

## *Numbers that Count!*

### *Your Numbers, What they Might Mean, and What Your School Can do About it*

<i>School Name:</i>	JFK Elementary School	<i>Grades Reported on:</i>	K	to	5
<i>Data Collection Date:</i>	Oct 4, 2021	<i>Total School Population:</i>	359		students
<i>Debrief Date:</i>	Nov 10, 2021	<i>Number (%) of Minority Students:</i>	212		59.1%
<i>Data Collected &amp; Analyzed by:</i>	Michael F. Giangreco & Jesse C. Suter (CDCI / UVM)	<i>Number (%) Students on Free/Reduced Lunch:</i>	207		57.7%
<i>School Setting:</i>	Urban	<i>Number (%) of Students English Language Learners (ELL):</i>	115		32.0%
<i>*Number of Special Educators Reported on:</i>	8	<i>Number (%) of Students From Other Schools in District:</i>	2		0.6%
<i>Number of Students w/1:1 Supports Reported on:</i>	24				

*\*Note: Only Special Educators with 0.40 FTE or higher were included.*

*Aim of the Activity:* To collect data about special education service delivery that can help inform school improvement.

*Steps Involved:*

1. Collect data using the *School Demographic Questionnaire* from a school administrator.
2. Collect data using the *Special Educator Questionnaire* from all special educators in the school.
3. Collect data using the *Student Questionnaire* from those special educators who have students with full-time, one-to-one, paraprofessional supports in general education classes (one for each such student).
4. Summarize data and insert into appropriate spaces provided below.
5. Convene a team to review and consider the level of concern (see key below) corresponding to each piece of data.
6. Consider potential actions your school can take to improve service delivery to students with and without disabilities.

## Numbers that Count! Data Grid

\*Generic information, not specific to your setting. \*\*Key: N = None L = Low M = Moderate H = High

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
<b>1a</b>	Average Class Size (General Education)  M = 17	Small class size (e.g., 1:15), especially in the lower grades is positively correlated with student achievement, participation, and improved behavior. Vermont's <i>School Quality Standards</i> suggest that classes K-3, should average fewer than 20 students, and in grades 4-8 average fewer than 25. At the high school levels total rolls should not exceed 100 in English/Language Arts or average above 150 in other subject areas (both total would be divided by the number of class sections to determine average class size).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce class size</li> <li>• Co-teaching (general and special educators)</li> <li>• Distribute students with disabilities to ensure natural proportions</li> <li>• Reduce the range of grades and/or subjects for which special educators are responsible.</li> </ul>										
<b>1b</b>	Average Grade Range Covered by Special Educators  <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr> <tr> <td>8</td><td>3.0</td><td>2.1</td><td>1</td><td>6</td></tr> </table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	8	3.0	2.1	1	6	Regardless of class size, if the percentage of students with disabilities substantially exceeds the "natural proportion" (the percent of students with disabilities in the school), various problems may arise (e.g., difficulty meeting instructional needs, behavior management, planning time).  When special educators are responsible for students across multiple grades this increases the number of general education teachers they need to collaborate with and creates a wider range of curriculum for which they must be knowledgeable.		
n	M	SD	Low	High										
8	3.0	2.1	1	6										

#	Your School's Numbers that Count			What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
2	Number (%) of Students on IEPs			In Vermont, students with disabilities on IEPs was approximately 15% and 14% nationwide (2019-2020). Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's percentage of students with disabilities on IEPs varies from the averages. In other cases, particularly high numbers of students with disabilities on IEPs may signal systemic problems such as over-identification of students, problems with referral and/or eligibility practices and procedures, or problems with schoolwide programs and services designed to meet student needs without necessitating referral to special education.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize special education eligibility procedures</li><li>• Improve supports schoolwide and increase capacity of general education to reduce reliance on special education</li></ul>
		n	%			
	Total	95	26.5%			
	At School	92	96.8%			
	Off Campus	3	3.2%			
	Students w/ IEPs on Alternate Assessment	4	4.2%*			
	*1.1% of total student population (IDEA allows up to 1% of population.)					
3	Number (%) of Students on 504 Plans			In Vermont schools, the percentage of students with disabilities on 504 Plans is approximately 5.5%, and 2.7% nationwide (2017-2018). Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's percentage of students with disabilities on 504 plans varies from the averages. In other cases, particularly high or low numbers of students with disabilities on 504 may signal under or over-utilization of this option, especially when considered in relationship to the number of students on IEPs and those considered "at risk" who are being served on Educational Support Team (EST) plans		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize 504 eligibility procedures</li></ul>
		n	%			
	Total	7	1.9%			
	At School	7	100.0%			
	Off-Campus	0	0.0%			

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>		<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
4	Number (%) of Students “At Risk” Receiving Supports (e.g., EST)		In Vermont schools, the percentage of students (without disabilities) who are on Educational Support Team (EST) plans is over 6% (2020). There are no comparable national data. Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's % of students without disabilities on EST plans varies from the averages (e.g., poverty). In other cases, particularly high or low numbers of students without disabilities on EST plans may signal under or over-utilization of this option, especially when considered in relationship to the number of students on IEPs and 504 plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize EST / “at risk” supports and services</li><li>• Improve supports schoolwide in an effort to reduce the number of students "at risk"</li></ul>	
		<i>n</i>			<i>%</i>
	Total	9			2.5%
	At School	9			100.0%
	Off-Campus	0			0.0%
5	Number (%) of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) whose Primary Educational Placement is in General Education		In Vermont schools, the percentage of students with disabilities on IEPs who have their primary placement ( <i>at least 80% of the time</i> ) in general education classes with supports is approximately 79% (2020), down from a historic high of 88% (1992); <i>State Performance Plan</i> target was 79%, and approximately 65% nationwide. The percentages vary quite substantially based on disability category, with students who have high-incidence disabilities (e.g., speech/language impairments, learning disabilities) being included at substantially higher rates than those with lower-incidence disabilities (e.g., intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, emotional disturbance). Any time students are not afforded supported access to the general education classroom and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize initial and annual placement procedures to ensure that each year each student is considered for regular class placement with supplemental supports and aids.</li><li>• Explore teacher attitudes and conceptualization of regular class</li></ul>	
		<i>n</i>			<i>%</i>
	In general ed 80% or more	85			89.5%
	In general ed less than 80%	10			10.5%

#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>	<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
		curriculum, it warrants close scrutiny to ensure that students' educational rights are protected and they have full access to quality education. Placement of students with disabilities in more restrictive settings (e.g., special class, special school) raises potential questions about: (a) the annual procedures used to determine placement in the LRE (least restrictive environment), (b) attitudes and expectations about including the full range of students with disabilities, (c) potential misapplication of IDEA LRE provisions, or (d) knowledge and skills about how to successfully include the full range of students with disabilities in general education settings. Students need not function at the same level as their classmates for the regular class to be the LRE.		placement to ensure that all faculty understand how students with a full range of disabilities and levels of severity can be meaningfully included in regular class (even when they are pursuing different learning outcomes.
6	Number of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) in <i>non-residential placements outside of your school</i>  $n = 3$ $\% = 3.2\%$	Any time students with disabilities are placed outside of your school district, it warrants close scrutiny to ensure appropriateness for the student. Further it raises potential questions about whether there is a sufficient continuum of supports within the district.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in place (or strengthen) supports to avoid out of district placements.</li> </ul>
7	Number of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) in <i>residential placements</i>  $n = 0$ $\% = 0.0\%$	Since residential placements are among the most restrictive placements, they always require close scrutiny to ensure appropriateness for the student. Further it raises potential questions about whether there is a sufficient continuum of supports within the district.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore supports that could be put in place or strengthened to avoid residential placements.</li> </ul>

#	Your School's Numbers that Count		What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
8a	Information supplied by the school:		The number of special educators in the school is one of the most important numbers to consider when supporting students on IEPs, not just the number of actual people, but the amount of their FTE dedicated toward students on IEPs (since some people may be part-time or have split assignments, such with Title I or 504). Although examining the ratio of special educator FTE to students on IEPs is important, the simple ratio can be misleading because it doesn't address the range of caseload sizes and doesn't account for the varying percentage of students with disabilities in a school. Therefore, when tracking a school or district's special education service delivery from year to year, it can be helpful to compare the amount of special education FTE to the total school population; this ratio will account for changes in school population growth or decline and changes in the percentage of students identified as having a disability. One study (Suter & Giangreco, 2009) considered this ratio “special educator school density.” Subjective reports indicated “the lower the ratio the more these schools could absorb the fluctuations that are a routine aspect of public schooling (e.g., the enrollment of a new student with intensive special needs).” Schools with ratios from 1:50 to 1:79 reported they had the resources they needed; from 1:80 to 1:100 responses were mixed; and schools higher than		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare amount of special education time on IEPs with amount of assigned special educator time (account for direct, indirect, and consultative time).</li><li>• Allocate special education resources based on ratio of combined special educator FTE to total school population (8c) rather than only number of students on IEPs.</li><li>• Reduce special educator caseload size.</li></ul>
	Number of Special Educators & FTE				
	Number of Special Educators	10			
	Special Educator (SPED) FTE	9.23			
	SPED FTE for on-campus students	9.00			
	SPED FTE for off-campus students	0.23			
	Number of Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) serving as Special Educators	0			
	SLP serving as SPED FTE	0.00			
	Combined SPED FTE	9.23			
8b	Combined SPED FTE <i>at school</i>		9.00		
	Ratio of Combined Special Educator FTE to Students on IEPs ( <i>at school</i> )		1: 10.2		
8c	Ratio of Combined Special Educator FTE to the Total School Population ( <i>at school</i> )		1: 39.6		

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>	<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
9a	<i>Information supplied by special educators:</i>				
	Average Special Educator Caseload <i>Number of Students on IEPs</i>				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
9b	8	9.8	4.1	5	16
	IEP Caseload Breakdown <i>Providing Primary IEP Services</i>				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
	8	6.1	5.1	0	14
	<i>Sharing IEP Services</i>				
	8	1.9	2.9	0	7
9c	<i>Providing Few Direct IEP Services</i>				
	8	1.8	3.1	0	9
	Students with IEPs Supported but Not on Official Caseload				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
9d	8	0.3	0.5	0	1
	Percentage of Out-of-Class Instruction				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
	7	54.3%	35.1%	10%	100%

1:100 were more consistently challenged. When special educator caseloads are high, it is one of the key contributors to special educators leaving the field, experiencing "burnout", so simply diminishing their ability to do their work. A recent study (Suter, Giangreco, & Bruhl, 2019) identified a relationship between special educator school density and absence rates of special educators. Students' education is disrupted by key personnel absences. Another study (Giangreco, Suter, Hurley, 2013) found that both special educator school density and a special educator's caseload were significantly related to their ratings of work responsibilities being conducive to providing effective special education to students on IEPs (*see item 24*).

Although there is limited data on special educator caseloads, and no Vermont or federal regulations or guidelines, it is important to consider whether the special educator can reasonably and sufficiently address the specialized needs of the students on the caseload as reflected in the IEP. In addition to the number of students, it is important to consider the students' characteristics, whether the special educator is the primary provider of services or not, the range of grade levels and the number of teachers with whom a special educator works.

When the number of students with special educational needs on one caseload exceeds 10

- Consider adding special educators through resource reallocation (e.g., trading paraprofessional positions for special educator positions).
- Reduce the range of grades and/or subjects for which special educators are responsible.
- Explore reducing variability in special educator caseload size.
- Explore regular education supports for students on 504 or EST plans.





			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>										
11a	Average Special Educator Caseload Number of Students on EST Plans	See information on pages 6-7		See information on pages 6-7										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	8	0.0	0.0	0	0
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
8	0.0				0.0	0	0							
11b	EST Plan Caseload Breakdown <i>Providing Primary EST Services</i>													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	8	0.0	0.0	0	0
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
	8				0.0	0.0	0	0						
	<i>Sharing EST Services</i>													
<table><tr><td>8</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	8				0.0	0.0	0	0						
8	0.0	0.0	0	0										
<i>Provide Few Direct EST Services</i>														
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8	0.0	0.0	0	0										
11c	Students on EST Supported but Not on Caseload													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>0.4</td><td>1.1</td><td>0</td><td>3</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	8	0.4	1.1	0	3			
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High									
8	0.4	1.1	0	3										

			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
12a	Percentage of Time Working as Special Educator		Item 12 provides a few alternatives to examining special educator caseloads. The first (12b) is the <i>full equivalent caseload</i> which is the number of students on IEPs special educators would have if 100% of their time were directed toward students on IEPs.  The second (12c) is the average special educator caseload including students with IEPs, 504 plans, and EST plans.  The third (12e) is the average number of students supported by special educators ( <i>including both students on their caseloads plus</i> ).   <	

			Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
13a	<p>Number of Paraprofessionals Supervised Per Special Educator (information provided by special educators on the paraprofessionals they supervise)</p> <table> <tr> <th>n</th> <th>M</th> <th>SD</th> <th>Low</th> <th>High</th> </tr> <tr> <td>8</td> <td>3.6</td> <td>2.4</td> <td>1</td> <td>8</td> </tr> </table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	8	3.6	2.4	1	8	<p>The limited existing data suggests that when the ratio of special educators to special education paraprofessionals exceeds 1:2, the service delivery model may be unbalanced. In part the data suggest that when special educators have more than one or two paraprofessionals they have insufficient time to train/supervise/direct their activities. In a recent study where on average each special educator supervised 4 paraprofessionals, they only spent about 2% of their time per paraprofessional. The maximum number of paraprofessionals supervised by a single special educator was 14 -- leaving insufficient time for supervision or instruction. This exacerbates the problems mentioned earlier, leaving too many paraprofessionals to fend for themselves. Based on federally reported data (2019 for students ages 6-21), Vermont is one of 6 states with a special educator FTE to special education paraprofessional FTE ratio higher than 1:2 (VT is 1 : 2.4). In contrast, the US ratio was 1 : 1.2, and 20 states have more special educator FTE than special education paraprofessional FTE. Though the averages can be illuminating, the range is critically important because the distribution of paraprofessionals per special educator can vary substantially.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the number of special educators or reduce the number of paraprofessionals.</li> <li>• Explore classroom teachers assuming primary or shared roles for supervising paraprofessionals.</li> <li>• Explore redistribution of paraprofessionals (and students if necessary) among special educators to more evenly distribute paraprofessional supervision.</li> </ul>
n	M	SD	Low	High										
8	3.6	2.4	1	8										
13b	<p>Ratio of Special Educator FTE to Special Education Paraprofessional FTE (information provided by school)</p> <p>1: 2.7</p>													

