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Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled
P.O. Box 480
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

Archie Derboven,
Superintendent

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HIGHLIGHTS

STAFF

Internal Communique • Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled

What is ESY?

<http://dese.mo.gov/special-education/compliance/>

Extended School Year is commonly seen or heard in conversation as the acronym ESY. Districts are recommended to have ESY policies to avoid arbitrary decisions concerning the provision of ESY for any student, and to assist district personnel in determining the appropriateness of ESY for any individual student.

As with all other programming needs, the need for ESY is documented via data gathered about the student's performance in relation to the IEP goals and objectives. Additionally, if there is insufficient data at the time of the initial IEP meeting to determine whether ESY is appropriate, the team must then specify a time frame and the methods that will be used to collect data to determine the appropriateness of ESY at a future IEP meeting.

What is considered in the determination for the need for ESY?

- The nature of the student's disability
- The severity of the disability
- The areas of learning crucial to the student's attainment of self-sufficiency and independence
- Student's progress, behavioral and physical needs
- Opportunities to practice skills outside the formal classroom setting (the more functional the skill, the more opportunities the student has to practice it)
- Availability of alternative resources
- Areas of student's curriculum which need continuous attention
- Student's vocational needs
- Ability of student's parents to provide educational structure at home
- Opportunity for the student to interact with non-disabled students

Regression/recoupment rate is recognized across the nation as the standard in determining whether or not ESY is needed for a student. However, districts must not limit their policies to documented regression/recoupment. Instead, case law indicates a need for the policy to allow for an extended school year based on the prediction of regression/recoupment rates and must always keep in mind that the decision whether to provide ESY for each student eligible for special education is a decision which should be made based on the unique characteristics of the individual student.

All of the legal requirements that apply to educational programs during the regular school year apply equally to ESY programs, including the least restrictive environment (LRE) requirement that students with disabilities be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who do not have disabilities. However, districts are not required to maintain the full continuum of placement options maintained for the regular school year. Districts are required to maintain those placement options which are necessary to implement a student's IEP.

In summary, when developing an ESY policy, a district must be cognizant of the compliance requirements for ESY which will be monitored by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Special Education:

- ESY must be considered, for all students with disabilities, by the IEP team
- If ESY eligibility is predicated on regression/recoupment criteria, documented and/or predicted regression/recoupment must be considered
- The length, nature and type of ESY services must be determined on an individual basis by the IEP team

In short ESY is not summer school. It is an extension in offering and providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the students of the district.

Read-In Day at Shady Grove School

The magic took place on Friday the 13th (of March) in many Missouri schools. Each year the second Friday in March is declared by the state legislature as "Missouri Read-In Day."

Students and staff at Shady Grove School in Poplar Bluff settled in comfy spots to share the magic of Dr. Seuss. The reading focus was on his popular book *Green Eggs and Ham*. The book's rhyming words, absurd phrases and colorful illustrations encouraged all to read. Students displayed a variety of skills from attending to a story and participating in a group reading to words of "I do not like green eggs and ham. I do not like them Sam I am." Everyone also enjoyed a serving of green eggs and ham.

The theme was continued in other content areas. Seven areas were included into the theme. In Science, food coloring was used to change the color of the eggs. For Home Living, students cooked the eggs and ham. In English and Language Arts, sequence step cards were followed and the story *Green Eggs and Ham* was read. In Fine Arts, Dr. Seuss hats were made and in Math, eggs were counted and tally marks were used to show how many did or did not like green eggs and ham. In Technology, some students used the iPad to provide information to discuss their likes and dislikes and in Social Studies everyone worked together by completing their job assignments.

At the end of the day, everyone could say "We like reading here and there, we like reading everywhere!"



Dale, Isaiah and Alicia listen to Green Eggs and Ham.



Madyson wears a Dr. Seuss hat.



Dylan tallies who likes green eggs and ham.



Ja-Vohni decides whether or not he likes green eggs and ham.

Students Read More Than 16,000 Pages!

