

PAAC ON SEAC

Highlights of SEAC Survey

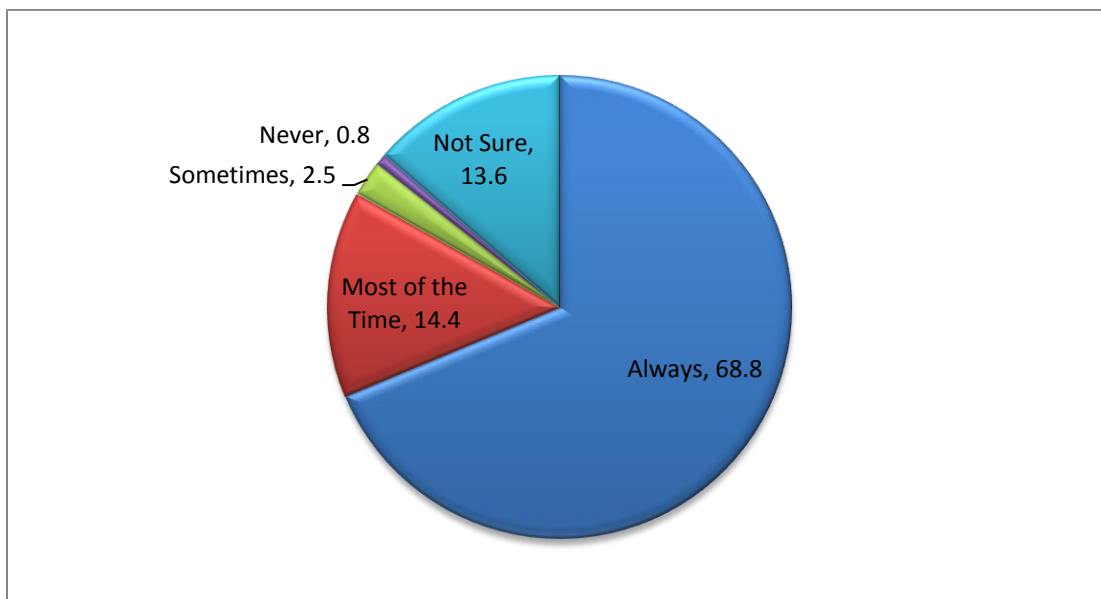
January 2010

Q1 My school board complies with its mandate under Regulation 464/98, including:

a) The process of appointing SEAC reps and their alternates.

118 Responses

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a) Always | 68.6% |
| b) Most of the time | 14.4% |
| c) Sometimes | 2.5% |
| d) Never | 0.8% |
| e) Not Sure | 13.6% |



Question 1a

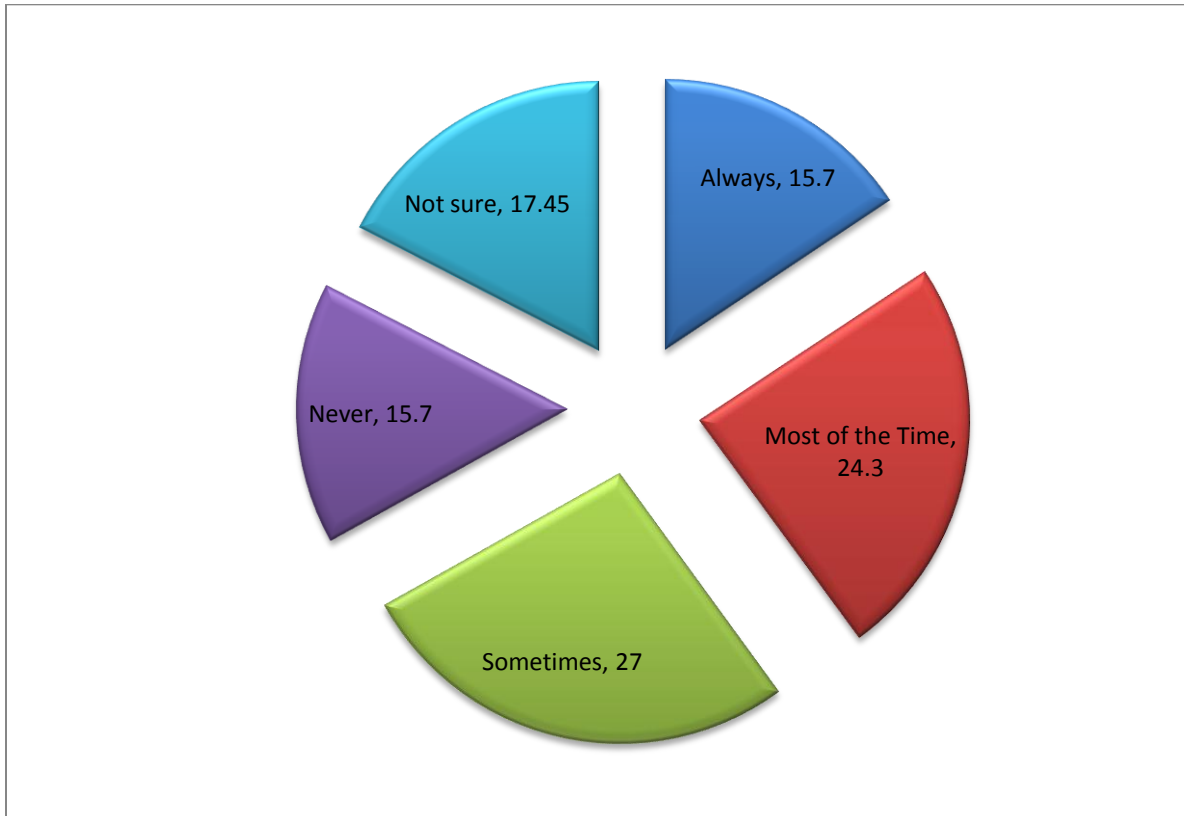
PAAC Comments:

- 68.6% respondents reported “always”. This is not satisfactory for legally required compliance with a Regulation
- Almost 15% were not sure if their school board was compliant
- Survey Comments from Respondents:
 - ***“The latest Community Representative Selection Process involved the Superintendent counter to the Board's stated policy.”***
 - ***“My board had appointed a paid employee as a voting member of our SEAC and Only changed it once challenged on the point.”***

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

b) Providing orientation and training to its SEAC reps.

| | <u>115 Responses</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. Always | 15.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 24.3% |
| c. Sometimes | 27% |
| d. Never | 15.7% |
| e. Not Sure | 17.45% |



Question 1b

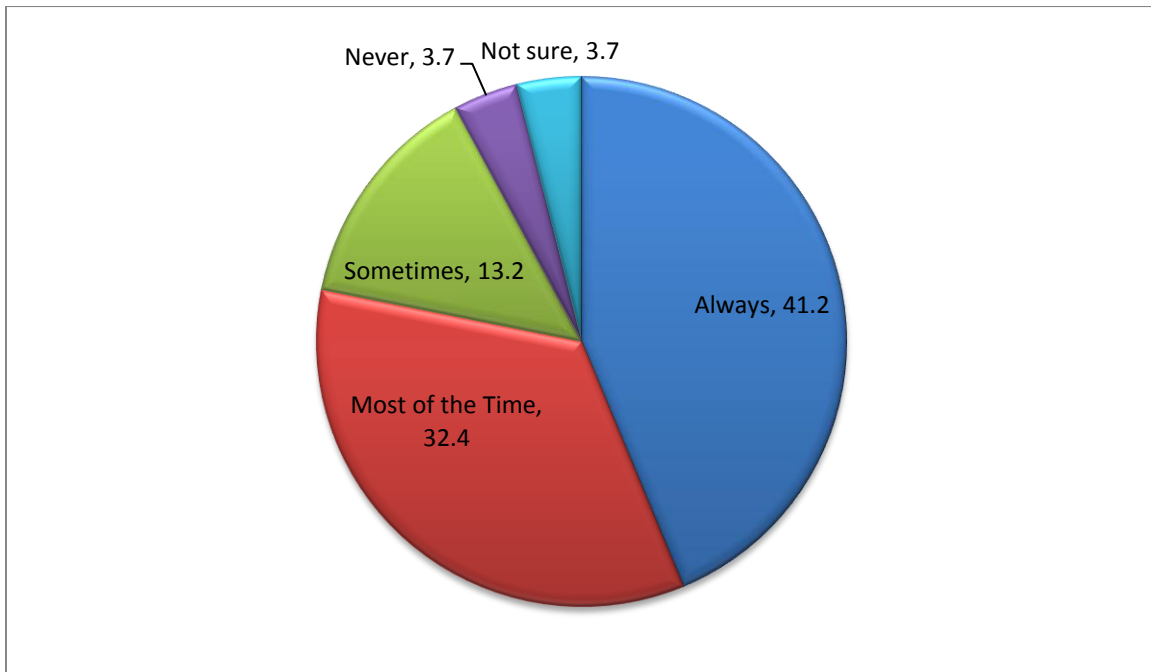
PAAC comments:

- Only 40 % reported that the school board had provided orientation or training always or most of the time
- 33% reported never or not sure
- These results suggest school boards are not meeting their obligation to provide orientation and training
- Respondent Survey Comments:
 - **"Since joining I have received no training"**
 - **"With me being new, I would like to know more on all the tasks I should do as a new SEAC member. Thanks."**
- 13 respondents commented that they had received no training
- Several respondents noted that associations had provided training
 - **"I have not received training, although LDAO has a course"**
 - **"Some of the associations represented on SEAC handle their own training"**

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

Q2 My SEAC plans in advance for the topics to be covered throughout the year

| | <u>136 Responses</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a) Always | 41.2% |
| b) Most of the time | 32.4% |
| c) Sometimes | 13.2% |
| d) Never | 3.7% |
| e) Not Sure | 3.7% |