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>		<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
<b>14a</b>	<i>Information supplied by the school:</i>		At present, there is no research on desirable numbers of general and special education paraprofessionals in schools. Data indicate that there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of paraprofessionals with ongoing growth. In 2019, there were 440,215 (FTE) special education paraprofessionals K-12 nationally, and their use has substantially increased.  For example, in Vermont in 1990 there were fewer than 1,200 (FTE) special education paraprofessionals (K-12). By 2019, there were more than 2,800 (FTE). When adjusted for population increases and changes in child count, on average in 1990 there was approximately one special education paraprofessional for every nine students on an IEP; by 2019 there was an average of one special education paraprofessional for every four and one-half students on IEPs. Small-scale studies suggest that Vermont's use of special education paraprofessionals may be among the highest in the nation. At the same time, data suggests that paraprofessionals' roles have become increasingly instructional, with some students with disabilities getting more of their education from under qualified personnel. Larger special educator caseloads typically provide insufficient time to plan for and direct the work of paraprofessionals, too often leaving paraprofessionals to make numerous curricular and instructional decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore service delivery to ensure that students with disabilities receive their primary instruction from teachers and special educators.</li><li>• Explore opportunities to have some paraprofessionals based funded by general education.</li><li>• If the number of paraprofessionals or ratio of special education paraprofessionals to students on IEPs is identified as a concern, consider using the schoolwide planning process, <i>Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals.</i></li></ul>
	Total Number (in FTE) of Paraprofessionals At School			
	Number of paraprofessionals	35.0		
	Paraprofessional FTE	31.5		
	FTE assigned to general education	7.0		
FTE assigned to special education	24.5			
<b>14b</b>	Ratio (in FTE) of Special Education Paraprofessionals to Students on IEPs (at school)			
		Ratio	%Ss	
	All students with IEPs	1 : 3.8	100.0%	
	Students with IEPs with 1:1 support	1 : 1.0	19.6%	
	Available to students with IEPs not receiving 1:1 support	1 : 11.4	80.4%	

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>		<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
15a	Subset of Special Education Paraprofessional FTE (listed in 14a) <i>Information supplied by school:</i>		<p>Over the past two decades there has been a substantial increase in the number of special education paraprofessionals assigned, one-to-one (full-time) to students with disabilities. Although this type and level of support is undoubtedly offered with benevolent intentions, a series of studies have documented that this model of service delivery is fraught with numerous unintended detrimental effects (e.g., isolation from classroom activities and peers, stigmatization, provocation of behavior problems). Use of 1:1 paraprofessional support is one of the most restrictive supports than can be offered to a student and therefore should be closely scrutinized. Even in cases where students have extensive support needs, rarely do they need 1:1 paraprofessional support 100% of the time. The literature suggests that if the paraprofessionals are being used in place of instruction from teachers and special educators it is problematic. Use of 1:1 paraprofessionals has become a convenient, though often ill-advised, first (and sometimes lone) option for supporting students with disabilities in general education classrooms. In addition, recent legal proceedings suggest that in some cases the use of 1:1 paraprofessional services without a plan for increasing student independence may be considered a violation of FAPE.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Re-assign full-time, one-to-one paraprofessionals as classroom paraprofessionals or consider a split funding FTE.</li><li>• If student needs are low frequency or intermittent, consider using a paraprofessional pool (e.g., where a paraprofessional moves between situations on a prescheduled or as needed basis).</li><li>• Explore options for more instruction from teachers and special educators.</li><li>• Explore peer supports.</li></ul>	
		FTE			%Ps
	Working 1:1 with students with IEPs	18.0			73.5%
	Working 1:1 with students in general education 80% or more	17.0			94.4%
	Working 1:1 with students in general education less than 80%	1.0			5.6%
15b	Amount of Time Students with IEPs with 1:1 Paraprofessional Support Spend in General Education Classes <i>Information supplied by Special Educators:</i>				
		n	%		
	80% or more	18	75.0%		
	40% to 79%	2	8.3%		
	0% to 39%	4	16.7%		

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
16a	Special Educator Time Use (Self-Reported) Ave. % of Time Spent on: <i>Special Education Paperwork</i>	<i>Please Note: Special Educators were asked to report on the percentage of time spent on these activities regardless of how many hours they devote to work. These percentages include any time spent working outside of the regular school day. Therefore, these percentages do not necessarily or exclusively reflect time spent during the school day and when students are present. Other forms of data collection are more appropriate for capturing what happens during the school day only (e.g., time study).</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired time use for special educators to take best advantage of their skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual time use.</li><li>Compare findings to data sources that exclusively focus on special educator time use during the school day (e.g., time study).</li></ul>										
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16b	<i>Collaboration with Others</i>													
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16c	<i>Behavior Support</i>													
	<table><tr><td>8</td><td>20.0</td><td>13.7</td><td>10</td><td>51</td></tr></table>				8	20.0	13.7	10	51					
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16d	<i>Instructional Time with Students</i>													
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16e	<i>Planning</i>													
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16f	<i>Working with Paraprofessionals</i>													
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	<table><tr><td>8</td><td>4.5</td><td>4.4</td><td>0</td><td>14</td></tr></table>	8	4.5	4.4	0	14								
8	4.5	4.4	0	14										
16h	<i>Other</i>													
	<table><tr><td>8</td><td>6.9</td><td>8.8</td><td>0</td><td>20</td></tr></table>	8	6.9	8.8	0	20								
8	6.9	8.8	0	20										

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*									
17a	Paraprofessional Time Use ( <i>Reported by Special Educators</i> ) Ave%of Time Spent: Clerical Support:		Existing data suggests that special education paraprofessionals are expending an increasing portion of their time on instruction. Under some circumstances this may be positive, though much depends on whether the instruction they provide is primary or supplemental; in too many cases it is inappropriately the primary instruction. Whether the increase in instruction by paraprofessionals is desirable also depends on whether they are properly trained and otherwise qualified for the tasks they are being asked to perform. Existing data suggests that many paraprofessionals are assigned to support students in classes where they report being under-skilled or unskilled. This becomes increasingly problematic in the upper elementary grades, middle school, and high school. As one study participant (paraprofessional) stated, "I don't do algebra." The breakdown of paraprofessional time use is designed to assist your school reflect on how you want paraprofessionals spending their time. In some cases there is renewed interest in having paraprofessionals engage in non-instructional tasks that allow teachers and special educators to spend more time directly teaching students with disabilities -- these non-instructional duties and supplemental instructional roles need to be clearly established as highly valued role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired time use for special education paraprofessionals to take best advantage of their skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual time use.</li></ul>									
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>1.9</td><td>2.6</td><td>0</td><td>5</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>			<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	8	1.9	2.6	0	5
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>			<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
8	1.9	2.6			0	5							
17b	Supervision of Students:												
<table><tr><td>8</td><td>13.8</td><td>9.9</td><td>0</td><td>30</td></tr></table>	8	13.8			9.9	0	30						
8	13.8	9.9			0	30							
17c	Personal Care:												
<table><tr><td>8</td><td>3.8</td><td>4.4</td><td>0</td><td>10</td></tr></table>	8	3.8			4.4	0	10						
8	3.8	4.4			0	10							
17d	Behavior Support:												
<table><tr><td>8</td><td>39.4</td><td>16.6</td><td>25</td><td>70</td></tr></table>	8	39.4	16.6	25	70								
8	39.4	16.6	25	70									
17e	Implementing Instruction Planned by a Teacher or Special Educator												
<table><tr><td>8</td><td>33.1</td><td>11.9</td><td>20</td><td>50</td></tr></table>	8	33.1	11.9	20	50								
8	33.1	11.9	20	50									
17f	Engaging in Self-Directed Activities, Not Planned or Supervised by Teacher/SPED												
<table><tr><td>8</td><td>8.1</td><td>8.4</td><td>0</td><td>25</td></tr></table>	8	8.1	8.4	0	25								
8	8.1	8.4	0	25									
17g	Other												
<table><tr><td>8</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	8	0.0	0.0	0	0								
8	0.0	0.0	0	0									

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*																																													
18	Number of Students who have 1:1 Paraprofessional Support by Primary IDEA Disability Category	Virtually no state or national data exist on the disability categories of students with disabilities who are receive full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports. Because the variability and severity with each category is substantial, these data offer only a modest amount of information to consider (more detailed and relevant data are found in item 20). In general, we suggest that you should especially scrutinize situations where the disability category is most closely associated with students who have high-incidence / mild disabilities. For example, if you have students in categories such as learning disabilities (LD) it should be explored further. It is more common (though not necessarily more appropriate) for students in categories most closely associated with low-incidence / severe disabilities (e.g., deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities) to receive one-to-one paraprofessional supports. It should be noted that some schools have made a decision to completely move away from the use of full-time one-to-one paraprofessionals because of its known problems. In these cases students may receive such supports at specific times and for specific purposes (e.g., personal care supports).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This informational item can assist in understanding items 13 and 14 regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight if any particular categories are unusually represented (e.g., high incidence disabilities).</li></ul>																																													
	<table><tr><th>Disability</th><th>n</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Autism</td><td>11</td><td>47.8%</td></tr><tr><td>Deaf-Blindness</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Developmental Delay</td><td>2</td><td>8.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Emotional Disturbance</td><td>4</td><td>17.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Hearing Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Intellectual Disability</td><td>3</td><td>13.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Multiple Disabilities</td><td>1</td><td>4.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Orthopedic Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Other Health Imp.</td><td>2</td><td>8.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Specific Learning Dis.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Speech / Language Imp.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Visual Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>23</td><td>100.0%</td></tr></table>				Disability	n	%	Autism	11	47.8%	Deaf-Blindness	0	0.0%	Developmental Delay	2	8.7%	Emotional Disturbance	4	17.4%	Hearing Impairment	0	0.0%	Intellectual Disability	3	13.0%	Multiple Disabilities	1	4.3%	Orthopedic Impairment	0	0.0%	Other Health Imp.	2	8.7%	Specific Learning Dis.	0	0.0%	Speech / Language Imp.	0	0.0%	Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0.0%	Visual Impairment	0	0.0%	Total	23	100.0%
	Disability				n	%																																											
	Autism				11	47.8%																																											
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Visual Impairment	0	0.0%																																															
Total	23	100.0%																																															



#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
19	Number of Students with 1:1 Paraprofessional Support Who Participate in Alternate Assessment			<p><i>Please note: We recommend exploring any discrepancies between special educators' response to this item and item 2.</i></p> <p>Virtually no state or national data exist on the number of students who receive full-time one-to-one supports who also are eligible to participate in alternate assessment. Presumably there should be a substantial correlation between those students with severe enough disabilities to warrant alternate assessment (most significantly impaired 1%) and those who warrant one-to-one supports. If a substantial number of students who are receiving one-to-one supports are not eligible for alternate assessment it may be of concern and one way to cross-check the level of need.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This item can assist in understanding items 13 and 14 regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight students who are receiving full-time, one-to-one supports, but who are not eligible for alternate assessment.</li> </ul>
		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	Students on Alternate Assessment	2	8.7%			
	Students not on Alternate Assessment	21	91.3%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
20a	Type and Level of Disability Among Those Receiving Full-Time 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports			<p>There are virtually no state or national data on the types and levels of disability among students who are receiving full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports. Given the inherent variability within the IDEA disability categories, having a better understanding of the types and levels of disabilities can assist your school as it reflects on which students are receiving full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports and whether any patterns exist that can facilitate school improvement planning. Once you ascertain the characteristics and levels you can begin asking questions such as: (a) Do these students need paraprofessional supports all day? (b) What is</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This informational item can assist in understanding items 13, 14 and 18, regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight if any particular types or levels are unusually represented (e.g., mild disabilities).</li> </ul>
	<i>Intellectual / Learning</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	0	0.0%			
	Mild	5	21.7%			
	Moderate	15	65.2%			
	Severe	3	13.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
<b>20b</b>	<i>Physical / Orthopedic</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	the paraprofessional doing when the student is with the teacher, special educator, or a related services professional? (c) Are the duties being fulfilled by the paraprofessional most appropriate for them to deliver, or are they better provided by a peer, teacher, or special educator?		See information on page 17
	None	12	52.2%			
	Mild	8	34.8%			
	Moderate	3	13.0%			
	Severe	0	0.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
	<i>Behavioral / Emotional</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	1	4.3%			
	Mild	2	8.7%			
	Moderate	10	43.5%			
	Severe	10	43.5%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
<b>20d</b>	<i>Vision</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	23	100.0%			
	Mild	0	0.0%			
	Moderate	0	0.0%			
	Severe	0	0.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
20e	<i>Hearing Disability</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>See information on pages 17-18</i>		<i>See information on page 17</i>
	None	22	95.7%			
	Mild	0	0.0%			
	Moderate	1	4.3%			
	Severe	0	0.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
20f	<i>Health Disability</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	16	69.6%			
	Mild	6	26.1%			
	Moderate	1	4.3%			
	Severe	0	0.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	Your School's Numbers that Count					What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
21a	Average Percent Instructional Time for Students Receiving 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports					One of the most important aspects of successful inclusive environments is what has been referred to as "teacher engagement", namely the teacher's attitude of ownership for the education of the student with a disability in the regular classroom and the teacher's actions to be knowledgeable and involved in the design and delivery of curriculum and instruction.  Existing data suggests that a substantial amount of primary instruction is provided paraprofessionals; there is little existing evidence that this approach is beneficial for students. A small number of studies have documented positive impact of paraprofessionals providing supplemental (not primary) instruction when they are appropriately trained and supervised in the implementation of researched-based approaches. Additionally, students with disabilities report feeling like outsiders in the classroom and less valued when they do not receive their instruction from the classroom teacher. Excessive use of paraprofessionals to provide instruction potentially establishes a double standard that would not be acceptable if applied to students without disabilities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired instructional time use for special educators, teachers, and paraprofessionals to take best advantage of their respective skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual instructional time use.</li><li>Increase instructional by teachers, special educators, and co-teaching.</li></ul>
	Classroom Teachers							
	n	M	SD	Low	High			
	24	42.1	26.8	0	80			
	Special Educators / Related Services							
	24	21.9	20.2	5	90			
21b	Paraprofessionals							
	24	36.0	29.1	0	94			

