey

# Increasing Survey Response Rate

## Distribution Methods

- ▶ In-person methods are the most effective and will produce higher response rates because district can monitor how many surveys have been completed.
  - ▶ At the annual IEP meeting: Have a paper survey or an I-pad/laptop available with the online survey. Ask the parents to take a few minutes prior to the meeting or a few minutes after the meeting to complete the survey. Have them seal the paper version in their envelope and offer to mail it for them.
  - ▶ Parent Teacher conferences or any time parents are in-person: Have paper surveys or an I-pad/laptop available to complete/submit the survey.
  - ▶ Read the [2023-2024 District Flyer](#) script to help parents understand WHY their feedback is needed and important.
- ▶ Other general methods:
  - ▶ Hand out or mail surveys/envelopes/flyer to all parents.
  - ▶ E-mail and handing the [2023-2024 District Flyer](#) to every parent in the spring as a final reminder to complete the survey online if they have not completed it yet.

# Increasing Survey Response Rate

## Other Tips

- ▶ Parents can complete the Parent Survey any time of the school year. For example, if a student has an initial evaluation meeting in October, that parent could more appropriately complete their survey later that spring after they have experienced the IEP implementation process and relationships with SPED staff.
- ▶ EVERY parent in the district with a child on an IEP should be given the Parent Survey EVERY school year.
- ▶ SPED Directors could develop policies/guidelines regarding survey distribution/collection.
- ▶ SPED Teachers/SLPs could develop checklists to ensure a survey is completed for each student on their caseload.

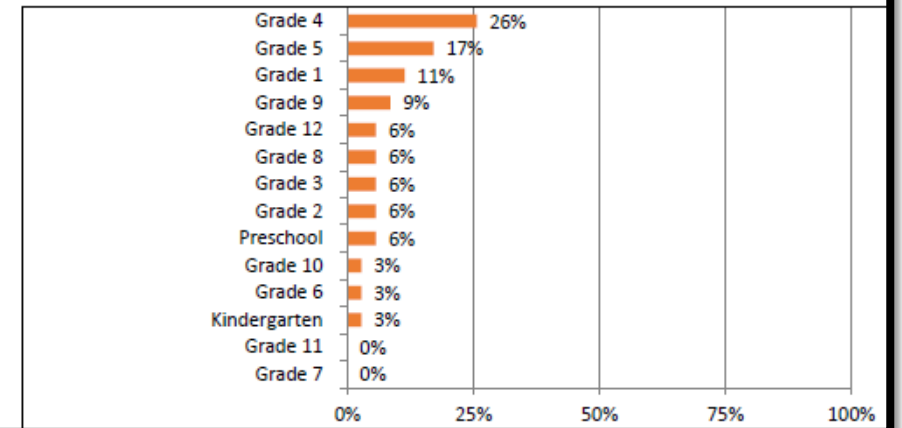
# Survey Response Rate

## Demographics

- ▶ District Reports have tables/graphs with results of response rates by demographic group.
- ▶ If a **grade level** or **disability category** is under-represented in the district survey response rate, the district must make targeted efforts to increase that group's response rate.
- ▶ DOE is federally required to analyze and report on the representativeness of statewide demographics.

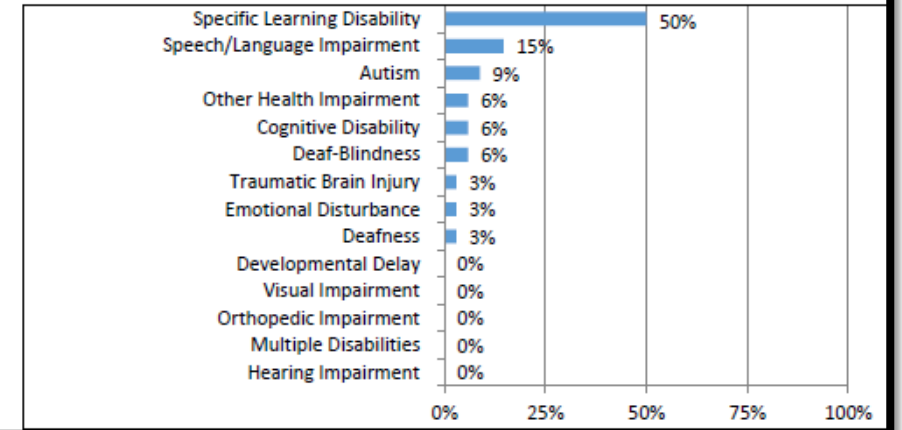
Display 11: Parent Respondents Who Had a Child in This Grade at Time of Survey

	Number	Percent
Preschool	2	6%
Kindergarten	1	3%
Grade 1	4	11%
Grade 2	2	6%
Grade 3	2	6%
Grade 4	9	26%
Grade 5	6	17%
Grade 6	1	3%
Grade 7	0	0%
Grade 8	2	6%
Grade 9	3	9%
Grade 10	1	3%
Grade 11	0	0%
Grade 12	2	6%



