

Annual Report of the Albemarle County Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Presentation to the
Albemarle County School Board

December 11, 2025

SEAC's Charge

- “Advise the local school division of needs in the education of children with disabilities;
- Participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting the identified needs of children with disabilities;
- Submit periodic reports and recommendations regarding the education of children with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the local school board;
- Assist the local school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special needs of children with disabilities for educational services;
- Review the policies and procedures for the provision of special education and related services prior to submission to the local school board; and
- Participate in the review of the local school division's annual plan....”

8 Va. Admin. Code 20-81-230(D)

Data Sources

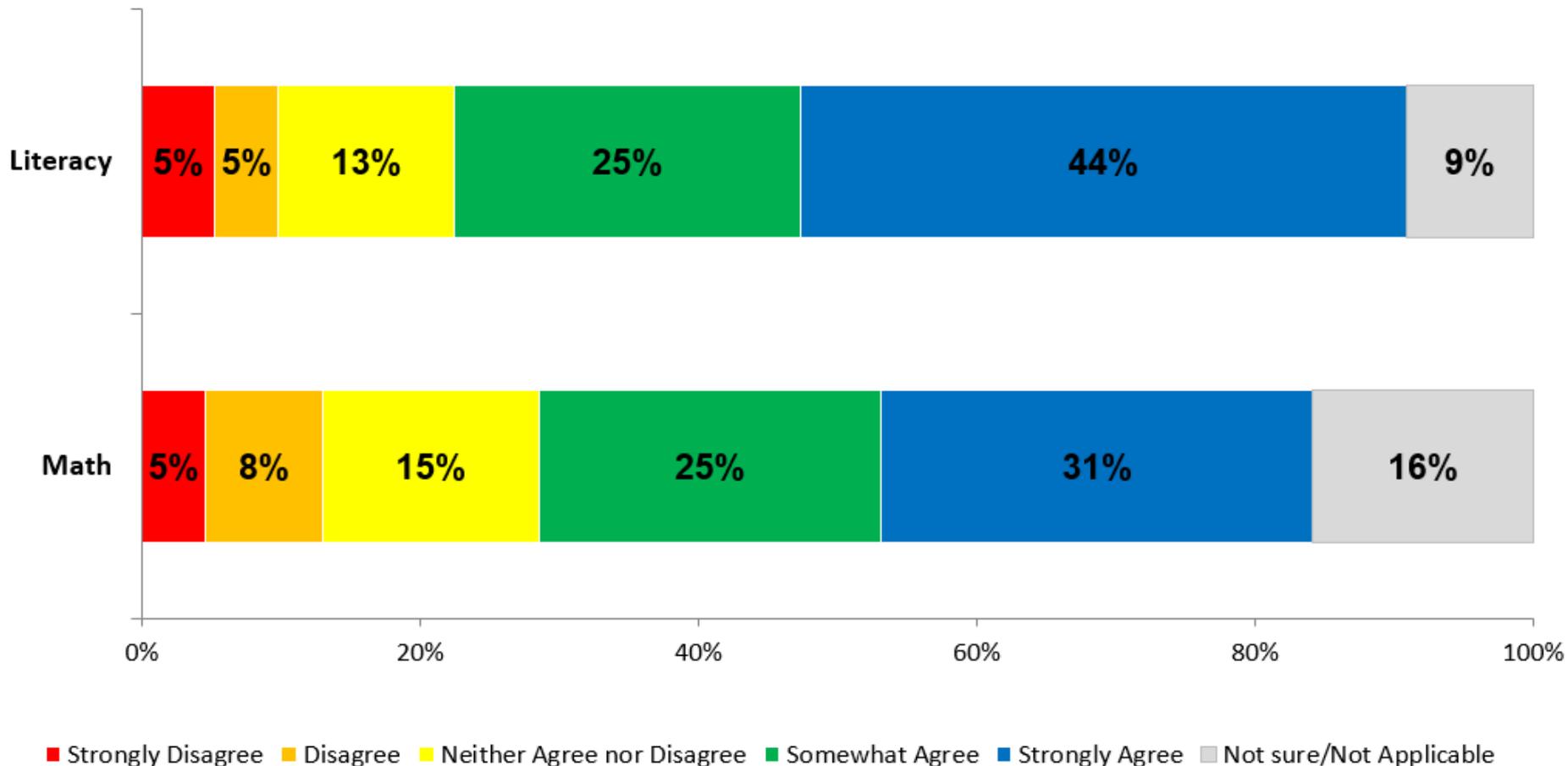
- SEAC Family Survey (2025)
- Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) Assessments
- State of the Division Reports (on Discipline)
- Family Council/UVA Law Survey (on Eligibility)
- Other sources as cited in report

SEAC Family Survey (2025)

- Open to all families with a child receiving special education services from ACPS
- Distributed & administered in Sept. 2025
- 374 responses
 - 18.5% response rate (increase from 18.0% in 2024 and 14.1% in 2023)

