

# The Impact of Schools Attuned on Special Education

Phase 4 Report

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# **The Impact of Schools Attuned on Special Education**

## **Phase 4 Report**

Westat designed and implemented an independent study of the impact of Schools Attuned on special education. The purpose of the study was to examine whether Schools Attuned training affected the nature and extent of special education services required in schools. The overall study consisted of four phases that served distinct functions and built on each other. This report describes the results of Phase 4 and provides some conclusions based on all four study phases.

### **Background for the Phase 4 Study**

To set the context for discussing Phase 4, we begin with brief overviews of the three previous phases.

#### ***Phase 1***

The first phase of the study was a qualitative inquiry that identified the most important factors related to special education that were potentially affected by the Schools Attuned program. Phase 1 yielded the following variables that educators trained in Schools Attuned reported had been or were expected to be affected by the program:

- Number or rate of referrals for formal special education evaluation;
- Number or rate of completed evaluations resulting in special education label;
- Number or rate of students served as students with disabilities;
- Average time spent by students with disabilities outside the regular classroom (amount of time outside classroom/number of students with disabilities);
- Teachers self-efficacy in working with diverse learners;
- Special education students' self-knowledge regarding their learning strengths and challenges;
- Special education students' self-advocacy related to their learning needs;
- Parents' satisfaction with their child's education program—including child's achievement, parents' communication with staff, and child's engagement;

- Number office discipline referrals and number of suspensions-expulsions (for all students);
- Number of retentions (for all students);
- Student achievement on end-of-year tests.

## *Phase 2*

The variables that emerged during Phase 1 were explored and defined in greater detail in Phase 2, when Westat designed and piloted questionnaires to collect data on the variables. The pilot was designed to test data collection methods that could be employed in a larger study using random assignment (Phase 3). Fourteen public elementary schools were selected for participation in Phase 2. Seven of the schools had been implementing and using the Schools Attuned program for at least 2 years. Staff from the All Kinds of Minds Institute assisted the Westat team in selecting these schools and enrolling them in the study. The Westat team identified seven matched schools as schools that were similar in size and other demographics to the seven schools, but that were not using Schools Attuned. Three sets of parallel questionnaires were created for the study, one set for the Schools Attuned schools and one for the matched schools: School Questionnaire, Teacher Questionnaire, Parent Questionnaire.

Most of the participants in Phase 2 found the questionnaires that we piloted to be easily understood and easy to complete. The questionnaires yielded valuable information useful in planning for Phase 3. Although the sample size available for Phase 2 was very small because this was a pilot study, findings related to teacher efficacy and to the self-awareness and self-advocacy of children with disabilities were intriguing. Although no tests of statistical significance were done due to the small number of teachers in the study, teachers from schools using Schools Attuned rated themselves higher on average at adapting instruction for special education students, accommodating culturally and linguistically diverse students' instructional needs, and collaborating or consulting with special education teachers compared to teachers from schools not using the program. These differences were small and only suggestive of possible true differences. They may have been due to differences between the two groups of schools that led them to choose Schools Attuned in the first place or to other differences, rather than differences caused by Schools Attuned.

### *Phase 3*

Phase 3 was initially designed as a quasi-experiment that would make comparisons of schools before and after implementation of Schools Attuned and provide evidence of any causal relationship between the application of Schools Attuned in a school and the nature and extent of special education services. Schools with no history with Schools Attuned were to be randomly assigned to one of two conditions. Under the first condition, approximately 25 percent of teachers and at least one administrator would receive training during the summer the study began. Additional teachers would be trained the following summer. Schools assigned to the second condition would receive no training until the second summer, when approximately 25 percent of teachers and at least one administrator would receive training, thus constituting a delayed treatment control. The schools would be studied for 3 years to determine the impact of Schools Attuned as its use developed in the schools.

The original Phase 3 plans were altered because recruiting efforts yielded too few participating schools. The study team, in consultation with the All Kinds of Minds research staff, narrowed the goals for Phase 3. Rather than a quasi-experiment, with schools assigned to a treatment group or a delayed treatment group, the redesigned study explored the course of implementation of Schools Attuned as they began using the program. Each of the 11 elementary schools that agreed to participate began training teachers in the summer when the study began, eliminating any delayed treatment condition. Two data collection strategies were employed. The first strategy used the three questionnaires refined in Phase 2 to collect and analyze quantitative data from 124 teachers at two points in time—spring 2004 and spring 2005. The second strategy employed a qualitative examination of implementation in a randomly selected set of five of the 11 schools. The qualitative strategy comprised interviews with 25 Schools Attuned trained teachers and 14 untrained teachers as well as classroom observations.

The findings from the qualitative strategy were most significant. The first round of data collection (fall 2004) expanded what we had learned in the Phases 1 and 2. Many of the Schools Attuned trained teachers reported a positive overall opinion of the program. Many appreciated the program's emphasis on student strengths rather than weaknesses. Some teachers indicated that they had a greater knowledge of "where kids were coming from" and better understood how the brain worked. Many liked the binder of strategies that they could refer to whenever needed. Some

teachers felt they had “more tools in their toolbox” after completing the training. Various levels of implementation were noted, however, during the fall site visits. A few trained teachers admitted that, due to competing programs in the school, they were not actually using Schools Attuned at all. This initial variation in implementation portended findings from the return visits.

In the spring, of the five site-visit schools, only one was clearly implementing Schools Attuned to a substantial degree. In two schools, teachers were using components of Schools Attuned but did not consistently or systematically attune or demystify students. In the remaining two schools, use of the program was quite limited. Clearly, an overriding deterrent to finding substantive results in the Phase 3 study was the inconsistency of implementation of the Schools Attuned program and ideas. Given the criteria for selection of the five schools, it could be assumed that these schools are reasonably representative of other public schools attempting to implement Schools Attuned.

The qualitative data provided further detail about reasons for the inconsistency of implementation among schools. Evidence from the five visited schools strongly suggested that successful implementation is dependent on contextual factors, beyond the control of teachers. Given the substantial time commitment required of teachers who wish to implement the full Attuning a Student process, support for teachers in the form of protected time might be required. Most significantly, support and buy-in is needed from individuals on multiple levels, including teachers, school-based administrators, and district administrators. It was clear that a general appreciation of and enthusiasm for Schools Attuned is not sufficient to ensure consistent and full implementation within a school.

The results of the Phase 3 findings did not allow us to predict what impacts Schools Attuned might have on special education if it were fully implemented. We suggested to the All Kinds of Minds research staff that future studies should identify schools where the context is conducive to high levels of implementation and where that high implementation can be adequately and systematically documented. Higher levels of documented implementation would likely enable a more nuanced and significant understanding of the impact of Schools Attuned on special education. That suggestion set the stage for an additional study, Phase 4.

## Phase 4 Overview

For the first three study phases, the search for anticipated teacher and student outcomes of Schools Attuned was predicated on the assumption that the program was being implemented and that this implementation included the full Attuning a Student process as the main strategy. Overall, however, less than a quarter of trained teachers actually attuned and demystified students or integrated Schools Attuned into their overall instructional approach. Taking this fact into account, Westat and the All Kinds of Minds research staff agreed that the next phase of the study should target schools that have a successful history with Schools Attuned implementation, where Schools Attuned was fully implemented in some classrooms, and that were continuing to train additional teachers. Thus, schools believed to be high implementing were the focus of Phase 4.

We designed the Phase 4 study to answer the following questions:

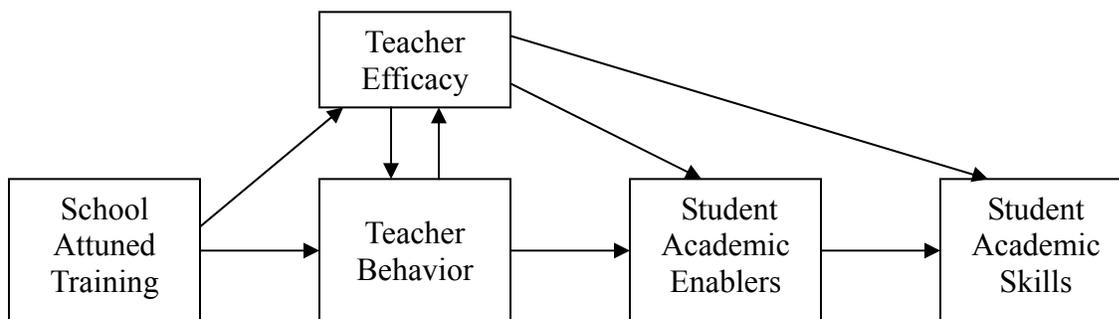
1. How does Schools Attuned training affect teachers' self-efficacy ratings?
2. What effect does Schools Attuned training have on the rate at which teachers refer students for special education evaluations?
3. For the students that teachers refer for special education evaluations, what effect does Schools Attuned training have on the rate at which those referred students are found eligible to receive special education services?
4. What effect does Schools Attuned training have on the rate at which teachers refer students to the office for disciplinary reasons and the rate at which their students are suspended or expelled?
5. What effect does Schools Attuned have on the proportion of students that teachers recommend for retention?
6. What effect does Schools Attuned training have on students' performance in (1) reading/language arts, (2) mathematics, (3) critical thinking, (4) interpersonal interactions, (5) academic engagement, (6) motivation, and (7) studying?
7. What effect does Schools Attuned training have on the amount of time that students receiving special education and related services spend outside the regular classroom for instruction?
8. What effect does the Schools Attuned program have on the costs associated with providing special education services (e.g., conducting special education evaluations, preparing individualized education programs, and providing special education staff)?

As with Phase 3, the Phase 4 study featured two complementary data collection approaches, one quantitative and one qualitative. The quantitative approach employed a non-randomized pretest-posttest comparison group design to study the impact of Schools Attuned training on

teachers’ attitudes and behaviors and the effect on their students’ learning and behavior. We attempted to survey all general and special education teachers at selected high implementing schools. Teachers who had completed training were compared with untrained teachers. Each teacher was asked to report about themselves, each of their students with individualized education programs (IEPs),<sup>1</sup> and three struggling learners without IEPs. This quantitative approach relied on (1) teachers’ ratings of themselves, (2) their ratings of their students with IEPs and selected struggling learners without IEPs, and (3) existing school data. The qualitative approach was designed to discover additional information about the implementation and impact of Schools Attuned. The Westat team conducted interviews and observed Schools Attuned in action. This qualitative approach examined effects not necessarily captured by quantitative measures and, most important, explored the causal connections between Schools Attuned and the quantitative outcomes.

Because Schools Attuned is primarily a professional development program for educators, we postulated that the most direct and possibly the greatest measurable effects of the program would be changes to teachers’ attitudes and behavior. Changes in students would be viewed as indirect, albeit anticipated, effects of the program. That is, changes in students are expected to result from changes that have occurred in their teachers, as seen in Diagram 1. For example, we assume that general education teachers who attend Schools Attuned training will be more inclined and better equipped to intervene on behalf of struggling learners than those who do not attend the training, and that this will ultimately lead to improved student attitudes and behaviors, particularly for students who have been formally attuned and demystified.

**Diagram 1. Effects of Schools Attuned Training.**



<sup>1</sup> We use the term “students with IEPs” to refer to students with disabilities who are receiving special education and related services.

We predicted that trained teachers in high implementing schools would report more growth in self-efficacy from fall to spring than untrained teachers. Teacher self-efficacy is “a judgment about his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated” (Armor et al., 1976; Bandura, 1997). In addition, “teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to set high goals for students and themselves as teachers, and believe that they have more responsibility for student achievement” (Ross, 1994). We used the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (Tschannan-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) to measure self-efficacy.

We also expected students of trained teachers to show more growth on academic enablers and academic skills. We used the Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (ACES) to measure this effect (DiPerna & Elliot, 2000). The ACES is a tool to determine how students function in the classroom. On the Teacher Record Form, ACES summarizes four academic enablers (motivation, academic engagement, studying, interpersonal communication) and three academic skills (reading/language arts, mathematics, critical thinking). For this study, because we included only grades 6 and below, we used only the Teacher Record Form and not the Student Record Form, which is a student self-report for grades 6 to 12.

As the questions above outline, consistent with the variables we explored in previous study phases, we expected to see a decrease in the number of students referred for special education evaluations by Schools Attuned teachers and, for the students they did refer, we expected to see an increase in the proportion found to be eligible to actually receive services. Because we had previously found some evidence that students with IEPs who had been exposed to Schools Attuned practices spent less time outside the regular classroom for instruction, we expected to see a similar trend in this phase of the study. We also expected teachers trained in Schools Attuned to refer fewer students to the office for disciplinary reasons compared to untrained teachers, and we expected that overall their students would be suspended, expelled, and retained at a lower rate.

Our primary focus, however, was on teachers’ attitudes and behaviors. We employed a non-randomized pretest-posttest comparison group design to study the impact of Schools Attuned training on teachers’ attitudes and behaviors as well as their perceived changes in students’ skills and behaviors. The ability to attribute noted differences in student and teacher attitudes and behavior to Schools Attuned training was limited by our inability to randomly assign teachers to the

treatment and comparison groups, but the inclusion of a comparison group was designed to decrease the effects of selection bias.

The remainder of this report is in four sections. The first section below describes the procedures the study team employed in selecting schools, collecting data, and analyzing the data. An overview of individual school findings is reported in the second section. The third section summarizes findings by research questions from both interview and survey data. The fourth section provides a discussion of a few key Phase 4 findings. The final section is a discussion of Schools Attuned implementation with consideration of findings across all study phases.

## **Phase 4 Procedures**

Staff from the All Kinds of Minds Institute's Department of Research, Program Evaluation, and Information assisted the Westat study team in selecting six public elementary schools for participation in Phase 4 of the study. Thirteen schools were originally contacted by the All Kinds of Minds Institute for this study. These schools were screened down to six by Westat staff using the following criteria: the schools were public and served at least three elementary grades (one large elementary school, which served only two grades, was included), they had teachers trained in 2004 and 2005 as well as some untrained teachers, and more than 50 percent of the teachers in the school were trained.

The selected schools were from five states in the northeast and central regions of the country. The enrollment in the six schools ranged from 306 to 823 students in the fall of 2005. The average enrollment among the sample was 542 students. White students predominated in all six of the schools, accounting for more than two-thirds of the student body in five of the schools. In one school, White students accounted for 58 percent and students of Asian ethnicity made up 29 percent of the student population. Two schools were on the fringe of urban areas, two were located in mid-sized cities, and two were rural. The percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches ranged from 2 percent to 12 percent in five of the schools while the sixth school had the higher rate of 38 percent. In five of the six schools the percentage of students with IEPs ranged from 2 percent to 12 percent with the sixth school again having a higher rate with 25 percent of their students having IEPs.

One school was dropped from the study because of a poor response rate to the fall data collection and because, following the fall and winter site visits, it was clear that implementation of Schools Attuned was marginal. The teachers interviewed at this school seemed uncomfortable discussing Schools Attuned and its implementation at their school. Several teachers would not agree to have their interview recorded. Unfortunately, the dropped school was the school that varied in its demographics from the other five. That is, it was the school with lowest percent of White students, the highest percentage of students receiving free or reduced price lunches, and the highest percentage of students with IEPs.