Question 2

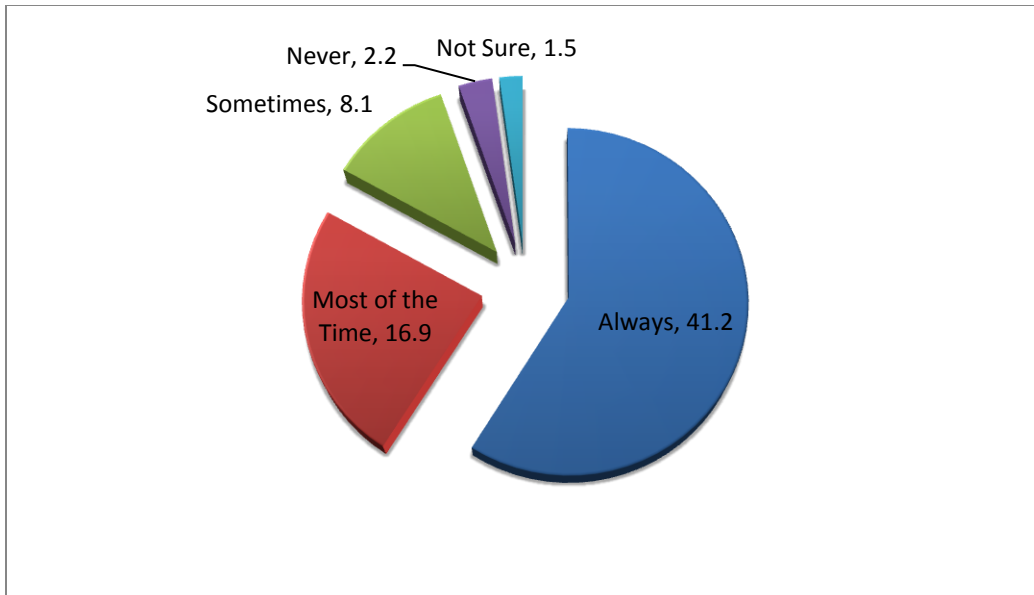
PAAC comments:

- 70% report SEACs have an annual schedule always or most of the time

Q3 Members of my SEAC receive the agenda and information for the meetings several days in advance.

| | <u>Responses 136</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. Always | 65.4% |
| b. Most of the time | 16.9% |
| c. Sometimes | 8.1% |
| d. Never | 2.2% |
| e. Not Sure | 1.5% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



Question 3

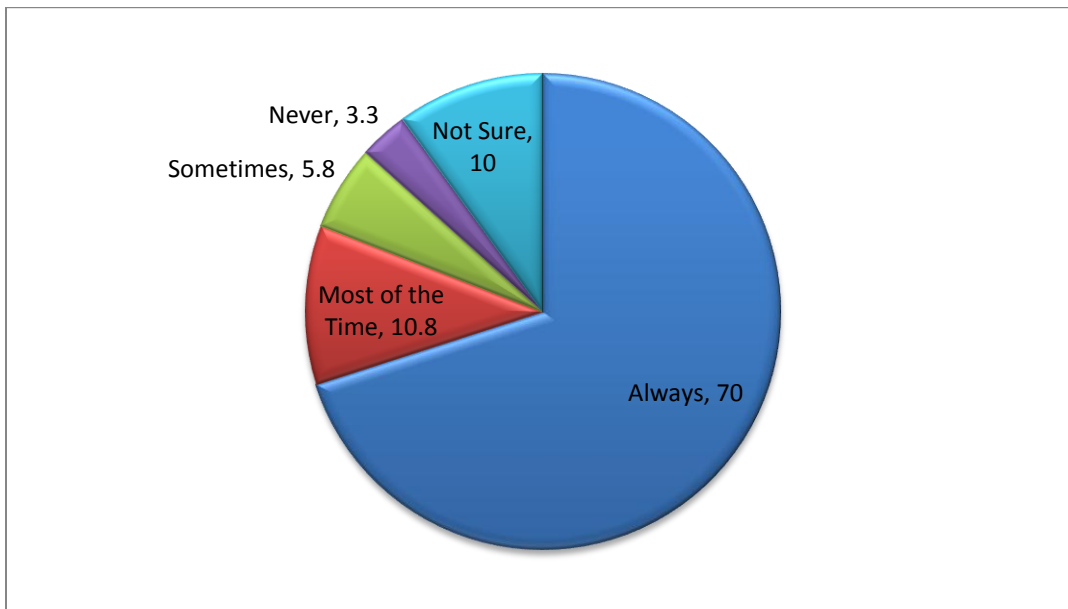
PAAC comments:

- 82% reported they get Agenda and information in advance always or most of the time

Q4 Information about SEAC membership, roles and meeting times is available via:

Part a) School Board Website

| | Responses 120 |
|---------------------|---------------|
| a. Always | 70.0% |
| b. Most of the time | 10.8% |
| c. Sometimes | 5.8% |
| d. Never | 3.3% |
| e. Not Sure | 10.0% |



Question 4a

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

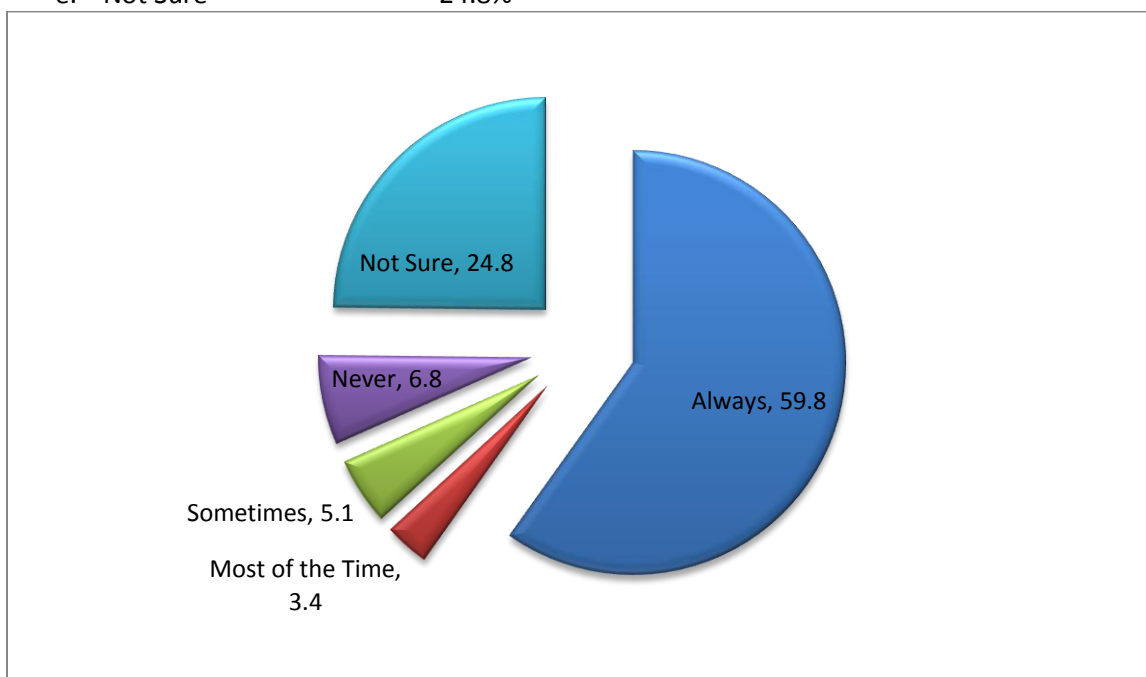
PAAC comments:

- Of the six formats listed, Website was reported as being used the most, with 80% reporting always or most of the time

Part b) Special Education Parent Guide

Responses 117

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 59.8% |
| b. Most of the time | 3.4% |
| c. Sometimes | 5.1% |
| d. Never | 6.8% |
| e. Not Sure | 24.8% |



Question 4b

PAAC comments:

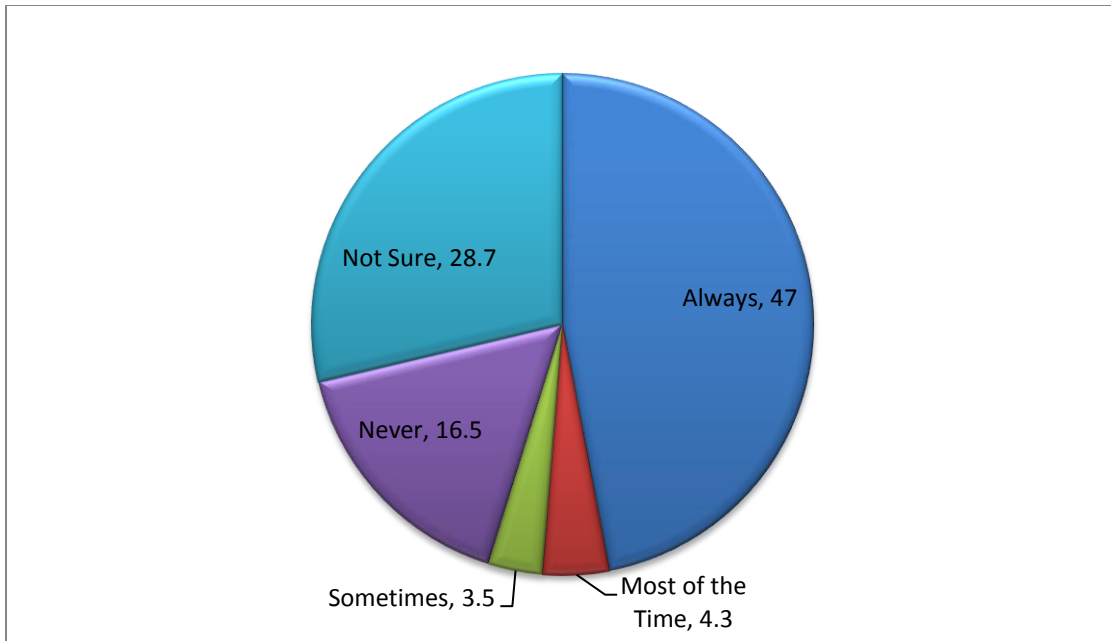
- The Ministry of Education Standards for School Boards' Special education Plans suggest that the Parent Guide should include names of associations on SEAC
- Just over 60% of respondents reported that The Parent Guide always or most of the time included information on SEAC

Part c) SEAC brochure

Responses 115

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 47.0% |
| b. Most of the time | 4.3% |
| c. Sometimes | 3.5% |
| d. Never | 16.5% |
| e. Not Sure | 28.7% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