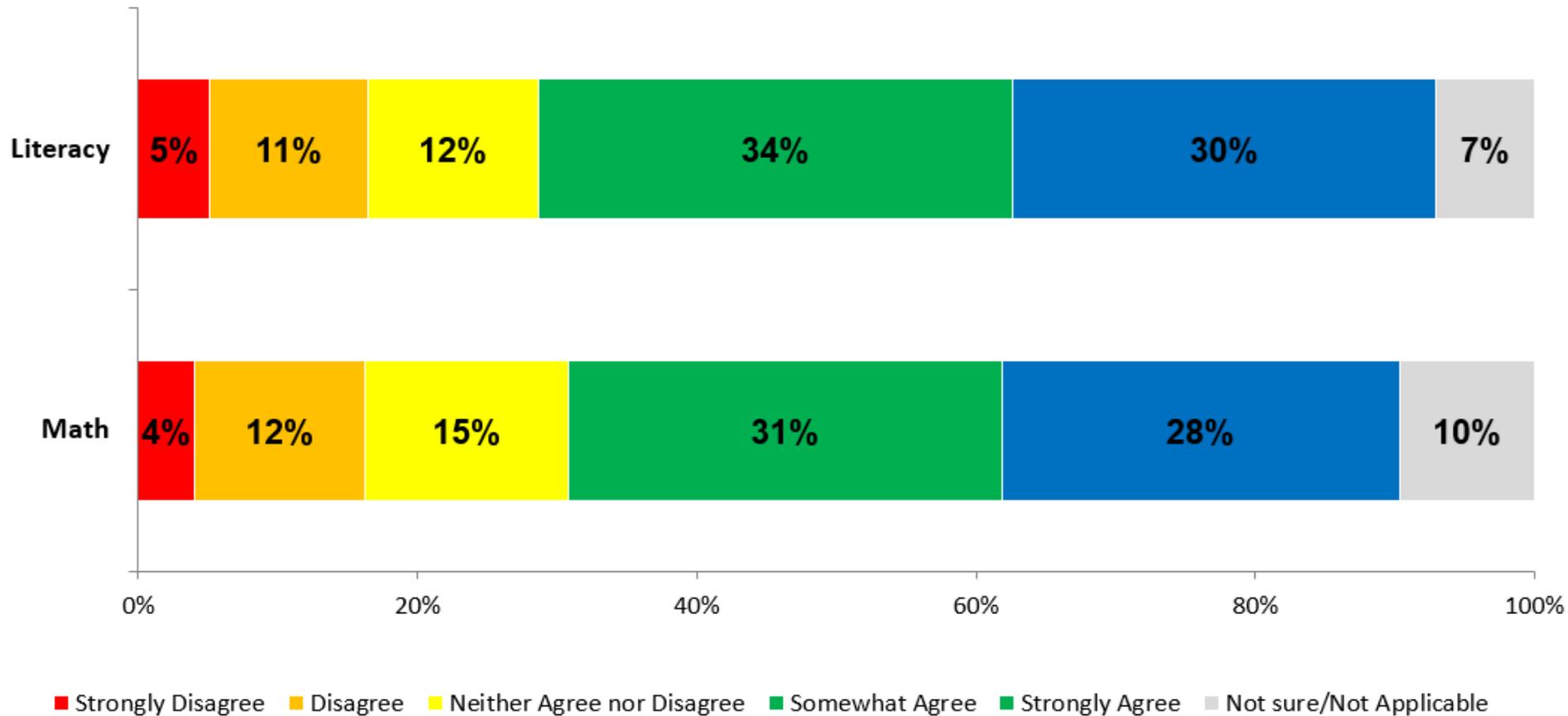
SEAC Family Survey (2025)

For children with an IEP: Do you feel that the special education program is helping your child meet the academic goals in your child's IEP?