Packets containing the ACES teacher forms (described above) and Westat questionnaires for the school and teachers were mailed directly to the principal in each school in the fall of 2005 and again in the spring of 2006. Incorporated into the teacher questionnaire was a self-efficacy scale. Self-efficacy was measured by responses to the 24-item Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES). The OSTES was developed and field-tested by Ohio State University researchers (Tschannan-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Based on prior self-efficacy research, the scale was refined in a series of three confirmatory factor analytic studies of the responses of pre-service and in-service teachers taking courses at Ohio State and other universities. No parent questionnaire was used. The school and teacher questionnaires were slightly modified from those used in Phase 3. They are included in the appendix to this report.

Principals distributed the teacher questionnaires to all general education and special education teachers. Completed questionnaires were returned by the respondents directly to the study team at Westat in an attached business reply envelop. Follow-up calls were made by the study team to the principal or other administrator to provide technical assistance with the questionnaires and to ensure that the questionnaires were returned in a timely manner.

The school questionnaire was completed by an administrator, usually the principal, or the contact person in the school who was most familiar with the implementation of Schools Attuned. All teachers were asked to respond to both questionnaires, whether or not they were to be trained in Schools Attuned. Each teacher was asked to complete a questionnaire and, in addition, an ACES form for each student with an IEP and for an additional three struggling learners. Participating schools received a \$750 as an incentive to participate. Teachers who completed both the pre and post surveys received \$50 as an incentive at the end of the study.

Fall 2005 response rates for the six schools ranged from 11 percent to 72 percent on the Westat teacher questionnaire. The school with the 11 percent response rate was the one subsequently dropped from the study and all analysis. The response rate to the Westat teacher questionnaires for the five remaining schools ranged from 39 percent to 72 percent. The response rate is less clear cut for the ACES form. Westat mailed out ACES forms to all general education teachers for each student in their class with an IEP and three additional forms for the teacher to fill out on three struggling learners in their class. Not all teachers had three struggling learners in their class. While some teachers returned the forms blank with a note that they did not have three struggling learners to rate, others did not return the forms. Response rates on ACES forms ranged from 29 percent to 74 percent with the same school dropped as reported above. The dropped school had only a 4 percent response rate on the ACES teacher form.

Three site visits were planned in the fall 2005, winter 2005, and spring 2006. Site visits were conducted at all six schools in the fall 2005 and then winter 2006. The purpose of the first site visit was to establish a baseline reflecting the implementation of the program early in the school year. The second site visit, in the winter, included classroom observations rather than interviews. On the third site visit, at the end of the school year in spring 2006 to the five schools remaining in the study, we posed follow-up questions and investigated how the Schools Attuned process unfolded during the year, whether teachers used Schools Attuned as they had intended during the year, and what their opinions were of the program's future at their school. The site visit protocols are included in the appendix of this report.

## **Overview of Phase 4 Individual School Findings**

In this section, we present an overview of each of the five schools. Schools were promised anonymity in the project. But one school, Ft. Salonga Elementary, stood out from the others regarding extent of implementation. In fact, Ft. Salonga Elementary implemented Schools Attuned more fully than any school the Westat team visited across all four phases of the study. So that we could describe the school and its Schools Attuned implementation more completely without concerns about unknowingly revealing the school's identity, we obtained the principal's permission to name the school in this report.

We describe the remaining four schools without naming them. The fact that we have chosen not to name these schools should not be interpreted to mean that the schools were not implementing Schools Attuned with some degree of fidelity or success, or that we found anything in the schools that needs to be concealed.

### ***Fort Salonga Elementary***

Fort Salonga Elementary is one of two public kindergarten-through-grade-three elementary schools in the Kings Park Central School District in Long Island, New York. The district also includes one intermediate, one middle, and one high school. The Fort Salonga Elementary population of 626 students is 96 percent White with about 4 percent qualifying for free/reduced lunch and 12 percent having IEPs. The staff includes 15 Masters degreed teachers, averaging 8½ years of teaching experience with about 7 of those being at Ft. Salonga. In addition, the principal has spent 14 of her 17 years as an administrator at the school.

In 2005, Kings Park Central Schools introduced two district-wide initiatives in its elementary and intermediate schools. One initiative is a learning model based on higher order cognition and Bloom's taxonomy that they have labeled the "Tower of Learning." An illustration of a skyscraper is posted in every classroom with each of Bloom's levels referred to as a "floor." The model includes key words and questions at each floor that teachers use in planning student discussions and for teaching students about the different levels of learning.

The second initiative in the three schools is the use of Schools Attuned by all teachers. Posters depicting the neurodevelopmental constructs hang in every classroom together with the tower of learning. During the school year, Fort Salonga teachers use the information on the posters in teaching students about the various levels of learning, the neurodevelopmental constructs as they relate to language arts, the different ways in which students learn, and strategies that can help when they have difficulty. These activities sometimes involve actual lessons, but teachers also take naturally occurring opportunities as they arise throughout the day to illustrate important points and remind students about useful strategies. Students also are encouraged to talk with their parents about the constructs and how they relate to their child's learning.

The principal offers a great deal of support for teachers' implementation of Schools Attuned. In addition to their Schools Attuned resource guides, the principal has provided teachers with a

library of all books written by Mel Levine. During informal conversations, several teachers indicated that they often refer to the Schools Attuned website for ideas and that they use the children's books listed there that have been aligned with the constructs. The principal holds monthly Schools Attuned workshops with teachers to discuss their use of Schools Attuned, share ideas about strategies, and plan new ways to implement the program consistently across grade levels so that students receive the same information from year to year. Teachers reported that they formally attuned students who were struggling or who they considered for referral for a special education evaluation. Demystification is employed as part of the formal process. Teachers also reported that they informally attuned all students.

As a result of Schools Attuned, Fort Salonga Elementary also has changed the way students are assessed. They created "articulation cards," which are completed for each student at the end of the school year and that go with them to their next teacher. In addition to basic information about each student, teachers also include whether the student was formally attuned; the student's strengths, weaknesses, and affinities; impressions of the student based on the neurodevelopmental constructs; and any strategies that have worked well for the student. This information is used by the student's next teacher in planning for the new school year.

Attuning a Student is required as part of Ft. Salonga's Child Study Team process, which is a step in process for referring a student for a special education evaluation. In addition, Schools Attuned is the basis for revising the special education referral process within the district. Before a student is referred, teachers are encouraged first to use resources available within their building. If the child still does not progress, a meeting is set up with the child study team during which time they review the completed Schools Attuned views, the strategies that were used, one untouched writing sample for the student, and the teacher's running record on the student. The child study team then works with the teacher to determine whether additional work can be done or a referral for further testing is warranted.

In response to No Child Left Behind, the district last year piloted a new intervention program based primarily on Schools Attuned that will be fully implemented in the coming year in the elementary and intermediate schools. The program involves an intervention class at each grade level in each school for students who are not receiving special education services but are having difficulty. Each class contains a maximum of 15 students with a Schools Attuned trained teacher

and other Schools Attuned trained teachers “pushed in” for additional support. Students are selected for the intervention class based upon teacher recommendations following a Schools Attuned protocol. The intervention class allows teachers to focus on these students and how they learn in order to help them improve performance. As a result of the pilot year at Ft. Salonga, seven students improved enough to go back into regular education classes, six will continue in an intervention class next year, and two were referred for further testing.

### *School 2*

This elementary school is a high achieving school in a university town. The school has approximately 330 students, 12 percent of whom receive free or reduced lunch. According to the responses to the questionnaires sent out in fall 2005, the school served 39 students with IEPs. Approximately 20 percent of the students are ESL learners. Teacher turnover at the school is low, and the principal has been there for 5 years.

The majority of general education and special education teachers at this school are trained in Schools Attuned and the others expect to undergo training. One teacher does not want to be trained but will participate in all school-based sessions. The principal has been trained and is a very active supporter of the program. A parent raised the funds to start Schools Attuned and the principal has been a major force behind the program’s growth at the school and its continued support at the district level. This school serves as the demonstration site for Schools Attuned in the district. The principal reaches out to parents to inform them about Schools Attuned through a variety of means, including PTO informational sessions and newsletters. This school has access to a Schools Attuned coach who has been very helpful and the principal intends to invite her back next year.

This school is well on its way to becoming a high implementing Schools Attuned school. The principal has required each teacher to attune a student over the course of this school year. The staff has received Schools Attuned coaching and in-service training and organized their own discussions about Mel Levine books. Schools Attuned binders are visible and accessible in every classroom. One or two teachers also have charts or posters related to Schools Attuned constructs hanging on their walls. Teachers express enthusiasm for Schools Attuned and believe their training has helped them pinpoint students’ issues, look at children differently and with more care, refrain from making quick assumptions, expand their own tolerance, experiment with strategies, and

become more reflective. They all use Schools Attuned strategies with individual students and across the classroom. Schools Attuned gives teachers a common language and insight into children's strengths and weaknesses enabling them to target their interventions for struggling learners in their classrooms. Schools Attuned has had an impact on the pre-referral stage of the Special Education process here. Teachers are asked to try Schools Attuned strategies and accommodations with children before they bring them to the Student Study Team (SST). The SST regularly discusses students using Schools Attuned language and constructs.

Teachers express concern about the time it takes to carry out the formal Attuning a Student and the paperwork associated with the process. Several did not use the program as planned this year and some felt bogged down by the program's demands. The teachers and the principal contend it will take several more years to solidify the program and for the staff to feel proficient in the Schools Attuned approach. Teachers do feel a strong sense of commitment to the program, however, and the school has developed a plan to deepen the integration of Schools Attuned over the next 4 years.

Schools Attuned has had an impact on individual students and on the school as a whole. For the staff, Schools Attuned provides a common language, a set of strategies, and a new lens they can share. Teachers believe their use of Schools Attuned strategies affects students "dramatically." Schools Attuned has changed the relationship between teachers and students; not only do students receive more one-on-one interaction with teachers but the quality of that interaction is now positive and non-judgmental. According to the principal, the dynamics of Schools Attuned interventions make a difference for children, enabling them to be involved in their own learning processes. As they become attuned to their own struggles, students realize they are not alone and are able to get the help they need from teachers who understand their individual profiles. The principal and teachers will use the student profiles and the intervention plans they have developed this year to place children appropriately and share information with next year's teachers.

Schools Attuned has changed the way the school does referrals and the principal believes that referrals are now more accurate. The school has incorporated Schools Attuned into the Student Study Team to make the process more efficient; teachers spend time observing, thinking about a child, and experimenting with Schools Attuned strategies before bringing that child to the SST.

This allows the SST to be more precise with the struggles kids are having and helps teachers be better advocates in the SST for the children.

Everyone here “sees the value” of Schools Attuned. Schools Attuned has generated a sense of unity amongst the staff. Schools Attuned has given teachers a new language, a lens on children’s learning complexities, and a way to talk about students with hope. Teachers are committed to building their knowledge and efficacy in terms of Schools Attuned. They realize, however, that it will take considerable time for them to absorb all the program’s dimensions and to feel fully proficient in Schools Attuned. The principal believes that this school will achieve full implementation of Schools Attuned over a 4-year span. The staff does expect a “fine-tuned” Schools Attuned program to exist in the school in 5 years unless budget constraints impede funding and as long as the same principal is at the school.

### ***School 3***

This elementary school serves approximately 800 students in grades three and four and in two self-contained special education classrooms. The school is adjacent to a major private university. Special education is offered through team teaching and resource, as well as in the two self-contained classrooms. Approximately 7 percent of the students have IEPs. Sixty-eight percent of the students are White, and 27 percent are Asian. Only 2 percent of the students receive free or reduced-price lunch. The school is located in a suburban area, near a major university and a high-tech business community, and is considered by staff to be a high-achieving school. Average students who transfer from other schools often struggle, and high achievers from other schools often find that they are average at their new school. Overall, the school has an extremely high level of resources and is in a district with abundant resources. As a result, a variety of programs are available to help struggling learners. The school has a low student-teacher ratio, particularly for special education teachers and students. For example, one team-taught classroom has a full-time general education teacher and a full-time special education teacher with only two students with IEPs in the class, yet those students receive additional pullout services from a reading specialist and another special education teacher. Suspensions, expulsions, and grade retention are virtually nonexistent at this school

The principal never fully completed Schools Attuned training, but is self-taught and is quite supportive of and highly knowledgeable about the program. Additionally, major support for Schools Attuned comes from the district special education director. The director is a Schools Attuned trainer who has trained many of the teachers in the elementary school and is leading the practicum activities for those recently trained. Two cohorts of teachers have now been trained. Although that constitutes a great majority of teachers (but not most special education teachers), some teachers have declined to be involved. Yet, even those who are not trained and have no plans to be trained appear to be at least passively supportive, no doubt in part because of the principal's enthusiasm for the program.

This school falls short of being a high implementing school at this time as they do not use the formal Attuning a Student process in a consistent or systematic way. Although most teachers are comfortable using Schools Attuned language and employing Schools Attuned strategies, they avoid using the formal Attuning a Student process except to meet the requirements of the practicum. The school is infusing Schools Attuned into the peer-support committee that assists teachers in their efforts with struggling learners. The committee, which always includes at least one teacher who is trained in Schools Attuned as well as a representative from the district child study team, provides the referring teacher with child-specific strategies to try, makes arrangements for additional in-school services (such as counseling or basic skills instruction) when appropriate, and determines whether to refer a student for a special education evaluation. Increased use of Schools Attuned strategies, and perhaps the formal Attuning a Student process, is expected as part of the pre-referral intervention process beginning with the 2006-2007 school year. Additionally, the school is planning a Schools Attuned information fair for parents in the fall.

The use of Schools Attuned language and strategies is common here. Most of the teachers trained in Schools Attuned report that they look at children in a different way and that the program has had an impact within their classroom, particularly with the students they attuned during their practicum. Relationships among teachers (including special and general educators) have not necessarily changed, but this is not noteworthy because close working relationships already existed. Schools Attuned has had an impact on the nature of pre-referral interventions, and this impact is likely to increase in the upcoming school year. Schools Attuned, however, has had no apparent effect on the number of special education referrals, the number of students served in special

education, or the types of services these students receive. Staff at the school, as well as the district special education director, do not view the Schools Attuned strategies as especially useful for students with disabilities who require IEPs. That is, Schools Attuned is clearly viewed as a general education initiative, appropriate in particular for struggling learners whose problems are not at a level that requires special education.

#### ***School 4***

This elementary school is a kindergarten to third grade school enrolling just over 600 students. The student population is 95 percent White with about eleven percent having IEPs and only 2 percent being eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Students with disabilities have access to a full range of services such as counseling, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, a nurse, a reading specialist, and resource room. The school does not retain students unless it is requested by the parents and discipline is largely handled in the classroom. Parents and the community as the whole are reported to be very supportive.

The principal, while new to this school, has received Schools Attuned training and hopes to become a high implementing school. Schools Attuned is a district-wide initiative started by a principal and strongly supported by the superintendent. All but four of the 25 teachers in the school have attended the Schools Attuned summer training but only about half have completed their practicum. A few teachers have turned down opportunities to attend the training. Other programs being used by teachers include Orton-Gillingham, Reading Recovery, and Balanced Literacy.

At the school level, Schools Attuned has become part of the pre-referral process for special education. In order to refer a student to the Child Study Team, the team that decides whether a student should be evaluated, teachers complete a new form which has been aligned to Schools Attuned. Specifically, teachers must provide information on a certain number of constructs before the student can be referred. Workshops focusing on a different construct each month also were provided to teachers throughout the school year.

