



Special Education/RTI Conference Evaluation Update

March 2013

Legislative Proposals – Impact on Special Education

- Inclusion of special education students in individual growth score calculations
- School-wide/System-wide
 - Reduction from 35% to 25% pending legislative session



Current Landscape

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and NCLB require that all students, including those with the most severe disabilities, must be included in state-mandated assessments.
- However, there is currently a prohibition on including special education students in individual growth calculations.



Proposed Change

- Bill number SB 156/HB 150 has been proposed.
- This bill will remove the prohibition on including special education students in individual growth calculations.
- This proposal is the result of feedback from districts, as well as the collaborative work of multiple TDOE divisions, including:
 - Special Populations
 - Teachers and Leaders
 - Data and Accountability
- The Tennessee Advisory Council for the Education of Students with Disabilities has endorsed this revision.
- Under the current version of the bill this change would go into effect immediately.



Why is this right for Tennessee?

- The state of Tennessee is committed to ensuring that all students receive a high-quality education.
- As a state, our largest achievement gap is between special education students and general education students.
- The majority of districts '**In Need of Improvement**' and schools identified as '**Focus Schools**' were identified by gap closure issues for students with disabilities.
- An important part of making sure all students receive a high-quality education is making sure all students count when we assess whether we are succeeding as a state, as school districts, as schools, and as teachers.

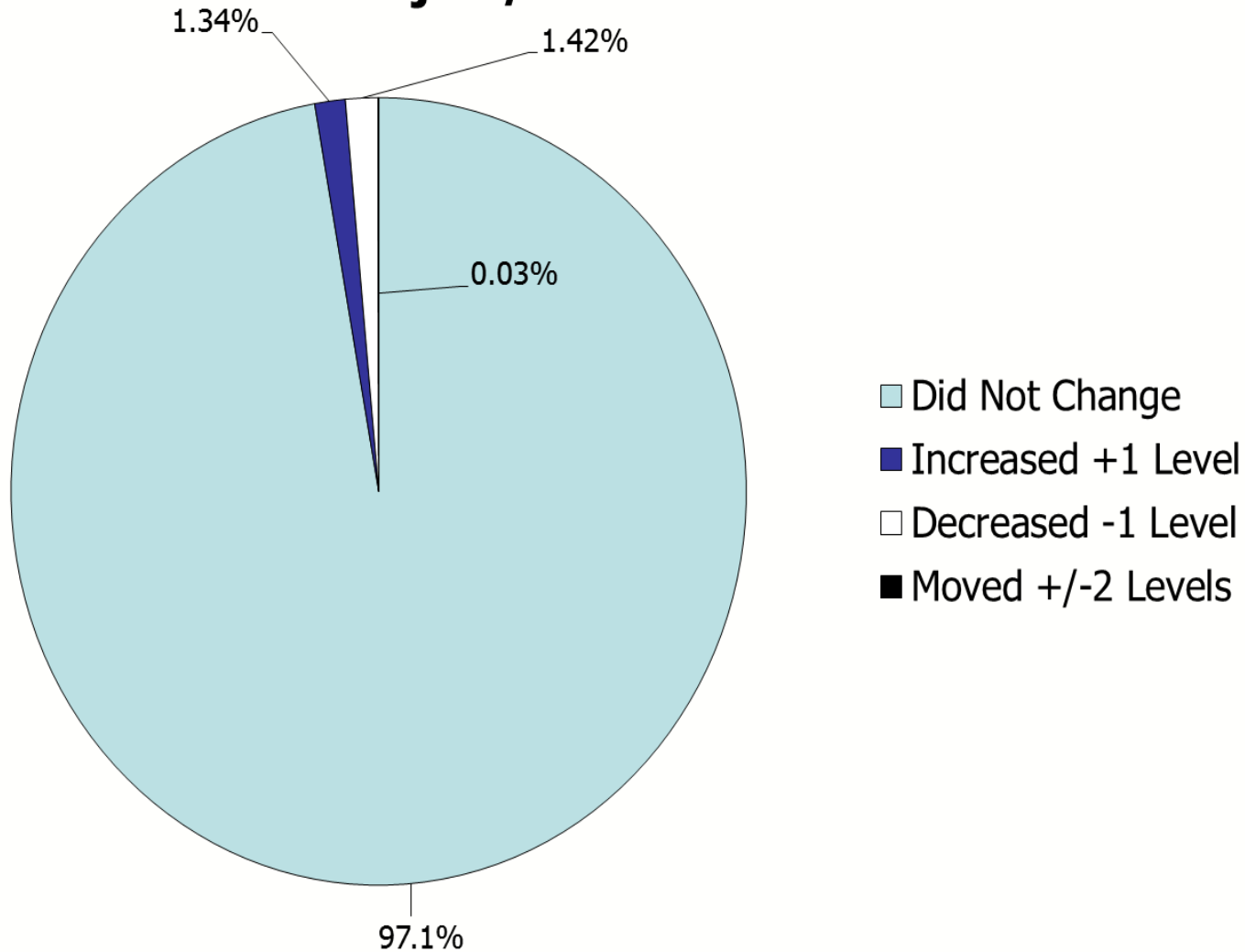


This change will not negatively impact teachers

- The academic growth of special education students is very similar to the academic growth of general education students.
- In fact, more than **97%** of subject/grade levels received the same teacher effect score with the inclusion of SPED students as they did without the inclusion of SPED students.
- Looking at 2011-12 data across all five levels of effectiveness:
 - The number of teachers identified in each level is almost identical when SPED students are included as when they are not.
 - No teacher who received a 3, 4, or 5 without the inclusion of SPED students received a 1 when SPED students were included.
 - No teacher who received a 4 or 5 without the inclusion of SPED students received below a 3 when SPED students were included.