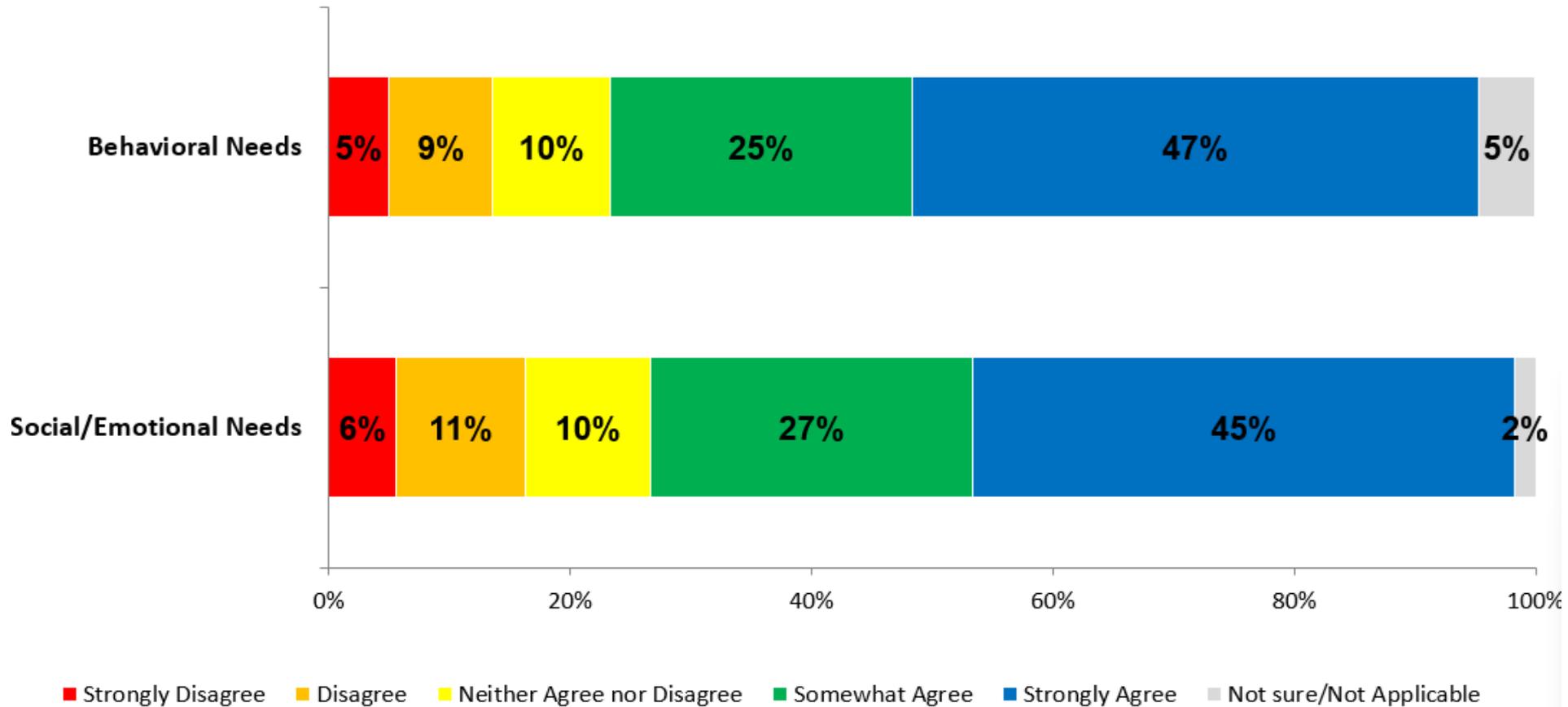
SEAC Family Survey (2025)

For all children: Do you feel that the general education program is helping your child meet the academic goals?



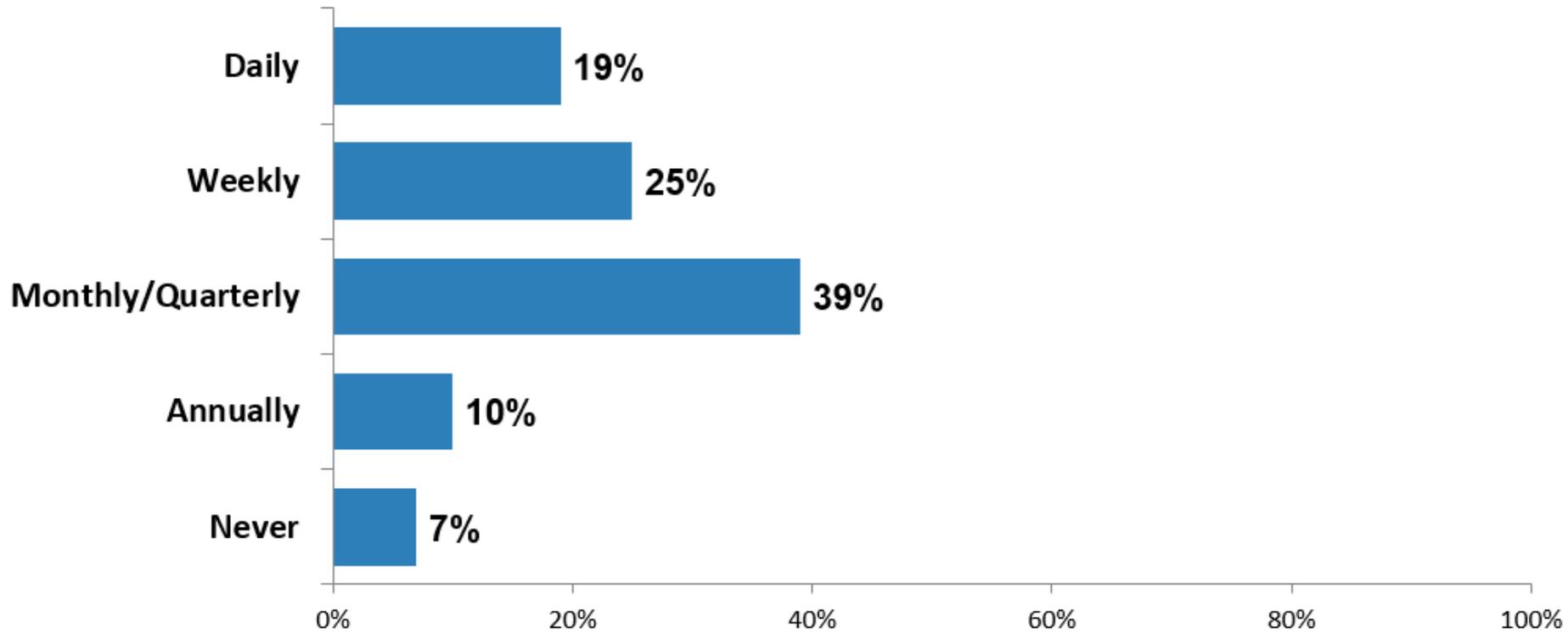
SEAC Family Survey (2025)