At the teacher level, trained teachers reported their knowledge of Schools Attuned as being average (3 on a scale of 1 to 5). Similarly, teachers rated themselves slightly above average (about 3.5 on a 5 point scale) on their frequency of use, comprehensiveness of use, and integration of Schools Attuned into other classroom activities. With regard to the ways they used Schools

Attuned, teachers generally reported using the Schools Attuned binder for strategies with students on an individual as well as classroom level. Only two of the seven teachers reported using the formal Attuning a Student process.

The principal and two of the teachers interviewed reported a decrease in the number of student referrals for special education evaluation as well as an increase in the accuracy of those referrals. This decrease was reported to be a result of teachers using strategies they learned to meet students' needs in the classroom as well as teachers not wanting to hassle with the new referral form. The principal believed that either way the decrease was positive because it put the onus on teachers to deal with the student. Other impacts of the program included teachers looking deeper into and being able to better pinpoint the issues behind students' learning difficulties as well as differentiating and using a variety of assessments.

### ***School 5***

This intermediate school, which serves grades four through six, is a high achieving school in a small college town. The school has approximately 555 students, the majority of students are White (98 percent) with just 2 percent of them receiving free or reduced lunch. As of fall of 2005, there were 68 students with IEPs at the school. The school has a very small (less than 1 percent) ESL population. There is low teacher turnover at the school and the principal has been there for 3 years. Student suspensions and expulsions are extremely rare as is grade retention.

Slightly more than half of all teachers were trained. The principal has also been trained. This school serves as the pilot site for Schools Attuned in the district. There is some minor use of Schools Attuned at the high school in this district. Even teachers here that have not been trained have been exposed to Schools Attuned. Once a month the school uses early release days to present Schools Attuned constructs to the untrained teachers. Schools Attuned came to the district when one teacher took an interest in the program and a few teachers were trained in the summer of 2004. The first teacher got the previous superintendent on board and that is how the program began in the district.

This school adapted the Attuning a Student procedure to use for the pre-referral intervention required prior to a referral for a special education evaluation. All students must be attuned before they can be referred for testing. Classroom teachers fill out the Teacher's View and all other

paperwork is completed by the guidance counselor. As pre-referral intervention, teachers implement strategies recommended by the guidance counselor after she attunes a child. Some classroom teachers integrate Schools Attuned strategies into the entire classroom setting for all students. Attuning a Student, however, is never used for students not being considered for special education evaluation.

Schools Attuned has had some impact at this school. Teachers use strategies in the classroom and now have a common language, but the principal says the Attuning a Student paperwork is too cumbersome and he does not expect teachers to attune students outside of the special education referral process. Teachers who are trained buy into the pre-referral process more readily than those not trained.

Although the principal likes and supports Schools Attuned, he does not think the program will still be in use in 5 years. This school is a pilot for the rest of the district. There is a new superintendent in the district who is not familiar with Schools Attuned and therefore not promoting the program. According to the principal, Schools Attuned has had limited success in the high school and teachers at the elementary school did not sign up for training this summer. The principal's plan going into training was to come up with a consistent pre-referral intervention process and "everything else was icing on the cake." He stated that others probably had greater expectations for how the program would be implemented and used. He got out of it what he expected. He thought there would always be those students needing extra attention beyond what can be accomplished by teachers with Schools Attuned. He does not think the point of Schools Attuned was to get rid of special education programs but instead to provide teachers with other options so they would not have to go that route. While the principal thinks Schools Attuned is a useful endeavor, the formal Attuning a Student process is too paperwork intensive for teachers to realistically carry out.

### ***School 6***

The sixth school was not included in our analysis due to low implementation of the School Attuned program and a low questionnaire response rate. According to the principal, the surrounding community is an avant-garde "bedroom" community of artists and musicians and residents who tend to be well educated and cosmopolitan. This elementary school includes

kindergarten through fifth grade and in 2005, enrolled 307 students, 25 percent with IEPs. The student population is mostly White (77 percent) followed by African American (7 percent) and Asian/Pacific Islander (6 percent), with about 38 percent of all students qualifying for free/reduced lunch. The school also provides a before-school tutoring program, a special education resource room, three special education classrooms, five FTE special education teachers, and 13 FTE special education paraprofessionals. Most teachers in the school received Schools Attuned training in the summer and fall of 2005. Teachers are trained as they get funding. The principal has not yet received Schools Attuned training.

Several teachers interviewed indicated that while they view students differently as a result of the training, they did not think that Schools Attuned was being well implemented at their school. They stated that the program is “too complicated,” “too much work,” and “there was not enough support available from Schools Attuned” to help them learn to implement it well. Additionally, there is little collaboration among teachers within or across grade levels. One of the special education teachers said that although the teachers who have received training want to see it work, she is worried that some teachers think that if they attune a student, they can then refer him or her for further testing. Because Schools Attuned is still so new here and there appears to be a lack of understanding as to how to implement, there has been little, if any, impact on either teachers or students at this point.

#### **Phase 4 Findings by Research Question**

Below we present more specific findings for each of the eight research questions posed for this phase of the study. We initially considered the participating schools to be high implementing because at least half of their teachers had been trained in Schools Attuned, they were continuing to train teachers, and they were self-identified during a screening telephone call as active users of Schools Attuned. Although qualitative results ultimately raised questions about the true degree and quality of implementation, it is important to note that the five schools that fully participated in our Phase 4 study implemented Schools Attuned more comprehensively than any others in our 4-year investigation.

### *Effects on Teachers' Self-Efficacy*

To look at how Schools Attuned training affected teachers' self-efficacy ratings, we analyzed data from the teacher survey administered in fall 2005 and again in spring 2006. As noted previously, teachers' self-efficacy was measured by responses to the 24-item Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES). The OSTES items are divided into three subscales rating teachers' self-efficacy for instructional strategies, self-efficacy for classroom management, and self-efficacy for student engagement. Each item begins with the phrase "how much can you ..." or the phrase "how well can you..." and is rated on a scale from 1 (nothing) to 9 (a great deal). The overall mean in the final field test (involving 183 in-service teachers) was 7.1, with the means of the three subscales ranging from 6.7 to 7.3.

The 62 teachers surveyed in our sample of five participating schools had higher classroom management self-efficacy than the teachers in the Ohio State field tests.<sup>2</sup> This difference held in both fall and spring surveys. The Schools Attuned teachers did not differ from the field test teachers in the other two self-efficacy categories, but the classroom management self-efficacy difference resulted in higher overall spring means for the Schools Attuned teachers than for the field test teachers.

We were interested first in examining whether Schools Attuned training affected school-wide teacher self-efficacy (that is, improvements in both trained and untrained teachers). We noted improvements in teacher efficacy between the fall and spring surveys overall and in each subcategory (Table 1). Paired t-tests show that none of the gains differ significantly from zero, but it is notable that all are positive and some approach significance (e.g.  $p=.08$  for the overall score gain). It is possible that a larger sample size would verify the existence of these fall to spring improvements in teacher efficacy, but the effect sizes of these non-significant differences suggest that even such a study would be unlikely to find large effects<sup>3</sup> of Schools Attuned training on school-wide teacher self-efficacy. Such a study would also need a control group of comparable, non-Schools Attuned schools to verify that this growth is a result of the training. No firm

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<sup>2</sup> Differences of means are tested here with two-tailed t-tests, assuming heterogeneous variances. The .05 significance level with Bonferroni adjustments for multiple comparisons is used.

<sup>3</sup> Even the largest of the effect sizes found (.24) would be characterized as small by Cohen.

conclusions about the relationship between Schools Attuned and school-wide teacher efficacy improvements can be drawn from the data available.

**Table 1. Teacher self-efficacy mean scores and fall-spring gains, all sampled teachers.**

	Fall Mean (N=62)	Spring Mean (N=62)	Fall-Spring Gain (N=62)	Gain Effect Sizes (Cohen's <b>d</b> )
Instruction	7.4 ± .2	7.6 ± .2	+0.2 (p=.07)	0.24
Management	7.7 ± .2	7.8 ± .1	+0.1 (p=.29)	0.13
Engagement	7.0 ± .2	7.2 ± .2	+0.1 (p=.15)	0.17
<b>Overall</b>	7.4 ± .2	7.5 ± .1	+0.1 (p=.08)	0.21

Note: This table shows means on the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) from fall 2005 to spring 2006 at five schools. 95% confidence intervals are provided for the means. Also shown are fall to spring mean gains along with p-values and effect sizes.

Next, we compared the trained to the untrained teachers. As the final row of Table 2 shows, trained teachers had a .08 advantage in overall self-efficacy score over untrained teachers in the spring of the study year. This was not a significant difference. There was no significant difference in any of the subscales in the spring. From fall to spring, trained teachers averaged an overall OSTES gain of .17, while untrained teachers averaged a change of .00 (see the final row of Table 3). But neither of these change scores differs significantly from zero and neither differs significantly from the other. The other rows of Table 3 also suggest potentially meaningful, but statistically insignificant advantages for trained teachers over untrained teachers in self-efficacy growth.

**Table 2. Teacher self-efficacy spring mean scores, by training category.**

	Spring Mean score for Untrained Teachers (N=22)	Spring Mean score for Trained Teachers (N=39)	Difference between Trained Teachers' score and Untrained Teachers' score
Instruction	7.50 ± .27	7.68 ± .19	+ .18 (p=.28)
Management	7.70 ± .21	7.80 ± .20	+ .10 (p=.49)
Student Engagement	7.18 ± .24	7.14 ± .28	- .04 (p=.89)
<b>Self-Efficacy Overall</b>	<b>7.46 ± .19</b>	<b>7.54 ± .18</b>	<b>+ .08 (p=.53)</b>

Note: This table shows mean gains on the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) from fall 2005 to spring 2006 at five schools. 95% confidence intervals are also provided for the mean gains. Also shown are trained versus untrained mean gains, along with p-values.

**Table 3. Teacher self-efficacy mean score gains from fall to spring, by training category.**

	Mean gain for Untrained Teachers (N=22)	Mean gain for Trained Teachers (N=39)	Difference between Trained Teachers' gain and Untrained Teachers' gain
Instruction	+ .03 ± .19	+ .23 ± .24	+ .20 (p=.33)
Management	- .05 ± .16	+ .16 ± .20	+ .21 (p=.23)
Student Engagement	+ .03 ± .17	+ .12 ± .19	+ .09 (p=.57)
<b>Self-Efficacy Overall</b>	<b>+ .00 ± .23</b>	<b>+ .17 ± .18</b>	<b>+ .17 (p=.27)</b>

Note: This table shows mean gains on the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) from fall 2005 to spring 2006 at five schools. 95% confidence intervals are also provided for the mean gains. Also shown are trained versus untrained mean gains, along with p-values.

### ***Rate of Referral for Special Education Evaluation***

To look at what effect Schools Attuned training had on the rate at which teachers refer students for special education evaluation, we reviewed both the survey and interview data. In the fall survey, teachers, on average, reported referring less than one student (mean = 0.65) for a special education evaluation during the previous year. Because this number was so small, the question was not asked on the spring survey. No statistical attempt to answer this question was made.

In reviewing the interview data, it was clear that no one could definitively verify declines in referrals, partly because many teachers had not referred a child at all in the prior year. Teachers did, however, widely report feeling that the Schools Attuned gave them more strategies to try before referring a student. Some speculated that if Schools Attuned were around long enough, rates would eventually drop. Others thought it would be hard to see an effect across time as students in their class were different from year to year. In schools where Schools Attuned was a part of the pre-referral process, some speculated there might be fewer referrals, but teachers and administrators in two of these schools said this might occur because teachers did not want to do all of the paperwork involved in the formal Attuning a Student process.

### ***Rate at Which Students Referred for Special Education Evaluation Are Found Eligible***

To look at the rate at which students referred for evaluation are found eligible for special education services we examined both the survey and interview data. Because so few students were referred for special education in the five Phase 4 schools, as noted previously, no statistical attempt to answer this question was appropriate. These schools in general had low special education referral rates prior to the implementation of Schools Attuned. It is possible that with a sample of schools with more referrals prior to the implementation of Schools Attuned, we might have seen an effect on referral accuracy. This possibility is supported by reports by many trained teachers during interviews that they believed Schools Attuned made their referrals more accurate because they now understood more what the school psychologists were looking for in the testing process.

### ***Rate of Office Discipline Referrals and Suspension or Expulsions***

Respondents in all five schools reported that sending students to the office for disciplinary reasons was rare and the rate at which students were suspended and expelled was extremely low. Most disciplinary actions were handled in the classroom by the classroom teachers. In these schools, discipline was not an issue prior to Schools Attuned. It is impossible to make any connection between Schools Attuned and disciplinary actions in the schools we visited for this phase. That is, the number of disciplinary actions was too small to reasonably expect an impact of Schools Attuned.

### ***Proportion of Students Recommended for Retention***

To look at the effect School Attuned has on the proportion of students that teachers recommend for retention, we reviewed both survey and interview data. According to the fall survey, only one in six teachers referred a student for retention during the previous year. Because this occurrence is so rare, that question was dropped from the spring survey. The Schools Attuned training could not be expected to have an impact on this already small number. Interviews confirmed the low incidence of retention in the five schools. In fact, teachers in several of the schools told us it was against district policy to retain a student unless the parents insisted.

### ***Effect on Teacher Ratings of Their Students' Skills***

To look at the effect of Schools Attuned training on students' academic skills and academic enablers, we asked all teachers (trained and untrained) to complete the Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (ACES) in both the fall and spring semesters for each of their students with an IEP, as well as three struggling learners without an IEP. Completed scales in both semesters were submitted by 35 trained teachers for 142 students and by 17 untrained teachers for 71 students.

The scales consist of 73 items. Teachers rate the relevant student from one (far below grade level) to five (far above grade level) with regard to 33 academic skills.<sup>4</sup> These academic skills are in three clusters: reading/language arts, mathematics, and critical thinking. In addition, teachers rate students on a scale from one (never exhibited) to five (almost always exhibited) regarding a series of 40 academic enablers.<sup>5</sup> These enablers fall in four categories: interpersonal skills, engagement, motivation, and study skills. We calculated averages of non-missing scores for the two large categories and for each of the seven subcategories. After descriptive analysis, regression was used to consider the effect of Schools Attuned training on improvement in each of the categories.

Table 4 shows improvement against grade level over the course of the year for the average student studied in each category of academic skills and academic enablers. The focus is on improvement, rather than spring scores because spring scores are meaningless without a comparison score. By comparing spring scores with fall scores, we can measure improvement over the course

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<sup>4</sup> K-2 teachers use only 28 of the 33 items.

<sup>5</sup> K-2 teachers rate only 38 academic enablers.

of a year. Without that comparison, we do not know the worth of the scores achieved. All teachers are included in this comparison. Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level paired-sample t-tests show significant improvement in all three academic skills and in engagement, but not in the other three academic enablers. We conclude that on average, when considering trained and untrained teachers together, teachers in the five Phase 4 schools tend to feel better about their students' engagement and academic skills (in relation to grade level) at the end of the school year than they do at the beginning. Without a group of control schools, we are unable to determine if this pattern is normal or specific to schools where Schools Attuned is implemented.