Subject/Grade Levels



***NOTE:** Over 100,000 classrooms are represented in this data.



Opportunity to Communicate Growth and Achievement

- Growth measures progress from a baseline.
- Achievement measures proficiency.
- Growth takes into account a student's history, ensuring a level playing field.
- No matter where a student starts, all students can grow, and the data backs this up.



Implications for Special Education Teachers

- As with all individual growth measures, a teacher will still need to provide student linkage information for:
 - 6 students if their students take the TCAP
 - 10 students if their students take an EOC
- This means that an elementary special education teacher linking to **20%** of each student would need to do so for **30 students** in order to have enough data for an individual growth score to be calculated.



Student Linkage Guidance

- Students on an IEP would be linked with the corresponding teacher(s) of record for each subject tested.
- The IEP services page should be used to determine the percentage of time a student is linked to their special education teacher and their general education teacher.
- The location of services may not be the sole factor used to determine with whom the student is linked.
 - Ex. A student may be in the general education setting with an inclusion teacher.



Student Linkage Guidance

Steps

- 1) Determine the total instruction time for the subject in question.
 - Ex. Student receives 90 minutes of reading instruction per day.
- 2) Look at the student's IEP services page to determine how much support they receive.
 - Ex. Student receives 30 minutes of pullout reading instruction per day.



Student Linkage Guidance

Steps cont.

3) Determine the percentage of the student each teacher should link with.

- Ex. Student would link with the special education teacher for 30 minutes out of the total 90 minutes, which would be 33%. Since linkages are done in increments of ten, the special education teacher would link to 30% of the student, and the general education teacher would link to 70% of the student.

4) Total all students served to determine whether you will receive an individual growth score.

- Ex. The special education teacher links with 30% of 20 students. This means he links with 6 whole students. If the students are taking the TCAP, he would have enough students to generate an individual growth score. If the students are taking an EOC, he would **not** have enough students to generate an individual growth score.



Elementary Resource (SPED setting) Example

- A 3rd grade student receives a total of 7.5 hours of ELA instruction.
 - Of the 7.5 total hours, 2.5 hours are spent receiving ELA resource instruction in a special education setting.
 - Therefore, the student will be linked with the special education teacher for 2.5 hours.
 - Of the 7.5 total hours, 5 hours are spent receiving ELA instruction in a general education setting.
 - Therefore, the student will be linked with the general education teacher for 5 hours.
- Since the student linkage process is set in 10% increments, the SPED teacher would link with 30% of the student, and the general education teacher would link with 70% of the student on the TCAP Reading portion.



Inclusion Setting Example

- A 6th grade student receives 5 hours of inclusion instruction in a special education setting for math.
 - The student will be linked with both the special education teacher and the general education teacher for these 5 hours.
- The SPED teacher would link with 50% of the student, and the general education teacher would link with the other 50% of the student on the TCAP Math portion.
- ***NOTE:*** *If this inclusion classroom utilized an educational assistant instead of a licensed special education teacher, the general education teacher would be linked to the student for 100% in this scenario.*



High School EOC Example

- A high school student on an IEP receives all English instruction in a special education setting.
 - The SPED teacher would link with 100% of the student on the English EOC.
- ***NOTE:*** *If this were an inclusion course, the SPED teacher would be linked with 50% of the student, and the general education teacher would be linked with the other 50% of the student. However, if this inclusion classroom utilized an educational assistant instead of a licensed special education teacher, the general education teacher would be linked to the student for 100% in this scenario.*



Student Linkage – Avoiding Unintended Consequences

- General education teachers should continue to link to special education students.
- Special education teachers should only link to 100% of their special education students if they are delivering 100% of their instruction.
- Shared responsibility among teachers should be emphasized.
- Only licensed special education teachers should link with students—not unlicensed educational assistants.



District Role in Student Linkage

- When there is a question, the IEP should be the primary driver for determining student linkages
- In scenarios that require interpretation, districts should make specific decisions based on local policy
- Interpreting student linkage scenarios in inclusion settings will often require district discretion
 - Ex: A 50-50 split between a general education and special education teacher may not always be appropriate



Why Now?

- We believe that **ALL** students count.
- This is right for students and for the state of Tennessee.
- Special education students are already included in accountability measures.
- It gives a more accurate picture of what is happening in the classroom.
- This policy is consistent with RTI work to ensure effective collaboration between general education and special education.



Observing Special Educators

- 'Observation Guidance Documents' are available on team-tn.org on the 'Teacher Model' page.
- Special education teachers should be observed using the General Educator rubric.
- School Services Personnel



Questions?



Contact

- Sara Heyburn, Assistant Commissioner, Teachers and Leaders
 - Sara.Heyburn@tn.gov
- Luke Kohlmoos, Director of Evaluation
 - Luke.Kohlmoos@tn.gov
- Joey Hassell, Assistant Commissioner, Special Populations
 - Joey.Hassell@tn.gov