In general, how well do you feel your child's behavioral and social/emotional needs are being met in school?



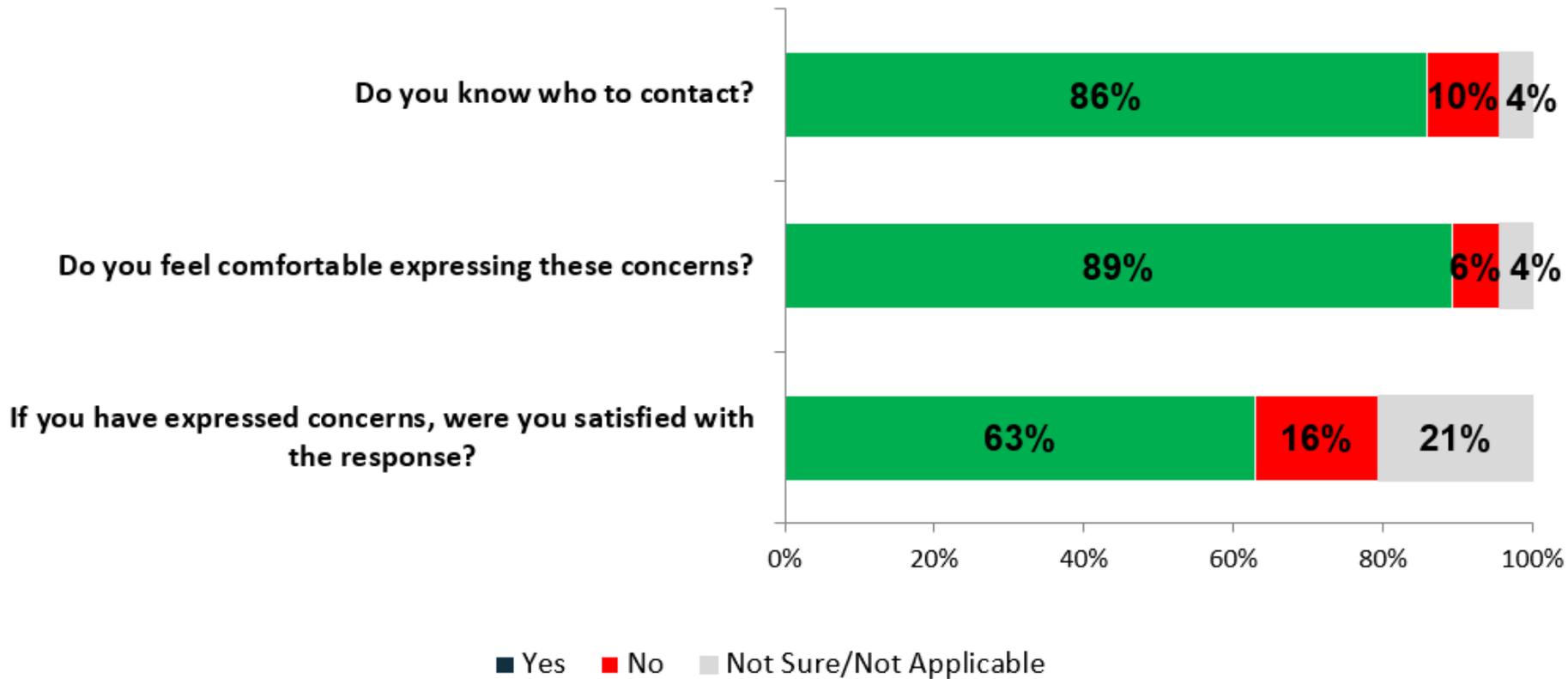
SEAC Family Survey (2025)

For children with an IEP: How often does your child's Special Education Teacher communicate with you?