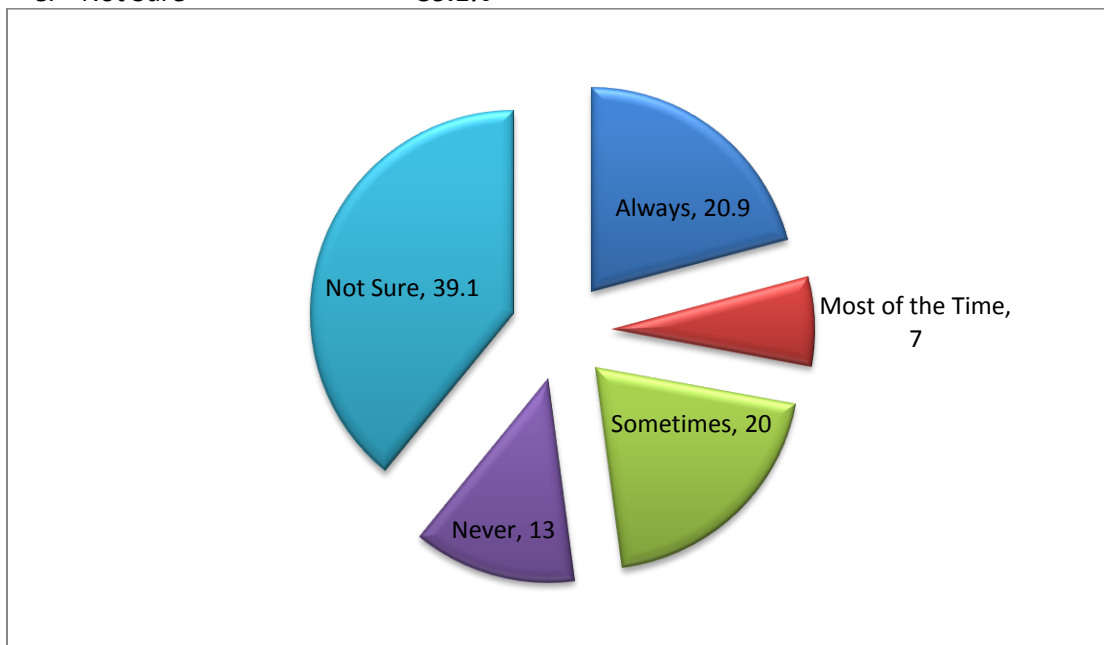
Question 4c

PAAC Comments:

- Almost 50% of the respondents reported that they have a brochure with information on SEAC

Part d) Board newsletters/updates

| | Responses 115 |
|---------------------|---------------|
| a. Always | 20.9% |
| b. Most of the time | 7.0% |
| c. Sometimes | 20.0% |
| d. Never | 13.0% |
| e. Not Sure | 39.1% |



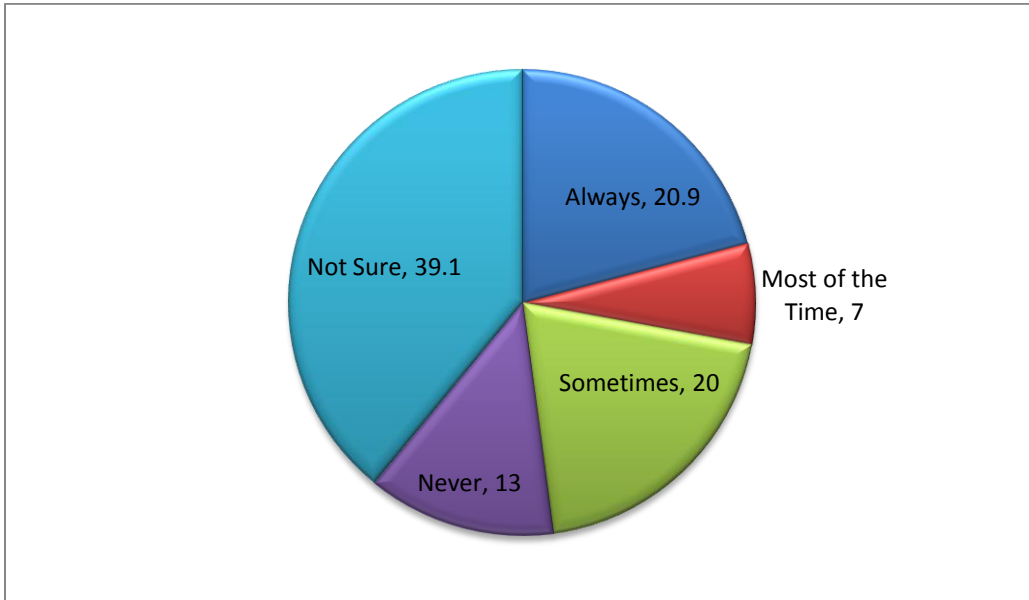
Question 4d

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

Part e) School Newsletters

Responses 116

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 15.5% |
| b. Most of the time | 4.3% |
| c. Sometimes | 17.2% |
| d. Never | 30.2% |
| e. Not Sure | 32.8% |

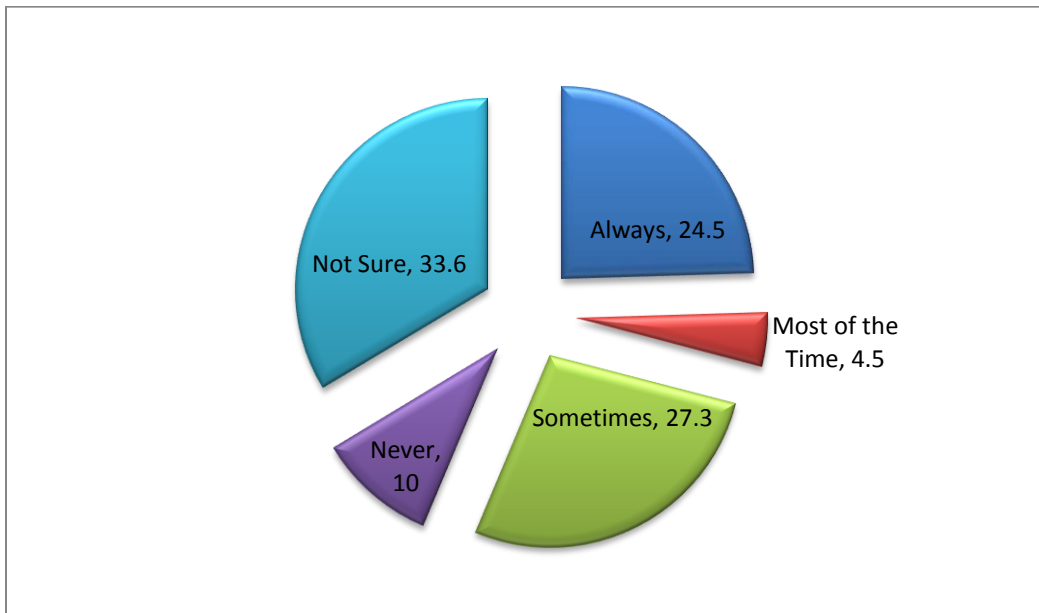


Question 4d

Part f) Presentations

Responses 110

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 24.5% |
| b. Most of the time | 4.5% |
| c. Sometimes | 27.3% |
| d. Never | 10.0% |
| e. Not Sure | 33.6% |



Question 4f

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

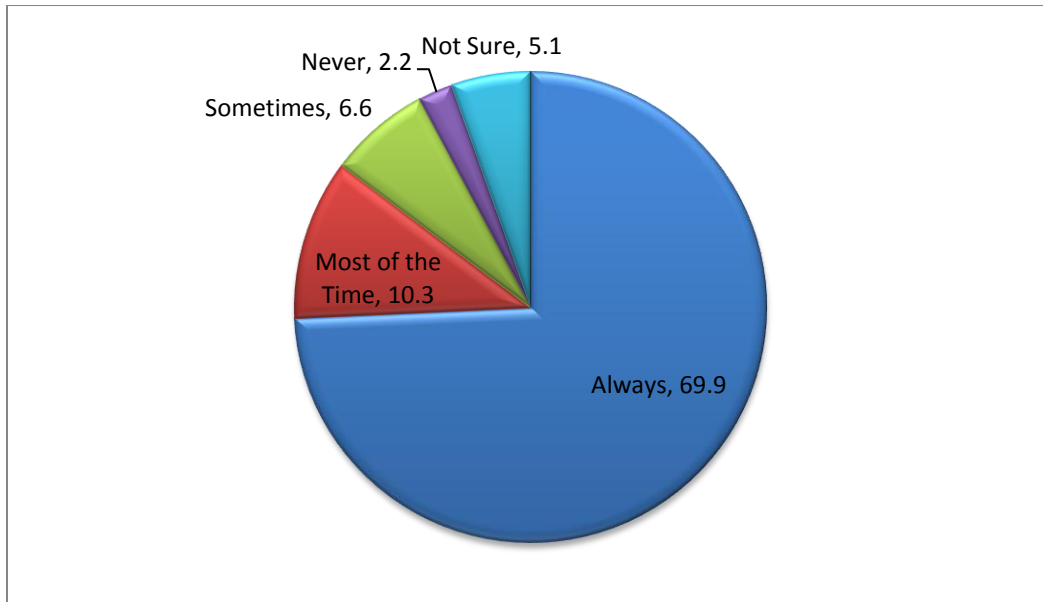
PAAC Comments:

- Over 30% of respondents were not sure whether school board newsletters, school newsletters or presentations included information about SEAC
- 62 people commented on this issue
- Survey Comments:
 - *“Individual schools update their own websites - the quality varies tremendously from one school to the next. Generally our board website is often not completely up to date.”*
 - *“I have never seen a SEAC brochure or a Board newsletter or presentation mentioning SEAC”*
 - *“Whenever I speak to people, they have no idea what a SEAC is, they've mostly never heard of it. So if there is info, it is buried or there is very little of it. We are in the process of looking at how we can raise awareness of SEAC and its role”*
 - *“We are currently working on a SEAC fact sheet.”*

Q 5 SEAC welcomes information distributed by parent association members.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 69.9% |
| b. Most of the time | 10.3% |
| c. Sometimes | 6.6% |
| d. Never | 2.2% |
| e. Not Sure | 5.1% |



Question 5

PAAC Comments:

- Almost 80% of respondents reported that the Board welcomes information from Parent Associations
- Survey Comments:
 - *“well- they accept information always; do they welcome it ... Not sure.”*
 - *“yes it does but it isn't encouraged”*

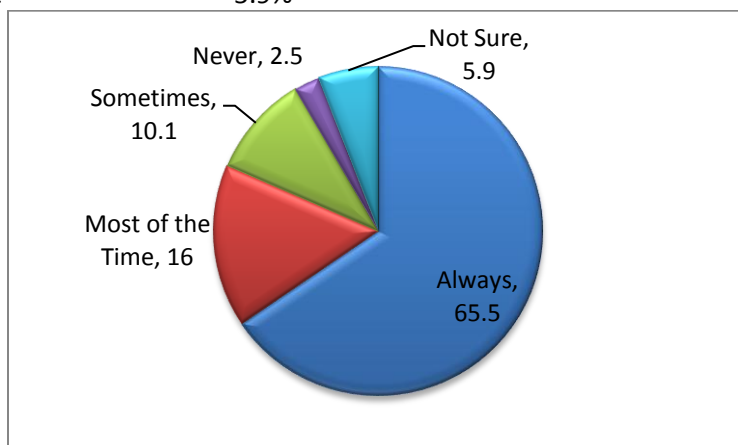
PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

Q 6 My school board consults SEAC in the development of its Special Education Plan and/or yearly amendments through:

Part a) Discussion

Responses 119

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 65.5% |
| b. Most of the time | 16.0% |
| c. Sometimes | 10.1% |
| d. Never | 2.5% |
| e. Not Sure | 5.9% |



