

Crisis Prevention Institute

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October 2009

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I. Methodology and Sample Characteristics

Methodology

Zogby International was commissioned by the Crisis Prevention Institute to conduct a hybrid interactive/telephone survey of teachers K-12 from 9/26/09 to 10/5/09.

The sample is 402 interviews of special education teachers and 538 interviews of regular education teachers with approximately 27 questions asked. Samples are randomly drawn from purchased lists of both regular education and special education K-12 teachers. In addition, Zogby International's interactive panel was invited to participate and screened to confirm K-12 teacher status. Of the 538 regular education teachers, 111 were done with purchased telephone numbers while 437 were completed with our internal interactive panel.

Zogby International surveys employ sampling strategies in which selection probabilities are proportional to population size within area codes and exchanges. Up to six calls are made to reach a sampled phone number. Cooperation rates are calculated using one of AAPOR's approved methodologies¹ and are comparable to other professional public-opinion surveys conducted using similar sampling strategies.² The margin of error is +/- 5.0 percentage points for the special education teachers and +/- 4.3 percentage points for regular education teachers. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

¹ See COOP4 (p.38) in *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates of Surveys*. The American Association for Public Opinion Research, (2000).

² *Cooperation Tracking Study: April 2003 Update*, Jane M. Sheppard and Shelly Haas. The Council for Marketing & Opinion Research (CMOR). Cincinnati, Ohio (2003).

Sample Characteristics

Sample Characteristics Regular Education	Frequency	Valid Percent*
Regular Education K-12	538	100
Schools of 250 Students or less	73	14
251-500	160	30
501-1000	160	30
>1,000	135	25
Did not answer school size	10	--
Schools in district 10 or less	205	38
11-20	82	15
>20	191	36
Private school	51	10
Did not answer number	9	--
Male	214	40
Female	320	60

Sample Characteristics Special Education	Frequency	Valid Percent*
Special Education	402	100
Schools of 250 Students or less	69	17
251-500	129	32
501-1000	134	33
>1,000	67	17
Schools in district 10 or less	213	53
11-20	70	17
>20	105	26
Private school	3	1
Male	47	12
Female	355	88

* Numbers have been rounded to the nearest percent and might not total 100.

II. Executive Summary

Regular and special education teachers largely see eye to eye when it comes to issues that are having an impact in reducing or preventing verbal aggression or physical violence, but there are some factors that each group leans toward more than the other.

For reducing and preventing verbal aggression, special education teachers (32%) are more likely than regular teachers (25%) to say that lack of teacher support for school policy has an impact. Regular education teachers (34%) are more likely than special education teachers (25%) to say that fear of litigation has an impact.

The same goes for reducing and preventing physical violence, as regular teachers (32%) are more likely than special education teachers (25%) to say that fear of litigation has an impact, while lack of teacher support for school policy has an impact to more special education teachers (28%) than regular teachers (18%).

Both special and regular education teachers say they think their students are more prone to violence than they were five years ago, but they are split over whether or not they feel more or less safe in the classroom. Special education teachers (58%) say they feel more safe than they did five years ago, while 47% of regular education teachers say the same, and Special education teachers (23%) are far more likely than their regular education counterparts (13%) to say they feel much more safe.

When it comes to being comfortable with the training they have in dealing with disruptive behavior or potential classroom violence, Special education teachers (82%) are far more likely than regular education teachers (68%) to say they are comfortable, which coincides with special education teachers being almost twice as likely as regular teachers to say their school has conducted a staff training day for issues such as managing disruptive behavior in the past year (80% vs. 43%).

In general, special education teachers are more likely than their regular counterparts to say that training topics identified in questions 15 through 21, as being helpful, particularly when it comes to learning about current state and federal statutes regarding school safety regulations and follow-up after critical incidents.

III. Narrative Analysis

How have the following factors impacted your school's progress in reducing or preventing verbal aggression?

1. Inadequate teacher training

	Impact			3	4	No impact		Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	8	13	21	20	19	35	54	6
Special Ed Teachers	13	11	25	27	15	32	47	2

***Note, numbers may not sum evenly or equal 100% due to rounding. This applies to all following tables as well.**

Slightly more than half of regular education teachers (54%) say inadequate teacher training has no impact on their school's progress in reducing or preventing verbal aggression, and almost half of special education teachers (47%) say the same. A quarter of special education teachers (25%) say it does have an impact, and 8% of regular education teachers says very much.

