



Boquet Valley Special Education Audit

December 2025

INTRODUCTIO N

- Robert Breidenstein:
 - Currently:
 - Executive Director of the New York State Association of Small City Schools
 - Educational Consultant for COGNIA (www.cognia.com), WozEd (www.wozed.com) and Cybersecurity Call to Action (www.cybersecuritycalltoaction.com)
 - Working with 20+ systems in NY, Kentucky and South Carolina since 2022
 - Working on multiple Optimization (Pre-Merger) Studies with NYS schools
 - Career: 38 years in public education
 - Retired Superintendent for the Salamanca City Central School District
 - Assistant Superintendent for PPS at Tonawanda City Schools
 - Director of Special Education at West Seneca Central Schools
 - Elementary Principal at West Seneca Central Schools
 - Middle School Assistant Principal at Orchard Park Central Schools
 - Guidance Director, School Counselor, CSE/CPSE/504 Chairperson at OA CSD
 - School Counselor Genesee Valley BOCES

Key Questions:



How well is the special education department meeting the needs of the students?



Are identified students learning and making appropriate progress as measured by important NYS and local standards of achievement?



Do identified students have a good experience in the school and in special education programs?



Why Was an Audit Done?

The audit was district initiated to examine operations in the department, program offerings and the available supports for students and staff.



FOCAL POINTS

The audit focused on three key areas-

- Compliance

- Capacity

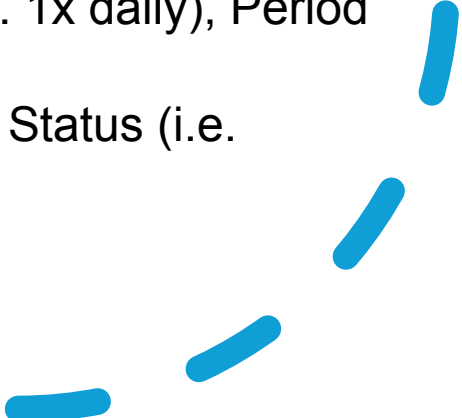
- Common Sense

 - Understanding of Programs and Services

+ Opportunities for Growth




METHODOLOG Y

- Audit Process:
 - The following protocols were utilized-
 - ❑ A data analysis of current programs, offerings, & services
 - ❑ Stakeholder interviews
 - ❑ Forensic review of random of documents with PII redacted
 - ❑ The review examined over 33,000 separate data:
 - School, Grade, Programs (PR) and Related Service (RS)
 - Ratio (i.e. 12-1-1), Frequency (i.e. 1x daily), Period (i.e. 30 minutes), Location
 - Key Dates (for 2024-25 SY only), Status (i.e. Classified, Declassified)
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ENGAGEMENT

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- Audit Process:
 - Stakeholder interviews
 - ❑ Confidential staff interviews (30-60 minutes) over multiple days, follow-up engagement
 - ❑ All Buildings were engaged
 - ❑ Commentary was honest, direct, collaborative, insightful and solution oriented even when challenges, frustrations and conflicts were being discussed
 - ❑ Administrators were also interviewed
 - ❑ Interviews were a critical component of the process to gauge culture, collaboration and program understanding, roles and responsibilities
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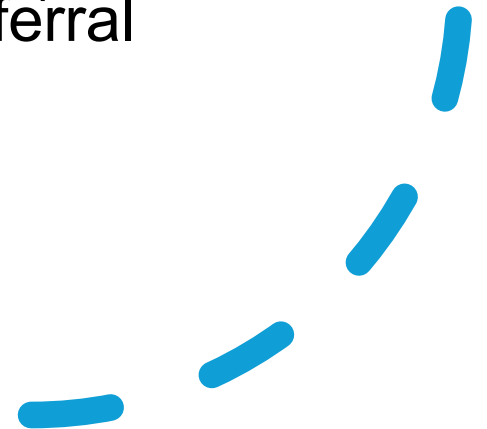
HISTORICAL DATA POINTS

- Audit Process:

- Forensic Review

- A deep dive into communication occurred. Including:

- District Website
 - Random sample of student IEPs
 - Formalized testing reports (psych, speech, OT, PT etc)
 - Progress Monitoring Reports
 - Written Communication with parents, guardians, providers/BOCES
 - Age specific requirements (CPSE, CSE , Transition, initial referral eligibility documentation)
 - Consent documentation
 - Schedule documents



Executive Summary

- ❑ Compliance Findings & Recommendations
- ❑ Capacity Findings & Recommendations
- ❑ Common Sense Understanding

Repetition is typical



Executive Summary

Key Takeaways

- Stakeholder Engagement
- Leadership
- Transitions
- Priorities
- Professional Development

Repetition is typical





COMPLIANCE



Compliance

- Timeline variations
- Technical issues with IEPs
(regulatory consistency, voice)
- Recommendations with good intent
but stray from regulatory guidance
- Communication misapplications

FINDINGS COMPLIANCE

Risk Factors include

- Calendar dates (AR, Re-Evals)
- Meeting timelines (start dates)
- Communication protocols (PWN)
- Regulation Variations
(over-customization)

Positive Indicators

- Improved Communications
 - Visibility & Collaboration
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CAPACITY



CAPACITY

- ❑ 45% of current IEPs were reviewed and 33,000+ data points were evaluated during this study (CPSE/CPSE)
- ❑ Cohort size limits capacity to meet emerging needs
- ❑ Standardized understanding of prg.
- ❑ Integrated Co-Teaching design varies
- ❑ Stakeholders support ICT model, but model varies GREATLY
- ❑ IEP process not consistent