**Table 4. Academic skill and academic enabler scores and improvement with 95 percent confidence intervals, all sampled teachers.**

	Fall mean ACES ratings	Spring mean ACES ratings	Improvement
Reading/Language Arts	2.34	2.57	+.23* ± .06 (p=.000)
Mathematics	2.45	2.61	+.16* ± .06 (p=.000)
Critical Thinking	2.46	2.64	+.18* ± .07 (p=.000)
Academic Skills	2.40	2.60	+.21* ± .05 (p=.000)
Interpersonal Skills	4.02	4.03	+.01 ± .09 (p=.850)
Engagement	3.17	3.39	+.21* ± .09 (p=.000)
Motivation	2.80	2.92	+.12 ± .09 (p=.008)
Study Skills	3.62	3.68	+.06 ± .09 (p=.205)
Academic Enablers	3.40	3.49	+.10 ± .07 (p=.008)

\* Indicates significant change at the two-tailed Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level. The Bonferroni adjustment for nine comparisons requires p values below .05/9=.006

A simple regression analysis was used to determine the effect of Schools Attuned training, if any, on the improvements documented in Table 4. Table 5 shows the regression coefficients attained. From fall to spring, untrained teachers reported significant gains in all three academic skill areas for their 71 students with IEPs and struggling learners; they did not report significant gains in

the academic enablers. Trained teachers also reported gains for their 142 students with IEPs and struggling learners. In four of seven categories, the gains were significant, but none of the gains were significantly larger than those reported by untrained teachers. The  $R^2$  values in the table show that the training variable explained between 0 and 2 percent of the total variance in student gains. In sum, we found no evidence that Schools Attuned training helped teachers promote growth in academic skills or academic enablers.

**Table 5. Seven categories of academic skill and academic enabler gains regressed on training levels.**

	Mean gain for students of untrained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=71)	Mean gain for students of trained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=142)	Difference <sup>b</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>
Reading/Language Arts	+ .18* (p=.003)	+ .26* (p=.000)	+ .09 (p=.213)	.01
Mathematics	+ .25* (p=.000)	+ .12* (p=.003)	- .13 (p=.061)	.02
Critical Thinking	+ .18* (p=.003)	+ .18* (p=.000)	- .00 (p=.952)	.00
Interpersonal Skills	- .00 (p=.984)	+ .02 (p=.772)	+ .02 (p=.849)	.00
Engagement	+ .10 (p=.234)	+ .26* (p=.000)	+ .17 (p=.105)	.01
Motivation	+ .04 (p=.612)	+ .15 (p=.007)	+ .11 (p=.239)	.01
Study Skills	- .08 (p=.936)	+ .14 (p=.020)	+ .22 (p=.030)	.02

<sup>a</sup>Values represent mean score gains for students of trained and untrained teachers.

<sup>b</sup>Values represent mean score gains for students of trained teachers over and above those for students of untrained teachers.

\* Indicates significant change at the two-tailed Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level. The Bonferroni adjustment for seven comparisons requires p values below .05/7=.007

Alternative models were evaluated. The seven categories were replaced with the two aggregate categories (See Table 6). Students of trained and untrained teachers in these schools gained on academic skills. Students of trained teachers gained significantly on academic enablers in this analysis. No significant differences were found in the amount of growth demonstrated by students of trained and untrained teachers. Teacher self-efficacy was added to the model. Two-level modeling of students within schools was attempted. Level one controls for student IEP and gender were added to the model. No significant changes in results were noted. These analyses were unable

to confirm positive effects of training on academic enablers or academic skills within any of the five schools.

**Table 6. Two aggregate categories of academic skill and academic enabler gains regressed on training levels.**

	Mean gain for students of untrained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=70)	Mean gain for students of trained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=142)	Difference <sup>b</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>
Academic Skills	.21* (p=.000)	.21* (p=.000)	+ .00 (p=.975)	.00
Academic Enablers	.01 (p=.827)	.14* (p=.003)	+ .12 (p=.116)	.01

<sup>a</sup>Values represent mean score gains for students of trained and untrained teachers.  
<sup>b</sup>Values represent mean score gains for students of trained teachers over and above those for students of untrained teachers.  
\* Indicates significant change at the two-tailed Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level. The Bonferroni adjustment for two comparisons requires p values below .05/2=.025.

***Effect on Teacher Ratings of the Skills of Struggling Learners Without IEPs***

Because some qualitative results suggested that Schools Attuned training results might be more noticeable in the performance of struggling learners without IEPs than that of students with IEPs, the analyses reported in the prior section were repeated only with the struggling learners without IEPs that teachers had selected for inclusion in this study. Completed ACES scales in both semesters were submitted by 46 teachers for 107 struggling learners without IEPs. The quantitative results do not support the claim that, within high-implementing schools, Schools Attuned training helps teachers serve struggling learners who do not have IEPs.

Table 7 shows improvement against grade level, on average, based on teacher ratings, over the course of the year for the struggling learner without an IEP in each category of academic skills and academic enablers. Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level paired-sample t-tests show that improvement to be significant in all three academic skills and in engagement and motivation, but not in the other two academic enablers. We conclude that on average, when considering trained and untrained teachers together, teachers in the five Phase 4 schools tend to feel better about the engagement and academic skills of their struggling learners without IEPs at the end of the school year than they do at the beginning. Overall, these results are slightly stronger than the results that include students with

IEPs (see Table 4). Without a group of control schools, however, we are unable to determine if this pattern is normal or if it is specific to schools where Schools Attuned is implemented.

**Table 7. Academic skills and academic enabler scores and improvement with 95 percent confidence intervals, all participating teachers, struggling learners without IEPs only.**

	Fall mean ACES ratings	Spring mean ACES ratings	Improvement
Reading/Language Arts	2.41	2.71	+ .30* ± .08 (p=.000)
Mathematics	2.53	2.71	+ .18* ± .08 (p=.000)
Critical Thinking	2.52	2.79	+ .26* ± .09 (p=.000)
Academic Skills	2.48	2.74	+ .26* ± .07 (p=.000)
Interpersonal Skills	4.08	4.16	+ .08 ± .13 (p=.200)
Engagement	3.16	3.53	+ .37* ± .13 (p=.000)
Motivation	2.84	3.05	+ .21* ± .12 (p=.001)
Study Skills	3.64	3.76	+ .12 ± .11 (p=.040)
Academic Enablers	3.43	3.61	+ .19* ± .10 (p=.000)

\* Indicates significant change at the two-tailed Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level. The Bonferroni adjustment for nine comparisons requires p values below .05/9=.006

A simple regression analysis was used to determine the effect of Schools Attuned training, if any, on the improvements documented in Table 7. Table 8 shows the regression coefficients attained. From fall to spring, both trained and untrained teachers reported gains in all seven categories of academic skills and academic enablers for struggling learners without IEPs. The gains were significant in five areas for untrained teachers and three areas for trained teachers. In each case untrained teachers saw greater mean gains than trained teachers, but this difference was never significant. The difference was considered significant, however, when only the two aggregate categories were compared (see Table 9). The R<sup>2</sup> values in the tables show that the training variable explained between 0 and 6 percent of the total variance in student gains. In sum, we found no evidence from this analysis that Schools Attuned training helped teachers promote growth in academic skills or academic enablers among struggling learners without IEPs.

**Table 8. Seven categories of academic skill and academic enabler gains regressed on training levels, struggling learners without IEPs only.**

	Mean gain for students of untrained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=34)	Mean gain for students of trained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=73)	Difference <sup>b</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>
Reading/Language Arts	+.42* (p=.000)	+.24* (p=.000)	-.18 (p=.033)	.04
Mathematics	+.27* (p=.000)	+.12 (p=.009)	-.15 (p=.064)	.03
Critical Thinking	+.39* (p=.000)	+.20* (p=.000)	-.18 (p=.048)	.04
Interpersonal Skills	+.26 (p=.033)	+.05 (p=.518)	-.21 (p=.145)	.02
Engagement	+.44* (p=.001)	+.30* (p=.000)	-.13 (p=.350)	.01
Motivation	+.42* (p=.001)	+.10 (p=.193)	-.32 (p=.020)	.05
Study Skills	.12 (p=.276)	+.11 (p=.137)	-.01 (p=.946)	.00

<sup>a</sup>Values represent mean score gains for struggling learners without IEPs.  
<sup>b</sup>Values represent mean score gains for struggling learners without IEPs of trained teachers over and above those for students of untrained teachers.  
\* Indicates significant change at the two-tailed Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level. The Bonferroni adjustment for seven comparisons requires p values below .05/7=.007

**Table 9. Two aggregate categories of academic skill and academic enabler gains regressed on training levels, struggling learners without IEPs only.**

	Mean gain for students of untrained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=34)	Mean gain for students of trained teachers <sup>a</sup> (N=73)	Difference <sup>b</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>
Academic Skills	.38* (p=.000)	.20* (p=.000)	-.18* (p=.012)	.06
Academic Enablers	.31* (p=.001)	.13 (p=.038)	-.18 (p=.115)	.02

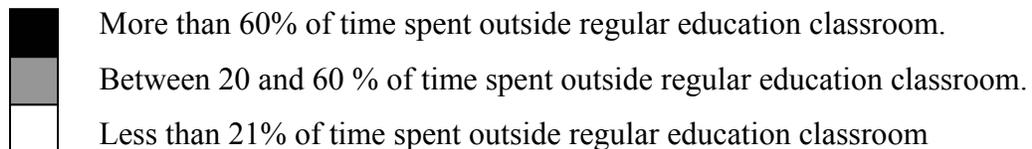
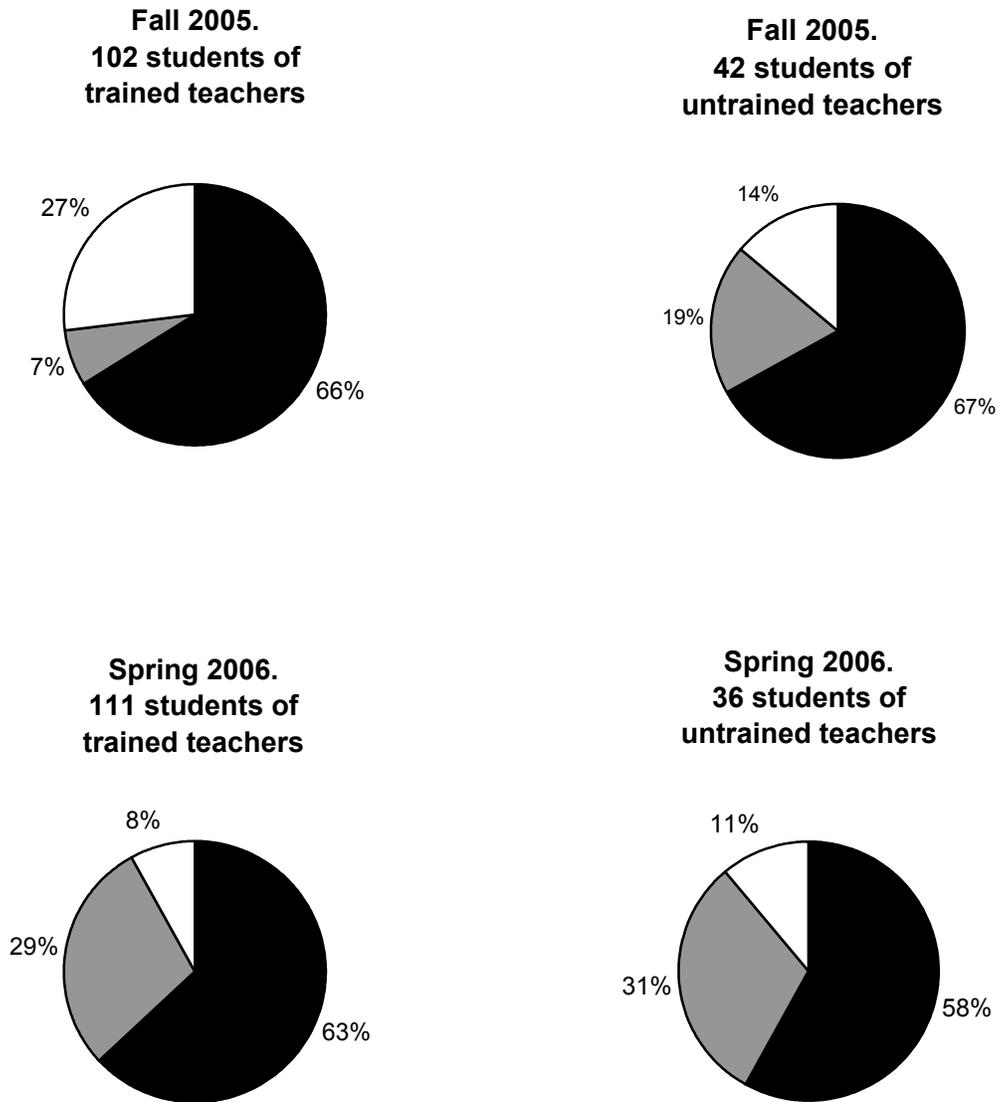
<sup>a</sup>Values represent mean score gains for struggling learners without IEPs of teachers in each category  
<sup>b</sup>Values represent mean score gains for struggling learners without IEPs of trained teachers over and above those for students of untrained teachers.  
\* Indicates significant change at the two-tailed Bonferroni-adjusted .05 level. The Bonferroni adjustment for two comparisons requires p values below .05/2=.025.

***Effect on Time Students with IEPs Spent Outside the Regular Education Classroom***

We next looked at the effect of Schools Attuned training on the amount of time that students with IEPs spend outside regular education classrooms for instruction. It is a well established goal of special education practice to minimize time outside of regular education classrooms as much as is possible without compromising services. On both fall and spring surveys, teachers were asked to report how much time each student with an IEP spends outside the regular classroom. Teachers reported on 144 students in the fall and 147 in the spring. Figure 1 shows the results. The four pie charts are very similar. In each time period, about two-thirds of students with IEPs were reported to be out of the regular education classroom for less than 21 percent of their day. Chi-square tests found no significant differences between trained and untrained teachers at either time period.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> A chi-square test comparing fall results for trained and untrained teachers finds that the assumption of no difference would produce differences at least this large 26% of the time (p=.26). A similar test for spring yields a p-value of .82.

Figure 1. Time spent outside of the regular education classroom by students with IEPs.



## ***Effects of Schools Attuned on Special Education Costs***

An original purpose of the overall study was to determine the effects of Schools Attuned on costs associated with special education. In Phase 3, low implementation at the schools prohibited drawing conclusions about this effect. With Phase 4, implementation was higher, but neither quantitative nor qualitative evidence indicated with any certainty that cost savings or a reduction in special education services occurred. As in the other phases, many respondents told us that Schools Attuned was decreasing or would decrease the number of referrals, was increasing the accuracy of the referral process, and was reducing the need for some special education services, all of which could lead to cost savings. But no quantitative data, such as the number of students with IEPs, the number of students referred for evaluations, or the amount of time students spent receiving special education services outside the regular classroom, were available to support these assertions. In fact, contrary to those assertions, some respondents made a clear distinction between students with disabilities and other struggling learners. They said that Schools Attuned focused exclusively on the struggling learners and special education was both necessary and sufficient for addressing the needs of students with disabilities.

## **Discussion of Phase 4 Findings**

In our discussion we will look at three specific points: the importance of principal support, implementation patterns, and effects on special education.

### ***Principal Support***

Teachers at one school described the principal as “gung ho” towards the Schools Attuned program. They felt they could always go to her for support. The principal reported that her own practice had changed as a result of her training. She said she no longer looked at problems from within a box. The training enabled her, and her teachers, to diagnose learning problems in children and to look at learners in different ways. At another school, the principal and teachers reported on many ways that the principal had built support for Schools Attuned into the school structure: monthly school-wide meetings to discuss and improve practice, grade-level team meetings to study constructs, and workshops for parents. The principal made Schools Attuned a focus at the school on a daily basis. Another principal served as the Schools Attuned liaison for the district, where the

school was designated as a Schools Attuned demonstration site. Still another principal reported satisfaction at meeting a personal goal of integrating Schools Attuned into the special education pre-referral process.