SEAC Family Survey (2025)

When you have a concern about your child's Special Education services:



SOL Results

Table 2: SOL Pass Rate - English: Reading

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
All ACPS Students	74%	75%	75%
ACPS Students with Disabilities	45%	44%	47%
<i>Difference (Achievement Gap)</i>	<i>-29%</i>	<i>-31%</i>	<i>-28%</i>

SOL Results

Table 4: SOL Pass Rate - Mathematics

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
All ACPS Students	69%	72%	74%
ACPS Students with Disabilities	41%	45%	47%
<i>Difference (Achievement Gap)</i>	<i>-28%</i>	<i>-27%</i>	<i>-27%</i>

SOL Results

Table 5: SOL Pass Rate - English: Reading

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
ACPS Students with Disabilities	45%	44%	47%
Statewide Students with Disabilities	44%	45%	45%
<i>Difference</i>	<i>+1%</i>	<i>-1%</i>	<i>+2%</i>

SOL Results

Table 7: SOL Pass Rate - Math

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
ACPS Students with Disabilities	41%	45%	47%
Statewide Students with Disabilities	43%	45%	45%
<i>Difference</i>	<i>-2%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>+2%</i>

Recommendations

1. Increase Support for Meaningful Inclusion

- **Add position for a learning specialist**
- **Add position for a behavioral specialist**
 - Both specialists would serve as coaches to general and special education teachers regarding accommodations for academics and behavior.
- **Include Special Education Teachers and TA in shared PLC time (with compensation)**

Issue - Exclusionary Discipline

“[R]esearch reveals that the use of exclusionary discipline policies and practices, involving in- and out-of-school suspension and expulsion, could lead to long-term harmful outcomes for students who are frequently excluded from learning environments. Exclusionary discipline increases the risk of academic failure, school dropout, and socioemotional and mental health problems.”

Source: [*Behavior and School Discipline for Students With Disabilities*](#),
Institute for Education Sciences (2023).

Disproportionality in School Discipline

Equity Table for Division: 2023-2024

	Student Count (PK-12)		Students with Out of School Suspensions		Incidents of Out of School Suspensions	
	13967		405		632	
Asian	883	6%	6	1%	10	2%
Black/African American	1638	12%	144	36%	214	34%
Hispanic/Latino	2421	17%	70	17%	96	15%
Multi-Racial	976	7%	34	8%	63	10%
White	8025	58%	151	37%	249	39%
Economically Disadvantaged	4745	34%	283	70%	435	69%
English Learners	1791	13%	39	10%	52	8%
Students with Disabilities	1930	14%	138	34%	253	40%