Display 13: Parent Respondents Who Had a Child with This Primary Disability

	Number	Percent
Autism	3	9%
Deaf-Blindness	2	6%
Deafness	1	3%
Emotional Disturbance	1	3%
Hearing Impairment	0	0%
Cognitive Disability	2	6%
Multiple Disabilities	0	0%
Orthopedic Impairment	0	0%
Other Health Impairment	2	6%
Specific Learning Disability	17	50%
Speech/Language Impairment	5	15%
Traumatic Brain Injury	1	3%
Visual Impairment	0	0%
Developmental Delay	0	0%





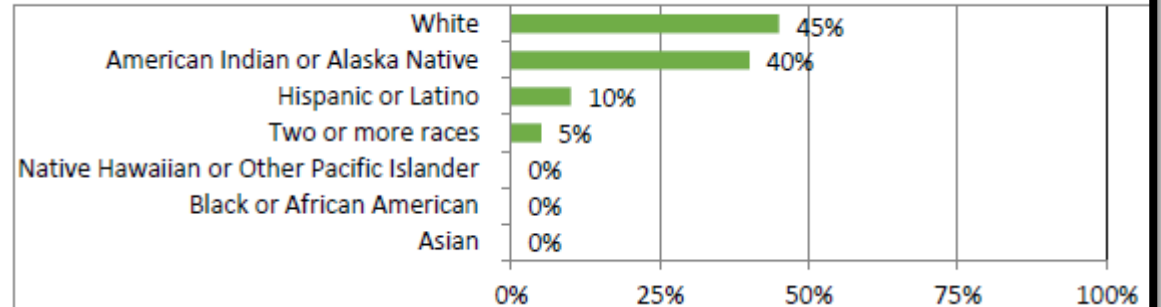
# Survey Response Rate

## Demographics: Race/Ethnicity

- ▶ DOE is federally required to report if **Race/Ethnicity** is under-represented in survey response rates.
- ▶ For the 2022-2023 school year, 66% of students with disabilities were White, however 73% of the survey respondents were White. Therefore, the survey results were NOT representative of South Dakota’s demographics.
- ▶ Districts should make every attempt to ensure that parents of students in all Race/Ethnic groups are being surveyed with a response rate that is representative of the groups in the district’s special education population. For example, if 70% of a district’s students with disabilities are American Indian, then 70% of the district survey responses should be from American Indian respondents.
- ▶ DOE will monitor race/ethnicity response rates at the district level.

Display 12: Parent Respondents Who Had a Child of This Race/Ethnicity

	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	40%
Asian	0	0%
Black or African American	0	0%
Hispanic or Latino	2	10%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0%
White	9	45%
Two or more races	1	5%



- ▶ Now we understand how to increase overall parent involvement and how to increase survey response rates.
- ▶ What are my district's next steps?
- ▶ District Planning

# District Planning

- ▶ Districts can develop and implement plans to improve parent involvement!
  - ▶ **District Reports:** Download and analyze your district results. Share results with SPED Teachers/SLPs.
  - ▶ **[Indicator 8 District Reflection](#):** Review it with administration or SPED staff.
  - ▶ **In-Services:** Present district plans/ideas at end-of-school year or beginning-of-school year to SPED staff. Encourage staff to attend trainings on effective parent communication or increasing parent engagement. Dedicate time to going through the [SD Parental Rights Handbook](#) with staff.
  - ▶ **Staff Meetings:** Provide SPED Teachers/SLPs with information/resources to distribute to parents. Explain district expectations/protocols regarding communication, information, and IEP processes. Discuss how to increase response rate with accurate demographic representation.
  - ▶ **District Policy:** Develop a policy/guidelines on survey distribution methods for SPED staff to follow.

# District Planning

**1. POLL: Which general topic from this training are you going to focus on?**

- ▶ Parent Involvement (IEP): Improve IEP processes/meetings/implementation
- ▶ Parent Involvement (Communication): Increase communication with parents
- ▶ Parent Involvement (Information): Provide more information/resources to parents
- ▶ District Survey Reports: Access and use district survey results/data
- ▶ Response Rate: Have more parents complete the Parent Survey

**2. CHAT: Please share specific examples.**

- ▶ Procedural Safeguards... [District Flyer](#) ... [District Reflection](#) ...)



Questions?

# Thank you!

- ▶ Thank you for all your efforts in partnering with parents and serving students with disabilities in South Dakota!
- ▶ If you wish to receive one CECH, complete the one-question quiz:
  - ▶ [Canvas Course: Improving Parent Involvement in the IEP Process - Winter/Spring 2024](#)
- ▶ Questions about Parent Surveys or Indicator 8: Parent Involvement:
  - ▶ Stacy Holzbauer, Alternate Assessment Specialist
  - ▶ DOE Special Education Programs
  - ▶ [Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us](mailto:Stacy.Holzbauer@state.sd.us) , 605-295-3441