The need for principal support seems particularly important for the successful implementation of the Schools Attuned program. In two cases, a person other than the principal initially brought Schools Attuned to the school, but in all Phase 4 schools, the principal became a strong supporter of the program. When teachers from the five schools that completed the study were asked in spring 2006 if they thought Schools Attuned would still be in their school in 5 years, many answered they thought the program would remain as long as the current principal remained.

### ***Implementation Patterns***

As we have described in this report, across the six schools in Phase 4, we saw a variety of levels of implementation. Fort Salonga Elementary, the highest implementing school we visited, integrated Schools Attuned into much of what went on school-wide every day. This emphasis on the program permeated everything the staff did. The language of Schools Attuned was in regular use among most of the teachers interviewed. Teachers were talking with children about how they learn as well as discussing the constructs with them. The atmosphere and culture were set by the principal who expressed a great deal of respect and regard for the skills, knowledge, and dedication of the staff.

At another school where Schools Attuned had a strong foothold, the majority of teachers had been trained, though many had not started the practicum and some felt confused as to what to do with all of the information they had. Teachers reported that they were comfortable with the language of Schools Attuned, but it was not commonly used in everyday language. One teacher pointed out that while she already used a lot of the strategies suggested by Schools Attuned, the program had helped her to be more organized with them. Another teacher said that Schools Attuned validated strategies that she already used. Schools Attuned fit readily into the educational system in place at this school.

Another school had adopted Schools Attuned widely, but teachers focused chiefly on the use of strategies with individual students and relatively little on the diagnostic and interpretive components of the program. Schools Attuned fit well into this school, where differentiated

instruction was already practiced. The school provided substantial resources for professional development, and staff enjoyed a particularly close relationship with the Schools Attuned coordinator in the district.

One school had integrated Schools Attuned into the special education referral process and was working to familiarize untrained teachers with the constructs of the program. Most trained teachers said they liked the binder of strategies, although the Schools Attuned language was not yet part of their everyday vocabulary. The special education teachers did think collaboration with General Ed teachers was better this year but could not say that this was definitely due to Schools Attuned.

At another school, respondents, including previously trained teachers, reported that the program still felt new. They were trying to figure out how to organize the Schools Attuned information and use the program effectively. Schools Attuned was useful in providing a common language, a set of strategies, and a “new lens” the staff could share. Teachers said that Schools Attuned offered concrete examples for their use and aligned with what they were already doing. Schools Attuned fit readily into the educational system and culture at this school. But many teachers described the Schools Attuned program as affirming what they were already doing rather than offering true innovation.

The sixth school, which was dropped from the study, was the exception to the group. The school’s implementation of Schools Attuned was marginal, and higher implementation did not seem to be on the horizon. Although teachers reported that they valued the opportunity Schools Attuned provided to help them look at students differently, they described the program as being too complicated and involving too much work. Many said that Schools Attuned was not being well-implemented and that there was not enough support available to help them learn it well. Also, two district-wide special education programs competed with Schools Attuned for teachers’ attention. It is important to note as well that the demographics of this school differed significantly from the other five. The school served a higher proportion of students with IEPs (25 percent, compared to a range of 2 to 12 percent for the other schools) and a higher proportion of students receiving free or reduced price lunch (38 percent, compared to a range of 7 to 12 percent for the other schools).

In each of the five schools completing the study, the philosophy and culture of the school was congruent with Schools Attuned: instruction focused on students' individual needs as learners, differentiation was already in place, and collaboration and collegiality amongst teachers was high. Additionally, each school had high financial and human resources and served student populations that were above average in ability and achievement. Each school had low turnover among staff. The teachers were well educated, many with Master's degrees. The principal at each school was a strong Schools Attuned supporter and committed to implementing the program school-wide. Large percentages of teachers were trained, and each school had a commitment to training more. Most staff were at least beginning to use the language, constructs, and strategies of Schools Attuned. At least some teachers in each school said that Schools Attuned "affirmed what we were doing already" or validated and improved strategies already used. Previously trained teachers commonly served as mentors for newly trained or untrained teachers. Several of the schools had district level support and two were pilot or demonstration schools for their districts.

### ***Effects on Special Education***

Teachers at the five Phase 4 schools talked about the common language that Schools Attuned provided between regular classroom teachers and special education teachers, as well as between teachers and parents. Some said that this led to a greater mutual understanding that helped regular classroom teachers be more supportive of special education teachers. But, overall, the Schools Attuned program's effect on special education services at the Phase 4 schools was marginal. Although several schools had made or were planning to make Schools Attuned part of the pre-referral process, no one provided evidence or definitively stated that referrals had decreased or that students had been found to not need special education services as a result of Schools Attuned. Additionally, some teachers stated that while Schools Attuned was effective for struggling learners, it really was not appropriate for students who already had IEPs, either because their problems were too severe or because their needs were appropriately met through special education.

Each school also had a number of other programs for struggling learners in addition to Schools Attuned, such as Orton-Gillingham, Reading Recovery, Balanced Literacy, and the Wilson Reading Program. This made it difficult to attribute any changes to any one program. Importantly, teachers often described Schools Attuned as complementing rather than competing with these other

programs. Nonetheless, no special relationship was reported between the addition of Schools Attuned to these other programs and outcomes for students with disabilities.

## **Conclusions Based on Findings Across All Four Study Phases**

In most ways, Phase 4 findings confirmed the findings from the previous study phases. We found many potentially positive results of Schools Attuned training, which we have documented in this report and the previous three reports. For example, virtually all trained teachers found the Schools Attuned strategies useful. Most expressed an appreciation for the emphasis on student strengths rather than weaknesses. Many reported an increased awareness of and ability to deal with diverse children and struggling learners. Some clearly made appropriate use of the Attuning a Student process (or at least components of it) with individual students or used Schools Attuned strategies with an entire classroom. Attuning a Student seemed to become institutionalized most comfortably as a part of the pre-referral intervention process for students being considered for a special education evaluation. The language of Schools Attuned was also reported to have permeated some of the participating schools.

Taking into consideration all findings from the multiple quantitative and qualitative data collections, however, we found no consequential evidence that Schools Attuned training affects the nature and extent of special education services required of schools, even when the Schools Attuned implementation is relatively high. In each study phase, the small school sample size made it unlikely that quantitative findings would show any Schools Attuned impact on special education, even if it existed; and in fact we found none. But the qualitative findings were more robust, given the variety of schools we included in the study, and those findings corroborated the lack of quantitative evidence. That is, interview respondents, including those who were enthusiastic about Schools Attuned, consistently failed to identify significant effects of the program specifically on special education services or students with IEPs. The only contrary evidence was from anecdotal accounts based on limited information or from speculation regarding the future impact of Schools Attuned.

One reason for the lack of findings to support the supposition that Schools Attuned would reduce the need for special education was the inconsistency of implementation of the program in the

schools studied. This implementation issue does not, however, nullify the negative findings because there is no reason to believe that the inconsistency of implementation we found is limited to the schools participating in the four study phases. Given the criteria for selection of the schools, it is fair to assume that these schools are reasonably representative of other schools attempting to implement Schools Attuned and are, in fact, examples of higher than average implementation. Similarly, the limitations on the quantitative analysis posed by the small sample size does not mitigate the lack of positive results. The sample size was in itself a reflection of the inability of Schools Attuned program staff to identify (and then for us to enroll in the study) schools that were using Schools Attuned at a level of implementation that was appropriate for the study.

Future Schools Attuned research and evaluation will need to focus on level and fidelity of implementation. Our study was predicated on the assumption that we could identify classrooms and schools where the program was being implemented as intended, particularly with a focus on the Attuning a Student process. In fact, many staff in the schools we studied were strong Schools Attuned advocates. But our experience makes it clear that a general appreciation of and enthusiasm for Schools Attuned are not sufficient to ensure consistent and full implementation within a school. Support and buy-in must exist on multiple levels (teachers, principals, district administrators) combined with a strong commitment and the dedication of adequate resources. Human and financial resources as well as other contextual factors, such as competing programs, must be considered.

More specifically, we suggest the following:

- Future research should focus on schools where implementation is school-wide and where district-level support for the Schools Attuned program is strong.
- Future evaluation should focus on implementation with the purpose of understanding (1) the school and district contexts and circumstances that lead to successful implementation, (2) the developmental sequence of successful implementation—how it develops into a meaningful program in a school, and (3) what sustains Schools Attuned once it is implemented.
- The Schools Attuned program should develop a system of integrated school-wide data collection that ensures that routine data collection procedures and instruments are used across

Schools Attuned schools. This system should provide data on the (1) level of implementation and (2) the impact on students.

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## **Appendices**

Questionnaires

Interview Protocols

Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (ACES)



**School Questionnaire**

**Study of the Impact of SCHOOLS ATTUNED  
on Special Education**

**Fall 2005**

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This questionnaire is part of an independent research study conducted by Westat. The study is one of several funded by the All Kinds of Minds Institute to document how Schools Attuned programs and services may improve students' learning, achievement, and long-term attainment of success. The Schools Attuned program is one of the services of the All Kinds of Minds Institute.

We are asking school administrators to complete this questionnaire. Your school has been selected for this study specifically because Schools Attuned is being implemented widely. With your contribution, we will gain a more accurate and complete understanding of how Schools Attuned is being implemented.

We hope you will join us in our effort to investigate how Schools Attuned may affect the need for and the nature of special education services. Thank you for your time and effort.

### Instructions

**Throughout this questionnaire, *students with IEPs* means students with disabilities who have individualized education programs (IEPs) and are receiving special education or related services.**

All information that would permit identification of the individual respondent will be held in strict confidence, will be used only by persons engaged in and for the purposes of the survey, and will not be disclosed or released to others for any purpose except as required by law.

**Please return the completed questionnaire in the attached postage-paid envelope to Westat.** If you need assistance in answering any of these questions, or if you have comments or suggestions on how this questionnaire can be improved, please do not hesitate to contact xxxxxx toll free at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxxxxx@westat.com.

## School Questionnaire

1. What is the current enrollment of your school (2005-2006 school year)?

Current enrollment:

2. How many of your students have IEPs (i.e., they have disabilities and are receiving special education services)?

Students with IEPs:

3. Currently, what is the FTE (full time equivalent) for special education teachers employed at your school?

FTE for special education teachers:

4. Currently, what is the FTE for special education paraprofessionals employed at your school?

FTE for special education paraprofessionals:

5. For the last school year (2004-2005), what was the number of retentions (students held back a grade) for all students at your school?

Retentions from last school year:

6. For the last school year (2004-2005), how many students with IEPs took the state-required *reading* achievement tests and how many scored as proficient (i.e., on or above grade level)?

Number of students with IEPs taking reading test:

Number of students with IEPs scoring proficient in reading:

7. For the last school year (2004-2005), how many students with IEPs took the state-required *math* achievement tests and how many scored as proficient (i.e., on or above grade level)?

Number of students with IEPs taking math test:

Number of students with IEPs scoring proficient in math:

8. For the current school year (2005-2006), what is the total number of students enrolled in your school in the following categories? Of those, how many are students with IEPs?

	Total number of students	Number of students with IEPs
a. Hispanic, regardless of race.....	_____	_____
b. White, not of Hispanic origin.....	_____	_____
c. Black, not of Hispanic origin.....	_____	_____
d. American Indian or Alaska Native.....	_____	_____
e. Asian or Pacific Islander.....	_____	_____

9. For the current school year (2005-2006), what is the total number of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch?

Students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch:

**Please continue on next page.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide us with your name, school, email address, and work phone number. *Your name is essential* because we will ask you to complete another questionnaire in the spring. Also, we may need to contact you to clarify your responses to any of these questions.

*Name* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Title* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Phone* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Fax* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Email* \_\_\_\_\_

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***Thank you for completing this questionnaire.***

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Please return this questionnaire in the attached envelope. If you do not have the envelope, please return to:

WESTAT  
1650 Research Blvd.  
Room 1221F  
Rockville, MD 20850-9973



## **Teacher Questionnaire**

### **Study of the Impact of SCHOOLS ATTUNED on Special Education**

**Fall 2005**

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This questionnaire is part of an independent research study conducted by Westat. The study is one of several funded by the All Kinds of Minds Institute to document how Schools Attuned programs and services may improve students' learning, achievement, and long-term attainment of success. The Schools Attuned program is one of the services of the All Kinds of Minds Institute.

We are asking teachers to complete this questionnaire. Your school has been selected for this study because Schools Attuned has been used there for a sufficient period of time so that results will be evident. With your contribution, we will gain a more accurate and complete understanding of how Schools Attuned is being implemented.

We hope you will join us in our effort to investigate how Schools Attuned may affect the need for and the nature of special education services.

Thank you for your time and effort.

### Instructions

All information that would permit identification of the individual respondent will be held in strict confidence, will be used only by persons engaged in and for the purposes of the survey, and will not be disclosed or released to others for any purpose except as required by law.

**Please seal the completed questionnaire, along with the completed ACES forms on your students (if you are a regular education classroom teacher), in the attached envelope and return to Westat.** If you need assistance in answering any of these questions, or if you have comments or suggestions on how this questionnaire can be improved, please do not hesitate to contact xxxxxx toll free at xxx-xxx-xxxx or xxxxxx@westat.com.

# Teacher Questionnaire

1. Please check the box that best describes your position for the current school year (2005–2006):

- Regular education classroom teacher .....
- Special education teacher .....
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please check the boxes that indicate the grades you are teaching (Check all that apply):

- Pre-K.....       K.....       1<sup>st</sup> .....       2<sup>nd</sup> .....
- 3<sup>rd</sup> .....       4<sup>th</sup> .....       5<sup>th</sup> .....       6<sup>th</sup> .....

3. How many years have you been teaching?

- 0 - 4       5 - 9       10 - 14       15 - 20       More than 20

4. What is the highest degree you have obtained?

- Bachelor's       Master's       Specialist       Doctorate

5. Have you participated in the Schools Attuned Core Training?

- Yes, I attended and completed the Core Training (month/year: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_).
- Yes, I attended but did not complete the Core Training (month/year: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_).
- No, I have not attended the training.

6. How many *students with IEPs* do you have currently? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please provide the following information about your students for the last school year (2004-2005):

- a. Number of *students with IEPs* in my class in 2004-2005:
- b. Number of students I *referred for a special education evaluation* in 2004-2005:
- c. Number of those referrals who *qualified for special education* in 2004-2005:
- d. Number of students *who were retained or* who, at the end of the year, were *at risk of being retained*. Include students in this count if, at the end of the year they were going to be retained unless they completed a summer program, passed a test they had previously failed, or were recommended by a special review committee, *even if they ultimately passed to the next grade*.


8. For the current school year (2005-2006), for *each child in your class with an IEP*, tell us the percentage of time they spend receiving special education services outside of the regular classroom.