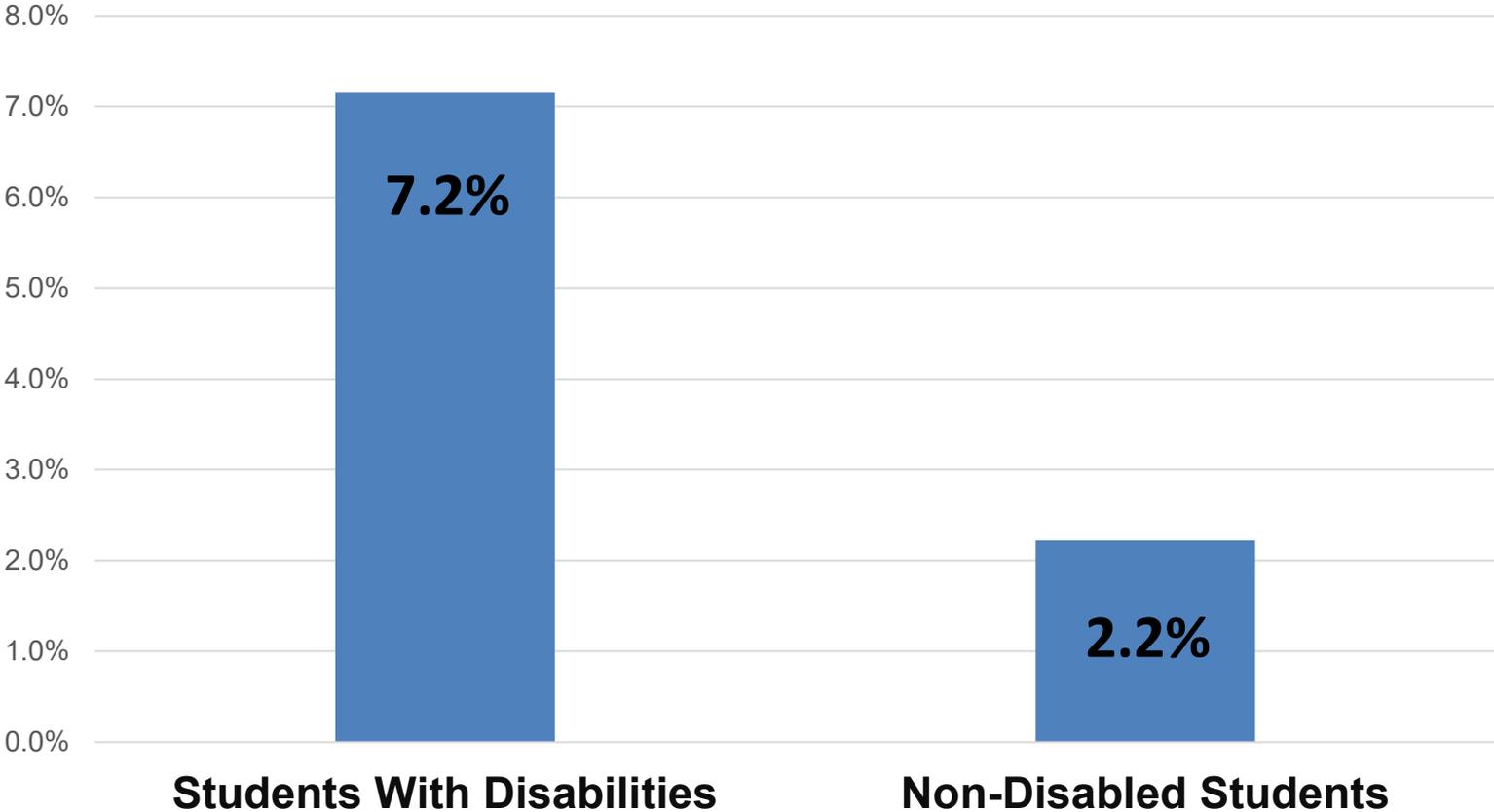
Disproportionality in School Discipline

Equity Table for Division: 2024-2025

	Student Count (PK-12)		Students with Out of School Suspensions		Incidents of Out of School Suspensions	
	14226		477		814	
Asian	972	7%	12	3%	14	2%
Black/African American	1697	12%	160	34%	278	34%
Hispanic/Latino	2508	18%	81	17%	133	16%
Multi-Racial	1027	7%	48	10%	79	10%
White	7998	56%	174	37%	307	38%
Economically Disadvantaged	4387	31%	315	66%	581	71%
English Learners	1625	11%	53	11%	92	11%
Students with Disabilities	2044	14%	153	32%	329	40%

Disproportionality in School Discipline (2023-2024)

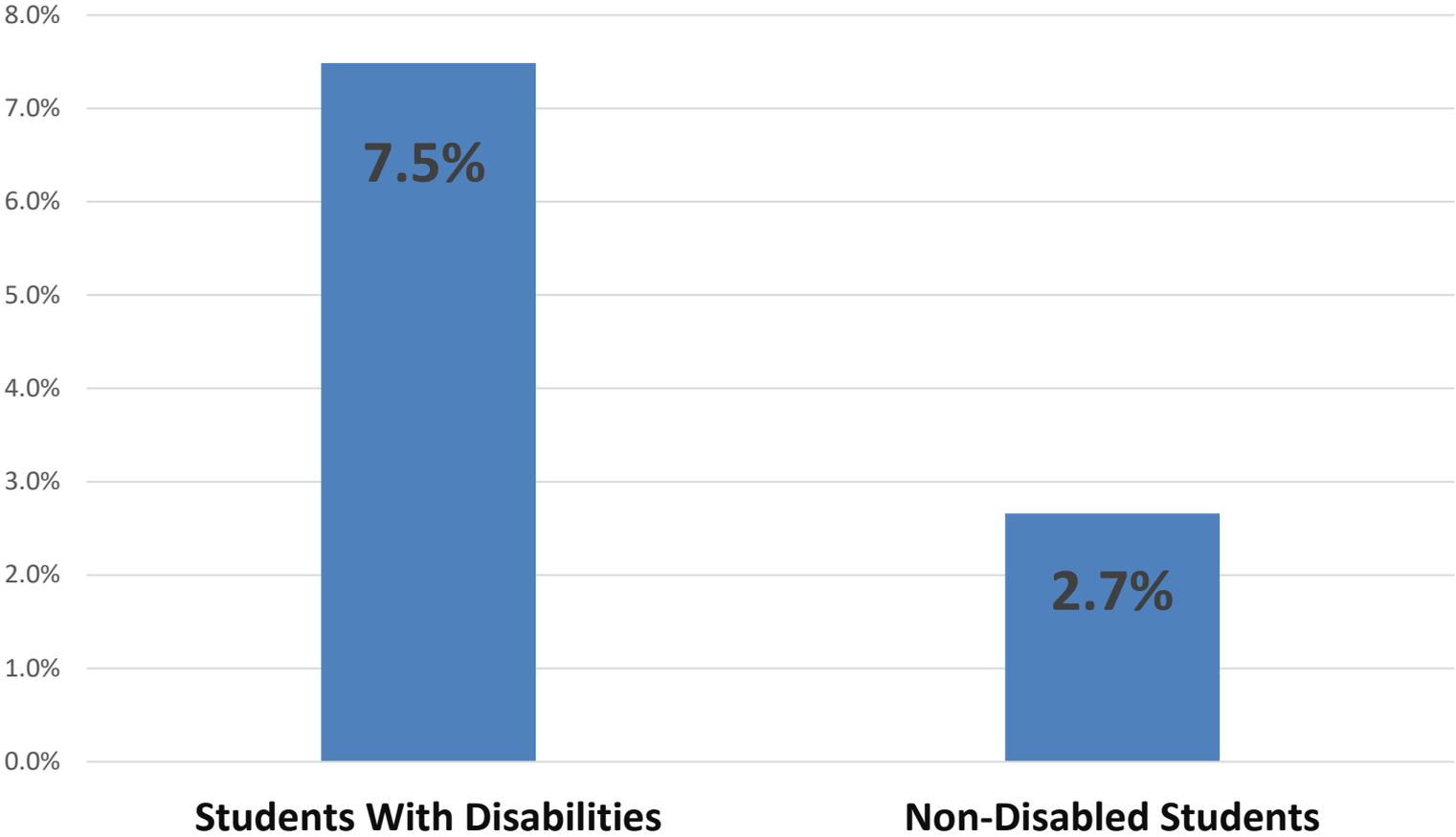
Percent of Students w/Out-of-School Suspensions