Question 6a

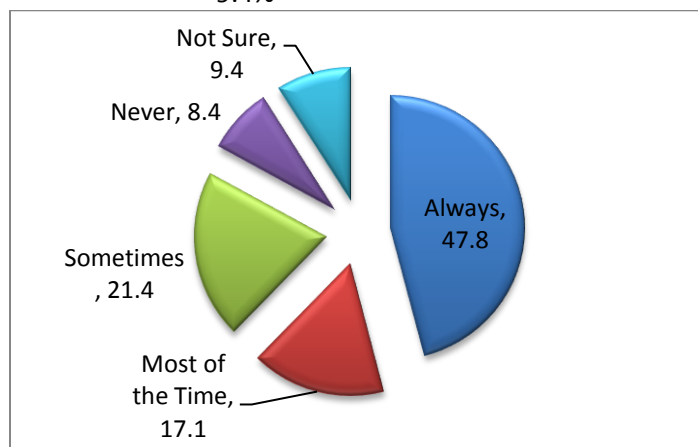
PAAC comments:

- The majority, 81% report that SEAC has discussion always or most of the time

Part b) Changes made as result of discussion

Responses 117

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 48.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 17.1% |
| c. Sometimes | 21.4% |
| d. Never | 3.4% |
| e. Not Sure | 9.4% |



Question 6b

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

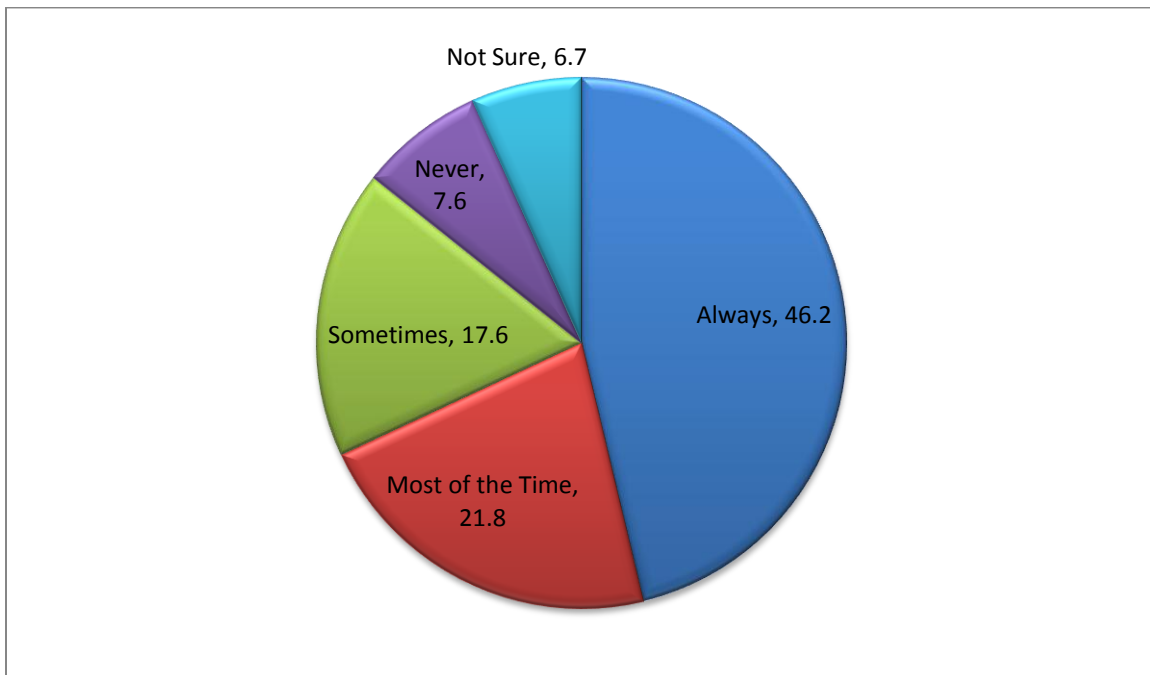
PAAC comments:

- 66% of the respondents reported that the school board made changes to the special education Plan because of SEAC input always or most of the time.

Part c) Collaborative Approach

Responses 119

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 46.2% |
| b. Most of the time | 21.8% |
| c. Sometimes | 17.6% |
| d. Never | 7.6% |
| e. Not Sure | 6.7% |



Question 6c

PAAC comments:

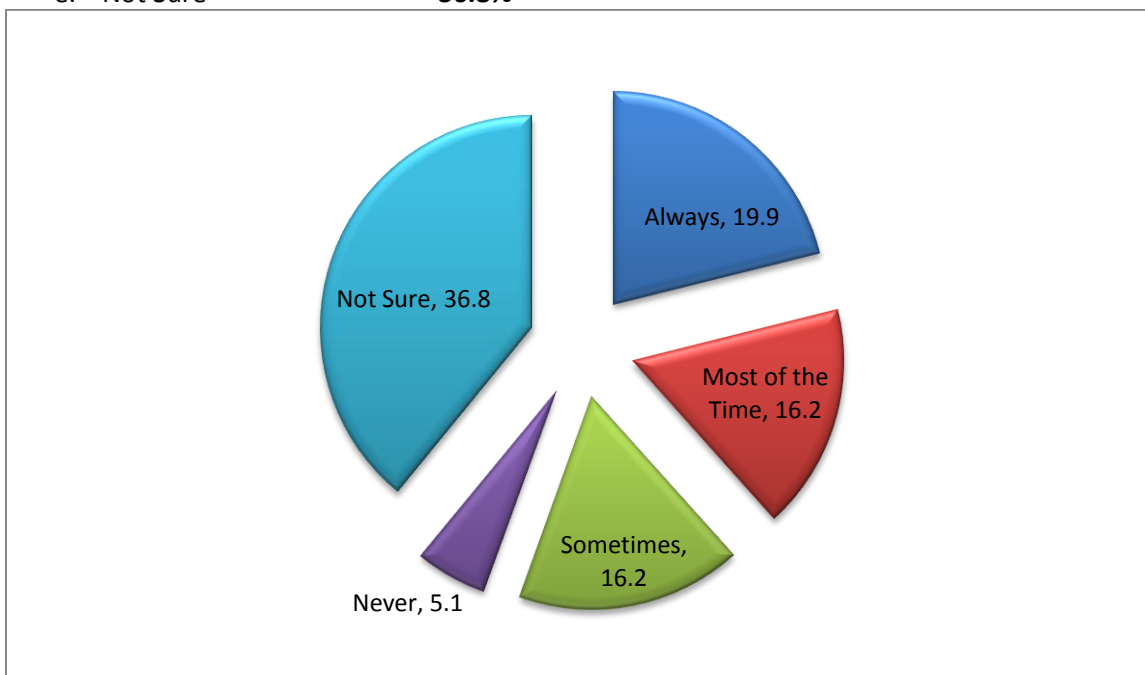
- 68% of the respondents reported that the school board and SEAC had a collaborative approach always or most of the time.
- Survey Comments suggest that not all reps feel included in the process:
 - *"School Board seeks APPROVAL from SEAC for its Spec Ed Plan and any amendments, (and has always received it) but no input is solicited in advance from SEAC prior to the presentation of the Spec Ed Plan"*
 - *"Generally they come to us presenting change as a fait accompli - they do provide explanations as to why programs are being moved etc ... but we have little input in that area."*
 - *"The voting members of my SEAC are unsatisfied with the last minute, rubber stamp approach taken by the board in presenting the plan and yearly report. Even when errors are identified to the board the response was that it was too late to change the information before submitting."*

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Q 7 Any minority reports from previous years are taken into account in developing the Special Education Plan/amendments.

Responses 136

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 19.9% |
| b. Most of the time | 16.2% |
| c. Sometimes | 16.2% |
| d. Never | 5.1% |
| e. Not Sure | 36.8% |



Question 7

PAAC comments:

- Only 36% of the respondents reported that Minority Report were considered in developing the Special Education Plan development always or most of the time.
- 50 respondents commented on this issue and it was clear many were not sure what a Minority Report was
- Survey Comments:
 - *"I am not aware if there are any minority reports"*
 - *"I am not sure what you are referring to - minority reports?"*
 - *"what is a minority report?"*

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Q 8 My school board's special education plan complies with the Ministry of Education's Standards for School Boards' Special Education Plans (2000) in terms of:

Part a) Containing all required components

Responses 120

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 70.8% |
| b. Most of the time | 15.8% |
| c. Sometimes | 3.3% |
| d. Never | 0.8% |
| e. Not Sure | 9.2% |

Part b) Describing the actual special education programs and services

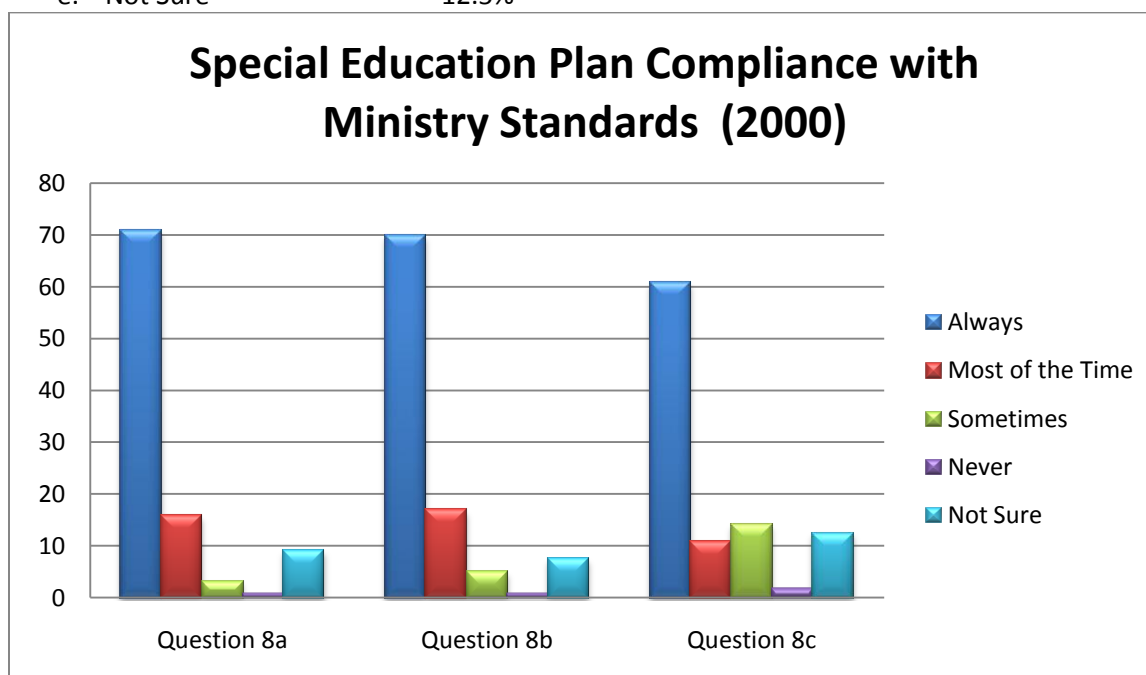
Responses 118

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 69.5% |
| b. Most of the time | 16.9% |
| c. Sometimes | 5.1% |
| d. Never | 0.8% |
| e. Not Sure | 7.6% |