FINDINGS CAPACITY

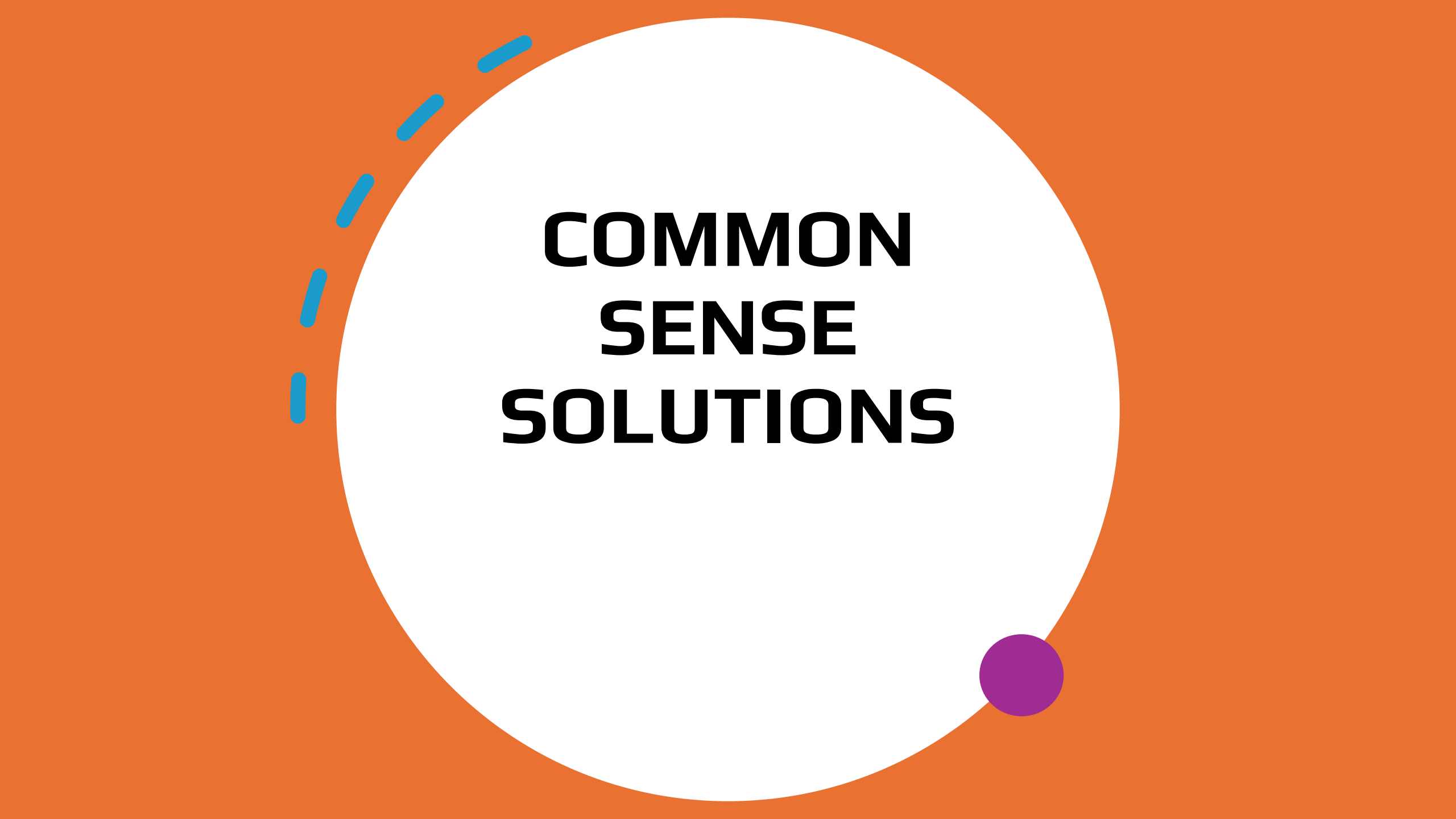
Risk Factors include

- Small Cohort Sizes
- Leadership Transitions
(administration, clerical, key staff)
- Program Design Gaps

Positive Indicators

- Stakeholders seek more guidance
- Collaborative mindset of stakeholders
- Use of paraprofessionals