Source: 2024 State of the Division Report

Disproportionality in School Discipline (2024-2025)

Percent of Students w/Out of School Suspensions



Source: 2025 State of the Division Report

Recommendations

2. Disproportionality in School Discipline

- **Comprehensive legal and policy audit of student discipline policies and practices**
- **Strengthen data transparency and monitoring**
- **Fully implement and sustain division-wide restorative practices training**

Recommendations

3. Training and Transparency for SROs

- **Mandatory training for dealing with students w/disabilities in MOU**
- **Advanced training course for identifying and responding to students w/disabilities and/or students w/mental health needs**
- **Greater transparency via monthly SRO incident and outcome reports**

Issue – Disability Evaluations



Community Organization and
Social Enterprise Clinic



Prof. Sarah Shalf

& team of law students



Consulting Partnership

- Child Find
- Survey
- In-Depth Interviews
- Analysis of Results
- Permission for Quotes

Issue – Disability Evaluations

Three Problem Areas:

#1 Unclear Referral Procedure

MULTIPURPOSE REFERRAL

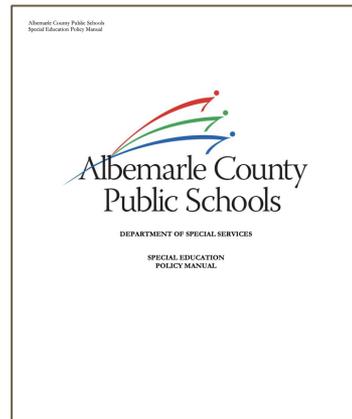
Albemarle County Public Schools

Student Information: Name, ID Number, Date of Birth, School, Grade, Teacher, District, DDA

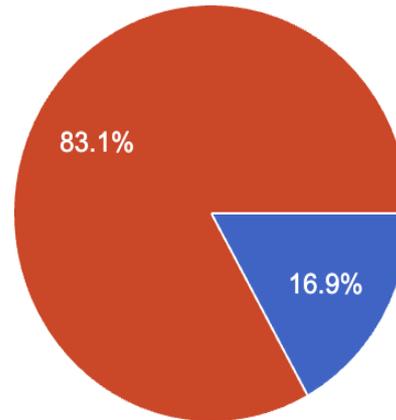
Parent/Guardian Information: Name, Phone, Work Phone, Cell Phone, Email

Statement of Concern: A section for describing the student's needs and the request for services.

No Request Form



2010 [Policy Manual](#)



No resources provided

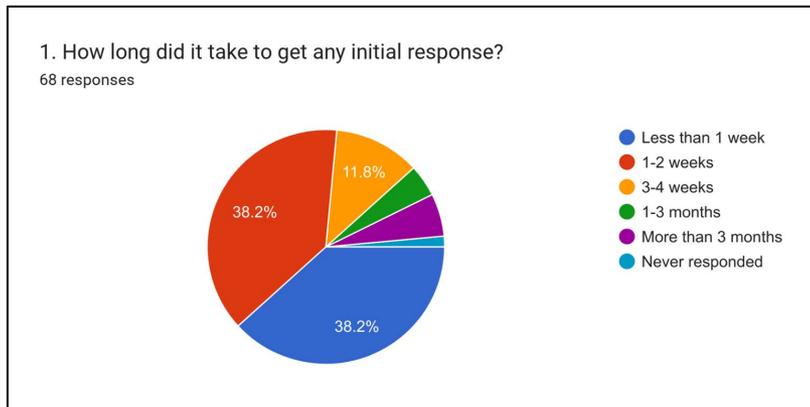
"I was told it was up to me to get a doctor to initiate it..."