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*		
22	Number of Students Where Various Team Members Have Advocated for Students to Have Full-Time 1:1 Paraprofessional Support (as reported by Special Educators)	There are virtually no data on this topic in the professional literature other than limited descriptions suggesting that in some cases parents advocate for one-to-one paraprofessional supports. This is often rooted in parental concerns that their child will be lost in the shuffle of the regular classroom and that their individual needs will not be met. At other times it is school personnel (e.g., teachers, principal) who require that a paraprofessional be assigned to a student in order for them to have access to the regular classroom (sometimes this is contrary to the wishes of the parent). Students themselves are rarely involved in these support service decisions, a fact that runs contrary to the current emphasis on self-determination as a best practice.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share information with families and school personnel about both the pros and cons (e.g., inadvertent detrimental effects) of utilizing full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports.</li><li>• Ensure that use of full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional support is neither the first or only option considered to support students with disabilities in general education classes (e.g., use <i>Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals</i>).</li><li>• Encourage self-determination by involving students in decisions about their own supports.</li></ul>		
	Team Member				n	%
	General Education Administrator				15	62.5%
	Special Education Administrator				14	58.3%
	Classroom Teacher				23	95.8%
	Special Educator				24	100.0%
	Parent or Guardian				22	91.7%
	Student with a Disability				1	4.2%
	Other				10	41.7%
	n reported				24	100.0%

#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>	<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>																											
23	<div>Primary Reasons Why Students Were Recommended for 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports</div> <table><tr><th><i>Reason</i></th><th><i>n</i></th><th><i>%</i></th></tr><tr><td>Safety of Student</td><td>19</td><td>79.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Safety of Others</td><td>13</td><td>54.2%</td></tr><tr><td>Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)</td><td>22</td><td>91.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Physical, Health, or Personal Care</td><td>10</td><td>41.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Communication Support</td><td>14</td><td>58.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Instructional / Learning Support</td><td>22</td><td>91.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td><i>n reported</i></td><td>24</td><td>100.0%</td></tr></table>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	Safety of Student	19	79.2%	Safety of Others	13	54.2%	Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)	22	91.7%	Physical, Health, or Personal Care	10	41.7%	Communication Support	14	58.3%	Instructional / Learning Support	22	91.7%	Other	0	0.0%	<i>n reported</i>	24	100.0%	There are virtually no data on this topic in the professional literature. Collecting data on the reasons why some students get assigned full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional support can assist schools in deciding: (a) whether the use of a paraprofessional is a good match with the reasons; and /or (b) whether the reasons prompt consideration of other ways to meet students' needs more effectively using less restrictive approaches.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider use of paraprofessional pools or classroom-assigned paraprofessionals to address low frequency needs.</li><li>• Consider use of generically available school personnel (e.g., school nurses, guidance counselors).</li><li>• Consider matches between personnel and functions to be served (e.g., if the function is instruction, who is best suited to provide that support?).</li></ul>
<i>Reason</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>																													
Safety of Student	19	79.2%																													
Safety of Others	13	54.2%																													
Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)	22	91.7%																													
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Other	0	0.0%																													
<i>n reported</i>	24	100.0%																													

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
24	<p>Special Educators' Agreement with:  <i>My work responsibilities are conducive to  providing effective special education to  students served on IEPs.</i>  (Rated on a scale of 1 to 10  1 = Strongly Disagree  10 = Strongly Agree)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8</td><td>6.1</td><td>2.7</td><td>3</td><td>10</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Special Educators' Ratings</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Strongly Disagree      Rating      Strongly Agree</p>	n	M	SD	Low	High	8	6.1	2.7	3	10	<p>This question was asked to gauge special educators' feelings toward their work responsibilities. Each school needs to decide whether the average is of concern or not for them. Asking special educators whether they feel their work conditions are conducive to providing effective services and supports can help schools (a) assess how special educators perceive their working conditions and (b) begin a conversation to address concerns and plan for possible changes. One recent study found that special educator ratings on this item were significantly related to special educator school density and special educator's IEP caseload.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify subset of special educators with the most challenging caseloads</li> <li>• Reduce caseload size</li> <li>• Reduce range of classes and /or ages served</li> <li>• Ensure no one special educator has too many students with intensive needs</li> <li>• Reduce the number of paraprofessionals a special educator is expected to supervise / direct</li> <li>• Consider limiting responsibilities for non IEP student</li> <li>• Meet with the special educators and seek their input about what would improve their working conditions to better serve students</li> </ul>
n	M	SD	Low	High										
8	6.1	2.7	3	10										

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[Number following citations correspond with numbered data items]

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## Interpreting the Data and Acknowledging its Limitations

The purpose of the *Numbers that Count!* data is provide an initial glimpse into a subset of schooling practices and demographics in an effort to illuminate issues that can lead to constructive dialogue within the school community in an effort to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for students. Therefore, they should be used as springboard for reflection and potential action and not viewed as a final word.

The data provided in the *Numbers that Count! Data Grid* are subject to many of the same limitations as any data, regardless of whether it is quantitative or qualitative. So as you consider the finding please keep the following limitations in mind:

1. Like all data, these data are partial (we only collected data on a subset of issues) and bound by context. Therefore, they should not be considered comprehensive and should be considered in context.
2. Data were collected from a small sample of special educators, about a small set of interrelated issues, at a single point in time.
3. Errors can sometimes occur in the raw data submitted by respondents for a variety of reasons (e.g., simple recording mistakes, misinterpretation of questions, idiosyncratic interpretation of questions, imprecisely worded questions on a questionnaire). So it is possible (maybe even likely) that some of these errors exist in these data. Therefore, if any numbers seem substantially out of kilter, it is advisable to not rush to judgment on their meaning and consider them in light of other findings and what is known about the context.
4. Through this process, we found that even seemingly simple issues (e.g., special educator caseloads) are never as simple as they might seem (e.g., SLPs functioning as special educators, special educators sharing caseloads, special educators not working directly with students they case manage and/or working directly with students they don't case manage). Therefore, even though the numbers are presented distinctly, some may be "fuzzier" than others because of the nuances that exist across and within schools. That is one reason why we have chosen to offer face-to-face debriefing.

Despite the inherent limitations in these data, they offer a variety of interesting and important information that can be utilized to improve opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities and there peers without disabilities.

We hope you find these data helpful in your school improvement process,

- Michael F. Giangreco & Jesse C. Suter

## *Numbers that Count!*

### *Your Numbers, What they Might Mean, and What Your School Can do About it*

<i>School Name:</i>	Winooski Middle School	<i>Grades Reported on:</i>	6	to	8
<i>Data Collection Date:</i>	Oct 4, 2021	<i>Total School Population:</i>	156	students	
<i>Debrief Date:</i>	Nov 3, 2021	<i>Number (%) of Minority Students:</i>	92	59.0%	
<i>Data Collected &amp; Analyzed by:</i>	Michael F. Giangreco & Jesse C. Suter (CDCI / UVM)	<i>Number (%) Students on Free/Reduced Lunch:</i>	110	70.5%	
<i>School Setting:</i>	Urban	<i>Number (%) of Students English Language Learners (ELL):</i>	57	36.5%	
<i>*Number of Special Educators Reported on:</i>	5	<i>Number (%) of Students From Other Schools in District:</i>	2	0.6%	
<i>Number of Students w/1:1 Supports Reported on:</i>	6				

*\*Note: Only Special Educators with 0.40 FTE or higher were included.*

*Aim of the Activity:* To collect data about special education service delivery that can help inform school improvement.

*Steps Involved:*

1. Collect data using the *School Demographic Questionnaire* from a school administrator.
2. Collect data using the *Special Educator Questionnaire* from all special educators in the school.
3. Collect data using the *Student Questionnaire* from those special educators who have students with full-time, one-to-one, paraprofessional supports in general education classes (one for each such student).
4. Summarize data and insert into appropriate spaces provided below.
5. Convene a team to review and consider the level of concern (see key below) corresponding to each piece of data.
6. Consider potential actions your school can take to improve service delivery to students with and without disabilities.

## Numbers that Count! Data Grid

\*Generic information, not specific to your setting. \*\*Key: N = None L = Low M = Moderate H = High

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
<b>1a</b>	Average Class Size (General Education)  M = 15	Small class size (e.g., 1:15), especially in the lower grades is positively correlated with student achievement, participation, and improved behavior. Vermont's <i>School Quality Standards</i> suggest that classes K-3, should average fewer than 20 students, and in grades 4-8 average fewer than 25. At the high school levels total rolls should not exceed 100 in English/Language Arts or average above 150 in other subject areas (both total would be divided by the number of class sections to determine average class size).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce class size</li> <li>• Co-teaching (general and special educators)</li> <li>• Distribute students with disabilities to ensure natural proportions</li> <li>• Reduce the range of grades and/or subjects for which special educators are responsible.</li> </ul>										
<b>1b</b>	Average Grade Range Covered by Special Educators  <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr> <tr> <td>5</td><td>3.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>3</td><td>3</td></tr> </table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	5	3.0	0.0	3	3	Regardless of class size, if the percentage of students with disabilities substantially exceeds the "natural proportion" (the percent of students with disabilities in the school), various problems may arise (e.g., difficulty meeting instructional needs, behavior management, planning time).  When special educators are responsible for students across multiple grades this increases the number of general education teachers they need to collaborate with and creates a wider range of curriculum for which they must be knowledgeable.		
n	M	SD	Low	High										
5	3.0	0.0	3	3										

#	Your School's Numbers that Count			What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
2	Number (%) of Students on IEPs			In Vermont, students with disabilities on IEPs was approximately 15% and 14% nationwide (2019-2020). Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's percentage of students with disabilities on IEPs varies from the averages. In other cases, particularly high numbers of students with disabilities on IEPs may signal systemic problems such as over-identification of students, problems with referral and/or eligibility practices and procedures, or problems with schoolwide programs and services designed to meet student needs without necessitating referral to special education.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize special education eligibility procedures</li><li>• Improve supports schoolwide and increase capacity of general education to reduce reliance on special education</li></ul>
		<i>n</i>	%			
	Total	49	31.4%			
	At School	47	95.9%			
	Off Campus	2	4.1%			
	<div>Students w/ IEPs on Alternate Assessment</div> <div>2</div> <div>4.1%*</div>					
*1.3% of total student population (IDEA allows up to 1% of population.)						
3	Number (%) of Students on 504 Plans			In Vermont schools, the percentage of students with disabilities on 504 Plans is approximately 5.5%, and 2.7% nationwide (2017-2018). Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's percentage of students with disabilities on 504 plans varies from the averages. In other cases, particularly high or low numbers of students with disabilities on 504 may signal under or over-utilization of this option, especially when considered in relationship to the number of students on IEPs and those considered "at risk" who are being served on Educational Support Team (EST) plans		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize 504 eligibility procedures</li></ul>
		<i>n</i>	%			
	Total	4	2.6%			
	At School	4	100.0%			
	Off-Campus	0	0.0%			

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>		<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
4	Number (%) of Students “At Risk” Receiving Supports (e.g., EST)		In Vermont schools, the percentage of students (without disabilities) who are on Educational Support Team (EST) plans is over 6% (2020). There are no comparable national data. Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's % of students without disabilities on EST plans varies from the averages (e.g., poverty). In other cases, particularly high or low numbers of students without disabilities on EST plans may signal under or over-utilization of this option, especially when considered in relationship to the number of students on IEPs and 504 plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize EST / “at risk” supports and services</li><li>• Improve supports schoolwide in an effort to reduce the number of students "at risk"</li></ul>	
		<i>n</i>			<i>%</i>
	Total	10			6.4%
	At School	10			100.0%
	Off-Campus	0			0.0%
5	Number (%) of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) whose Primary Educational Placement is in General Education		In Vermont schools, the percentage of students with disabilities on IEPs who have their primary placement ( <i>at least 80% of the time</i> ) in general education classes with supports is approximately 79% (2020), down from a historic high of 88% (1992); <i>State Performance Plan</i> target was 79%, and approximately 65% nationwide. The percentages vary quite substantially based on disability category, with students who have high-incidence disabilities (e.g., speech / language impairments, learning disabilities) being included at substantially higher rates than those with lower-incidence disabilities (e.g., intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, emotional disturbance). Any time students are not afforded supported access to the general education classroom and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize initial and annual placement procedures to ensure that each year each student is considered for regular class placement with supplemental supports and aids.</li><li>• Explore teacher attitudes and conceptualization of regular class</li></ul>	
		<i>n</i>			<i>%</i>
	In general ed 80% or more	39			79.6%
	In general ed less than 80%	10			20.4%

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
		curriculum, it warrants close scrutiny to ensure that students' educational rights are protected and they have full access to quality education. Placement of students with disabilities in more restrictive settings (e.g., special class, special school) raises potential questions about: (a) the annual procedures used to determine placement in the LRE (least restrictive environment), (b) attitudes and expectations about including the full range of students with disabilities, (c) potential misapplication of IDEA LRE provisions, or (d) knowledge and skills about how to successfully include the full range of students with disabilities in general education settings. Students need not function at the same level as their classmates for the regular class to be the LRE.		placement to ensure that all faculty understand how students with a full range of disabilities and levels of severity can be meaningfully included in regular class (even when they are pursuing different learning outcomes.
6	Number of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) in <i>non-residential placements outside of your school</i>  $n = 2$ $\% = 4.1\%$	Any time students with disabilities are placed outside of your school district, it warrants close scrutiny to ensure appropriateness for the student. Further it raises potential questions about whether there is a sufficient continuum of supports within the district.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in place (or strengthen) supports to avoid out of district placements.</li> </ul>
7	Number of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) in <i>residential placements</i>  $n = 0$ $\% = 0.0\%$	Since residential placements are among the most restrictive placements, they always require close scrutiny to ensure appropriateness for the student. Further it raises potential questions about whether there is a sufficient continuum of supports within the district.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore supports that could be put in place or strengthened to avoid residential placements.</li> </ul>