**COMMON
SENSE
SOLUTIONS**

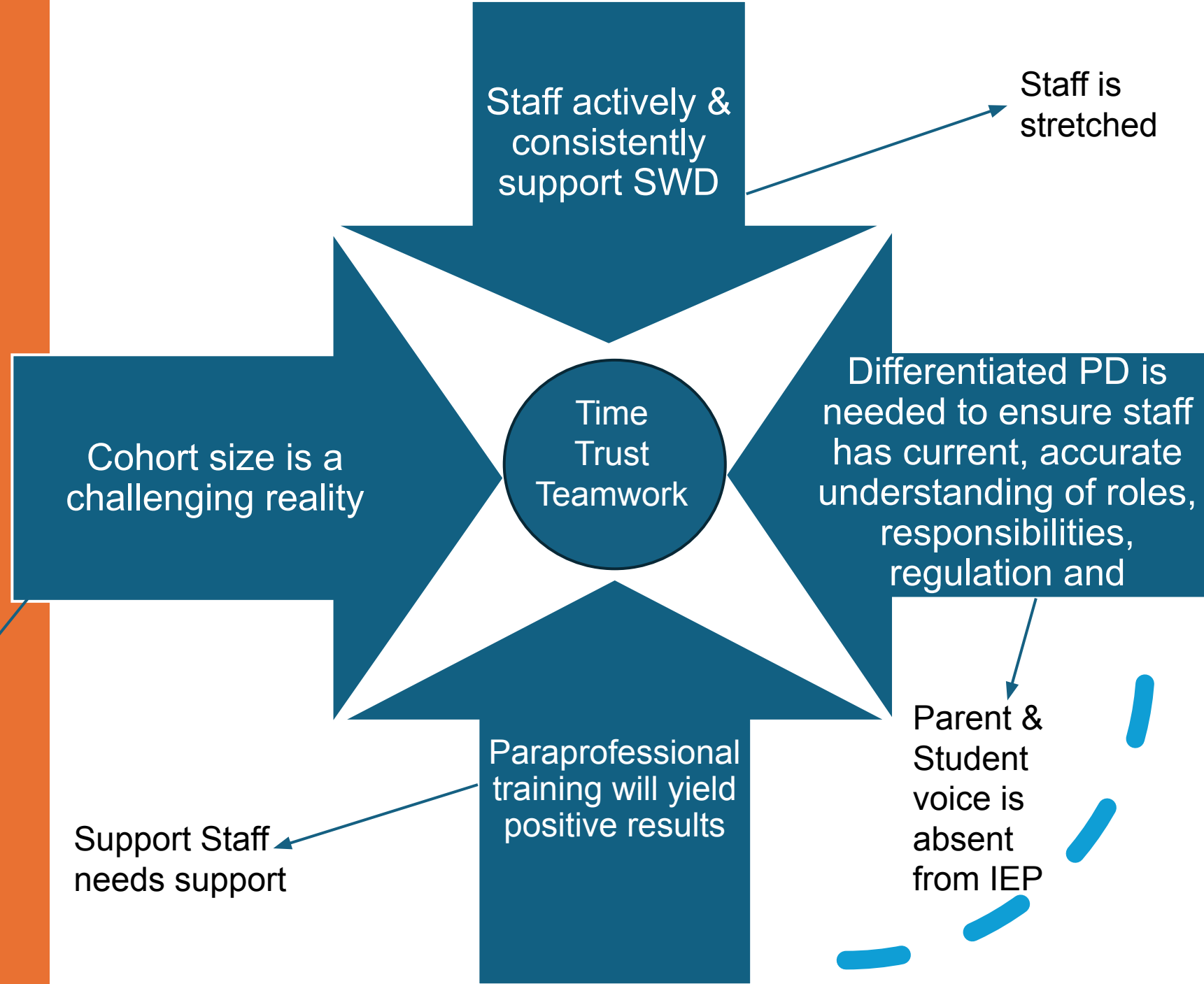
FINDINGS COMMON SENSE

Continuum options are limited

Support Staff needs support

Paraprofessional training will yield positive results

Parent & Student voice is absent from IEP



Staff actively & consistently support SWD

Staff is stretched

Cohort size is a challenging reality

Time Trust Teamwork


Differentiated PD is needed to ensure staff has current, accurate understanding of roles, responsibilities, regulation and





COMMON SENSE

- **Working Well-**

- Stakeholders are valued and comfortable advocating for their program, students and department needs.
 - Paraprofessional PD is helpful.
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COMMON SENSE

- **Working Well-**

- Adequate staffing but schedule challenges exist
- Program space is available
- Stakeholders work collaboratively
- Stakeholders desire more targeted PD, particularly in the areas of curriculum alignment, behavioral interventions, technology and how to collaborate more effectively- use inhouse experts
- Related Services are effective

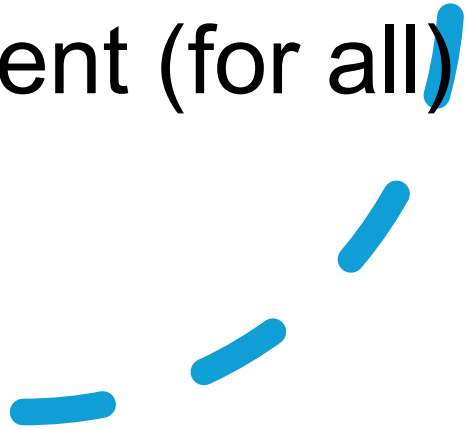
COMMON SENSE

•Obstacles-

- Scheduling conflicts exist
- Communication occurs in silos
- More collaboration/planning time is needed
- Varying degrees of “understanding” exist on program design, ratios and placements.

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

AKA PRIORITIES

- Regular, frequent staff meetings
 - Visibility & Stability
 - More planning time and IEP writing time
 - Oversight & review of all docs
 - Professional Development (for all)
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RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPLIANCE

- Leadership/clerical stability
- Role Specific PD
- Transition to Anniversary ARs
- Assign Compliance personnel (IEP accuracy, timelines, data integrity) to review IEPs
- Eliminate Non-compliant options on SMS menu

CAPACITY

- Process/SE Plan review
- Technical Support PD for data entry on IEPs
- Collaborative Team Discussions on current & future program needs

COMMON SENSE

- Time, Planning, Visibility
- Implement structured time for co-planning
- Avoid instructional interferences
- PD, PD, PD



Q & A