Part c) Being accessible to the public

Responses 120

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 60.8% |
| b. Most of the time | 10.8% |
| c. Sometimes | 14.2% |
| d. Never | 1.7% |
| e. Not Sure | 12.5% |



PAAC comments:

- 60 to 85% of respondents reported that their school boards Special Education Plans were compliant with the Ministry of Education Standards

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

- From the comments a number of respondents raised concerns about how accessible the special education plan was
- Survey Comments:
 - **"There is some debate within our SEAC as to whether the Spec Ed Plan is really a "plan" or just a list of what is being offered in this board. Discussion of whether it needs to be more strategically written such that it really does provide direction for future years."**
 - **"Not sure how accurate it is. Yes accessible, but not in very good format."**
 - **"accessible, but not in a very good format for viewing online."**
 - **"Not entirely sure how the community gets access to this - something I will look into"**

Q 9 My school board consults SEAC in its special education budget by:

Part a) Making an early presentation:

| | <u>Responses 120</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. Always | 55.8% |
| b. Most of the time | 18.3% |
| c. Sometimes | 10.0% |
| d. Never | 10.0% |
| e. Not Sure | 5.8% |

PAAC comments:

- 73% reported that SEAC had presentations about the Special education Budget early in the budget process always or most of the time.

Part b) Answering questions from SEAC members

| | <u>Responses 119</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. Always | 64.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 21.0% |
| c. Sometimes | 8.4% |
| d. Never | 1.7% |
| e. Not Sure | 4.2% |

PAAC comments:

- 85% reported that questions from SEAC were answered always or most of the time

Part c) Making changes as a result of discussion

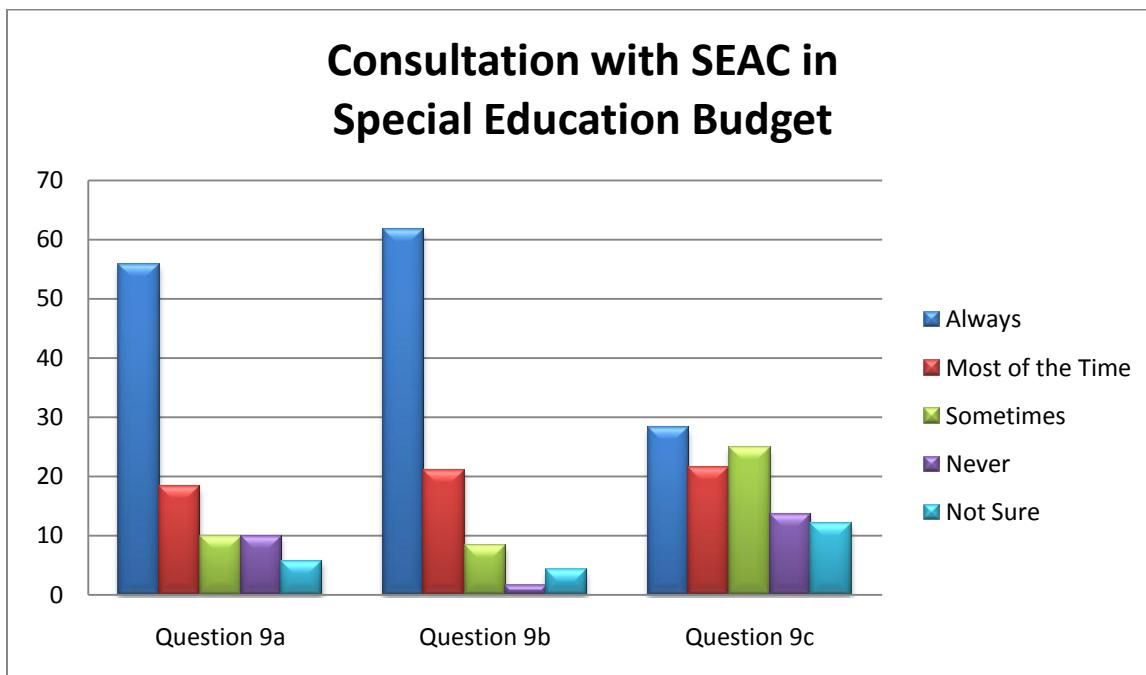
| | <u>Responses 117</u> |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| a. Always | 28.2% |
| b. Most of the time | 21.4% |
| c. Sometimes | 24.8% |
| d. Never | 13.7% |
| e. Not Sure | 12.0% |

PAAC comments:

- Less than 50% of respondents reported that changes were made to the Special Education Budget always or most of the time

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- Survey Comments suggest that SEAC members are part of the budget process but sometimes there is little opportunity to make changes:
 - *"We have an active budget sub-committee comprised of SEAC members and board staff - we are very much part of the process and always welcome to present our budget concerns to the Board annually"*
 - *"the budget is presented(always), questions are answered (most of the time), but, there is little opportunity to change the allocation of funds"*

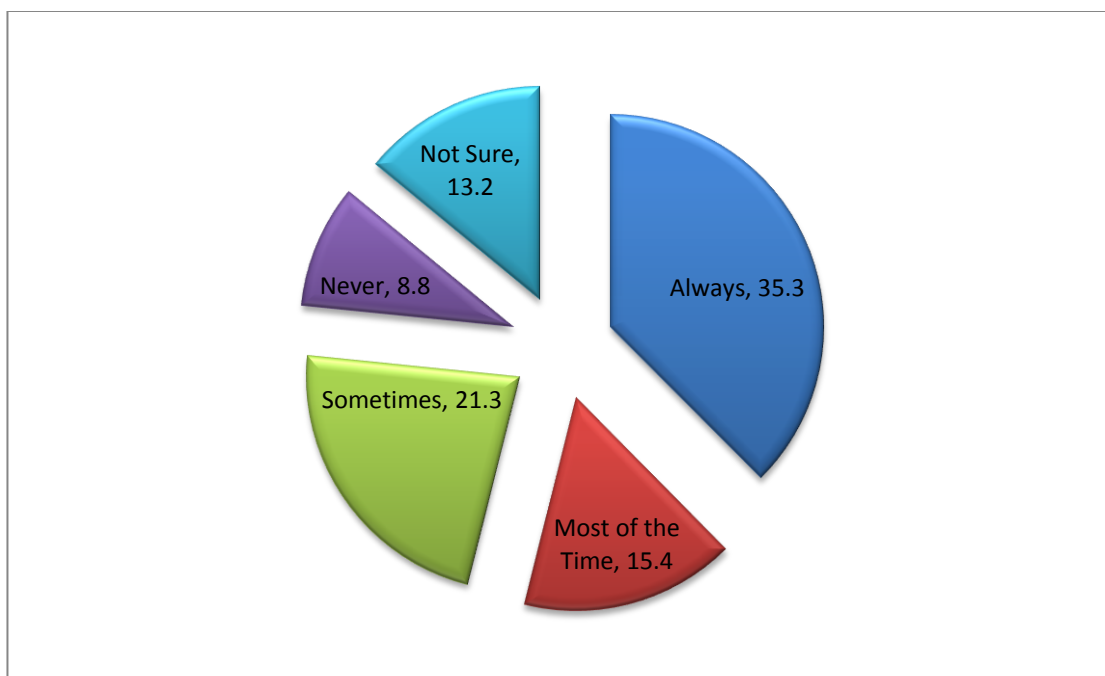


Q10 My school board provides the October report and other relevant statistical information to SEAC in a timely manner

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 35.3% |
| b. Most of the time | 25.0% |
| c. Sometimes | 10.3% |
| d. Never | 9.6% |
| e. Not Sure | 14.0% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



Question 10

PAAC Comments:

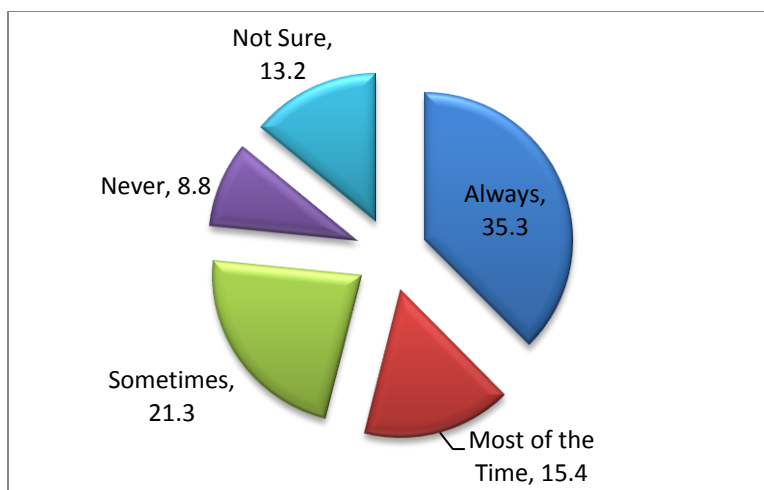
- 60% of respondents reported that the October Reports were shared always or most of the time
- 14% were not sure what October Reports were
- Survey Comments suggest SEAC reps are not sure what data they should see and how to use data in planning:
 - *"Not sure what the October report is ..."*
 - *"What statistical information? It would be nice to know what they are supposed to give us. But as a new member I'm still trying to figure that piece out."*

Q11 My SEAC is informed about the number of professional assessments carried out by school board personnel each year, and the number of students on waiting lists for professional assessments.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 35.3% |
| b. Most of the time | 15.4% |
| c. Sometimes | 21.3% |
| d. Never | 8.8% |
| e. Not Sure | 13.2% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



Question 11

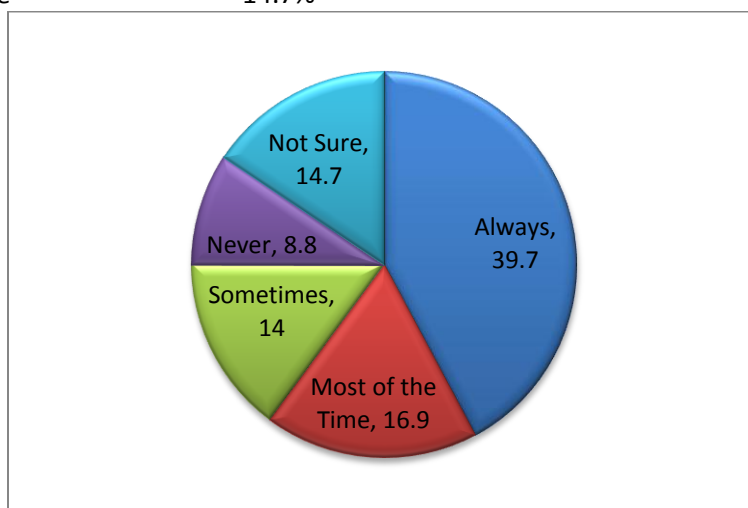
PAAC comments:

- Only half (50.7%) received information about Professional Assessments most of the time
- Survey Comments indicate there is more need for sharing of data and understanding how to interpret data:
 - *“the number of assessments is provided but usually we need to ask for the waiting list numbers”*
 - “Not aware of any reports”

Q 12 My school board tracks and reports to SEAC on the participation levels, exemptions, deferrals and achievement of its students with special education needs in all the EQAO testing.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 39.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 16.9% |
| c. Sometimes | 14.0% |
| d. Never | 8.8% |
| e. Not Sure | 14.7% |



Question 12

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

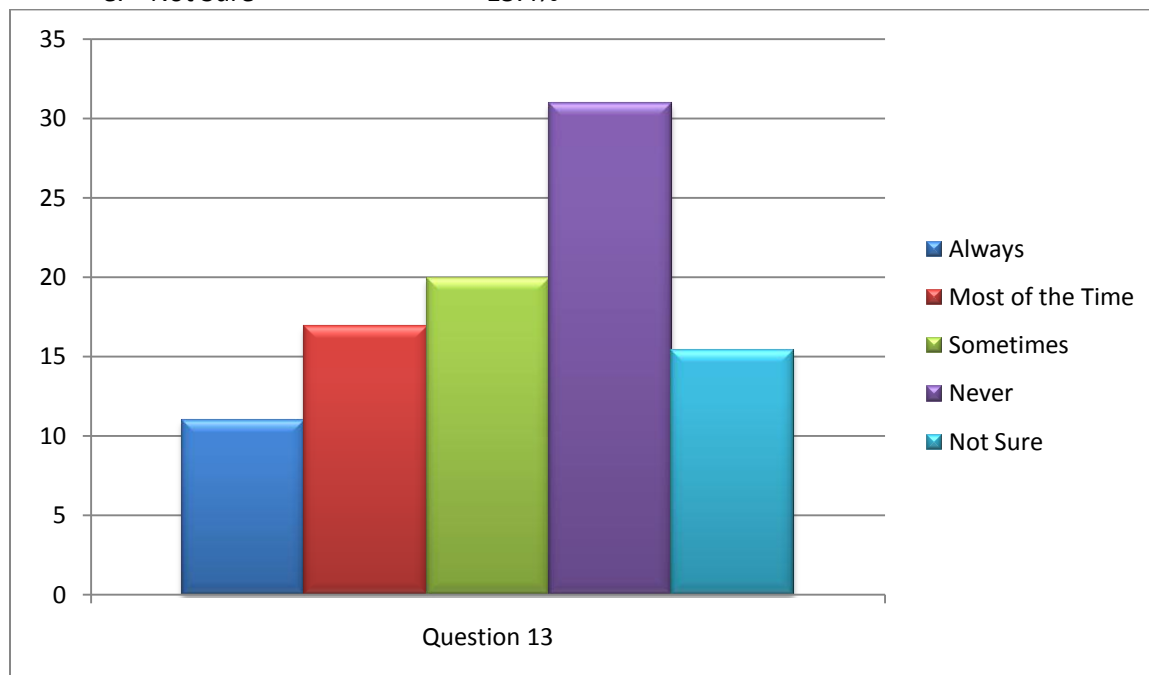
PAAC Comments:

- Just over half (56.6%) of the respondents report that they get the reports always or most of the time.
- Survey Comments suggest that data on outcomes for students with special education needs is not always available:
 - *“Usually overall results but not necessarily children with special needs”*
 - *“I don’t recall this being presented in detail or at least being a focus of discussion.”*

Q 13 My school board involves SEAC in planning how to assist students with special education needs who are doing poorly in or who are exempted from the EQAO testing.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 11% |
| b. Most of the time | 16.9% |
| c. Sometimes | 19.9 |
| d. Never | 30.9% |
| e. Not Sure | 15.4% |



PAAC Comments:

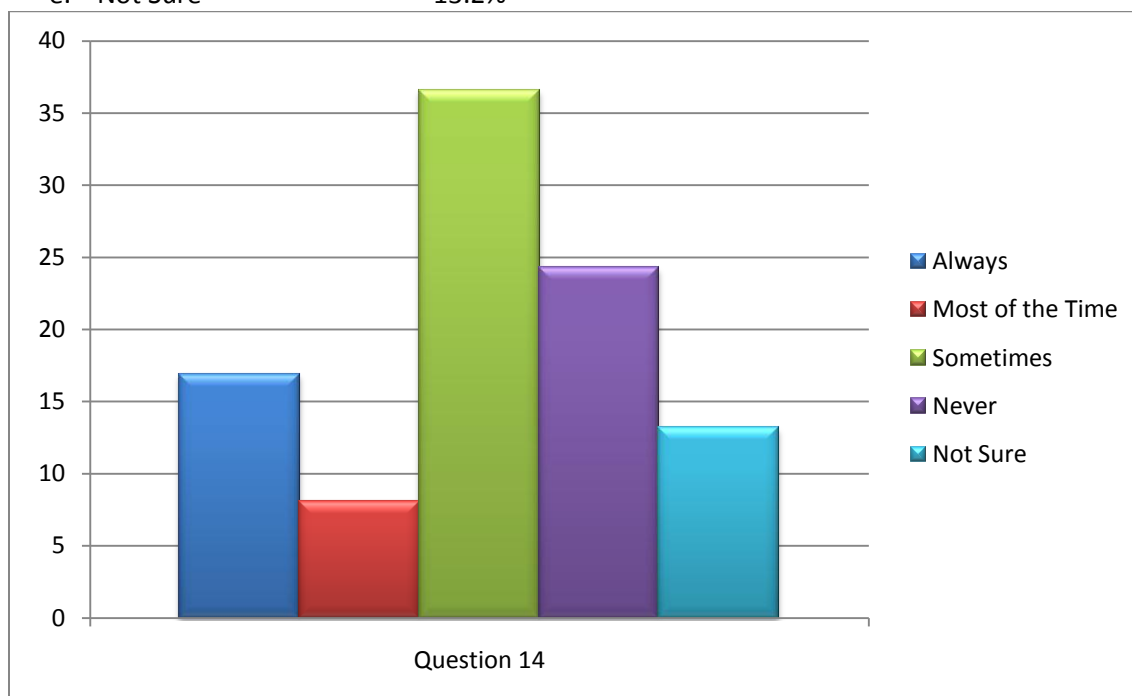
- Over 45% of respondents reported never or not sure for this question.
- Survey Comments indicate SEAC reps don’t always see the link between special education and board data:
 - *“We’ve not had this specific discussion, however, we do discuss how to meet Different needs of the various exceptionalities”*
 - *“Our SEAC does not plan, but is informed of the various initiatives and programs offered by the board”*

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Q14 My school board includes SEAC in the planning and provision of professional development to teachers

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 16.9% |
| b. Most of the time | 8.1% |
| c. Sometimes | 36.6% |
| d. Never | 24.3% |
| e. Not Sure | 13.2% |



PAAC Comments:

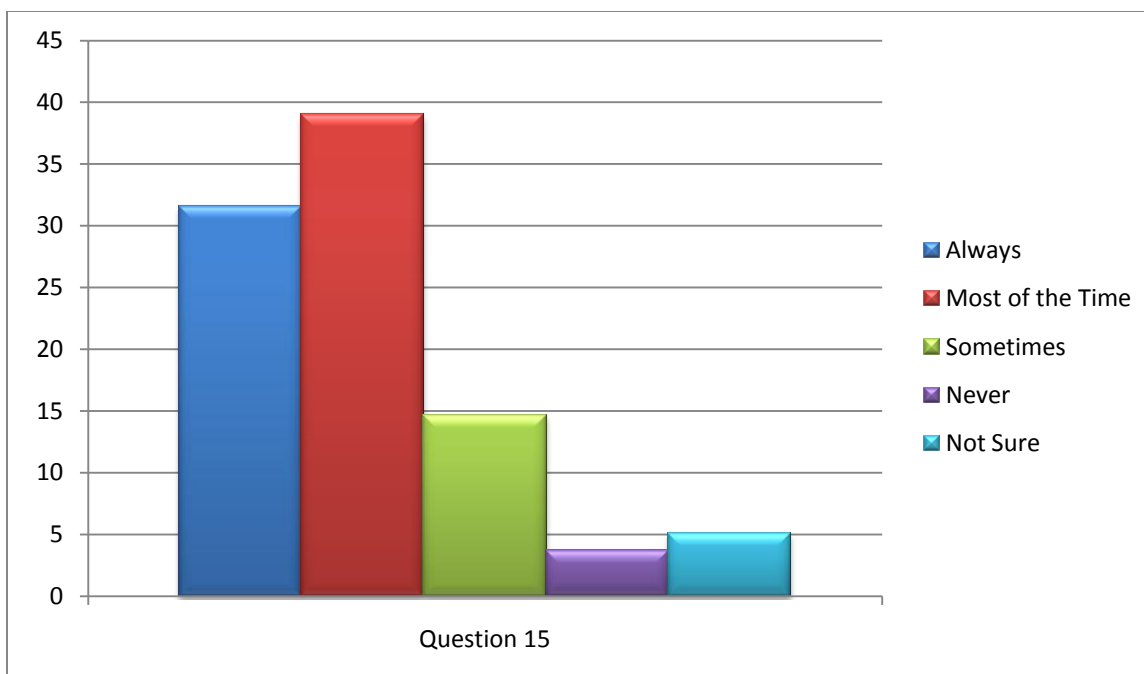
- Less than 25% reported they were sometimes or always included in PD.
- Survey Comments suggest there is more opportunity to use Parent Associations as a resource:
 - ***"We are told what the PD day topics are -- we have asked a number of times to be consulted and asked for input, however this hasn't happened yet."***
 - ***"Sometimes we are used - but not nearly enough"***

Q 15 My school board provides regular and timely information to the SEAC on all matters related to the development and delivery of special education programs and services.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 31.6% |
| b. Most of the time | 39.0% |
| c. Sometimes | 14.7% |
| d. Never | 3.7% |
| e. Not Sure | 5.1% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



PAAC Comments:

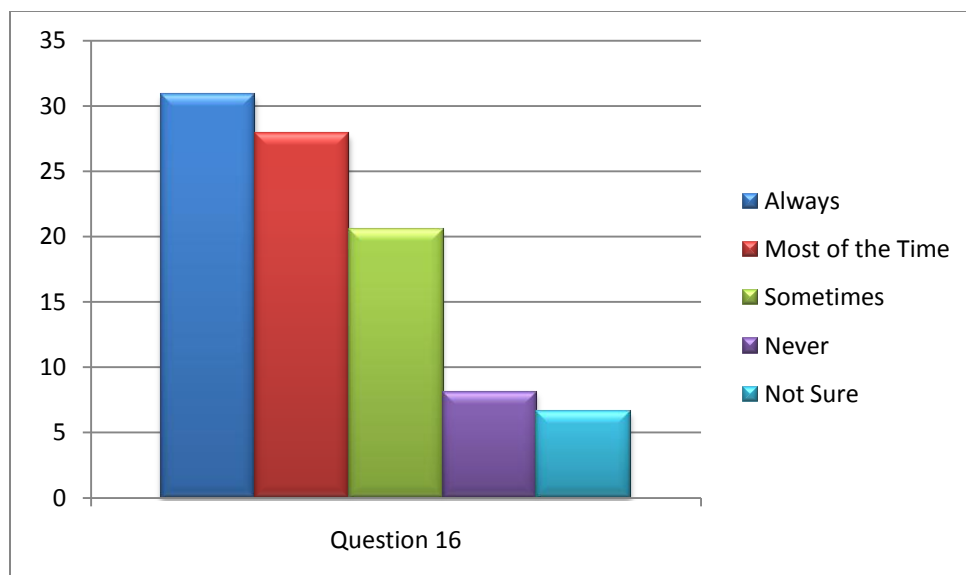
- 70 % report that they get regular and timely information on matters related to program and service delivery always or most of the time.
- Survey Comments suggest concern about the type of information that is shared or available:
 - ***“There are numerous occasions where information in regards to the numbers of identified students and their programming is not forthcoming from staff. Particularly of concern is access to self-contained classes and how many students (parents) are turned away because of a lack of space, or a suitable space in their local geographically area.”***

Q 16 My school board involves the SEAC in a meaningful way in discussions regarding the way special education students are treated under school board policies such as safe schools and character education policies.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 30.9% |
| b. Most of the time | 27.9% |
| c. Sometimes | 20.6% |
| d. Never | 8.1% |
| e. Not Sure | 6.6% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



PAAC Comment:

- Less than 60% of respondents reported they were always or most of the time involved in a meaningful way.
- Survey Comments suggest the challenge of meeting the needs of students with special education needs and getting the right information:
 - ***“In the past it was very helpful to receive the Suspension reports with break downs by exceptionality but we have not received this sort of statistical data in several years.”***
 - ***“I have not heard the term “character education policies”. When we have asked specifically about the safe schools issue and how it relates to special needs children the answer was that it is the same as for all students and there really wasn’t a component specific to special needs.”***

Q 17 My SEAC makes motions to the School Board about:

Part a) Special Education Plan/Amendments

Responses 127

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 45.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 16.5% |
| c. Sometimes | 19.7% |
| d. Never | 13.4% |
| e. Not Sure | 4.7% |

PAAC Comments:

- Over 60% reported that they made motions always or most of the time on the budget

Part b) Special Education Budget

Responses 125

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 44.0% |
| b. Most of the time | 13.6% |
| c. Sometimes | 16.0% |
| d. Never | 18.4% |
| e. Not Sure | 8.0% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

PAAC Comments:

- Almost 27% reported they had never made a motion on the special education budget or they weren't sure.

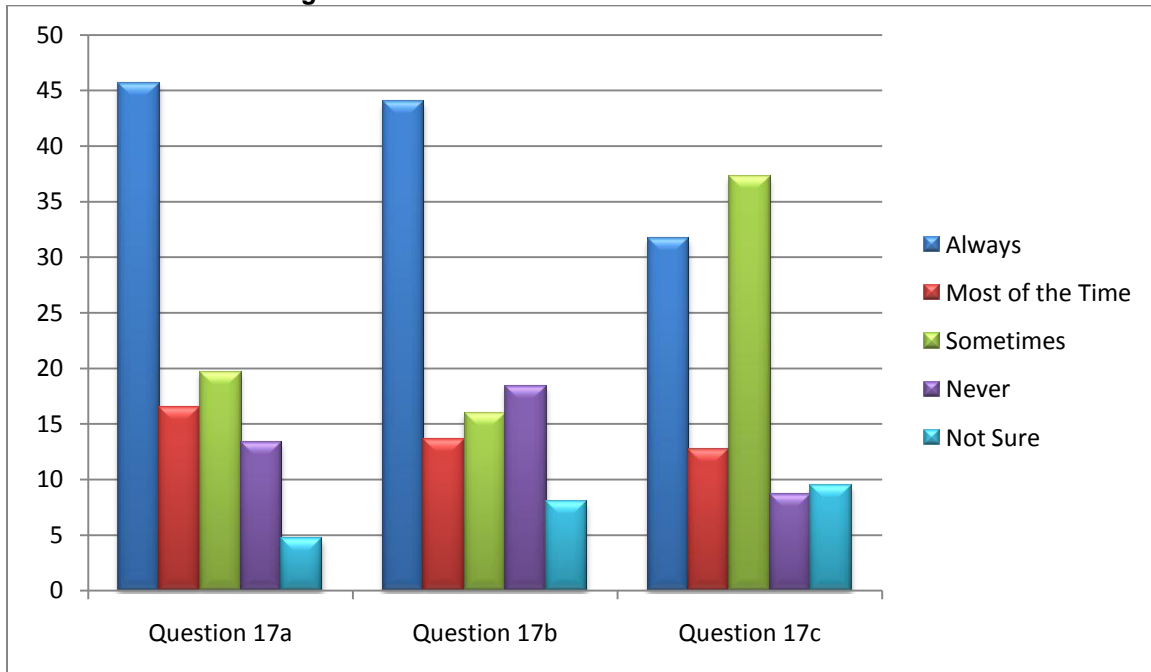
Part c) Other issues

Responses 126

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 31.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 12.7% |
| c. Sometimes | 37.3% |
| d. Never | 8.7% |
| e. Not Sure | 9.5% |

Survey Comments suggest that parliamentary process and motions is not well understood:

- ***“Generally the relationship of SEAC with our school board is good. I would state however that realistically we have very little say about amending the plan or services.”***
- ***“We were discouraged from using motions because we are a catholic board and didn't need them. Also we are treated with contempt when bringing forward a motion. In fact I needed to put forward a motion that our SEAC accept motions before the board backed away from discouraging our using them.”***

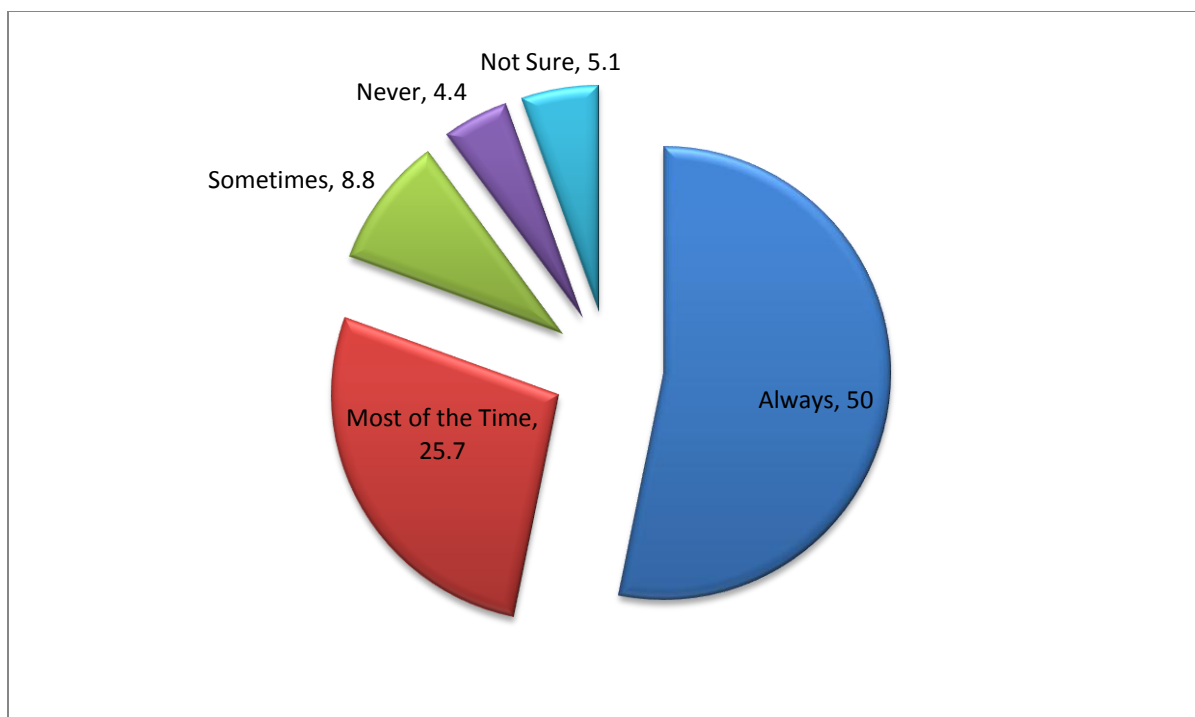


Q 18 School board staff who make presentations to my SEAC encourage input and discussion from parent association members.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| a. Always | 50.0% |
| b. Most of the time | 25.7% |
| c. Sometimes | 8.8% |
| d. Never | 4.4% |
| e. Not Sure | 5.1% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



Question 18

PAAC Comments;

The majority (75.7%) reported that they were encouraged to provide input on school board presentations.