#	Your School's Numbers that Count		What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
8a	Information supplied by the school:		The number of special educators in the school is one of the most important numbers to consider when supporting students on IEPs, not just the number of actual people, but the amount of their FTE dedicated toward students on IEPs (since some people may be part-time or have split assignments, such with Title I or 504). Although examining the ratio of special educator FTE to students on IEPs is important, the simple ratio can be misleading because it doesn't address the range of caseload sizes and doesn't account for the varying percentage of students with disabilities in a school. Therefore, when tracking a school or district's special education service delivery from year to year, it can be helpful to compare the amount of special education FTE to the total school population; this ratio will account for changes in school population growth or decline and changes in the percentage of students identified as having a disability. One study (Suter & Giangreco, 2009) considered this ratio "special educator school density." Subjective reports indicated "the lower the ratio the more these schools could absorb the fluctuations that are a routine aspect of public schooling (e.g., the enrollment of a new student with intensive special needs)." Schools with ratios from 1:50 to 1:79 reported they had the resources they needed; from 1:80 to 1:100 responses were mixed; and schools higher than		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare amount of special education time on IEPs with amount of assigned special educator time (account for direct, indirect, and consultative time).</li><li>• Allocate special education resources based on ratio of combined special educator FTE to total school population (8c) rather than only number of students on IEPs.</li><li>• Reduce special educator caseload size.</li></ul>
	Number of Special Educators & FTE				
	Number of Special Educators	6			
	Special Educator (SPED) FTE	4.64			
	SPED FTE for on-campus students	4.50			
	SPED FTE for off-campus students	0.14			
	Number of Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) serving as Special Educators	0			
	SLP serving as SPED FTE	0.00			
	Combined SPED FTE	4.64			
8b	Combined SPED FTE <i>at school</i>		4.50		
	Ratio of Combined Special Educator FTE to Students on IEPs ( <i>at school</i> )		1: 10.4		
8c	Ratio of Combined Special Educator FTE to the Total School Population ( <i>at school</i> )		1: 34.2		

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>	<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
9a	<i>Information supplied by special educators:</i>				
	Average Special Educator Caseload <i>Number of Students on IEPs</i>				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
9b	5	9.6	4.7	2	13
	IEP Caseload Breakdown <i>Providing Primary IEP Services</i>				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
	5	2.4	3.3	0	8
	<i>Sharing IEP Services</i>				
	5	4.6	3.6	0	9
9c	<i>Providing Few Direct IEP Services</i>				
	5	2.6	2.4	0	5
	Students with IEPs Supported but Not on Official Caseload				
9d	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
	5	8.2	6.6	0	16
	Percentage of Out-of-Class Instruction				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
	5	46.2%	31.8%	20%	100%

1:100 were more consistently challenged. When special educator caseloads are high, it is one of the key contributors to special educators leaving the field, experiencing "burnout", so simply diminishing their ability to do their work. A recent study (Suter, Giangreco, & Bruhl, 2019) identified a relationship between special educator school density and absence rates of special educators. Students' education is disrupted by key personnel absences. Another study (Giangreco, Suter, Hurley, 2013) found that both special educator school density and a special educator's caseload were significantly related to their ratings of work responsibilities being conducive to providing effective special education to students on IEPs (*see item 24*).

Although there is limited data on special educator caseloads, and no Vermont or federal regulations or guidelines, it is important to consider whether the special educator can reasonably and sufficiently address the specialized needs of the students on the caseload as reflected in the IEP. In addition to the number of students, it is important to consider the students' characteristics, whether the special educator is the primary provider of services or not, the range of grade levels and the number of teachers with whom a special educator works.

When the number of students with special educational needs on one caseload exceeds 10

- Consider adding special educators through resource reallocation (e.g., trading paraprofessional positions for special educator positions).
- Reduce the range of grades and/or subjects for which special educators are responsible.
- Explore reducing variability in special educator caseload size.
- Explore regular education supports for students on 504 or EST plans.

			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
10a	Average Special Educator Caseload <i>Number of Students on 504 Plans</i>				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
	5	0.0	0.0	0	0
10b	504 Plan Caseload Breakdown <i>Providing Primary 504 Services</i>				
	5	0.0	0.0	0	0
	<i>Sharing 504 Services</i>				
	5	0.0	0.0	0	0
	<i>Providing Few Direct 504 Services</i>				
10c	Students on 504 Supported but Not on Caseload				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
	5	0.6	1.3	0	3
			has suggested an inverse relationship between caseload size and instructional time. Special educators with higher caseloads tend to provide a smaller amount of instructional time to their students; as the caseload size decreases the amount of instructional typically increases. When the special educator has a higher caseload students with disabilities tend to get less instruction or receive their instruction from less qualified personnel (e.g., paraprofessionals). This is inconsistent with both the IDEA and ESSA efforts to ensure that all students have ongoing access to instruction from highly qualified teachers. It can also put schools at risk for due process complaints or legal actions because it may violate the LRE provisions in IDEA.  More instruction in regular class allows students to benefit from co-teaching between special educators and general educators, receive peer supports, and be more a part of the general classroom community.		See information on pages 6-7

			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>										
11a	Average Special Educator Caseload Number of Students on EST Plans	See information on pages 6-7		See information on pages 6-7										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	5	0.0	0.0	0	0
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
5	0.0				0.0	0	0							
11b	EST Plan Caseload Breakdown <i>Providing Primary EST Services</i>													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td>SD</td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High	5	0.0	0.0	0	0
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High						
	5				0.0	0.0	0	0						
	<i>Sharing EST Services</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>				5	0.0	0.0	0	0					
5	0.0				0.0	0	0							
<i>Provide Few Direct EST Services</i>														
<table><tr><td>5</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	5				0.0	0.0	0	0						
5	0.0				0.0	0	0							
11c	Students on EST Supported but Not on Caseload													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td>SD</td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>1.6</td><td>2.6</td><td>0</td><td>6</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High	5	1.6	2.6	0	6			
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High									
5	1.6	2.6	0	6										

			Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
12a	Percentage of Time Working as Special Educator	<table><tr><th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>90.0%</td><td>22.4%</td><td>50%</td><td>100%</td></tr></table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	5	90.0%	22.4%	50%	100%	<p>Item 12 provides a few alternatives to examining special educator caseloads. The first (12b) is the <i>full equivalent caseload</i> which is the number of students on IEPs special educators would have if 100% of their time were directed toward students on IEPs.</p> <p>The second (12c) is the average special educator caseload including students with IEPs, 504 plans, and EST plans.</p> <p>The third (12e) is the average number of students supported by special educators (<i>including both students on their caseloads plus</i>).</p>	See information on pages 6-7
n	M	SD	Low	High										
5	90.0%	22.4%	50%	100%										
12b	Full-Equivalent Caseload of Students on IEPs ( <i>Caseload / % Work Time</i> )	<table><tr><th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>10.0</td><td>3.9</td><td>4</td><td>13</td></tr></table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	5	10.0	3.9	4	13		
n	M	SD	Low	High										
5	10.0	3.9	4	13										
12c	Actual Caseload (IEP + 504 + EST)	<table><tr><th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>9.6</td><td>4.7</td><td>2</td><td>13</td></tr></table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	5	9.6	4.7	2	13		
n	M	SD	Low	High										
5	9.6	4.7	2	13										
12d	Students Supported Not on Caseload (IEP + 504 + EST)	<table><tr><th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>10.4</td><td>8.6</td><td>0</td><td>19</td></tr></table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	5	10.4	8.6	0	19		
n	M	SD	Low	High										
5	10.4	8.6	0	19										
12e	Total Students Supported on & off Caseload (IEP + 504 + EST)	<table><tr><th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>20.0</td><td>13.0</td><td>2</td><td>32</td></tr></table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	5	20.0	13.0	2	32		
n	M	SD	Low	High										
5	20.0	13.0	2	32										

			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>										
13a	Number of Paraprofessionals Supervised Per Special Educator <i>(information provided by special educators on the paraprofessionals they supervise)</i>	<p>The limited existing data suggests that when the ratio of special educators to special education paraprofessionals exceeds 1:2, the service delivery model may be unbalanced. In part the data suggest that when special educators have more than one or two paraprofessionals they have insufficient time to train/supervise/direct their activities. In a recent study where on average each special educator supervised 4 paraprofessionals, they only spent about 2% of their time per paraprofessional. The maximum number of paraprofessionals supervised by a single special educator was 14 -- leaving insufficient time for supervision or instruction. This exacerbates the problems mentioned earlier, leaving too many paraprofessionals to fend for themselves. Based on federally reported data (2019 for students ages 6-21), Vermont is one of 6 states with a special educator FTE to special education paraprofessional FTE ratio higher than 1:2 (VT is 1 : 2.4). In contrast, the US ratio was 1 : 1.2, and 20 states have more special educator FTE than special education paraprofessional FTE. Though the averages can be illuminating, the range is critically important because the distribution of paraprofessionals per special educator can vary substantially.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase the number of special educators or reduce the number of paraprofessionals.</li><li>• Explore classroom teachers assuming primary or shared roles for supervising paraprofessionals.</li><li>• Explore redistribution of paraprofessionals (and students if necessary) among special educators to more evenly distribute paraprofessional supervision.</li></ul>										
	<table><tr><th><i>n</i></th><th><i>M</i></th><th><i>SD</i></th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>2.8</td><td>1.1</td><td>2</td><td>4</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	5	2.8	1.1	2	4
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
5	2.8	1.1	2	4										
13b	Ratio of Special Educator FTE to Special Education Paraprofessional FTE <i>(information provided by school)</i>  1: 2.6													

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>		<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
<b>14a</b>	<i>Information supplied by the school:</i>		<p>At present, there is no research on desirable numbers of general and special education paraprofessionals in schools. Data indicate that there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of paraprofessionals with ongoing growth. In 2019, there were 440,215 (FTE) special education paraprofessionals K-12 nationally, and their use has substantially increased.</p> <p>For example, in Vermont in 1990 there were fewer than 1,200 (FTE) special education paraprofessionals (K-12). By 2019, there were more than 2,800 (FTE). When adjusted for population increases and changes in child count, on average in 1990 there was approximately one special education paraprofessional for every nine students on an IEP; by 2019 there was an average of one special education paraprofessional for every four and one-half students on IEPs. Small-scale studies suggest that Vermont's use of special education paraprofessionals may be among the highest in the nation. At the same time, data suggests that paraprofessionals' roles have become increasingly instructional, with some students with disabilities getting more of their education from under qualified personnel. Larger special educator caseloads typically provide insufficient time to plan for and direct the work of paraprofessionals, too often leaving paraprofessionals to make numerous curricular and instructional decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore service delivery to ensure that students with disabilities receive their primary instruction from teachers and special educators.</li><li>• Explore opportunities to have some paraprofessionals based funded by general education.</li><li>• If the number of paraprofessionals or ratio of special education paraprofessionals to students on IEPs is identified as a concern, consider using the schoolwide planning process, <i>Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals.</i></li></ul>	
	Total Number (in FTE) of Paraprofessionals At School				
	Number of paraprofessionals	16.0			
	Paraprofessional FTE	14.2			
	FTE assigned to general education	2.7			
<b>14b</b>	FTE assigned to special education	11.5			
	Ratio (in FTE) of Special Education Paraprofessionals to Students on IEPs (at school)				
		Ratio			%Ss
	All students with IEPs	1 : 4.1			100.0%
	Students with IEPs with 1:1 support	1 : 1.0			9.6%
	Available to students with IEPs not receiving 1:1 support	1 : 6.1			90.4%

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
<b>15a</b>	Subset of Special Education Paraprofessional FTE ( <i>listed in 14a</i> ) <i>Information supplied by school:</i>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-assign full-time, one-to-one paraprofessionals as classroom paraprofessionals or consider a split funding FTE.</li> <li>If student needs are low frequency or intermittent, consider using a paraprofessional pool (e.g., where a paraprofessional moves between situations on a prescheduled or as needed basis).</li> <li>Explore options for more instruction from teachers and special educators.</li> <li>Explore peer supports.</li> </ul>
		<b>FTE</b>	<b>% Ps</b>		
	Working 1:1 with students with IEPs	4.5	39.1%		
	Working 1:1 with students in general education 80% or more	2.0	44.4%		
	Working 1:1 with students in general education less than 80%	2.5	55.6%		
<b>15b</b>	Amount of Time Students with IEPs with 1:1 Paraprofessional Support Spend in General Education Classes <i>Information supplied by Special Educators:</i>				
		<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>		
	80% or more	3	50.0%		
	40% to 79%	0	0.0%		
	0% to 39%	3	50.0%		

Over the past two decades there has been a substantial increase in the number of special education paraprofessionals assigned, one-to-one (full-time) to students with disabilities. Although this type and level of support is undoubtedly offered with benevolent intentions, a series of studies have documented that this model of service delivery is fraught with numerous unintended detrimental effects (e.g., isolation from classroom activities and peers, stigmatization, provocation of behavior problems). Use of 1:1 paraprofessional support is one of the most restrictive supports than can be offered to a student and therefore should be closely scrutinized. Even in cases where students have extensive support needs, rarely do they need 1:1 paraprofessional support 100% of the time. The literature suggests that if the paraprofessionals are being used in place of instruction from teachers and special educators it is problematic. Use of 1:1 paraprofessionals has become a convenient, though often ill-advised, first (and sometimes lone) option for supporting students with disabilities in general education classrooms. In addition, recent legal proceedings suggest that in some cases the use of 1:1 paraprofessional services without a plan for increasing student independence may be considered a violation of FAPE.