Inaccurate info given

Issue – Disability Evaluations

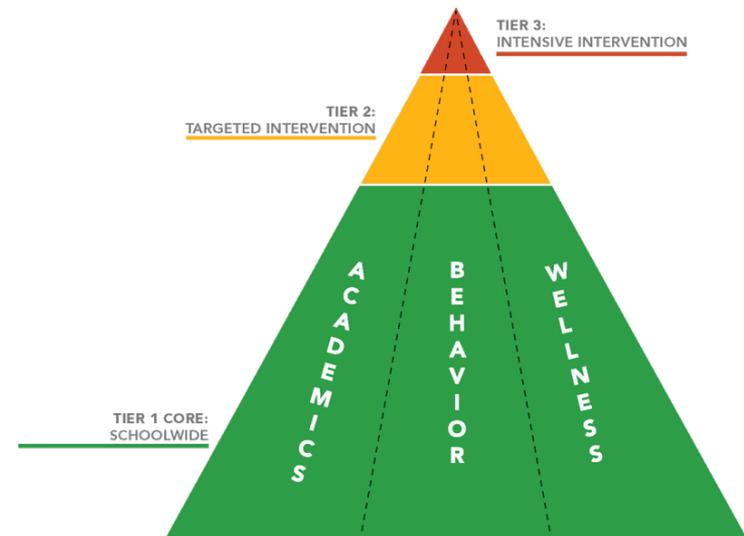
#2 Delays

Initial Response to Requests



$\frac{2}{3}$ of families report no response within one week, although in 3 days required.

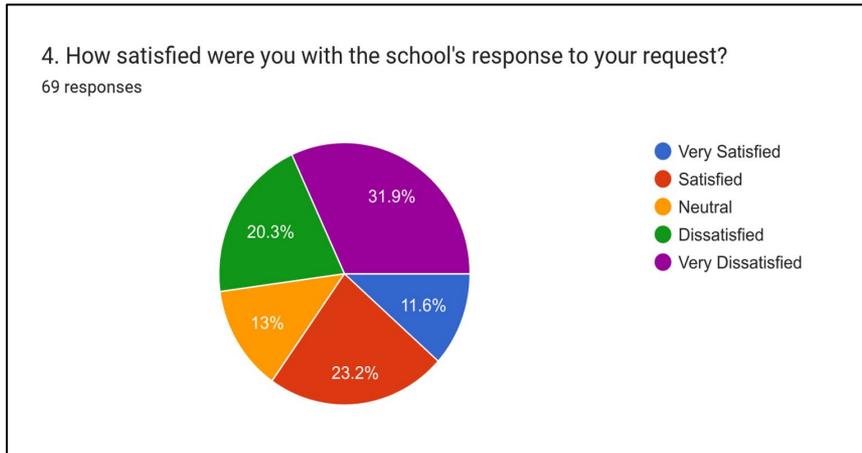
“Endless Loop” of Interventions



OSEP Guidance: “short-term and intensive”

Issue – Disability Evaluations

#3 Denials: Inconsistent & Inappropriate Criteria



Majority of families are not satisfied. True regardless of outcome (got IEP or 504, or didn't receive).

“I believe ACPS relies on those of us who can afford to pay... to fill in the gaps...”

Recommendations

4. Disability Evaluations

- **Create Task Force to Design Clear Process for Accessing Disability Evaluations**
- **Create Task Force to Standardize SBIT (School-Based Intervention)**
- **Update Special Education Policy Manual**
- **Train School Administrators and Staff on Revamped Processes**

Issue - Accessibility

Accessibility Audit Results (HB 2278): 300 total issues at ACPS School Facilities, in 3 categories:

- **Barriers**: Fixed obstacles that prevent accessibility (e.g., a stage accessible only by stairs)
- **Major Challenges**: Requires significant work, funding, or construction time to resolve (e.g., playground walkways or equipment for wheelchair access)
- **Minor Challenges**: Requires minimal effort or funds to resolve (e.g., signage)

Recommendations

5. Accessibility

- **Support increased state and local funding to ensure ACPS school facilities are accessible to ALL students**
- **Provide update by end of current school year regarding resolution of barriers and challenges identified in the audit**

Issue - Staffing

- Increased number of students with disabilities enrolled in ACPS, and increasingly intensive support needs of students in special education, requires additional staffing in near future
- Open positions for 3 school-based psychologists, including one (Henley Middle School) that has been open for over a year.

Recommendations

6. Compensation and Staffing

- **HR conduct a compensation and job description review for school-based psychologist positions to ensure competitiveness**
- **Plan for increase in special education staffing needs in budget for 2026-2027 school year**

Issue – SEAC Representativeness

- SEAC members incur significant out-of-pocket costs for childcare for monthly meetings (in addition to volunteering their time and talents). This creates a barrier to participation.
- Missing parent representation on SEAC from:
 - 4 elementary school (3 Title I Schools)
 - 1 middle school
 - Post High

Recommendations

7. Increasing SEAC Representativeness

- **Authorize reimbursement of SEAC members' reasonable child care expenses incurred in connection with monthly meetings**

Thank You!