Throughout March 2015 the students at Delmar Cobble School in Columbia celebrated Reading Month. The following activities were organized by Cocoa Warn:

- The PTO purchased a hardback age-appropriate book for each student
- Certificates of participation were presented to individual students
- Books were checked out from the Columbia Public Library
- Parents kept a record of the number of pages read and books read at home
- The Bookmobile visited the school
- Guest readers, such as a Columbia College student athlete, a state representative and the MSSD Assistant Superintendent, visited the classrooms to read to students

Building Administrator Kay Brejcha said, "I love this program! If we aren't reading to our students and encouraging our parents and caregivers to read to them our students will miss out. Hopefully, parents and classroom teachers will continue to read to the students daily."



Students and staff in Room 7 listen as the book is read.



A Columbia College athlete reads to CJ, Ayden and other students in Room 7.



Blake, Damion and Bonnie Aaron, MSSD Assistant Superintendent, pose with Dr. Seuss props.



State Representative Caleb Jones (Columbia) reads with Kevin.



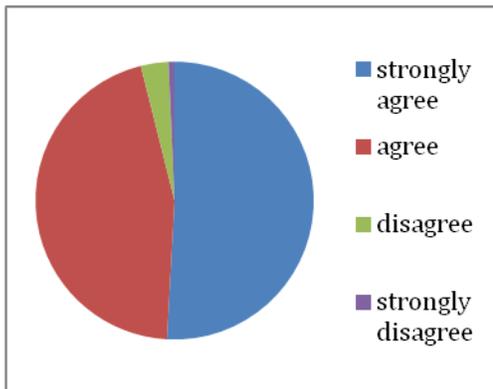
Damion with a trophy.

Summary of DESE (Office of Special Education) Staff Survey Results

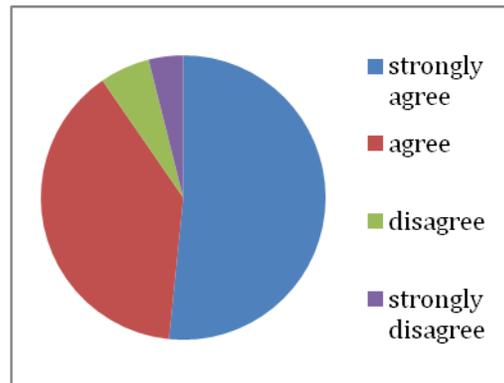
On February 20, 2015 Commissioner Margie Vandeven distributed an employee survey asking for your comments, input and thoughts on many aspects of employment and job satisfaction at the Department. Over 900 responses from employees across the state were received. Most of the results were positive, and many additional comments and ideas were submitted. The Department has shared the [survey results on the intranet](#).

The survey included questions and a place for employee comments. Because the survey was anonymous there was no way to identify which comments were from MSSD staff. However, many of the concerns expressed in the comment portion of the survey are addressed in the [Frequently Asked Questions on the MSSD intranet](#). The Frequently Asked Questions will be updated this summer to include some of the most common survey comments not addressed in the current FAQ. The results of the survey questions identified as Office of Special Education are shown below.

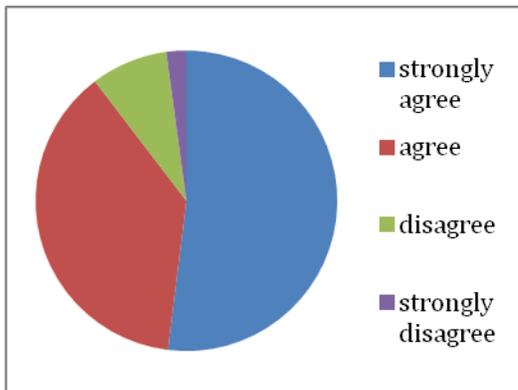
I understand what I am expected to do to achieve success on the job.



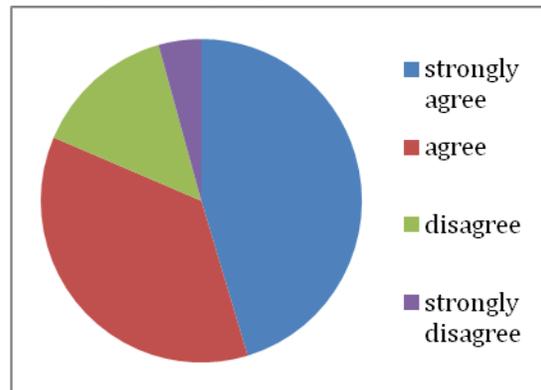
My supervisor is willing to listen to my ideas and suggestions.