Child's initials	Percent of time receiving special education services <u>outside</u> the regular classroom		
	Less than 21% of the day	21% to 60% of the day	More than 60% of the day
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Child's initials	Percent of time receiving special education services <u>outside</u> the regular classroom		
	Less than 21% of the day	21% to 60% of the day	More than 60% of the day
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Please continue on next page.**

9. The following questions are designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each question below by circling the appropriate number in each row. *Your responses are confidential.*

<b>Teacher Beliefs<sup>7</sup></b>		Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
a.	How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b.	How much can you do to help your students think critically?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c.	How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d.	How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e.	To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f.	How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
g.	How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
h.	How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
i.	How much can you do to help your students value learning?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
j.	How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
k.	To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
l.	How much can you do to foster student creativity?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
m.	How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
n.	How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
o.	How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
p.	How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
q.	How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
r.	How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
s.	How much can you do to keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
t.	To what extent can you provided an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
u.	How well can you respond to defiant students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
v.	How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
w.	How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
x.	How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

<sup>7</sup> Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 17*, 783-805.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide us with your name, school, email address, and work phone number. *Your name is essential* because we will ask you to complete another questionnaire in the spring. Also, we may need to contact you to clarify your responses to any of these questions.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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***Thank you for completing this questionnaire.***

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Please return the questionnaire, and the completed ACES forms on your students (if you are a regular education classroom teacher), in the attached envelope. If you do not have the envelope, please return to:

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**School Questionnaire**

**Study of the Impact of SCHOOLS ATTUNED  
on Special Education**

**Spring 2006**

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

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We are asking school administrators to complete this questionnaire. Your school was selected for this study specifically because Schools Attuned is being implemented widely. With your contribution, we will gain a more accurate and complete understanding of how Schools Attuned is being implemented.

We hope you will join us in our effort to investigate how Schools Attuned may affect the need for and the nature of special education services. Thank you for your time and effort.

### Instructions

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## School Questionnaire

1. What is the current enrollment of your school (2005-2006 school year)?

Current enrollment:

2. How many of your students currently have IEPs (i.e., they have disabilities and are receiving special education services)?

Students with IEPs:

3. For this school year (2005-2006), how many students with IEPs took the state-required *reading* achievement tests and how many scored as proficient (i.e., on or above grade level)?

Number of students with IEPs taking reading test:

Number of students with IEPs scoring proficient in reading:

4. For this school year (2005-2006), how many students with IEPs took the state-required *math* achievement tests and how many scored as proficient (i.e., on or above grade level)?

Number of students with IEPs taking math test:

Number of students with IEPs scoring proficient in math:

**Please continue on next page.**





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***Thank you for completing this questionnaire.***

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**Teacher Questionnaire**

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**Spring 2006**

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We are asking teachers who completed a similar questionnaire back in the fall to complete this questionnaire. Your school was selected for his study because Schools Attuned has been used there for a sufficient period of time so that results will be evident. With your contribution, we will gain a more accurate and complete understanding of how Schools Attuned is being implemented.

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1. Please check the box that best describes your current position:

- Regular education classroom teacher .....
- Special education teacher .....
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please check the boxes that indicate the grades you are teaching (Check all that apply):

- Pre-K.....       K.....       1<sup>st</sup> .....       2<sup>nd</sup> .....
- 3<sup>rd</sup> .....       4<sup>th</sup> .....       5<sup>th</sup> .....       6<sup>th</sup> .....

3. How many *students with IEPs* do you have currently? \_\_\_\_\_

4. During the past month, *for each child in your class with an IEP*, tell us the percentage of time they spend receiving special education services outside of the regular classroom.

Child's initials	Percent of time receiving special education services <u>outside</u> the regular classroom		
	Less than 21% of the day	21% to 60% of the day	More than 60% of the day
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Child's initials	Percent of time receiving special education services <u>outside</u> the regular classroom		
	Less than 21% of the day	21% to 60% of the day	More than 60% of the day
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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5. The following questions are designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each question below by circling the appropriate number in each row. *Your responses are confidential.*

Teacher Beliefs <sup>8</sup>		Nothing		Very Little		Some Influence		Quite A Bit		A Great Deal
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
a.	How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
b.	How much can you do to help your students think critically?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
c.	How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
d.	How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
e.	To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
f.	How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
g.	How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
h.	How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
i.	How much can you do to help your students value learning?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
j.	How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
k.	To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
l.	How much can you do to foster student creativity?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
m.	How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
n.	How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
o.	How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
p.	How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
q.	How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
r.	How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
s.	How much can you do to keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
t.	To what extent can you provided an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
u.	How well can you respond to defiant students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
v.	How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
w.	How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
x.	How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

<sup>8</sup> Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 17*, 783-805.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Please provide us with your name, school, email address, and work phone number.

*Name* \_\_\_\_\_

*School* \_\_\_\_\_

*Work Phone* \_\_\_\_\_

*Email* \_\_\_\_\_

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***Thank you for completing this questionnaire.***

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Please return the questionnaire, and the completed ACES forms on your students (if you are a regular education classroom teacher), in the attached envelope. If you do not have the envelope, please return to:

WESTAT  
1650 Research Blvd.  
Room 1221F  
Rockville, MD 20850-9973

## Phase 4: Fall Administrator Protocol

(**Note:** Instructions and other directions appear in *italics* and are not intended to be read to the interviewee. **Asterisks \* and bold numbers indicate absolutely key questions** that should be asked under all circumstances).

### Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to give us information about the Schools Attuned process used within schools and how this training may affect the educational environment for all students, but most especially for students seen to be struggling and/or officially classified as needing special education. This interview is in no way an evaluation of you or this school.

There are five (5) basic areas we will address during the interview. These include:

- (a) Strategies for supporting students who are struggling academically
- (b) Decision-making processes regarding special ed referrals
- (c) Strategies for dealing with difficult student behaviors in the classroom
- (d) (Where applicable) Training in SA and use of knowledge gained
- (e) Effects of SA on school climate

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. We anticipate the interview will take approximately 45 minutes. You may decline to answer any question(s) that you wish and/or may terminate the interview at any time. We would like to tape record the interview to make certain that we have recorded your words accurately. No one will have access to these tapes except for us or personnel in our office who may be assisting with this project. Tapes will be kept in a secure location and destroyed or reused when the project is terminated. At no time will anyone associated with your school, school system or the All Kinds of Minds organization be given access to these tapes. However, neither your name nor the name of your school will be associated with any quoted material used. Would it be okay for us to use the tape recorder?

*(Give them consent form if not previously signed. Let them read, ask questions, sign and return to you before proceeding. Offer a copy of the consent form for them to keep).*

Do you have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed before we begin?  
(If yes, answer questions. If no, turn on tape recorder and proceed)

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**Section I:** The first few questions are general informational questions and should not take long.  
(Proceed with questions 1 – 6).

- (1) How long have you been in administration?
- (2) How many different schools and where?
- (3) Were you a teacher before becoming an administrator? If so, what grades and for how long?
- (4) What is your assignment for this school year (i.e., principal; assistant principal; key responsibilities)?
- (5) Approximately, how many students per classroom do you consider as “struggling” who need special accommodations but who may not be eligible for special education services?
- (6) For my information, have you had the Schools Attuned training? If so, when did you complete the training?

**Section II:** The next few questions pertain to issues of student assessment. (Proceed with questions 7a-c).

- \*(7) How do you and your staff go about assessing what the needs of the students might be? Please describe any formal and informal assessments used with students who are struggling academically. (Omit a-c if already addressed).
- a. What role(s) do the general education teachers have in assessing individual students? (Ask for examples if short answer is given).
  - b. What role(s) do special educators or paraprofessionals have in assessing these students? (Ask for specifics where possible).
  - c. Do you use parent information or input as part of the assessment process? If so, please describe or give an example.

**Section III:** Now I'd like to ask you some questions pertaining to special education referrals and services.

**\*(8)** When a child is being considered for a possible special education evaluation, what process is followed?

Please describe or give an example.

- a. How was this process developed? Please describe your role in developing this process, if you had one.
- b. What roles do general ed teachers, special educators, paraprofessionals and family members play in the decision for referral, if they do? (*Ask for specifics*).
- c. To what degree is this process consistently applied?

(9) (*Optional*) What level of experience do you have, in general, in working with students who qualify for special education services?

**\*(10)** For the students in this school with IEPs, in general:

- a. What is the extent and nature of the special education services they receive?
- b. Are you involved with others concerning these students? (*Explore areas of collaboration with other teachers, paraprofessionals, families, special education resources*).

(11) How are decisions made for retention of a student?

- a. How does the process begin?
- b. How was this process developed?
- c. Has it changed over the course of your tenure as administrator here? If so, please describe and explain the reasons for the changes if possible.
- d. How many children, on average, are recommended for retention each year school-wide?

**Section IV**: I'd like to switch topics a bit and discuss your ideas about student behavior.

- (12) Please think about students with problematic behavior whom you, as the administrator, are asked to help manage. Can you describe how you work with those students?
- In what ways are the strategies you use successful?
  - Where did you learn these strategies?
  - In what ways might you consider the strategies you use with difficult student behaviors less than satisfactory?
- (13) Could you describe the circumstances that would necessitate students being sent to you or someone else in the office for disciplinary reasons? (*Omit a. or b. if answered*).
- How often and in what ways do teachers need administrative support to deal with problem behaviors in students?
  - Do you have school-wide policies—either formal or informal—about when students are sent to the office? If so, are the students aware of these policies? If not, how are these decisions made?
- (14) Could you describe circumstances that would result in suspension (*either in-school or out-of-school*) or expulsion?
- How much and what kinds of input, if any, do teachers and other staff have in those decisions?
  - What are the policies—either yours or the district's—about suspension and expulsion?
  - If a policy is in place, how consistently is it followed?

**Section V:** The final set of questions pertains to your experiences with professional development in general and Schools Attuned in particular if you have had the training. *(Make certain you have clarified their Schools Attuned training status before proceeding).*

- \*(15) Have you participated in any professional development activities in the past year—other than Schools Attuned—that you feel have had an impact on your administrative practices? If so, please explain what you have done and how it has made a difference in the school environment.

**If SA trained, continue. If not, skip to Question 19.**

*(Note: If they have discussed their use of SA in previous questions, ascertain if all of these questions have already been addressed. If not, proceed with those that have not been answered. If so, DO NOT REPEAT HERE).*

- \*(16) We have talked about children with special learning and behavioral needs today. How has your work and the work with SA in the school changed your practice with these students, if it has?
- In what ways do you use SA with individual children?
  - What use do you make of the demystification and attunement process with students, if any? *(Ask for specifics or examples).*
- \*(17) How has your training in SA affected your work with students in general, if it has?
- In your work with students, do you make use of the SA ideas?
- \*(18) How has your training in SA influenced your working relationship with other school personnel and parents, if it has? *(Omit a—c if addressed).*
- general educators?
  - special educators?
  - parents?

**Continue with Question 19 for non-trained administrators as well as with trained administrators.**

- \*(19)** In working with teachers who have had SA training, in what ways do you feel the training affects their work with students in general? *(Ask for specifics)*.
- Do you see teachers (either general ed or special ed) making use of the SA ideas? *Ask for specific resources or methods used.*
  - What about their use of the attunement and demystification process? *Ask for examples or description.*
- \*(20)** Does training in SA affect the rate at which students are referred for special education evaluation by general education teachers? If it does. . .
- Has the rate increased, decreased or remained the same?
  - Has the accuracy of teacher referrals changed (i.e., do teacher referrals result in eligibility more often, less often or is there no change)?
- \*(21)** What sorts of programs designed to help struggling students, if any, are currently being promoted in your school or district? *(Ask for a description, not just program name)*.
- Who is responsible for deciding to promote these programs?
  - How useful are the programs for students in general, in your opinion? Please give an example if possible.
  - How useful are the programs for students eligible for special education services? Please give an example if possible.
  - How would you compare the use of these programs to the use of SA?
- \*(22)** Is there someone in your school who is very active with Schools Attuned whom you feel we should speak with while we are here? *Make sure and get full name and position.*
- \*(23)** Given the student populations and issues we have been discussing, are there things that I need to know related to SA that I have not asked? *(Probe for specifics)*.
-

Thank you so much for your time today. It has been a pleasure speaking with you. Do you have any questions for me before we close? *(If yes, provide answers if possible. If no, proceed. If you do not know the answers, have them contact xxxxxxxx at Westat at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email xxxxx@westat.com. Alternatively, offer to find out the answers and contact them yourself).*

If you think of anything else that might be of interest to us or if you have questions that occur to you after I leave, please feel free to contact me. *(Give them your name, phone number and email address. Leave a business card if possible)*

## Phase 4: Fall General Education Teacher Protocol<sup>9</sup>

(**Note:** Instructions and other directions appear in *italics* and are not intended to be read to the interviewee. **Asterisks \* and bold numbers indicate absolutely key questions** that should be asked under all circumstances).

### Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to give us information about the Schools Attuned process used within schools and how this training may affect the educational environment for all students, but most especially for students seen to be struggling or officially classified as needing special education. This interview is in no way an evaluation of you or your teaching.

There are five (5) basic areas we will address during the interview. These include:

- (a) Strategies for supporting students who are struggling academically
- (b) Decision-making processes regarding special ed referrals
- (c) Strategies for dealing with difficult student behaviors in the classroom
- (d) (Where applicable) Training in Schools Attuned (SA) and use of knowledge gained
- (e) Effects of Schools Attuned on school climate

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. We anticipate the interview will take approximately 45 minutes. (*If focus group, approximately 90 minutes*). You may decline to answer any question(s) that you wish or may terminate the interview at any time. We would like to tape record the interview to make certain that we have recorded your words accurately. No one will have access to these tapes except for us or personnel in our office assisting with this project. Tapes will be kept in a secure location and destroyed or reused when the project is terminated. At no time will anyone associated with your school, school system or the All Kinds of Minds organization be given access to these tapes. However, neither your name nor the name of your school will be associated with any quoted material used. Would it be okay for us to use the tape recorder? (*Give them consent form if not previously signed. Let them read, ask*

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<sup>9</sup> Use this protocol for all *general ed teachers* regardless of SA training status. There is a *separate protocol for special ed teachers*.

questions, sign and return to you before proceeding. Offer a copy of the consent form for them to keep).

Do you have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed before we begin?

*(If yes, answer questions. If no, turn on tape recorder and proceed.)*

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**Section I:** The first few questions are general informational questions and should not take long.

*(Proceed with questions 1 – 7).*

- (1) How long have you been teaching?
- (2) What grades have you taught?
- (3) How many different schools and where?
- (4) What is your assignment for this school year (i.e., general ed, special ed, other; key responsibilities)?
- (5) How many students do you have in your class this year with IEPs?
- (6) How many other students do you consider as “struggling” who need special accommodations but who may not be eligible for special education services?
- (7) For my information, have you had the Schools Attuned training? If so, when did you complete the training?

**Section II:** The next few questions pertain to issues of student assessment. *(Proceed with questions 8-9)*

- \*(8)** Think about how you begin each school year. How do you go about assessing what the needs of your students might be? Please describe any formal and informal assessments you use with the class as a whole and with individual students.

- \*(9)** To provide us with an example, please think about the students you assessed using the ACES instrument we sent you. For the purposes of this interview, please think about one of these students who has particular learning difficulties.
- a. Describe how you assessed this student's needs.
  - b. Please describe the ways in which the strategies you use with this student seem to enable success.
  - c. Now, please describe ways that you feel this student is not meeting your expectations and, if you have considered it, what alternative strategies you are considering.
  - d. Do you feel like the practices you put into place with this student are fairly typical of how you assess and teach? If not, how do they differ from your usual practice?
  - e. Where did you learn these skills and strategies?