2. Lack of teacher support for school policies.

	Impact			3	4	No impact		Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	13	12	25	15	17	41	58	3
Special Ed Teachers	16	16	32	16	18	33	51	1

Regular education teachers (58%) are slightly more likely to say that lack of teacher support for school policies has no impact on their school's progress in reducing or preventing verbal aggression, compared to 51% of special education teachers who say the same. Special education teachers (32%) are more likely than regular education teachers (25%) to say lack of such support has an impact.

3. Teachers' fear of student retaliation.

	Impact			No impact				Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total	3	4	5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	7	11	18	16	19	44	63	4
Special Ed Teachers	9	10	18	13	17	50	67	1

Teachers' fear of student retaliation has no impact to a majority of regular (63%) and special education teachers (67%). Eighteen percent of regular and special education teachers say the issue of teachers' fear of student retaliation has an impact in their school's progress in reducing or preventing verbal aggression.

4. Fear of litigation.

	Impact			No impact				Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total	3	4	5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	15	19	34	16	18	28	45	5
Special Ed Teachers	11	13	25	21	22	30	52	2

Special education teachers (52%) are more likely than regular education teachers (45%) to say that fear of litigation has no impact on their school's progress in reducing or preventing verbal aggression. A third of regular education teachers (34%) say fear of litigation has an impact, while a quarter (25%) of special education teachers say the same.

How have the following factors impacted your schools progress in reducing or preventing physical aggression?

5. Inadequate teacher training.

	Impact			No impact				Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total	3	4	5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	7	10	17	18	22	38	60	5
Special Ed Teachers	15	14	28	19	16	36	51	2

***Note, numbers may not sum evenly or equal 100% due to rounding. This applies to all following tables as well.**

Special education teachers are more likely than regular education teachers to say that inadequate teacher training has an impact on their school’s progress in reducing or preventing physical aggression (28% vs. 17%), and they are more than twice as likely to say it has very much an impact (15% vs. 7%). Conversely, regular education teachers are more likely than special education teachers to say inadequate teacher training does not have an impact at their school (60% vs. 51%).

6. Lack of teacher support for school policies.

	Impact			No impact				Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total	3	4	5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	7	11	18	13	20	45	66	3
Special Ed Teachers	13	15	28	15	18	38	57	1

Special education teachers are more likely than regular education teachers to say a lack of teacher support for school policies has an impact on their school’s progress in reducing or preventing physical aggression (28% vs. 18%), while regular education teachers are more likely to say it has no impact (66% vs. 57%).

7. Teachers' fear of student retaliation.

	Impact			No impact				Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total	3	4	5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	7	12	19	17	20	41	61	3
Special Ed Teachers	12	10	22	16	20	41	61	1

Majorities of both regular and special education teachers (61%) each say that teachers' fear of student retaliation has no impact on their school's progress in reducing or preventing physical aggression. Similar numbers of regular education teachers 19% and special education teachers (22%) say such fear of retaliation has an impact, with special education teachers far more likely than regular education teachers to say it has very much an impact (12% vs. 7%).

8. Fear of litigation.

	Impact			No impact				Not Sure
	1 Very much	2	Total	3	4	5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	15	16	32	18	16	30	46	5
Special Ed Teachers	14	11	25	22	22	29	51	2

Regular education teachers (32%) are slightly more likely than their special education colleagues (25%) to say fear of litigation has an impact in their school's progress in reducing or preventing physical aggression, while similar numbers of both special (51%) and regular (46%) education teachers say such fear has no impact.

9. When considering current students in your school, are they more or less prone to violence than they were [5] years ago?

	More			Less			Not Sure
	Much more	Somewhat More	Total	Somewhat less	Much less	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	17	39	55	25	8	33	12
Special Ed Teachers	22	38	60	20	12	32	8

Most regular (55%) and special education teachers (60%) say that considering current students in their school, they are more prone to violence than they were five years ago, while a third each saying they are less prone to violence.