#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
16a	Special Educator Time Use (Self-Reported) Ave. % of Time Spent on: <i>Special Education Paperwork</i>	<i>Please Note: Special Educators were asked to report on the percentage of time spent on these activities regardless of how many hours they devote to work. These percentages include any time spent working outside of the regular school day. Therefore, these percentages do not necessarily or exclusively reflect time spent during the school day and when students are present. Other forms of data collection are more appropriate for capturing what happens during the school day only (e.g., time study).</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired time use for special educators to take best advantage of their skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual time use.</li><li>Compare findings to data sources that exclusively focus on special educator time use during the school day (e.g., time study).</li></ul>										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td><i>Low</i></td><td><i>High</i></td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>17.3</td><td>13.0</td><td>9</td><td>40</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	5	17.3	13.0	9	40
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>						
5	17.3				13.0	9	40							
16b	<i>Collaboration with Others</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>11.7</td><td>4.6</td><td>5</td><td>17</td></tr></table>				5	11.7	4.6	5	17					
5	11.7				4.6	5	17							
16c	<i>Behavior Support</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>14.5</td><td>9.8</td><td>9</td><td>32</td></tr></table>				5	14.5	9.8	9	32					
5	14.5				9.8	9	32							
16d	<i>Instructional Time with Students</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>28.5</td><td>13.1</td><td>10</td><td>41</td></tr></table>				5	28.5	13.1	10	41					
5	28.5				13.1	10	41							
16e	<i>Planning</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>10.3</td><td>4.8</td><td>5</td><td>17.4</td></tr></table>				5	10.3	4.8	5	17.4					
5	10.3				4.8	5	17.4							
16f	<i>Working with Paraprofessionals</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>4.9</td><td>3.7</td><td>1</td><td>10</td></tr></table>	5	4.9	3.7	1	10								
5	4.9	3.7	1	10										
16g	<i>Working with Families</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>9.3</td><td>6.6</td><td>3</td><td>20</td></tr></table>	5	9.3	6.6	3	20								
5	9.3	6.6	3	20										
16h	<i>Other</i>													
	<table><tr><td>5</td><td>3.4</td><td>4.8</td><td>0</td><td>10</td></tr></table>	5	3.4	4.8	0	10								
5	3.4	4.8	0	10										

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*	
17a	Paraprofessional Time Use ( <i>Reported by Special Educators</i> ) Ave%of Time Spent: Clerical Support:				
	n	M	SD	Low	High
	5	1.2	2.2	0	5
17b	Supervision of Students:				
	5	17.0	21.1	0	50
17c	Personal Care:				
	5	3.2	4.3	0	10
17d	Behavior Support:				
	5	36.2	19.5	13	60
17e	Implementing Instruction Planned by a Teacher or Special Educator				
	5	40.8	30.3	10	84
17f	Engaging in Self-Directed Activities, Not Planned or Supervised by Teacher/SPED				
	5	1.6	2.3	0	5
17g	Other				
	5	0.0	0.0	0	0
		Existing data suggests that special education paraprofessionals are expending an increasing portion of their time on instruction. Under some circumstances this may be positive, though much depends on whether the instruction they provide is primary or supplemental; in too many cases it is inappropriately the primary instruction. Whether the increase in instruction by paraprofessionals is desirable also depends on whether they are properly trained and otherwise qualified for the tasks they are being asked to perform. Existing data suggests that many paraprofessionals are assigned to support students in classes where they report being under-skilled or unskilled. This becomes increasingly problematic in the upper elementary grades, middle school, and high school. As one study participant (paraprofessional) stated, "I don't do algebra." The breakdown of paraprofessional time use is designed to assist your school reflect on how you want paraprofessionals spending their time. In some cases there is renewed interest in having paraprofessionals engage in non-instructional tasks that allow teachers and special educators to spend more time directly teaching students with disabilities -- these non-instructional duties and supplemental instructional roles need to be clearly established as highly valued role.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired time use for special education paraprofessionals to take best advantage of their skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual time use.</li></ul>	

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*																																													
18	Number of Students who have 1:1 Paraprofessional Support by Primary IDEA Disability Category	Virtually no state or national data exist on the disability categories of students with disabilities who are receive full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports. Because the variability and severity with each category is substantial, these data offer only a modest amount of information to consider (more detailed and relevant data are found in item 20). In general, we suggest that you should especially scrutinize situations where the disability category is most closely associated with students who have high-incidence / mild disabilities. For example, if you have students in categories such as learning disabilities (LD) it should be explored further. It is more common (though not necessarily more appropriate) for students in categories most closely associated with low-incidence / severe disabilities (e.g., deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities) to receive one-to-one paraprofessional supports. It should be noted that some schools have made a decision to completely move away from the use of full-time one-to-one paraprofessionals because of its known problems. In these cases students may receive such supports at specific times and for specific purposes (e.g., personal care supports).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This informational item can assist in understanding items 13 and 14 regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight if any particular categories are unusually represented (e.g., high incidence disabilities).</li></ul>																																													
	<table><tr><th>Disability</th><th>n</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Autism</td><td>4</td><td>66.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Deaf-Blindness</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Developmental Delay</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Emotional Disturbance</td><td>1</td><td>16.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Hearing Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Intellectual Disability</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Multiple Disabilities</td><td>1</td><td>16.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Orthopedic Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Other Health Imp.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Specific Learning Dis.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Speech / Language Imp.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Visual Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>6</td><td>100.0%</td></tr></table>				Disability	n	%	Autism	4	66.7%	Deaf-Blindness	0	0.0%	Developmental Delay	0	0.0%	Emotional Disturbance	1	16.7%	Hearing Impairment	0	0.0%	Intellectual Disability	0	0.0%	Multiple Disabilities	1	16.7%	Orthopedic Impairment	0	0.0%	Other Health Imp.	0	0.0%	Specific Learning Dis.	0	0.0%	Speech / Language Imp.	0	0.0%	Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0.0%	Visual Impairment	0	0.0%	Total	6	100.0%
	Disability				n	%																																											
	Autism				4	66.7%																																											
	Deaf-Blindness				0	0.0%																																											
	Developmental Delay				0	0.0%																																											
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	Traumatic Brain Injury				0	0.0%																																											
Visual Impairment	0	0.0%																																															
Total	6	100.0%																																															

#	Your School's Numbers that Count			What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
19	Number of Students with 1:1 Paraprofessional Support Who Participate in Alternate Assessment			<p><i>Please note: We recommend exploring any discrepancies between special educators' response to this item and item 2.</i></p> <p>Virtually no state or national data exist on the number of students who receive full-time one-to-one supports who also are eligible to participate in alternate assessment. Presumably there should be a substantial correlation between those students with severe enough disabilities to warrant alternate assessment (most significantly impaired 1%) and those who warrant one-to-one supports. If a substantial number of students who are receiving one-to-one supports are not eligible for alternate assessment it may be of concern and one way to cross-check the level of need.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This item can assist in understanding items 13 and 14 regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight students who are receiving full-time, one-to-one supports, but who are not eligible for alternate assessment.</li> </ul>
		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	Students on Alternate Assessment	1	16.7%			
	Students not on Alternate Assessment	5	83.3%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
20a	Type and Level of Disability Among Those Receiving Full-Time 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports			<p>There are virtually no state or national data on the types and levels of disability among students who are receiving full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports. Given the inherent variability within the IDEA disability categories, having a better understanding of the types and levels of disabilities can assist your school as it reflects on which students are receiving full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports and whether any patterns exist that can facilitate school improvement planning. Once you ascertain the characteristics and levels you can begin asking questions such as: (a) Do these students need paraprofessional supports all day? (b) What is</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This informational item can assist in understanding items 13, 14 and 18, regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight if any particular types or levels are unusually represented (e.g., mild disabilities).</li> </ul>
	<i>Intellectual / Learning</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	0	0.0%			
	Mild	3	50.0%			
	Moderate	0	0.0%			
	Severe	3	50.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
<b>20b</b>	<i>Physical / Orthopedic</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	the paraprofessional doing when the student is with the teacher, special educator, or a related services professional? (c) Are the duties being fulfilled by the paraprofessional most appropriate for them to deliver, or are they better provided by a peer, teacher, or special educator?		See information on page 17
	None	4	66.7%			
	Mild	1	16.7%			
	Moderate	0	0.0%			
	Severe	1	16.7%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
	<i>Behavioral / Emotional</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	0	0.0%			
	Mild	0	0.0%			
	Moderate	2	33.3%			
	Severe	4	66.7%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
<b>20d</b>	<i>Vision</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	5	83.3%			
	Mild	0	0.0%			
	Moderate	0	0.0%			
	Severe	1	16.7%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
20e	<i>Hearing Disability</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>See information on pages 17-18</i>		<i>See information on page 17</i>
	None	6	100.0%			
	Mild	0	0.0%			
	Moderate	0	0.0%			
	Severe	0	0.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
20f	<i>Health Disability</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	4	66.7%			
	Mild	1	16.7%			
	Moderate	1	16.7%			
	Severe	0	0.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	Your School's Numbers that Count					What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
21a	Average Percent Instructional Time for Students Receiving 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports					One of the most important aspects of successful inclusive environments is what has been referred to as "teacher engagement", namely the teacher's attitude of ownership for the education of the student with a disability in the regular classroom and the teacher's actions to be knowledgeable and involved in the design and delivery of curriculum and instruction.  Existing data suggests that a substantial amount of primary instruction is provided paraprofessionals; there is little existing evidence that this approach is beneficial for students. A small number of studies have documented positive impact of paraprofessionals providing supplemental (not primary) instruction when they are appropriately trained and supervised in the implementation of researched-based approaches. Additionally, students with disabilities report feeling like outsiders in the classroom and less valued when they do not receive their instruction from the classroom teacher. Excessive use of paraprofessionals to provide instruction potentially establishes a double standard that would not be acceptable if applied to students without disabilities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired instructional time use for special educators, teachers, and paraprofessionals to take best advantage of their respective skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual instructional time use.</li><li>Increase instructional by teachers, special educators, and co-teaching.</li></ul>
	Classroom Teachers							
	n	M	SD	Low	High			
6	31.7	28.8	0	80				
21b	Special Educators / Related Services							
	6	30.0	19.2	10	60			
21c	Paraprofessionals							
	6	38.3	33.3	10	85			

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*		
22	Number of Students Where Various Team Members Have Advocated for Students to Have Full-Time 1:1 Paraprofessional Support (as reported by Special Educators)	There are virtually no data on this topic in the professional literature other than limited descriptions suggesting that in some cases parents advocate for one-to-one paraprofessional supports. This is often rooted in parental concerns that their child will be lost in the shuffle of the regular classroom and that their individual needs will not be met. At other times it is school personnel (e.g., teachers, principal) who require that a paraprofessional be assigned to a student in order for them to have access to the regular classroom (sometimes this is contrary to the wishes of the parent). Students themselves are rarely involved in these support service decisions, a fact that runs contrary to the current emphasis on self-determination as a best practice.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share information with families and school personnel about both the pros and cons (e.g., inadvertent detrimental effects) of utilizing full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports.</li><li>• Ensure that use of full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional support is neither the first or only option considered to support students with disabilities in general education classes (e.g., use <i>Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals</i>).</li><li>• Encourage self-determination by involving students in decisions about their own supports.</li></ul>		
	Team Member				n	%
	General Education Administrator				5	83.3%
	Special Education Administrator				4	66.7%
	Classroom Teacher				5	83.3%
	Special Educator				6	100.0%
	Parent or Guardian				6	100.0%
	Student with a Disability				4	66.7%
	Other				0	0.0%
	n reported				6	100.0%



#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*																											
23	<div>Primary Reasons Why Students Were Recommended for 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports</div> <table><tr><th>Reason</th><th>n</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Safety of Student</td><td>5</td><td>83.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Safety of Others</td><td>4</td><td>66.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)</td><td>6</td><td>100.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Physical, Health, or Personal Care</td><td>1</td><td>16.7%</td></tr><tr><td>Communication Support</td><td>3</td><td>50.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Instructional / Learning Support</td><td>5</td><td>83.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>n reported</td><td>6</td><td>100.0%</td></tr></table>	Reason	n	%	Safety of Student	5	83.3%	Safety of Others	4	66.7%	Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)	6	100.0%	Physical, Health, or Personal Care	1	16.7%	Communication Support	3	50.0%	Instructional / Learning Support	5	83.3%	Other	0	0.0%	n reported	6	100.0%	There are virtually no data on this topic in the professional literature. Collecting data on the reasons why some students get assigned full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional support can assist schools in deciding: (a) whether the use of a paraprofessional is a good match with the reasons; and /or (b) whether the reasons prompt consideration of other ways to meet students' needs more effectively using less restrictive approaches.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider use of paraprofessional pools or classroom-assigned paraprofessionals to address low frequency needs.</li><li>• Consider use of generically available school personnel (e.g., school nurses, guidance counselors).</li><li>• Consider matches between personnel and functions to be served (e.g., if the function is instruction, who is best suited to provide that support?).</li></ul>
Reason	n	%																													
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#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
24	<p>Special Educators' Agreement with:  <i>My work responsibilities are conducive to  providing effective special education to  students served on IEPs.</i>  (Rated on a scale of 1 to 10  1 = Strongly Disagree  10 = Strongly Agree)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>4</td><td>5.3</td><td>3.8</td><td>2</td><td>9</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Special Educators' Ratings</p> <p>Number of Special Educators</p> <p>Rating</p> <p>Strongly Disagree</p> <p>Strongly Agree</p>	n	M	SD	Low	High	4	5.3	3.8	2	9	<p>This question was asked to gauge special educators' feelings toward their work responsibilities. Each school needs to decide whether the average is of concern or not for them. Asking special educators whether they feel their work conditions are conducive to providing effective services and supports can help schools (a) assess how special educators perceive their working conditions and (b) begin a conversation to address concerns and plan for possible changes. One recent study found that special educator ratings on this item were significantly related to special educator school density and special educator's IEP caseload.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify subset of special educators with the most challenging caseloads</li> <li>Reduce caseload size</li> <li>Reduce range of classes and /or ages served</li> <li>Ensure no one special educator has too many students with intensive needs</li> <li>Reduce the number of paraprofessionals a special educator is expected to supervise / direct</li> <li>Consider limiting responsibilities for non IEP student</li> <li>Meet with the special educators and seek their input about what would improve their working conditions to better serve students</li> </ul>
n	M	SD	Low	High										
4	5.3	3.8	2	9										

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[Number following citations correspond with numbered data items]

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## Interpreting the Data and Acknowledging its Limitations

The purpose of the *Numbers that Count!* data is provide an initial glimpse into a subset of schooling practices and demographics in an effort to illuminate issues that can lead to constructive dialogue within the school community in an effort to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for students. Therefore, they should be used as springboard for reflection and potential action and not viewed as a final word.