Survey Comments suggest that process can get in the way of discussion and that input does not translate to action:

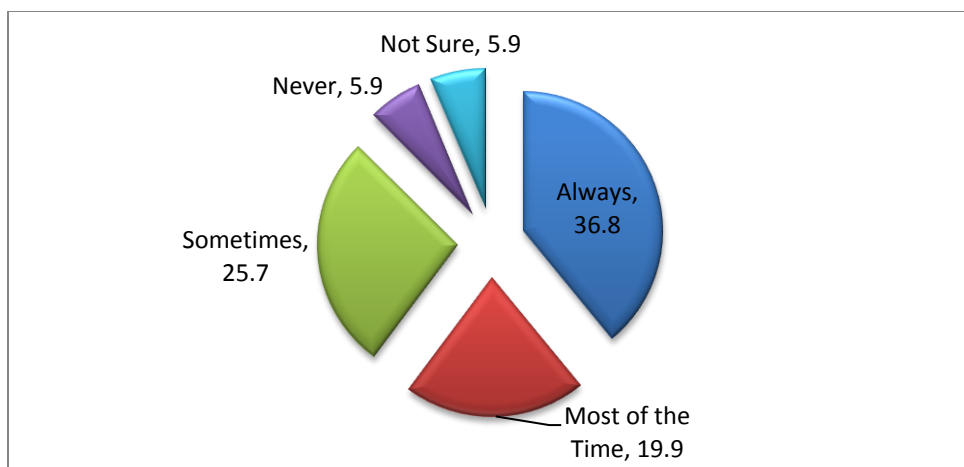
- *“Staff who come and present are very open to discussion from members, I am not sure however how seriously they take our feedback and how much they would implement it.”*
- *“I think they try. The problem is it’s so rule driven as to when you can speak and ask questions there is not flexibility to have open and honest dialogue.”*

Q 19 As a parent association representative I feel that my opinions are respected and considered in the development of special education policy at my school board.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 36.8% |
| b. Most of the time | 19.9% |
| c. Sometimes | 25.7% |
| d. Never | 5.9% |
| e. Not Sure | 5.9% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



Question 19

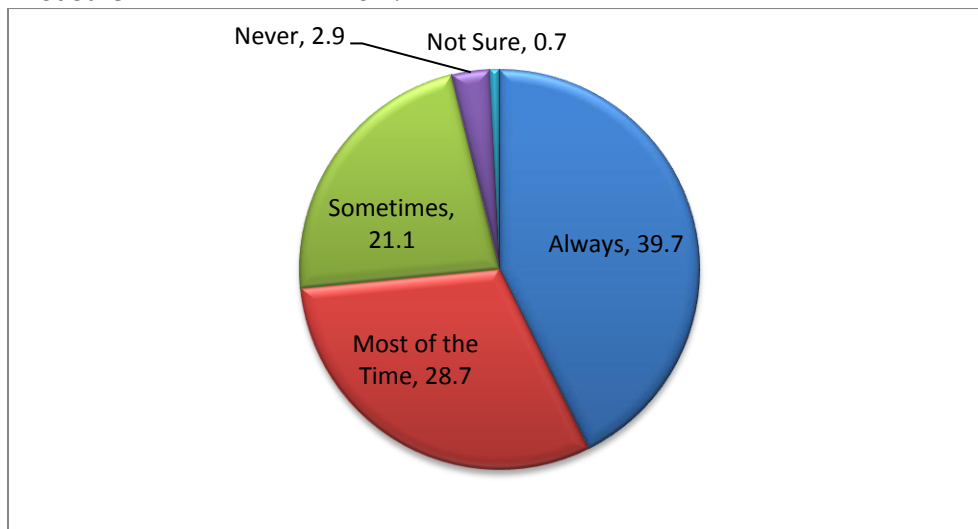
PAAC Comment:

- Only 55% of respondents felt their opinions were always or most of the time respected.
- Survey Comments suggest that the SEAC voice is heard, but not always acted on:
 - ***“Around the table no. But the Special Ed Supervisor has made efforts to include me in subcommittee with staff which has allowed me to voice my concerns and have staff consider them. That part has been affective.”***
 - ***“While I know my voice is heard and respected, it does not always translate into changes in particular around the areas of inclusive education”***

Q 20 Parent association members of my SEAC share information about their organizations on a regular basis.

Responses 136

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 39.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 28.7% |
| c. Sometimes | 21.1% |
| d. Never | 2.9% |
| e. Not Sure | 0.7% |



Question 20

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

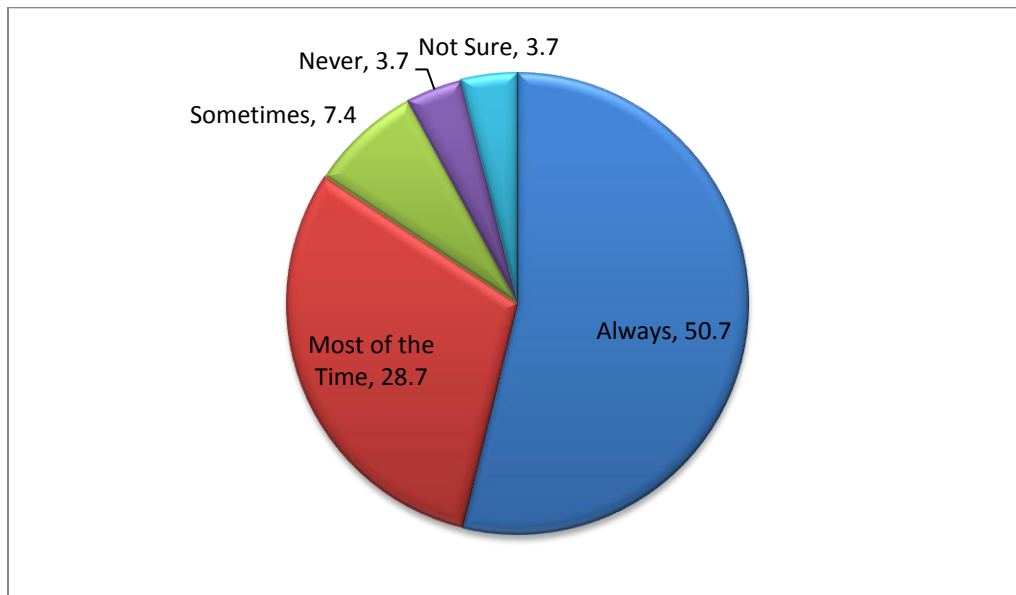
PAAC Comments:

- Almost 70% report that information from parent associations is shared always or most of the time
- Survey Comments suggest that Provincial Association reps have the opportunity to share but don't always have something to share:
 - ***"This is a regular agenda item however not all representatives share at the meetings"***

Q 21 Parent association members of my SEAC talk to each other and discuss different points of view respectfully.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 50.7% |
| b. Most of the time | 28.7% |
| c. Sometimes | 7.4% |
| d. Never | 3.7% |
| e. Not Sure | 3.7% |



Question 21

PAAC Comment:

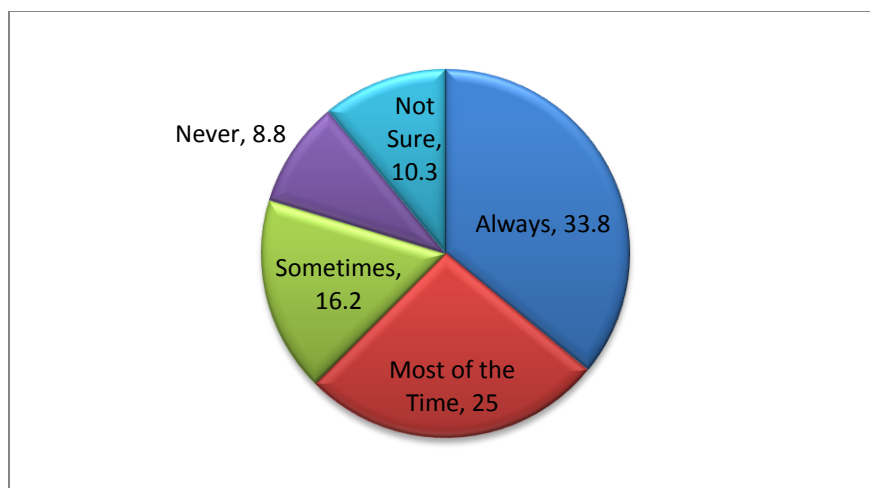
- Almost 80% reported that SEAC members work respectfully together always or most of the time.
- Survey Comments suggest that respect does not always mean effective interaction:
 - ***"people are very respectful of each other; the culture does not promote discussion around different points of view"***

Q 22 Parent association members have served as chair of my SEAC.

Responses 136

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| a. Always | 33.8% |
| b. Most of the time | 25.0% |
| c. Sometimes | 16.2% |
| d. Never | 8.8% |
| e. Not Sure | 10.3% |

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey



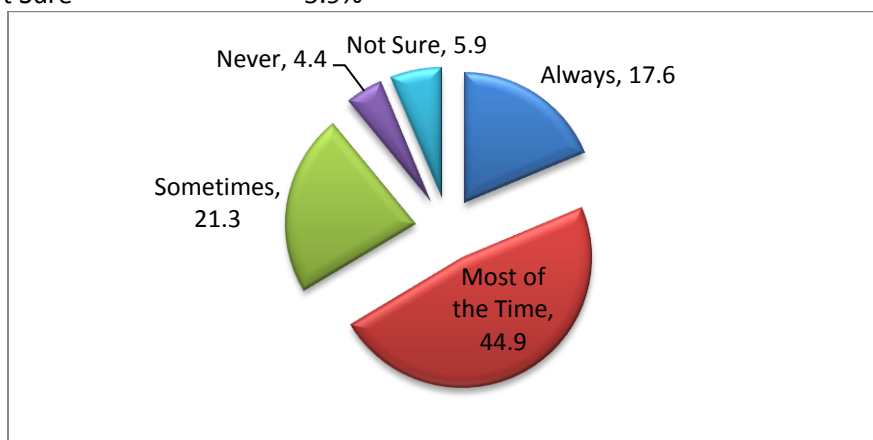
Question 22

PAAC Comment:

- Over half (58.9%) report that a parent association member has served as Chair always or most of the time.
- Survey Comments revealed examples of effective practice (alternating Chairs) and of Boards with inflexible policies:
 - ***“We have an alternating system - one year it is a trustee and the next, it is an association representative.”***
 - ***“The board has a policy of only having trustees be the chair. The voting members have challenged this to no result. In fact last year there were no elections but rather the chair and vice-chair were appointed by the board. Even when this was challenged it was not corrected.”***

Q23 My SEAC is able to recruit and retain parent association members.

| | Responses 136 |
|---------------------|---------------|
| a. Always | 17.6% |
| b. Most of the time | 44.9% |
| c. Sometimes | 21.3% |
| d. Never | 4.4% |
| e. Not Sure | 5.9% |



Question 23

PAAC on SEAC - SEAC Effectiveness Survey

PAAC Comment:

- Almost 63% reported that they were able to recruit and retain SEAC reps always or most of the time
- Survey Comments suggest that some SEACs have problems with recruitment and retention:
 - ***“Difficult to find new reps or alternates. Several key parent associations are not represented on our SEAC due to volunteer shortage..”***
 - ***“Our numbers are dwindling -lack of interest from associations because we don't feel that we can make a difference”***
 - ***“this is an ever increasing problem... recruiting is difficult and keeping new members is also very difficult - we don't have all positions filled with association members and have taken members from the community to fill membership designated for associations. And even with that, positions remain vacant.”***