10. *Thinking about your personal feelings of safety in your school and classroom, do you feel more or less than you did [5] years ago?*

	More			Less			Not Sure
	Much more	Somewhat More	Total	Somewhat less	Much less	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	13	34	47	34	8	42	12
Special Ed Teachers	23	34	57	24	9	32	10

Special education teachers are more likely than regular education teachers to say they feel more safe in the classroom than they did five years ago (57% vs. 47%). Regular education teachers are more likely to say they feel less safe than they did five years ago (42%) compared to special education teachers (32%) who say the same.

Please tell us if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements.

11. *I trust the ability of fellow teachers and administrators to successfully aid me in the event of disruptive behavior or even violent behavior in my classroom.*

	Agree			Disagree			Not Sure
	Strongly	Somewhat	Total	Somewhat	Strongly	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	46	35	81	12	7	18	1
Special Ed Teachers	55	35	90	7	4	10	1

Special education teachers (90%) are more likely than their regular education counterparts (81%) to agree that they trust the ability of fellow teachers and administrators to successfully aid them in the event of disruptive behavior or even violent behavior in their classroom. Regular education teachers are more likely to say they disagree with that statement (18%) compared to special education teachers (10%).

12. I feel comfortable that the training I have received in dealing with disruptive behavior or potential classroom violence is sufficient to allow me to address situations that may arise.

	Agree			Disagree			Not Sure
	Strongly	Somewhat	Total	Somewhat	Strongly	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	32	36	68	19	10	29	3
Special Ed Teachers	45	37	82	9	7	16	2

Both regular and special education teachers agree that the training they have received in dealing with disruptive behavior or potential classroom violence is sufficient to allow them to address situations that may arise, but special education teachers (82%) are more likely to say so than regular education teachers (68%). Regular education teachers are more likely to say they disagree (29%) than special education teachers (16%).

13. Thinking about the last school year, have any of the following occurred at your school or in your classroom? (Choose all that apply)

	Regular Ed	Special Ed
Verbal confrontation	76	80
Fights in school	65	63
Abuse of a staff member....	36	41
Student w/ weapon....	28	30
None of the above	16	12
Not sure	2	1

Regular (76%) and special education teachers (80%) are both most likely to say that verbal confrontations have occurred in their school or classroom in the last school year, followed by fights in school. Special education teachers (41%) are slightly more likely to say abuse of a staff member occurred in the last year than regular education teachers (36%).

14. Has your school conducted a staff training day in the past year for school safety issues such managing disruptive behavior?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Regular Ed	43	51	6
Special Ed	80	19	1

Special education teachers are almost twice as likely as regular education teachers (80% vs. 43%) to say their school has conducted a staff training day in the past year for schools safety issues, such as managing disruptive behavior. Half of all regular education teachers polled (51%) say their school has not conducted such a training day.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very helpful and 5 being not at all helpful please rate the following training topics.

15. Identifying students at-risk for violent behavior.

	Helpful			3	4	Not Helpful		Not Sure
	1 Very	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	38	26	64	19	8	6	14	3
Special Ed Teachers	51	15	66	16	8	9	17	2

Majorities of both regular (64%) and special education teachers (66%) say identifying students at-risk for violent behavior is a helpful training topic. Half of all special education teachers polled (51%) say it is a very helpful topic.

16. Methods for diffusing disruptive & assaultive students.

	Helpful			3	4	Not Helpful		Not Sure
	1 Very	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	43	24	67	18	8	5	13	2
Special Ed Teachers	50	19	69	15	8	6	14	2

Most regular (67%) and special education teachers (69%) say that training on methods for diffusing disruptive and assaultive students would be helpful. Half of special education teachers say it would be very helpful and 43% of regular education teachers say the same.

17. Using technology to improve school safety & security.

	Helpful			3	4	Not Helpful		Not Sure
	1 Very	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	26	25	50	22	12	11	23	5
Special Ed Teachers	32	21	53	23	10	10	21	4

Half of all regular (50%) and special education teachers (53%) say that using technology to improve school safety and security would be a helpful training topic, while 23% of regular education teachers and 21% of special education teachers say it is not helpful.

18. Identifying students in need of special services or assistance.

	Helpful			3	4	Not Helpful		Not Sure
	1 Very	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	40	28	68	16	8	5	13	2
Special Ed Teachers	57	20	77	12	5	5	10	1

Majorities of special and regular education teachers say training for identifying students in need of special services or assistance would be helpful, with special education teachers (77%) slightly more likely than regular education teachers (68%) to say so. Special education teachers (57%) are also more likely than regular education teachers (40%) to say that such training would be very helpful.