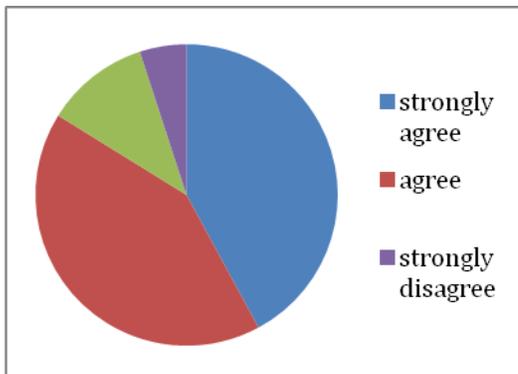
My supervisor lets me know that my job is important.



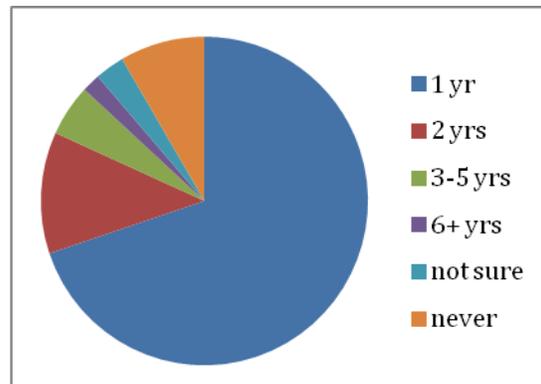
My supervisor has a good understanding of the challenges I face in my job every day.



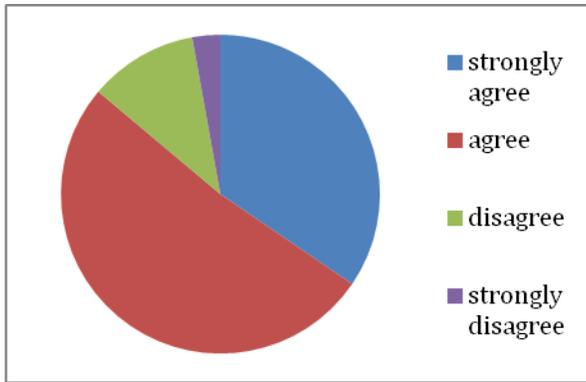
My supervisor makes necessary decisions to keep the office running smoothly.



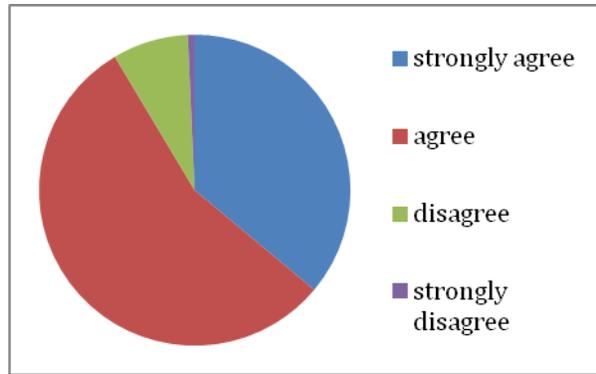
The last time I received a formal performance evaluation from my supervisor was within the last _____ year(s).



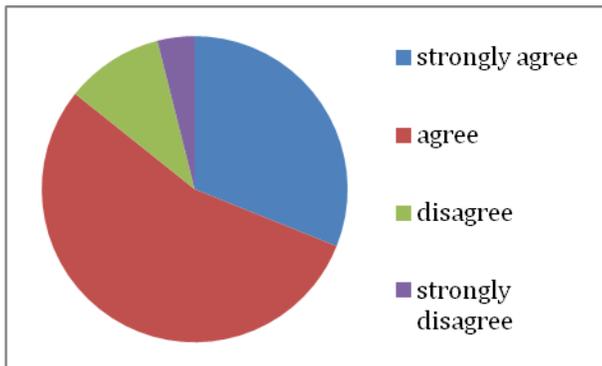
The environment here allows all employees to be successful, no matter age, gender, nationality, religion or physical ability.