The data provided in the *Numbers that Count! Data Grid* are subject to many of the same limitations as any data, regardless of whether it is quantitative or qualitative. So as you consider the finding please keep the following limitations in mind:

1. Like all data, these data are partial (we only collected data on a subset of issues) and bound by context. Therefore, they should not be considered comprehensive and should be considered in context.
2. Data were collected from a small sample of special educators, about a small set of interrelated issues, at a single point in time.
3. Errors can sometimes occur in the raw data submitted by respondents for a variety of reasons (e.g., simple recording mistakes, misinterpretation of questions, idiosyncratic interpretation of questions, imprecisely worded questions on a questionnaire). So it is possible (maybe even likely) that some of these errors exist in these data. Therefore, if any numbers seem substantially out of kilter, it is advisable to not rush to judgment on their meaning and consider them in light of other findings and what is known about the context.
4. Through this process, we found that even seemingly simple issues (e.g., special educator caseloads) are never as simple as they might seem (e.g., SLPs functioning as special educators, special educators sharing caseloads, special educators not working directly with students they case manage and/or working directly with students they don't case manage). Therefore, even though the numbers are presented distinctly, some may be "fuzzier" than others because of the nuances that exist across and within schools. That is one reason why we have chosen to offer face-to-face debriefing.

Despite the inherent limitations in these data, they offer a variety of interesting and important information that can be utilized to improve opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities and there peers without disabilities.

We hope you find these data helpful in your school improvement process,

- Michael F. Giangreco & Jesse C. Suter

## *Numbers that Count!*

### *Your Numbers, What they Might Mean, and What Your School Can do About it*

<i>School Name:</i>	Winooski High School	<i>Grades Reported on:</i>	9	to	12
<i>Data Collection Date:</i>	Oct 4, 2021	<i>Total School Population:</i>	218	students	
<i>Debrief Date:</i>	Nov 17, 2021	<i>Number (%) of Minority Students:</i>	124	56.9%	
<i>Data Collected &amp; Analyzed by:</i>	Michael F. Giangreco & Jesse C. Suter (CDCI / UVM)	<i>Number (%) Students on Free/Reduced Lunch:</i>	137	62.8%	
<i>School Setting:</i>	Urban	<i>Number (%) of Students English Language Learners (ELL):</i>	92	42.2%	
<i>*Number of Special Educators Reported on:</i>	6	<i>Number (%) of Students From Other Schools in District:</i>	2	0.6%	
<i>Number of Students w/1:1 Supports Reported on:</i>	9				

*\*Note: Only Special Educators with 0.40 FTE or higher were included.*

*Aim of the Activity:* To collect data about special education service delivery that can help inform school improvement.

*Steps Involved:*

1. Collect data using the *School Demographic Questionnaire* from a school administrator.
2. Collect data using the *Special Educator Questionnaire* from all special educators in the school.
3. Collect data using the *Student Questionnaire* from those special educators who have students with full-time, one-to-one, paraprofessional supports in general education classes (one for each such student).
4. Summarize data and insert into appropriate spaces provided below.
5. Convene a team to review and consider the level of concern (see key below) corresponding to each piece of data.
6. Consider potential actions your school can take to improve service delivery to students with and without disabilities.

## Numbers that Count! Data Grid

\*Generic information, not specific to your setting. \*\*Key: N = None L = Low M = Moderate H = High

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
<b>1a</b>	Average Class Size (General Education)  M = 15	Small class size (e.g., 1:15), especially in the lower grades is positively correlated with student achievement, participation, and improved behavior. Vermont's <i>School Quality Standards</i> suggest that classes K-3, should average fewer than 20 students, and in grades 4-8 average fewer than 25. At the high school levels total rolls should not exceed 100 in English/Language Arts or average above 150 in other subject areas (both total would be divided by the number of class sections to determine average class size).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce class size</li> <li>• Co-teaching (general and special educators)</li> <li>• Distribute students with disabilities to ensure natural proportions</li> <li>• Reduce the range of grades and/or subjects for which special educators are responsible.</li> </ul>										
<b>1b</b>	Average Grade Range Covered by Special Educators  <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr> <tr> <td>6</td><td>4.3</td><td>0.8</td><td>4</td><td>6</td></tr> </table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	6	4.3	0.8	4	6	Regardless of class size, if the percentage of students with disabilities substantially exceeds the "natural proportion" (the percent of students with disabilities in the school), various problems may arise (e.g., difficulty meeting instructional needs, behavior management, planning time).  When special educators are responsible for students across multiple grades this increases the number of general education teachers they need to collaborate with and creates a wider range of curriculum for which they must be knowledgeable.		
n	M	SD	Low	High										
6	4.3	0.8	4	6										



#	Your School's Numbers that Count			What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
2	Number (%) of Students on IEPs			In Vermont, students with disabilities on IEPs was approximately 15% and 14% nationwide (2019-2020). Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's percentage of students with disabilities on IEPs varies from the averages. In other cases, particularly high numbers of students with disabilities on IEPs may signal systemic problems such as over-identification of students, problems with referral and/or eligibility practices and procedures, or problems with schoolwide programs and services designed to meet student needs without necessitating referral to special education.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize special education eligibility procedures</li><li>• Improve supports schoolwide and increase capacity of general education to reduce reliance on special education</li></ul>
		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	Total	65	29.8%			
	At School	47	72.3%			
	Off Campus	18	27.7%			
	Students w/ IEPs on Alternate Assessment	5	7.7%*			
	*2.3% of total student population (IDEA allows up to 1% of population.)					
3	Number (%) of Students on 504 Plans			In Vermont schools, the percentage of students with disabilities on 504 Plans is approximately 5.5%, and 2.7% nationwide (2017-2018). Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's percentage of students with disabilities on 504 plans varies from the averages. In other cases, particularly high or low numbers of students with disabilities on 504 may signal under or over-utilization of this option, especially when considered in relationship to the number of students on IEPs and those considered "at risk" who are being served on Educational Support Team (EST) plans		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize 504 eligibility procedures</li></ul>
		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	Total	8	3.7%			
	At School	8	100.0%			
	Off-Campus	0	0.0%			

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>		<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>	
4	Number (%) of Students “At Risk” Receiving Supports (e.g., EST)		In Vermont schools, the percentage of students (without disabilities) who are on Educational Support Team (EST) plans is over 6% (2020). There are no comparable national data. Since these are averages, the actual percentages vary from school to school and there may be reasons why an individual school's % of students without disabilities on EST plans varies from the averages (e.g., poverty). In other cases, particularly high or low numbers of students without disabilities on EST plans may signal under or over-utilization of this option, especially when considered in relationship to the number of students on IEPs and 504 plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize EST / “at risk” supports and services</li><li>• Improve supports schoolwide in an effort to reduce the number of students "at risk"</li></ul>	
		<i>n</i>			<i>%</i>
	Total	20			9.2%
	At School	20			100.0%
	Off-Campus	0			0.0%
5	Number (%) of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) whose Primary Educational Placement is in General Education		In Vermont schools, the percentage of students with disabilities on IEPs who have their primary placement ( <i>at least 80% of the time</i> ) in general education classes with supports is approximately 79% (2020), down from a historic high of 88% (1992); <i>State Performance Plan</i> target was 79%, and approximately 65% nationwide. The percentages vary quite substantially based on disability category, with students who have high-incidence disabilities (e.g., speech / language impairments, learning disabilities) being included at substantially higher rates than those with lower-incidence disabilities (e.g., intellectual disabilities, multiple disabilities, emotional disturbance). Any time students are not afforded supported access to the general education classroom and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scrutinize initial and annual placement procedures to ensure that each year each student is considered for regular class placement with supplemental supports and aids.</li><li>• Explore teacher attitudes and conceptualization of regular class</li></ul>	
		<i>n</i>			<i>%</i>
	In general ed 80% or more	34			52.3%
	In general ed less than 80%	31			47.7%

#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>	<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
		curriculum, it warrants close scrutiny to ensure that students' educational rights are protected and they have full access to quality education. Placement of students with disabilities in more restrictive settings (e.g., special class, special school) raises potential questions about: (a) the annual procedures used to determine placement in the LRE (least restrictive environment), (b) attitudes and expectations about including the full range of students with disabilities, (c) potential misapplication of IDEA LRE provisions, or (d) knowledge and skills about how to successfully include the full range of students with disabilities in general education settings. Students need not function at the same level as their classmates for the regular class to be the LRE.		placement to ensure that all faculty understand how students with a full range of disabilities and levels of severity can be meaningfully included in regular class (even when they are pursuing different learning outcomes.
6	Number of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) in <i>non-residential placements outside of your school</i>  $n = 18$ $\% = 27.7\%$	Any time students with disabilities are placed outside of your school district, it warrants close scrutiny to ensure appropriateness for the student. Further it raises potential questions about whether there is a sufficient continuum of supports within the district.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put in place (or strengthen) supports to avoid out of district placements.</li> </ul>
7	Number of Students with Disabilities (on IEPs) in <i>residential placements</i>  $n = 0$ $\% = 0.0\%$	Since residential placements are among the most restrictive placements, they always require close scrutiny to ensure appropriateness for the student. Further it raises potential questions about whether there is a sufficient continuum of supports within the district.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore supports that could be put in place or strengthened to avoid residential placements.</li> </ul>

#	Your School's Numbers that Count		What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
8a	Information supplied by the school:		The number of special educators in the school is one of the most important numbers to consider when supporting students on IEPs, not just the number of actual people, but the amount of their FTE dedicated toward students on IEPs (since some people may be part-time or have split assignments, such with Title I or 504). Although examining the ratio of special educator FTE to students on IEPs is important, the simple ratio can be misleading because it doesn't address the range of caseload sizes and doesn't account for the varying percentage of students with disabilities in a school. Therefore, when tracking a school or district's special education service delivery from year to year, it can be helpful to compare the amount of special education FTE to the total school population; this ratio will account for changes in school population growth or decline and changes in the percentage of students identified as having a disability. One study (Suter & Giangreco, 2009) considered this ratio “special educator school density.” Subjective reports indicated “the lower the ratio the more these schools could absorb the fluctuations that are a routine aspect of public schooling (e.g., the enrollment of a new student with intensive special needs).” Schools with ratios from 1:50 to 1:79 reported they had the resources they needed; from 1:80 to 1:100 responses were mixed; and schools higher than		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare amount of special education time on IEPs with amount of assigned special educator time (account for direct, indirect, and consultative time).</li><li>• Allocate special education resources based on ratio of combined special educator FTE to total school population (8c) rather than only number of students on IEPs.</li><li>• Reduce special educator caseload size.</li></ul>
	Number of Special Educators & FTE				
	Number of Special Educators	6			
	Special Educator (SPED) FTE	5.14			
	SPED FTE for on-campus students	4.50			
	SPED FTE for off-campus students	0.64			
	Number of Speech Language Pathologists (SLP) serving as Special Educators	0			
	SLP serving as SPED FTE	0.00			
	Combined SPED FTE	5.14			
8b	Combined SPED FTE <i>at school</i>		4.50		
	Ratio of Combined Special Educator FTE to Students on IEPs ( <i>at school</i> ) 1: 10.4				
8c	Ratio of Combined Special Educator FTE to the Total School Population ( <i>at school</i> ) 1: 42.4				

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>	<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>										
9a	<i>Information supplied by special educators:</i>  Average Special Educator Caseload <i>Number of Students on IEPs</i>	1:100 were more consistently challenged. When special educator caseloads are high, it is one of the key contributors to special educators leaving the field, experiencing "burnout", so simply diminishing their ability to do their work. A recent study (Suter, Giangreco, & Bruhl, 2019) identified a relationship between special educator school density and absence rates of special educators. Students' education is disrupted by key personnel absences. Another study (Giangreco, Suter, Hurley, 2013) found that both special educator school density and a special educator's caseload were significantly related to their ratings of work responsibilities being conducive to providing effective special education to students on IEPs (see item 24).  Although there is limited data on special educator caseloads, and no Vermont or federal regulations or guidelines, it is important to consider whether the special educator can reasonably and sufficiently address the specialized needs of the students on the caseload as reflected in the IEP. In addition to the number of students, it is important to consider the students' characteristics, whether the special educator is the primary provider of services or not, the range of grade levels and the number of teachers with whom a special educator works.  When the number of students with special educational needs on one caseload exceeds 10		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consider adding special educators through resource reallocation (e.g., trading paraprofessional positions for special educator positions).</li><li>Reduce the range of grades and/or subjects for which special educators are responsible.</li><li>Explore reducing variability in special educator caseload size.</li><li>Explore regular education supports for students on 504 or EST plans.</li></ul>										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>10.3</td><td>4.0</td><td>4</td><td>14</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	10.3	4.0	4	14
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
6	10.3				4.0	4	14							
9b	IEP Caseload Breakdown <i>Providing Primary IEP Services</i>													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>1.7</td><td>3.6</td><td>0</td><td>9</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	1.7	3.6	0	9
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
	6				1.7	3.6	0	9						
<i>Sharing IEP Services</i>														
<table><tr><td>6</td><td>6.3</td><td>5.8</td><td>0</td><td>13</td></tr></table>	6				6.3	5.8	0	13						
6	6.3	5.8	0	13										
9c	<i>Providing Few Direct IEP Services</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>2.3</td><td>3.2</td><td>0</td><td>8</td></tr></table>	6	2.3	3.2	0	8								
	6	2.3	3.2	0	8									
Students with IEPs Supported but Not on Official Caseload														
9d	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>5.3</td><td>5.9</td><td>0</td><td>12</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	5.3	5.9	0	12			
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High									
	6	5.3	5.9	0	12									
Percentage of Out-of-Class Instruction														
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>37.5%</td><td>36.3%</td><td>0%</td><td>100%</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	37.5%	36.3%	0%	100%			
<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High										
6	37.5%	36.3%	0%	100%										

			Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*	
10a	Average Special Educator Caseload Number of Students on 504 Plans				
	n	M	SD	Low	High
	6	0.0	0.0	0	0
10b	504 Plan Caseload Breakdown Providing Primary 504 Services				
	6	0.0	0.0	0	0
	Sharing 504 Services				
	6	0.0	0.0	0	0
10c	Providing Few Direct 504 Services				
	6	0.0	0.0	0	0
	Students on 504 Supported but Not on Caseload				
	n	M	SD	Low	High
	6	0.0	0.0	0	0

has suggested an inverse relationship between caseload size and instructional time. Special educators with higher caseloads tend to provide a smaller amount of instructional time to their students; as the caseload size decreases the amount of instructional typically increases.