19. Current state & federal statutes regarding school safety regulations.

	Helpful			3	4	Not Helpful		Not Sure
	1 Very	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	17	19	35	25	14	19	33	6
Special Ed Teachers	27	19	46	27	10	11	22	5

Special education teachers (46%) are slightly more likely than regular education teachers (35%) to say that training for current state and federal statutes regarding school safety regulations would be helpful, while a third a regular education teachers (33%) say it would not be helpful and 22% of special education teacher say the same.

20. Intervening with angry/abusive families.

	Helpful			3	4	Not Helpful		Not Sure
	1 Very	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	23	28	52	21	11	8	19	8
Special Ed Teachers	33	23	56	19	12	9	21	5

Most regular (52%) and special education teachers (56%) say that training for intervening with angry/abusive families would be helpful. Nineteen percent of regular education teachers and 21% of special education teachers say such training would not be helpful.

21. Follow-up after critical incidents.

	Helpful			3	4	Not Helpful		Not Sure
	1 Very	2	Total			5 Not at all	Total	
Regular Ed Teachers	34	26	59	21	9	6	15	5
Special Ed Teachers	45	22	68	14	8	7	15	4

Special education teachers (68%) are more likely than regular education teachers (59%) to say that training for follow-up after critical incidents would be helpful, while equal numbers of both (15% each) say such training would not be helpful.

22. Which of the following strategies/interventions have you seen the greatest level of effectiveness in addressing very aggressive and violent student behavior?

	Regular Ed	Special Ed
Proactive approaches	75	76
Reactive strategies	5	8
Aversive techniques	5	5
Other	5	8
Not sure	10	4

Both regular (75%) and special education teachers (76%) choose proactive approaches most often as the strategy/intervention they have seen the greatest level of effectiveness in addressing very aggressive and violent student behavior. Fewer special education and regular education teachers say the other methods of intervention are greatly effective, and there is little difference among either teaching group regarding those methods considering the margin of error for the polls.

23. Please tell us the **top two** types of resources you believe are most effective in addressing aggressive and violent student behavior from the list below.

	Regular Ed	Special Ed
Adequate staffing in classes for students with challenging behaviors	48	59
Administrative Support	56	47
Well defined policies/procedures	34	19
Professional Development/Training in de-escalation techniques	28	44
School Police	17	12
School policy	7	6
Technical assistance and support	2	1
Program guidelines	1	2
Other	3	2
Not sure	1	1

The top two types of resources regular education teachers say are most effective in addressing aggressive and violent student behavior are administrative support (56%) and adequate staffing in classes for students with challenging behaviors (48%). Special education teachers chose the same two types of resources as being most effective, but picked adequate staffing (59%) over administrative support (47%). Special education teachers were also more likely than regular education teachers to say professional development/training in de-escalation techniques are most effective (44% vs. 28%).

24. Do you feel comfortable with training on-line, either from your home or school, or not?

	Yes	No	Not sure
Regular Ed	58	32	10
Special Ed	55	42	3

Majorities of both regular (58%) and special education teachers (55%) say they feel comfortable with training on-line, but special education teachers (42%) are slightly more likely than regular education teachers (32%) to say they are not. Regular education teachers are far more likely to say they are not sure (10%) than special education teachers (3%).

25. How many students are in your school?

	Regular Ed	Special Ed
250 or less	14	17
251-500	30	32
501-1,000	30	33
More than 1,000	25	17
Not sure	2	1

The number of students is relatively consistent among special and regular education teachers polled, with the exception of those with more than 1,000 students. Regular education teachers (25%) are more likely than special education (17%) to say they have more than 1,000 students in their school.

26. How many schools are in your school district?

	Regular Ed	Special Ed
10 or less	38	53
11-20	15	17
More than 20	36	26
Private school	10	1
Not sure	2	3

Special education teachers (53%) are more likely than regular education teachers (38%) to say they have 10 or less schools in their district, while regular education teachers (36%) are more likely to say they have more than 20, compared to special education teachers (26%) who say the same.