**Section III:** Now I'd like to ask you some questions pertaining to special education referrals and services.

- \*(10)** When you are considering referring a child for a special education evaluation, what goes into your decision making? *Ask for descriptions and examples where possible.*
- a. What part do other teachers or other professionals play in your referral decision, if they do?
  - b. What is the role of administrative policy in your referral decision, if any?
- \*(11)** For your students with IEPs, in general:
- a. What is the extent and nature of the special education services they receive?
  - b. How do you collaborate with others about these students, if you do? (*Explore areas of collaboration with other teachers, paraprofessionals, families, special education resources*).

- (12) How do you go about deciding to recommend a student for retention?
- a. Has this decision making changed over the course of your teaching career? If so, please describe and explain the reasons for the changes if possible.

- b. How often do you think you generally refer a child for retention on average (i.e., once every three years; two a year, etc)?

**Section IV:** I'd like to switch topics a bit and discuss your ideas about student behavior and classroom management.

(13) Please describe a student who exhibits problematic behaviors. Can you describe how you work with that student?

- a. How does that compare with other students with whom you have similar behavioral difficulties?
- b. In what ways are the strategies you use successful?
- c. Where did you learn these strategies?
- d. In what ways might you consider the strategies you use with such difficult behaviors less than satisfactory?

(14) Could you describe the circumstances that would necessitate your sending a student to the office for disciplinary reasons?

- a. Does the school have policies—either formal or informal—about when teachers send a student to the office?
- b. If not, how do you make these decisions?
- c. If so, are the students aware of these policies?
- d. If a policy is in place, how consistently is the policy followed?

(15) Now, could you describe circumstances that would result in suspension (*either in-school or out-of-school*) or expulsion?

- a. How much input, if any, do you have in those decisions?
- b. What are the school's policies about suspension and expulsion?
- c. If a policy is in place, how consistently is the policy followed?

**Section V:** The final set of questions pertains to your experiences with professional development in general and Schools Attuned in particular if you have had the training. (*Make certain you have clarified their Schools Attuned training status before proceeding*).

**\*(16)** Have you participated in any professional development activities in the past year—other than Schools Attuned—that you feel has had an impact on your classroom practice? If so, please explain what you have done and how it has made a difference in your classroom.

**If SA trained, continue. If not, skip to Question 21.**

*(Note: If they have discussed their use of SA in previous questions, ascertain if all of these questions have already been addressed. If not, proceed with those that have not been answered. If so, DO NOT REPEAT HERE).*

**\*(17)** How has your training in SA affected your assessments of students in general, if it has?

- a. Do you use a variety of alternative assessments? If so, please describe.
- b. Do your assessments make use of the SA ideas? If so, please describe.

**\*(18)** We have talked a lot about children with special learning and behavioral needs today. How has your work with SA changed your practice with these students, if it has?

- a. In what ways do you use SA with individual children? *Ask for specific resources or methods used.*
- b. How do you use SA in your general classroom, if you do?
- c. What use do you make of the attunement and demystification process with students? *Ask for description or examples if they do.*

- \*(19)** In what ways, if any, does your SA training affect the ways in which you refer students for special education evaluation?
- a. Has the rate increased, decreased or remained the same?
  - b. Has the accuracy with which you refer students for evaluation changed (i.e., do your referrals result in eligibility more often, less often or no change)?
- (20) How has your training in SA influenced your working relationship with special educators, if it has? How about with parents? *Ask for examples.*

**Continue with Question 21 for non-trained teachers as well as with trained teachers.**

***(Note: If time is short, questions 22 and 23 may be omitted).***

- \*(21)** What sorts of other programs designed to help struggling students are currently being promoted in your school or district, if any? *Ask for brief description.*
- (22) *(Optional)* How useful are these programs to you in your classroom? Please give an example if possible.
- (23) *(Optional)* How useful are these programs with the struggling students you teach? Please give an example if possible.
- \*(24)** Is there someone in your school who is very active with Schools Attuned whom you feel we should speak with while we are here? *Make sure and get full name and position.*
- \*(25)** Given the student populations and issues we have been discussing, are there things that I need to know that I have not asked? *Ask for specifics and examples.*

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Thank you so much for your time today. It has been a pleasure speaking with you. Do you have any questions for me before we close? *(If yes, provide answers if possible. If no, proceed. If you do not know the answers, have them contact xxxxxxxx at Westat at xxx-xxx-xxxx*

*or email xxxxx@westat.com. Alternatively, offer to find out the answers and contact them yourself).*

If you think of anything else that might be of interest to us or if you have questions that occur to you after I leave, please feel free to contact me. *(Give them your name, phone number and email address. Leave a business card if possible.)*

## Phase 4: Fall Special Ed Teacher Protocol

(**Note:** Instructions and other directions appear in *italics* and are not intended to be read to the interviewee. **Asterisks \* and bold numbers indicate absolutely key questions** that should be asked under all circumstances).

### Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to give us information about the Schools Attuned process used within schools and how this training may affect the educational environment for all students, but most especially for students seen to be struggling or officially classified as needing special education. This interview is in no way an evaluation of you or your teaching.

There are five (5) basic areas we will address during the interview. These include:

- a. Strategies for supporting students who are struggling academically
- b. Decision-making processes regarding special ed referrals
- c. Strategies for dealing with difficult student behaviors in the classroom
- d. (Where applicable) Training in SA and use of knowledge gained
- e. Effects of SA on school climate

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. We anticipate the interview will take approximately 45 minutes. (*If focus group, approximately 90 minutes*). You may decline to answer any question(s) that you wish and/or may terminate the interview at any time. We would like to tape record the interview to make certain that we have recorded your words accurately. No one will have access to these tapes except for us or personnel in our office who may be assisting with this project. Tapes will be kept in a secure location and destroyed or reused when the project is terminated. At no time will anyone associated with your school, school system or the All Kinds of Minds organization be given access to these tapes. However, neither your name nor the name of your school will be associated with any quoted material used. Would it be okay for us to use the tape recorder? (*Give them consent form if not previously signed. Let them read,*

*ask questions, sign and return to you before proceeding. Offer a copy of the consent form for them to keep.)*

Do you have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed before we begin?

*(If yes, answer questions. If no, turn on tape recorder and proceed.)*

---

**Section I:** The first few questions are general informational questions and should not take long.

*(Proceed with questions 1 – 7).*

- (1) How long have you been teaching?
- (2) If you have taught anything other than special ed, what grades have you taught?
- (3) How many different schools and where?
- (4) What is your assignment for this school year (i.e., general ed, special ed, other; key responsibilities)?
- (5) How many students with IEPs are you working with this year?
- (6) How many other students are you aware of that are “struggling” and who need special accommodations but may not be eligible for special education services?
- (7) For my information, have you had the Schools Attuned training? If so, when did you complete the training?

**Section II:** The next few questions pertain to issues of student assessment. *(Proceed with questions 8 – 9).*

- \***(8)** How are you involved in assessing students for special education services? Please describe any formal and informal assessments you use either in classes or with individual students.
  - a. What part do general ed teachers or paraprofessionals play in the referral decision, if they do?
  - b. What is the role of administrative policy in the referral decision, if any?
  
- \***(9)** Please think of one student, either currently or in the past, who had particular learning difficulties and with whom you feel you were successful.
  - a. Describe how you assessed this student’s needs.

- b. Please describe the ways in which the strategies you used with this student enabled success.
- c. Now, please describe ways that you feel this student did not meet your expectations, and, if you have considered it, what you would have done differently.
- d. Do you feel like the practices you put into place with this student are fairly typical of how you assess and work with struggling students? If not, how do they differ from your usual practice?
- e. Where did you learn these skills and strategies?

**Section III:** Now, I'd like to ask you some questions pertaining to special education services.

\*(10) For your students with IEPs, in general:

- a. What is the extent and nature of the special education services they receive?
- b. How do you collaborate with others about these students, if you do? (*Explore areas of collaboration with other teachers, other professionals, families, special education resources*).

(11) Do you have any input into recommending students for retention? If so, how do you go about deciding to recommend a student for retention?

- a. Has this decision making changed over the course of your teaching career? If so, please describe and explain the reasons for the changes if possible.
- b. How often do you think you generally refer a child for retention on average (i.e., once every three years; two a year, etc).

**Section IV:** I'd like to switch topics a bit and discuss your ideas about student behavior and behavioral management.

(12) Please describe a student who exhibits problematic behaviors. Can you describe how you work with that student?

- a. How does that compare with other students with whom you have similar behavioral difficulties?
- b. In what ways are the strategies you use successful?
- c. Where did you learn these strategies?

- d. In what ways might you consider the strategies you use with difficult behaviors less than satisfactory?
- (13) Could you describe the circumstances that would necessitate your sending a student to the office for disciplinary reasons?
- a. Does the school have policies—either formal or informal—about when teachers send a student to the office?
  - b. If not, how do you make these decisions?
  - c. If so, are the students aware of these policies?
  - d. If a policy is in place, how consistently is the policy followed?
- (14) Now, could you describe circumstances that would result in suspension (*either in-school or out-of-school*) or expulsion?
- a. How much input, if any, do you have in those decisions?
  - b. What are the school’s policies about suspension and expulsion?
  - c. If a policy is in place, how consistently is the policy followed?

**Section V**: The final set of questions pertains to your experiences with professional development in general and Schools Attuned in particular if you have had the training. (*Make certain you have clarified their Schools Attuned training status before proceeding*).

- \*(15)** Have you participated in any professional development activities in the past year—other than Schools Attuned—that you feel has had an impact on your practice? If so, please explain what you have done and how it has made a difference in your work with students.

**If SA trained, continue. If not, skip to Question 20.**

*(Note: If they have discussed their use of SA in previous questions, ascertain if all of these questions have already been addressed. If not, proceed with those that have not been answered. If so, DO NOT REPEAT HERE).*

- \***(16)** How has your training in SA affected your assessments of students in general, if it has?
- Do you use a variety of alternative assessments? If so, please describe.
  - Do your assessments make use of the SA constructs? If so, please describe.
- \***(17)** We have talked a lot about children with special learning and behavioral needs today. How has your work with SA changed your practice with these students, if it has?
- In what ways do you use SA with individual children? *Ask for specific resources or methods.*
  - What use do you make of the demystification and attunement process with students? Please describe or give examples.
- \***(18)** In what ways, if any, does your SA training affect your recommendation related to referral of students for special education evaluation?
- Have your recommendations for which students should be referred increased, decreased or remained the same since your SA training?
- (19) How has your training in SA influenced your working relationship with general educators, if it has? How about with parents? *Ask for examples.*

**Continue with Question 20 for non-trained special educators as well as with trained special educators.**

- \***(20)** What are your perceptions about the ways general educators who are trained in Schools Attuned use the training with their students? *Ask for specific examples.*
- Does SA affect the *rate* at which general ed teachers refer students for special education evaluation? If so, what is that effect (i.e., increase, decrease)?
  - Does SA affect the *accuracy* with which general ed teachers refer students for evaluation (i.e., are the students referred for evaluation likely to be deemed eligible for special education services)?

- c. Does SA seem to affect the *nature or extent* of the special education services needed by the students who are identified as students needing special education?
- \*(21) What sorts of other programs designed to help struggling students are currently being promoted in your school or district, if any? Please describe.
- (22) *(Optional)* How useful are these programs to you in your work with students who qualify for special education services? Please give an example if possible.
- \*(23) Is there someone in your school who is very active with Schools Attuned whom you feel we should speak with while we are here? *Make sure and get full name and position.*
- \*(24) Given the student populations and issues we have been discussing, are there things that I need to know that I have not asked? *Ask for specifics and examples.*

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Thank you so much for your time today. It has been a pleasure speaking with you. Do you have any questions for me before we close? *(If yes, provide answers if possible. If no, proceed. If you do not know the answers, have them contact xxxxxxxx at Westat at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email xxxxx@westat.com. Alternatively, offer to find out the answers and contact them yourself).*

If you think of anything else that might be of interest to us or if you have questions that occur to you after I leave, please feel free to contact me. *(Give them your name, phone number and email address. Leave a business card if possible.)*

## Phase 4: Spring Administrator Protocol

*[Note: Instructions and other directions appear in italics and are not intended to be read to the interviewee. Asterisks (\*) and bold numbers indicate absolutely key questions that should be asked under all circumstances. The focus is on this school year.]*

### Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to give us information about the Schools Attuned process used within schools and how this training may affect the educational environment for all students, but especially for struggling students or those classified as needing special education. This interview is in no way an evaluation of you or this school.

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. We anticipate the interview will take approximately 30 minutes. You may decline to answer any question and may terminate the interview at any time. We would like to tape record the interview to make certain that we have recorded your words accurately. No one will have access to these tapes except for us or personnel in our office who may be assisting with this project. Tapes will be kept in a secure location and destroyed or reused when the project is terminated. At no time will anyone associated with your school, school system, or the All Kinds of Minds organization be given access to these tapes. Neither your name nor the name of your school will be associated with any quoted material used. Would it be okay for us to use the tape recorder? *(Give them consent form if not previously signed. Let them read, ask questions, sign and return to you before proceeding. Offer a copy of the consent form for them to keep.)*

Do you have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed before we begin?  
*(If yes, answer questions. If no, turn on tape recorder and proceed)*

**Section I:** The first few questions are general informational questions.

- (1) Have your assignment or responsibilities changed this school year? If so, how?
- (2) Approximately, how many students per classroom do you consider as “struggling”—that is, who need special accommodations but who may not be eligible for special education services?

**Section II:** Now I'd like to ask you some questions pertaining to special education and student retention.

- \***(3)** For your students with IEPs, in general:
  - a. How has the extent and nature of the special education services you provide changed this year? If there have been changes, what are the reasons for those changes?
  - b. Has the process for considering a student for a special education evaluation changed this year? If yes, please describe the changes.
  
- \***(4)** Are you expecting to retain or are you considering retention of any students this year?
  - a. *[If yes]* Tell us about that student [those students] and what went into your decision making regarding retention?
  - b. *[If no]* Tell us in general whether your decision making has changed this year when you are considering retaining a student?

**Section III:** I'd like to switch topics a bit and ask about student behavior.

- \***(5)** Approximately how often have students been sent to the office this year for disciplinary reasons?
  - a. How does the rate of office referrals compare to previous years? If it has changed, please explain why.
  - b. Tell us about a couple of those students.

**Section IV:** The final set of questions pertains to your experiences with the implementation of Schools Attuned.

- \***(6)** How has the training in SA influenced your working relationship with other school personnel and parents, if it has? *(Omit a—c if addressed).*
  - a. General educators?
  - b. Special educators?
  - c. Parents?
  
- \***(7)** Has Schools Attuned been used this year in your school in the way you thought it would? Please explain.
  
- \***(8)** In working with teachers who have had SA training, in what ways do you feel the training has affected their work with students in general? *(Ask for specifics).*
  - a. Have you seen teachers (either general ed or special ed) making use of the SA ideas? *Ask for specific resources or methods used.*
  - b. What about their use of the attuning and demystification process? *Ask for examples or description.*

- \***(9)** Has the SA training affected the rate at which students have been referred for special education evaluations this year? If yes, . . .
  - a. Has the rate increased or decreased this year?
  - b. Has the accuracy of teacher referrals changed this year (i.e., do teacher referrals result in eligibility more often, less often or is there no change)?
  
- \***(10)** On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how would you rate your knowledge of Schools Attuned? Why do you rate yourself at this level?
  
- \***(11)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate your frequency of use of Schools Attuned? Why this rating?
  
- \***(12)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate the integration of Schools Attuned into the overall activities of your school? Why this rating?
  