When the special educator has a higher caseload students with disabilities tend to get less instruction or receive their instruction from less qualified personnel (e.g., paraprofessionals). This is inconsistent with both the IDEA and ESSA efforts to ensure that all students have ongoing access to instruction from highly qualified teachers. It can also put schools at risk for due process complaints or legal actions because it may violate the LRE provisions in IDEA.

More instruction in regular class allows students to benefit from co-teaching between special educators and general educators, receive peer supports, and be more a part of the general classroom community.

*See information on pages 6-7*

			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>											
<b>11a</b>	Average Special Educator Caseload	<i>See information on pages 6-7</i>		<i>See information on pages 6-7</i>											
	Number of Students on EST Plans														
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	0.0	0.0	0	0	
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High							
	6				0.0	0.0	0	0							
	<b>11b</b>				EST Plan Caseload Breakdown										
					<i>Providing Primary EST Services</i>										
					<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td>SD</td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High	6	0.0	0.0	0	0
					<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High						
					6	0.0	0.0	0	0						
<i>Sharing EST Services</i>															
<table><tr><td>6</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>		6	0.0	0.0	0	0									
6		0.0	0.0	0	0										
<i>Provide Few Direct EST Services</i>															
<table><tr><td>6</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>		6	0.0	0.0	0	0									
6	0.0	0.0	0	0											
<b>11c</b>	Students on EST Supported but														
	Not on Caseload														
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td>SD</td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>0.0</td><td>0.0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High	6	0.0	0.0	0	0				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	SD	Low	High										
6	0.0	0.0	0	0											

			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>										
12a	Percentage of Time Working as Special Educator	<p>Item 12 provides a few alternatives to examining special educator caseloads. The first (12b) is the <i>full equivalent caseload</i> which is the number of students on IEPs special educators would have if 100% of their time were directed toward students on IEPs.</p> <p>The second (12c) is the average special educator caseload including students with IEPs, 504 plans, and EST plans.</p> <p>The third (12e) is the average number of students supported by special educators (<i>including both students on their caseloads plus</i>).</p>		See information on pages 6-7										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>85.7%</td><td>22.6%</td><td>50%</td><td>100%</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	85.7%	22.6%	50%	100%
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
6	85.7%				22.6%	50%	100%							
12b	Full-Equivalent Caseload of Students on IEPs ( <i>Caseload / % Work Time</i> )													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>11.8</td><td>2.6</td><td>8</td><td>14</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	11.8	2.6	8	14
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
6	11.8				2.6	8	14							
12c	Actual Caseload (IEP + 504 + EST)													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>10.3</td><td>4.0</td><td>4</td><td>14</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	10.3	4.0	4	14
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High									
6	10.3	4.0	4	14										
12d	Students Supported Not on Caseload (IEP + 504 + EST)													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>5.3</td><td>5.9</td><td>0</td><td>12</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	5.3	5.9	0	12			
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High									
6	5.3	5.9	0	12										
12e	Total Students Supported on & off Caseload (IEP + 504 + EST)													
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>15.7</td><td>9.7</td><td>4</td><td>26</td></tr></table>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	15.7	9.7	4	26			
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High									
6	15.7	9.7	4	26										



			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>										
13a	Number of Paraprofessionals Supervised Per Special Educator <i>(information provided by special educators on the paraprofessionals they supervise)</i>	<p>The limited existing data suggests that when the ratio of special educators to special education paraprofessionals exceeds 1:2, the service delivery model may be unbalanced. In part the data suggest that when special educators have more than one or two paraprofessionals they have insufficient time to train/supervise/direct their activities. In a recent study where on average each special educator supervised 4 paraprofessionals, they only spent about 2% of their time per paraprofessional. The maximum number of paraprofessionals supervised by a single special educator was 14 -- leaving insufficient time for supervision or instruction. This exacerbates the problems mentioned earlier, leaving too many paraprofessionals to fend for themselves. Based on federally reported data (2019 for students ages 6-21), Vermont is one of 6 states with a special educator FTE to special education paraprofessional FTE ratio higher than 1:2 (VT is 1 : 2.4). In contrast, the US ratio was 1 : 1.2, and 20 states have more special educator FTE than special education paraprofessional FTE. Though the averages can be illuminating, the range is critically important because the distribution of paraprofessionals per special educator can vary substantially.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase the number of special educators or reduce the number of paraprofessionals.</li><li>• Explore classroom teachers assuming primary or shared roles for supervising paraprofessionals.</li><li>• Explore redistribution of paraprofessionals (and students if necessary) among special educators to more evenly distribute paraprofessional supervision.</li></ul>										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>1.3</td><td>1.5</td><td>0</td><td>4</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	6	1.3	1.5	0	4
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High						
6	1.3	1.5	0	4										
13b	Ratio of Special Educator FTE to Special Education Paraprofessional FTE <i>(information provided by school)</i>  1: 1.6													

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>		<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
<b>14a</b>	<i>Information supplied by the school:</i>		At present, there is no research on desirable numbers of general and special education paraprofessionals in schools. Data indicate that there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of paraprofessionals with ongoing growth. In 2019, there were 440,215 (FTE) special education paraprofessionals K-12 nationally, and their use has substantially increased.  For example, in Vermont in 1990 there were fewer than 1,200 (FTE) special education paraprofessionals (K-12). By 2019, there were more than 2,800 (FTE). When adjusted for population increases and changes in child count, on average in 1990 there was approximately one special education paraprofessional for every nine students on an IEP; by 2019 there was an average of one special education paraprofessional for every four and one-half students on IEPs. Small-scale studies suggest that Vermont's use of special education paraprofessionals may be among the highest in the nation. At the same time, data suggests that paraprofessionals' roles have become increasingly instructional, with some students with disabilities getting more of their education from under qualified personnel. Larger special educator caseloads typically provide insufficient time to plan for and direct the work of paraprofessionals, too often leaving paraprofessionals to make numerous curricular and instructional decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore service delivery to ensure that students with disabilities receive their primary instruction from teachers and special educators.</li><li>• Explore opportunities to have some paraprofessionals based funded by general education.</li><li>• If the number of paraprofessionals or ratio of special education paraprofessionals to students on IEPs is identified as a concern, consider using the schoolwide planning process, <i>Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals.</i></li></ul>
	Total Number (in FTE) of Paraprofessionals At School			
	Number of paraprofessionals	12.0		
	Paraprofessional FTE	11.0		
	FTE assigned to general education	4.0		
FTE assigned to special education	7.0			
<b>14b</b>	Ratio (in FTE) of Special Education Paraprofessionals to Students on IEPs (at school)			
		Ratio	%Ss	
	All students with IEPs	1 : 6.7	100.0%	
	Students with IEPs with 1:1 support	1 : 1.0	7.4%	
	Available to students with IEPs not receiving 1:1 support	1 : 12.4	92.6%	

	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
<b>15a</b>	Subset of Special Education Paraprofessional FTE ( <i>listed in 14a</i> ) <i>Information supplied by school:</i>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-assign full-time, one-to-one paraprofessionals as classroom paraprofessionals or consider a split funding FTE.</li> <li>If student needs are low frequency or intermittent, consider using a paraprofessional pool (e.g., where a paraprofessional moves between situations on a prescheduled or as needed basis).</li> <li>Explore options for more instruction from teachers and special educators.</li> <li>Explore peer supports.</li> </ul>
		<b>FTE</b>	<b>% Ps</b>		
	Working 1:1 with students with IEPs	3.5	50.0%		
	Working 1:1 with students in general education 80% or more	2.0	57.1%		
	Working 1:1 with students in general education less than 80%	1.5	42.9%		
<b>15b</b>	Amount of Time Students with IEPs with 1:1 Paraprofessional Support Spend in General Education Classes <i>Information supplied by Special Educators:</i>				
		<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>		
	80% or more	3	33.3%		
	40% to 79%	0	0.0%		
	0% to 39%	6	66.7%		

Over the past two decades there has been a substantial increase in the number of special education paraprofessionals assigned, one-to-one (full-time) to students with disabilities. Although this type and level of support is undoubtedly offered with benevolent intentions, a series of studies have documented that this model of service delivery is fraught with numerous unintended detrimental effects (e.g., isolation from classroom activities and peers, stigmatization, provocation of behavior problems). Use of 1:1 paraprofessional support is one of the most restrictive supports than can be offered to a student and therefore should be closely scrutinized. Even in cases where students have extensive support needs, rarely do they need 1:1 paraprofessional support 100% of the time. The literature suggests that if the paraprofessionals are being used in place of instruction from teachers and special educators it is problematic. Use of 1:1 paraprofessionals has become a convenient, though often ill-advised, first (and sometimes lone) option for supporting students with disabilities in general education classrooms. In addition, recent legal proceedings suggest that in some cases the use of 1:1 paraprofessional services without a plan for increasing student independence may be considered a violation of FAPE.

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
16a	Special Educator Time Use (Self-Reported) Ave. % of Time Spent on: <i>Special Education Paperwork</i>	<i>Please Note: Special Educators were asked to report on the percentage of time spent on these activities regardless of how many hours they devote to work. These percentages include any time spent working outside of the regular school day. Therefore, these percentages do not necessarily or exclusively reflect time spent during the school day and when students are present. Other forms of data collection are more appropriate for capturing what happens during the school day only (e.g., time study).</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired time use for special educators to take best advantage of their skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual time use.</li><li>Compare findings to data sources that exclusively focus on special educator time use during the school day (e.g., time study).</li></ul>										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td><i>Low</i></td><td><i>High</i></td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>20.5</td><td>10.3</td><td>10</td><td>40</td></tr></table>				<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	6	20.5	10.3	10	40
	<i>n</i>				<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>						
6	20.5				10.3	10	40							
16b	<i>Collaboration with Others</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>13.5</td><td>13.2</td><td>5</td><td>40</td></tr></table>				6	13.5	13.2	5	40					
6	13.5				13.2	5	40							
16c	<i>Behavior Support</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>8.7</td><td>3.4</td><td>4</td><td>13</td></tr></table>				6	8.7	3.4	4	13					
6	8.7				3.4	4	13							
16d	<i>Instructional Time with Students</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>29.2</td><td>20.1</td><td>0</td><td>50</td></tr></table>				6	29.2	20.1	0	50					
6	29.2				20.1	0	50							
16e	<i>Planning</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>9.2</td><td>7.4</td><td>0</td><td>20</td></tr></table>				6	9.2	7.4	0	20					
6	9.2				7.4	0	20							
16f	<i>Working with Paraprofessionals</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>5.3</td><td>4.1</td><td>0</td><td>10</td></tr></table>	6	5.3	4.1	0	10								
6	5.3	4.1	0	10										
16g	<i>Working with Families</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>12.5</td><td>10.4</td><td>5</td><td>30</td></tr></table>	6	12.5	10.4	5	30								
6	12.5	10.4	5	30										
16h	<i>Other</i>													
	<table><tr><td>6</td><td>1.2</td><td>2.9</td><td>0</td><td>7</td></tr></table>	6	1.2	2.9	0	7								
6	1.2	2.9	0	7										

#	Your School's Numbers that Count					What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*										
17a	Paraprofessional Time Use ( <i>Reported by Special Educators</i> ) Ave% of Time Spent: Clerical Support:					Existing data suggests that special education paraprofessionals are expending an increasing portion of their time on instruction. Under some circumstances this may be positive, though much depends on whether the instruction they provide is primary or supplemental; in too many cases it is inappropriately the primary instruction. Whether the increase in instruction by paraprofessionals is desirable also depends on whether they are properly trained and otherwise qualified for the tasks they are being asked to perform. Existing data suggests that many paraprofessionals are assigned to support students in classes where they report being under-skilled or unskilled. This becomes increasingly problematic in the upper elementary grades, middle school, and high school. As one study participant (paraprofessional) stated, "I don't do algebra." The breakdown of paraprofessional time use is designed to assist your school reflect on how you want paraprofessionals spending their time. In some cases there is renewed interest in having paraprofessionals engage in non-instructional tasks that allow teachers and special educators to spend more time directly teaching students with disabilities -- these non-instructional duties and supplemental instructional roles need to be clearly established as highly valued role.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired time use for special education paraprofessionals to take best advantage of their skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual time use.</li></ul>										
	<table><tr><td><i>n</i></td><td><i>M</i></td><td><i>SD</i></td><td>Low</td><td>High</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>4.5</td><td>6.1</td><td>0</td><td>13</td></tr></table>								<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	4	4.5	6.1	0	13
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High													
4	4.5	6.1	0	13														
17b	Supervision of Students:																	
	<table><tr><td>4</td><td>17.5</td><td>23.6</td><td>0</td><td>50</td></tr></table>								4	17.5	23.6	0	50					
4	17.5	23.6	0	50														
17c	Personal Care:																	
	<table><tr><td>4</td><td>2.5</td><td>5.0</td><td>0</td><td>10</td></tr></table>								4	2.5	5.0	0	10					
4	2.5	5.0	0	10														
17d	Behavior Support:																	
	<table><tr><td>4</td><td>20.0</td><td>28.3</td><td>0</td><td>60</td></tr></table>					4	20.0	28.3	0	60								
4	20.0	28.3	0	60														
17e	Implementing Instruction Planned by a Teacher or Special Educator																	
	<table><tr><td>4</td><td>44.3</td><td>44.4</td><td>7</td><td>100</td></tr></table>					4	44.3	44.4	7	100								
4	44.3	44.4	7	100														
17f	Engaging in Self-Directed Activities, Not Planned or Supervised by Teacher/SPED																	
	<table><tr><td>4</td><td>1.3</td><td>2.5</td><td>0</td><td>5</td></tr></table>					4	1.3	2.5	0	5								
4	1.3	2.5	0	5														
17g	Other																	
	<table><tr><td>4</td><td>10.0</td><td>20.0</td><td>0</td><td>40</td></tr></table>					4	10.0	20.0	0	40								
4	10.0	20.0	0	40														