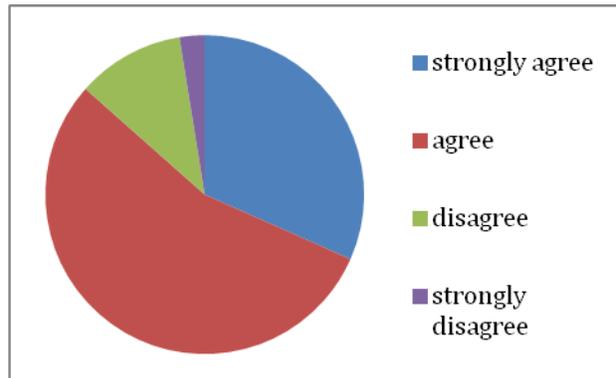
The physical conditions in my work area are suitable for performance of my job.



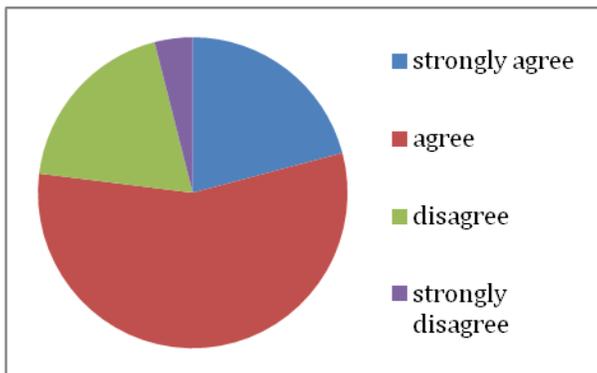
Security where I work is adequate.



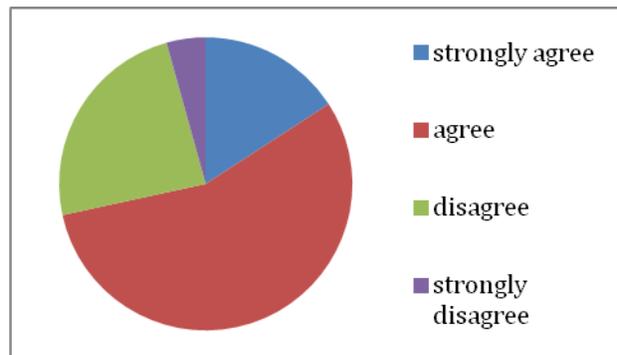
The Department has high standards and ethics.



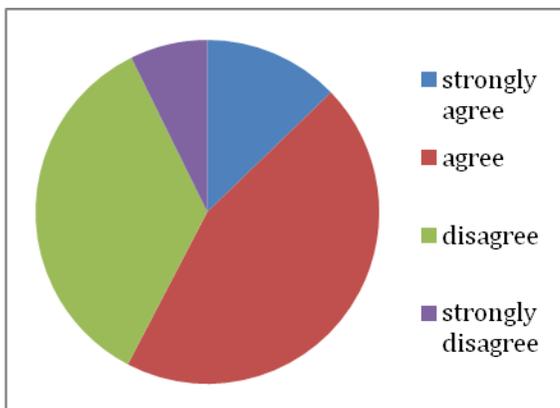
The Department provides a caring workplace that fosters teamwork.



The cooperation among offices/sections is satisfactory.



Employees' personal and professional accomplishments are publicly recognized and celebrated.



Shady Grove School Valentine Campaign 2015

The staff at Shady Grove School in Poplar Bluff recently took advantage of Valentine's Day to get parents involved. A king, queen, prince and princess were crowned as part of their Valentine's Day celebration. This year a new component was added to get parents involved.

A poster board and a letter were sent home with each student. The letter asked families to assist their student in making a campaign poster. Families were to use their imagination, with the focus to promote each individual student to be crowned king, queen, prince or princess.

The response was overwhelming. A large majority of our students brought their poster back to school. Not only did the families participate, but they went all out. Each poster was unique and elaborate. We had an assortment of colors and styles to decorate our building. Everyone enjoyed the display, and voters may have been encouraged to vote for their favorite.

The students in the Young Adult Classroom set up a voting system. All students were candidates. The students in the younger two classrooms were in the election to be prince or princess. The students in the older two classrooms were in the election to be king or queen. Students made a selection from pictures of individuals to indicate who they wanted to vote for each position. Students counted the votes to determine the royal positions. The procedure of voting was promoted, and democracy reigned at Shady Grove.

Who won? Everyone wins when parents are involved in our schools.



Top left to right: Keagen, Hayden and Tyler
Bottom left to right: Bobby, Ja-Vohni and Fisher