- \***(13)** With regard to Schools Attuned, do you consider your school to be a high implementing school?
  - a. *[If yes]* How do you know that it is high implementing—that is, why do you consider it high implementing?
  - b. *[If yes]* What are the characteristics of your school that facilitate high implementation?
  - c. *[If no]* Is implementation of SA in your school even and orderly and is it progressing in a way that will lead to high implementation? Why or why not?
  
- (14) Do you think SA will still be in use in this school 5 years from now? Why or why not?
  
- (15) Are there any new competing professional development programs or other initiatives on the horizon in this school (or district) that could affect the use of SA?
  
- (16) Given your student population and issues we have been discussing, are there things that I need to know that I have not asked? *Ask for specifics and examples.*

Thank you so much for your time today. It has been a pleasure speaking with you. Do you have any questions for me before we close? *(If yes, provide answers if possible. If no, proceed. If you do not know the answers, have them contact xxxxxx at Westat at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email xxxxxx@westat.com. Alternatively, offer to find out the answers and contact them yourself).*

If you think of anything else that might be of interest to us or if you have questions that occur to you after I leave, please feel free to contact me. *(Give them your name, phone number and email address. Leave a business card if possible).*

## Phase 4: Spring General Education Teacher Protocol<sup>10</sup>

*[Note: Instructions and other directions appear in italics and are not intended to be read to the interviewee. Asterisks (\*) and bold numbers indicate absolutely key questions that should be asked under all circumstances. The focus is on this school year.]*

### Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to give us information about the Schools Attuned process used within schools and how this training may affect the educational environment for all students, but especially for students seen to be struggling or officially classified as needing special education. This interview is in no way an evaluation of you or your teaching.

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. We anticipate the interview will take approximately 30 minutes. *(If group interview, approximately 60 minutes)*. You may decline to answer any question and may terminate the interview at any time. We would like to tape record the interview to make certain that we have recorded your words accurately. No one will have access to these tapes except for us or personnel in our office assisting with this project. Tapes will be kept in a secure location and destroyed or reused when the project is terminated. At no time will anyone associated with your school, school system, or the All Kinds of Minds organization be given access to these tapes. Neither your name nor the name of your school will be associated with any quoted material used. Would it be okay for us to use the tape recorder? *(Give them consent form if not previously signed. Let them read, ask questions, sign and return to you before proceeding. Offer a copy of the consent form for them to keep)*.

Do you have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed before we begin?  
*(If yes, answer questions. If no, turn on tape recorder and proceed.)*

**Section I:** The first few questions are general informational questions.

- (1) What is your assignment for this school year (i.e., general ed, special ed, other; key responsibilities)?
- (2) How many students do you have in your class this year? How many of those students have IEPs?

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<sup>10</sup> Use this protocol for all **general ed teachers** regardless of SA training status. There is a **separate protocol for special ed teachers**.

**Section II:** Now I'd like to ask you some questions pertaining to special education referrals and student retention.

- \***(3)** Have you referred a student or students for a special education evaluation this year or have you raised the possibility of referring a student with your colleagues?
  - a. *[If yes]* Tell us about that student [those students] and what went into your decision making regarding the referral?
  - b. *[If no]* Tell us in general what goes into your decision making when you are considering referring a child for a special education evaluation? *Ask for descriptions and examples where possible.*
  - c. *[If either yes or no]* What part do other teachers or other professionals play in your referral decision, if they do?
  - d. *[If either yes or no]* What is the role of administrative policy in your referral decision, if any?
  
- (4) Will you be recommending a student or students for retention this year?
  - a. *[If yes]* Tell us about that student [those students] and what went into your decision making regarding retention?
  - b. *[If no]* Tell us in general what goes into your decision making when you are considering recommending retention? *Ask for descriptions and examples where possible.*
  - c. *[If either yes or no]* Has this decision making changed over the course of your teaching career? If so, please describe and explain the reasons for the changes.

**Section III:** I'd like to switch topics a bit and discuss your ideas about student behavior and classroom management.

- \***(5)** Have you sent a student or students to the office this year for disciplinary reasons?
  - a. *[If yes]* Tell us about that student [those students] and what went into your decision making regarding sending them to the office?
  - b. *[If no]* Tell us in general what goes into your decision making when you are considering sending a student to the office? *Ask for descriptions and examples where possible.*

**Section IV:** The final set of questions pertains to your experiences with Schools Attuned, particularly if you have had the training. (*Make certain you have clarified their Schools Attuned training status before proceeding*).

*If SA trained, continue with Question 6. If not, skip to Question 16.*

- \***(6)** How has your training in SA affected your assessments of students in general through the school year, if it has?
  - a. Do you use a variety of alternative assessments? If so, please describe.
  - b. Do your assessments make use of the SA ideas? If so, please describe.
  
- \***(7)** How has your work with SA changed your practice this year with students who have special learning or behavioral needs, if it has?
  - a. In what ways have you used SA with individual children? *Ask for specific resources or methods used.*
  - b. How have you used SA in your general classroom, if you do?
  - c. What use have you made of the attuning and demystification process with students? *Ask for description or examples if they do.*
  
- \***(8)** In what ways, if any, has your SA training affected the ways in which you think about referring students for special education evaluation?
  - a. This year, has the rate increased, decreased or remained the same?
  - b. Has the accuracy with which you refer students for evaluation changed (i.e., do your referrals result in eligibility more often, less often or no change)?
  
- (9)** How has your training in SA influenced your working relationship with special educators, if it has? How about with parents? *Ask for examples.*
  
- \***(10)** Have you used SA this year in the way you planned or thought you would? Please explain.
  
- \***(11)** On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how would you rate your knowledge of Schools Attuned? Why do you rate yourself at this level?
  
- \***(12)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate your frequency of use of Schools Attuned? Why this rating?
  
- \***(13)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate your comprehensiveness of use of Schools Attuned (use of language with colleagues and students, use of constructs in your thinking about students, use of views, use of demystification)? Why this rating?
  
- \***(14)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate your integration of Schools Attuned into other classroom activities? Why this rating?

- \*(15)** Is the implementation of SA at this school even and orderly (i.e., are most people supporters or are there vocal dissenters, etc)? Is implementation progressing in a way that will lead to high implementation? Why or why not?

*Continue with Question 16 for non-trained teachers as well as with trained teachers.*

- (16) Do you think SA will still be in use in this school 5 years from now? Why or why not?
- (17) Are there any new competing professional development programs or other initiatives on the horizon in this school (or district) that could affect the use of SA?
- (18) Given your student population and issues we have been discussing, are there things that I need to know that I have not asked? *Ask for specifics and examples.*

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Thank you so much for your time today. It has been a pleasure speaking with you. Do you have any questions for me before we close? *(If yes, provide answers if possible. If no, proceed. If you do not know the answers, have them contact xxxxxx at Westat at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email xxxxxx@westat.com. Alternatively, offer to find out the answers and contact them yourself).*

## Phase 4: Spring Special Ed Teacher Protocol

*[Note: Instructions and other directions appear in italics and are not intended to be read to the interviewee. Asterisks (\*) and bold numbers indicate absolutely key questions that should be asked under all circumstances. The focus is on this school year.]*

### Introduction

The purpose of this interview is to give us information about the Schools Attuned process used within schools and how this training may affect the educational environment for all students, but especially for students seen to be struggling or officially classified as needing special education. This interview is in no way an evaluation of you or your teaching.

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. We anticipate the interview will take approximately 30 minutes. *(If focus group, approximately 60 minutes).* You may decline to answer any question and may terminate the interview at any time. We would like to tape record the interview to make certain that we have recorded your words accurately. No one will have access to these tapes except for us or personnel in our office who may be assisting with this project. Tapes will be kept in a secure location and destroyed or reused when the project is terminated. At no time will anyone associated with your school, school system, or the All Kinds of Minds organization be given access to these tapes. Neither your name nor the name of your school will be associated with any quoted material used. Would it be okay for us to use the tape recorder? *(Give them consent form if not previously signed. Let them read, ask questions, sign and return to you before proceeding. Offer a copy of the consent form for them to keep.)*

Do you have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed before we begin?  
*(If yes, answer questions. If no, turn on tape recorder and proceed.)*

**Section I:** The first questions are general informational questions and should not take long.

- (1) What is your assignment for this school year (i.e., general ed, special ed, other; key responsibilities)?
- (2) How many students with IEPs are you working with this year?

**Section II:** Now, I'd like to ask you some questions pertaining to special education services and student retention.

- \***(3)** For your students with IEPs, in general:
  - a. How has the extent and nature of the special education services you provide changed this year? If there have been changes, what are the reasons for those changes?
  - b. How do you collaborate with others about your students with IEPs, if you do? *(Explore areas of collaboration with other teachers, other professionals, families, special education resources).*
  
- (4) Do you have any input into recommending students for retention? If so, have you recommended or supported a recommendation that a student to be retained this year?
  - a. *[If yes]* Tell us about that student [those students] and what went into your decision making regarding retention?
  - b. *[If no]* Tell us in general what goes into your decision making when you are considering recommending retention? *Ask for descriptions and examples where possible.*

**Section III:** I'd like to switch topics a bit and discuss your ideas about student behavior and behavioral management.

- \***(5)** Have you sent a student or students to the office this year for disciplinary reasons?
  - a. *[If yes]* Tell us about that student [those students] and what went into your decision making regarding sending them to the office?
  - b. *[If no]* Tell us in general what goes into your decision making when you are considering sending a student to the office? *Ask for descriptions and examples where possible.*

**Section IV:** The final set of questions pertains to your experiences with Schools Attuned, particular if you have had the training. *(Make certain you have clarified their Schools Attuned training status before proceeding).*

***If SA trained, continue. If not, skip to Question 16.***

- \***(6)** How has your training in SA affected your assessments of students in general through the school year, if it has?
  - a. Do you use a variety of alternative assessments? If so, please describe.
  - b. Do your assessments make use of the SA ideas? If so, please describe.

- \***(7)** How has your work with SA changed your special education instructional practices this year, if it has?
  - a. In what ways do you use SA with individual children? *Ask for specific resources or methods.*
  - b. What use do you make of the demystification and attuning process with students? Please describe or give examples.
- \***(8)** In what ways, if any, has your SA training affected your recommendation related to referral of students for special education evaluation?
  - a. This year, have your recommendations for which students should be referred increased, decreased or remained the same?
- (9)** How has your training in SA influenced your working relationship with general educators, if it has? How about with parents? *Ask for examples.*
- \***(10)** Have you used SA this year in the way you planned or thought you would? Please explain.
- \***(11)** On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how would you rate your knowledge of Schools Attuned? Why do you rate yourself at this level?
- \***(12)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate your frequency of use of Schools Attuned? Why this rating?
- \***(13)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate your comprehensiveness of use of Schools Attuned (use of language with colleagues and students, use of constructs in your thinking about students, use of views, use of demystification)? Why this rating?
- \***(14)** On a 1 to 5 scale, how would you rate your integration of Schools Attuned into other classroom activities? Why this rating?
- \***(15)** Is the implementation of SA at this school even and orderly (i.e., are most people supporters or are there vocal dissenters, etc)? Is implementation progressing in a way that will lead to high implementation? Why or why not?

***Continue with Question 16 for non-trained special educators as well as with trained special educators.***

- \*(16)** What are your perceptions about the ways general educators who are trained in Schools Attuned have used the training with their students this year? *Ask for specific examples.*
- a. Does SA affect the *rate* at which general ed teachers have referred students for special education evaluation? If so, what is that effect (i.e., increase, decrease)?
  - b. Does SA affect the *accuracy* with which general ed teachers have referred students for evaluation (i.e., are the students referred for evaluation likely to be deemed eligible for special education services)?
  - c. Does SA seem to have affected the *nature or extent* of the special education services needed by the students who are identified as students needing special education?
- (17) Do you think SA will still be in use in this school 5 years from now? Why or why not?
- (18) Are there any new competing professional development programs or other initiatives on the horizon in this school (or district) that could affect the use of SA?
- (19) Given your student population and issues we have been discussing, are there things that I need to know that I have not asked? *Ask for specifics and examples.*
- 

Thank you so much for your time today. It has been a pleasure speaking with you. Do you have any questions for me before we close? *(If yes, provide answers if possible. If no, proceed. If you do not know the answers, have them contact xxxxxx at Westat at xxx-xxx-xxxx or email xxxxxx@westat.com. Alternatively, offer to find out the answers and contact them yourself).*

If you think of anything else that might be of interest to us or if you have questions that occur to you after I leave, please feel free to contact me.

## **Academic Competence Evaluation Scales (ACES)**

The ACES is a functional assessment tool designed to provide a standardized screening of students who are having difficulty learning. It is published by The Psychological Corporation, which is a subsidiary of Harcourt Assessment. More complete information is available at <http://harcourtassessment.com/HAIWEB/Cultures/en-us/Productdetail.htm?Pid=015-8005-805&Mode=summary>

The Teacher Record Form was used for this study. It summarizes the following academic competences from the teacher's perspective:

### **Academic Skills**

#### **Reading/Language Arts**

1. Reading comprehension
2. Word-attack
3. Vocabulary
4. Identifying a main idea
5. Reading fluency
6. Spelling
7. Punctuation
8. Grammar
9. Written communication
10. Oral communication
11. Drawing conclusions from written material

#### **Mathematics**

12. Computation
13. Pattern analysis
14. Measurement
15. Understanding of spatial relationships
16. Mental math
17. Using numbers to solve daily problems
18. Breaking down a complex problem
19. Problem-solving

#### **Critical Thinking**

20. Synthesizing related information
21. Drawing conclusions from observations
22. Comparing similarities or differences among multiple objects or ideas
23. Classifying objects or ideas into categories
24. Generalizing from information or experiences
25. Identifying patterns from information
26. Deciding among alternative solutions
27. Investigating a problem or issue
28. Developing a solution to a problem

*Grades 3-12 only*

29. Identifying specific principles and their applications
30. Analyzing errors in information or processes
31. Constructing support for or against an issue
32. Analyzing supporting and opposing viewpoints
33. Testing hypothesis

**Academic Enablers**

**Interpersonal Skills**

34. Follows classroom rules
35. Corrects inappropriate behavior when asked
36. Expresses dissatisfaction appropriately
37. Accepts suggestions from teachers
38. Works effectively in a large group activity
39. Interacts appropriately with adults
40. Listens to what others have to say
41. Gets along with people who are different
42. Works effectively in a small group activity
43. Interacts appropriately with other students

**Engagement**

44. Speaks in class when called upon
45. Asks questions about tests or projects
46. Participates in class discussions
47. Volunteers answers to questions
48. Assumes leadership in group situations
49. Volunteers to read aloud
50. Initiates conversations appropriately
51. Asks questions when confused

**Motivation**

52. Is motivated to learn
53. Prefers challenging tasks
54. Produces high-quality work
55. Critically evaluates own work
56. Attempts to improve on previous performance
57. Makes the most of learning experience
58. Persists when task is difficult
59. Looks for ways to academically challenge self
60. Assumes responsibility for own learning
61. Is goal-oriented
62. Stays on task

**Study Skills**

63. Completes homework
64. Corrects own work
65. Finishes class work on time
66. Prepares for tests
67. Prepares for class
68. Turns in homework on time
69. Takes care of materials (e.g., textbooks, desk)
70. Pays attention in class
71. Completes assignments according to directions
72. Takes notes in class (Grades 3-12 only)
73. Reviews materials (Grades 3-12 only)