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*																																													
18	Number of Students who have 1:1 Paraprofessional Support by Primary IDEA Disability Category	Virtually no state or national data exist on the disability categories of students with disabilities who are receive full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports. Because the variability and severity with each category is substantial, these data offer only a modest amount of information to consider (more detailed and relevant data are found in item 20). In general, we suggest that you should especially scrutinize situations where the disability category is most closely associated with students who have high-incidence / mild disabilities. For example, if you have students in categories such as learning disabilities (LD) it should be explored further. It is more common (though not necessarily more appropriate) for students in categories most closely associated with low-incidence / severe disabilities (e.g., deaf-blindness, multiple disabilities) to receive one-to-one paraprofessional supports. It should be noted that some schools have made a decision to completely move away from the use of full-time one-to-one paraprofessionals because of its known problems. In these cases students may receive such supports at specific times and for specific purposes (e.g., personal care supports).		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This informational item can assist in understanding items 13 and 14 regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight if any particular categories are unusually represented (e.g., high incidence disabilities).</li></ul>																																													
	<table><tr><th>Disability</th><th>n</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Autism</td><td>3</td><td>33.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Deaf-Blindness</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Developmental Delay</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Emotional Disturbance</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Hearing Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Intellectual Disability</td><td>3</td><td>33.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Multiple Disabilities</td><td>3</td><td>33.3%</td></tr><tr><td>Orthopedic Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Other Health Imp.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Specific Learning Dis.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Speech / Language Imp.</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Traumatic Brain Injury</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Visual Impairment</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr></table>				Disability	n	%	Autism	3	33.3%	Deaf-Blindness	0	0.0%	Developmental Delay	0	0.0%	Emotional Disturbance	0	0.0%	Hearing Impairment	0	0.0%	Intellectual Disability	3	33.3%	Multiple Disabilities	3	33.3%	Orthopedic Impairment	0	0.0%	Other Health Imp.	0	0.0%	Specific Learning Dis.	0	0.0%	Speech / Language Imp.	0	0.0%	Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0.0%	Visual Impairment	0	0.0%	Total	9	100.0%
	Disability				n	%																																											
	Autism				3	33.3%																																											
	Deaf-Blindness				0	0.0%																																											
	Developmental Delay				0	0.0%																																											
	Emotional Disturbance				0	0.0%																																											
	Hearing Impairment				0	0.0%																																											
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	Speech / Language Imp.				0	0.0%																																											
Traumatic Brain Injury	0	0.0%																																															
Visual Impairment	0	0.0%																																															
Total	9	100.0%																																															

#	Your School's Numbers that Count			What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
19	Number of Students with 1:1 Paraprofessional Support Who Participate in Alternate Assessment			<p><i>Please note: We recommend exploring any discrepancies between special educators' response to this item and item 2.</i></p> <p>Virtually no state or national data exist on the number of students who receive full-time one-to-one supports who also are eligible to participate in alternate assessment. Presumably there should be a substantial correlation between those students with severe enough disabilities to warrant alternate assessment (most significantly impaired 1%) and those who warrant one-to-one supports. If a substantial number of students who are receiving one-to-one supports are not eligible for alternate assessment it may be of concern and one way to cross-check the level of need.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This item can assist in understanding items 13 and 14 regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight students who are receiving full-time, one-to-one supports, but who are not eligible for alternate assessment.</li> </ul>
		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	Students on Alternate Assessment	4	50.0%			
	Students not on Alternate Assessment	4	50.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
20a	Type and Level of Disability Among Those Receiving Full-Time 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports			<p>There are virtually no state or national data on the types and levels of disability among students who are receiving full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports. Given the inherent variability within the IDEA disability categories, having a better understanding of the types and levels of disabilities can assist your school as it reflects on which students are receiving full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports and whether any patterns exist that can facilitate school improvement planning. Once you ascertain the characteristics and levels you can begin asking questions such as: (a) Do these students need paraprofessional supports all day? (b) What is</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This informational item can assist in understanding items 13, 14 and 18, regarding paraprofessional utilization and can highlight if any particular types or levels are unusually represented (e.g., mild disabilities).</li> </ul>
	<i>Intellectual / Learning</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	0	0.0%			
	Mild	0	0.0%			
	Moderate	2	22.2%			
	Severe	7	77.8%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	Your School's Numbers that Count			What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
20b	Physical / Orthopedic	n	%	the paraprofessional doing when the student is with the teacher, special educator, or a related services professional? (c) Are the duties being fulfilled by the paraprofessional most appropriate for them to deliver, or are they better provided by a peer, teacher, or special educator?		See information on page 17
	None	3	33.3%			
	Mild	2	22.2%			
	Moderate	2	22.2%			
	Severe	2	22.2%			
	Total	9	100.0%			
20c	Behavioral / Emotional	n	%			
	None	0	0.0%			
	Mild	1	11.1%			
	Moderate	3	33.3%			
	Severe	5	55.6%			
	Total	9	100.0%			
20d	Vision	n	%			
	None	6	66.7%			
	Mild	2	22.2%			
	Moderate	0	0.0%			
	Severe	1	11.1%			
	Total	9	100.0%			



#	<i>Your School's Numbers that Count</i>			<i>What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*</i>	<i>Level of Concern** N-L-M-H</i>	<i>Potential Actions*</i>
20e	<i>Hearing Disability</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>See information on pages 17-18</i>		<i>See information on page 17</i>
	None	9	100.0%			
	Mild	0	0.0%			
	Moderate	0	0.0%			
	Severe	0	0.0%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			
20f	<i>Health Disability</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>			
	None	5	55.6%			
	Mild	1	11.1%			
	Moderate	2	22.2%			
	Severe	1	11.1%			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100.0%</b>			

#	Your School's Numbers that Count					What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*
21a	Average Percent Instructional Time for Students Receiving 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports					One of the most important aspects of successful inclusive environments is what has been referred to as "teacher engagement", namely the teacher's attitude of ownership for the education of the student with a disability in the regular classroom and the teacher's actions to be knowledgeable and involved in the design and delivery of curriculum and instruction.  Existing data suggests that a substantial amount of primary instruction is provided paraprofessionals; there is little existing evidence that this approach is beneficial for students. A small number of studies have documented positive impact of paraprofessionals providing supplemental (not primary) instruction when they are appropriately trained and supervised in the implementation of researched-based approaches. Additionally, students with disabilities report feeling like outsiders in the classroom and less valued when they do not receive their instruction from the classroom teacher. Excessive use of paraprofessionals to provide instruction potentially establishes a double standard that would not be acceptable if applied to students without disabilities.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establish desired instructional time use for special educators, teachers, and paraprofessionals to take best advantage of their respective skills and knowledge; then explore strategies to establish alignment between desired and actual instructional time use.</li><li>Increase instructional by teachers, special educators, and co-teaching.</li></ul>
	Classroom Teachers							
	n	M	SD	Low	High			
21b	9	26.7	31.9	0	80			
	Special Educators / Related Services							
	9	54.4	40.1	10	100			
21c	Paraprofessionals							
	9	18.9	29.8	0	90			

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*																											
22	Number of Students Where Various Team Members Have Advocated for Students to Have Full-Time 1:1 Paraprofessional Support (as reported by Special Educators)	There are virtually no data on this topic in the professional literature other than limited descriptions suggesting that in some cases parents advocate for one-to-one paraprofessional supports. This is often rooted in parental concerns that their child will be lost in the shuffle of the regular classroom and that their individual needs will not be met. At other times it is school personnel (e.g., teachers, principal) who require that a paraprofessional be assigned to a student in order for them to have access to the regular classroom (sometimes this is contrary to the wishes of the parent). Students themselves are rarely involved in these support service decisions, a fact that runs contrary to the current emphasis on self-determination as a best practice.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Share information with families and school personnel about both the pros and cons (e.g., inadvertent detrimental effects) of utilizing full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional supports.</li><li>• Ensure that use of full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional support is neither the first or only option considered to support students with disabilities in general education classes (e.g., use <i>Guidelines for Selecting Alternatives to Overreliance on Paraprofessionals</i>).</li><li>• Encourage self-determination by involving students in decisions about their own supports.</li></ul>																											
	<table><tr><th>Team Member</th><th>n</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>General Education Administrator</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Special Education Administrator</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Classroom Teacher</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Special Educator</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Parent or Guardian</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Student with a Disability</td><td>4</td><td>44.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>1</td><td>11.1%</td></tr><tr><td>n reported</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr></table>				Team Member	n	%	General Education Administrator	9	100.0%	Special Education Administrator	9	100.0%	Classroom Teacher	9	100.0%	Special Educator	9	100.0%	Parent or Guardian	9	100.0%	Student with a Disability	4	44.4%	Other	1	11.1%	n reported	9	100.0%
	Team Member				n	%																									
	General Education Administrator				9	100.0%																									
	Special Education Administrator				9	100.0%																									
	Classroom Teacher				9	100.0%																									
	Special Educator				9	100.0%																									
	Parent or Guardian				9	100.0%																									
	Student with a Disability				4	44.4%																									
	Other				1	11.1%																									
n reported	9	100.0%																													

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*																											
23	<div>Primary Reasons Why Students Were Recommended for 1:1 Paraprofessional Supports</div> <table><tr><th>Reason</th><th>n</th><th>%</th></tr><tr><td>Safety of Student</td><td>8</td><td>88.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Safety of Others</td><td>5</td><td>55.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr><tr><td>Physical, Health, or Personal Care</td><td>4</td><td>44.4%</td></tr><tr><td>Communication Support</td><td>5</td><td>55.6%</td></tr><tr><td>Instructional / Learning Support</td><td>8</td><td>88.9%</td></tr><tr><td>Other</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr><tr><td>n reported</td><td>9</td><td>100.0%</td></tr></table>	Reason	n	%	Safety of Student	8	88.9%	Safety of Others	5	55.6%	Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)	9	100.0%	Physical, Health, or Personal Care	4	44.4%	Communication Support	5	55.6%	Instructional / Learning Support	8	88.9%	Other	0	0.0%	n reported	9	100.0%	There are virtually no data on this topic in the professional literature. Collecting data on the reasons why some students get assigned full-time, one-to-one paraprofessional support can assist schools in deciding: (a) whether the use of a paraprofessional is a good match with the reasons; and /or (b) whether the reasons prompt consideration of other ways to meet students' needs more effectively using less restrictive approaches.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Consider use of paraprofessional pools or classroom-assigned paraprofessionals to address low frequency needs.</li><li>Consider use of generically available school personnel (e.g., school nurses, guidance counselors).</li><li>Consider matches between personnel and functions to be served (e.g., if the function is instruction, who is best suited to provide that support?).</li></ul>
Reason	n	%																													
Safety of Student	8	88.9%																													
Safety of Others	5	55.6%																													
Behavioral, Emotional, or Social Concerns (not safety issues)	9	100.0%																													
Physical, Health, or Personal Care	4	44.4%																													
Communication Support	5	55.6%																													
Instructional / Learning Support	8	88.9%																													
Other	0	0.0%																													
n reported	9	100.0%																													

#	Your School's Numbers that Count	What They Might Mean If They are Too High or Low*	Level of Concern** N-L-M-H	Potential Actions*																						
24	<p>Special Educators' Agreement with: <i>My work responsibilities are conducive to providing effective special education to students served on IEPs.</i> (Rated on a scale of 1 to 10 1 = Strongly Disagree 10 = Strongly Agree)</p> <table><tr><th>n</th><th>M</th><th>SD</th><th>Low</th><th>High</th></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>7.0</td><td>1.8</td><td>5</td><td>10</td></tr></table> <p style="text-align: center;">Special Educators' Ratings</p> <table><caption>Special Educators' Ratings Data</caption><tr><th>Rating</th><th>Number of Special Educators</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	n	M	SD	Low	High	6	7.0	1.8	5	10	Rating	Number of Special Educators	5	1	6	2	7	1	8	1	10	1	<p>This question was asked to gauge special educators' feelings toward their work responsibilities. Each school needs to decide whether the average is of concern or not for them. Asking special educators whether they feel their work conditions are conducive to providing effective services and supports can help schools (a) assess how special educators perceive their working conditions and (b) begin a conversation to address concerns and plan for possible changes. One recent study found that special educator ratings on this item were significantly related to special educator school density and special educator's IEP caseload.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify subset of special educators with the most challenging caseloads</li><li>Reduce caseload size</li><li>Reduce range of classes and/or ages served</li><li>Ensure no one special educator has too many students with intensive needs</li><li>Reduce the number of paraprofessionals a special educator is expected to supervise/direct</li><li>Consider limiting responsibilities for non IEP student</li><li>Meet with the special educators and seek their input about what would improve their working conditions to better serve students</li></ul>
n	M	SD	Low	High																						
6	7.0	1.8	5	10																						
Rating	Number of Special Educators																									
5	1																									
6	2																									
7	1																									
8	1																									
10	1																									

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[Number following citations correspond with numbered data items]

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## Interpreting the Data and Acknowledging its Limitations

The purpose of the *Numbers that Count!* data is provide an initial glimpse into a subset of schooling practices and demographics in an effort to illuminate issues that can lead to constructive dialogue within the school community in an effort to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for students. Therefore, they should be used as springboard for reflection and potential action and not viewed as a final word.

The data provided in the *Numbers that Count! Data Grid* are subject to many of the same limitations as any data, regardless of whether it is quantitative or qualitative. So as you consider the finding please keep the following limitations in mind:

1. Like all data, these data are partial (we only collected data on a subset of issues) and bound by context. Therefore, they should not be considered comprehensive and should be considered in context.
2. Data were collected from a small sample of special educators, about a small set of interrelated issues, at a single point in time.
3. Errors can sometimes occur in the raw data submitted by respondents for a variety of reasons (e.g., simple recording mistakes, misinterpretation of questions, idiosyncratic interpretation of questions, imprecisely worded questions on a questionnaire). So it is possible (maybe even likely) that some of these errors exist in these data. Therefore, if any numbers seem substantially out of kilter, it is advisable to not rush to judgment on their meaning and consider them in light of other findings and what is known about the context.
4. Through this process, we found that even seemingly simple issues (e.g., special educator caseloads) are never as simple as they might seem (e.g., SLPs functioning as special educators, special educators sharing caseloads, special educators not working directly with students they case manage and/or working directly with students they don't case manage). Therefore, even though the numbers are presented distinctly, some may be "fuzzier" than others because of the nuances that exist across and within schools. That is one reason why we have chosen to offer face-to-face debriefing.

Despite the inherent limitations in these data, they offer a variety of interesting and important information that can be utilized to improve opportunities and outcomes for students with disabilities and there peers without disabilities.

We hope you find these data helpful in your school improvement process,

- Michael F. Giangreco & Jesse C. Suter