Parental Perceptions of Literacy: Children With Intellectual Disability

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Literacy defined as *the use written words/text and symbols such as pictures/visual representations to access information and communicate ideas.*

Purpose

Background

- Literacy is a critical function of public education
- Ability to understand and generate text is important settings (e.g., school, home, community)
- Unclear if published research has improved literacy instruction for students with IDs
- Few researchers have investigated literacy programming for students with ID through direct classroom observations

What were the perceptions of parents regarding what **skills are important** related to literacy?

What do parents perceive as the **current skill sets taught related** to literacy (i.e., reading and writing) to their child with ID?

What do parents perceive as the **barriers that prevent** their child with ID from learning literacy skills?

Method

Table 1
Number of Students Reported on by Grade and Age

Grade Band	n (%)
K-2nd Grade	35 (16.6)
3rd-5th Grade	47 (22.3)
6th-8th Grade	48 (22.7)
9th-12th Grade	50 (23.7)

Age	F	%
4-5	35	16.6
6-11	47	22.3
12-14	48	22.7
15-18	50	23.7

Table 2
Number of Students Reported on by Type of Expressive Communication Used

	Elementary		Middle		High School		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Spoken Word	70	85.4	45	93.8	43	86	158	87.8
Written Word	1	1.2	0	0	0	0	1	0.5
Assistive Tech Device	3	3.7	1	2.1	1	2	5	2.7
Picture Exchange	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0.5
Pointing/pulling/gesture	3	3.7	1	2.1	2	4	6	3.3
No clear communication method	5	6.1	1	2.1	3	6	9	5

n=180 Elementary=82   Middle=48   High=50

Table3
Number of Students Reported on by Primary Location of Literacy Instruction

Location of Lit Instruction	Elementary		Middle		High School		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Self-Contained, SPED	33	40.7	20	41.7	19	38.0	72	40.2
Resource Classroom	19	23.5	13	27.1	5	10.0	37	20.7
Small group instruction	12	14.8	6	12.5	5	10.0	23	12.8
General Education	10	12.3	7	14.6	16	32.0	33	18.4
General Ed Total	*41*	*50.6*	*26*	*54.2*	*26*	*52*	*93*	*51.9*
Hospital/Homebound	3	3.7	1	2.1	2	4.0	6	3.4
Homeschool	4	4.9	1	2.1	1	2.0	6	3.4
Parentally Placed Private School	0	0	0	0	2	4.0	2	1.1

Procedures

1. Members of the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC)'s mailing list received an email containing a URL link to a survey (~8,210 members)

2. Of the 290 people who responded to the email and began the survey, 211 participants answered '*yes*' to "Does your child have an intellectual disability?" and were prompted to proceed

3. Participants were able to select more than one item for each multiple selection question
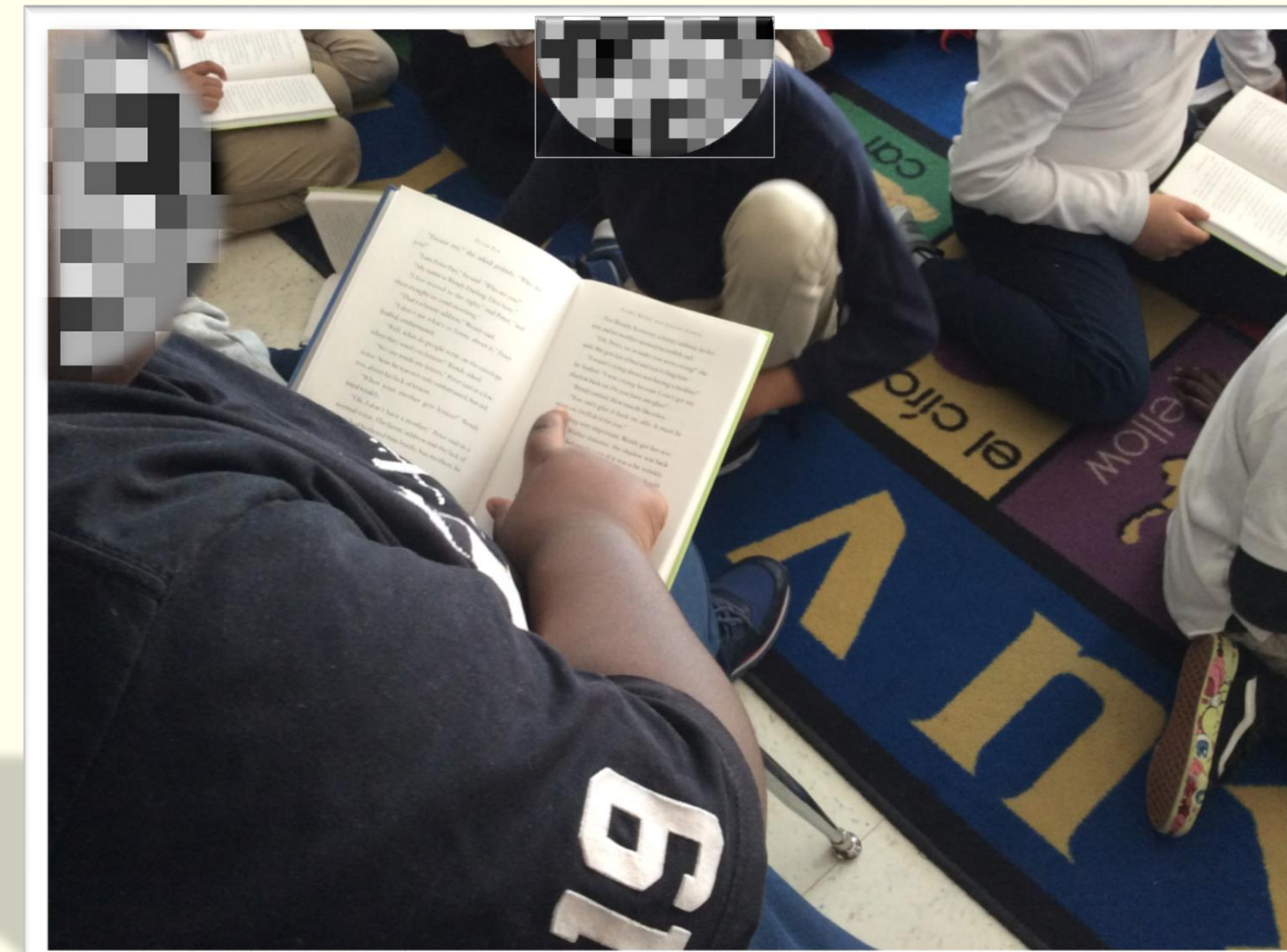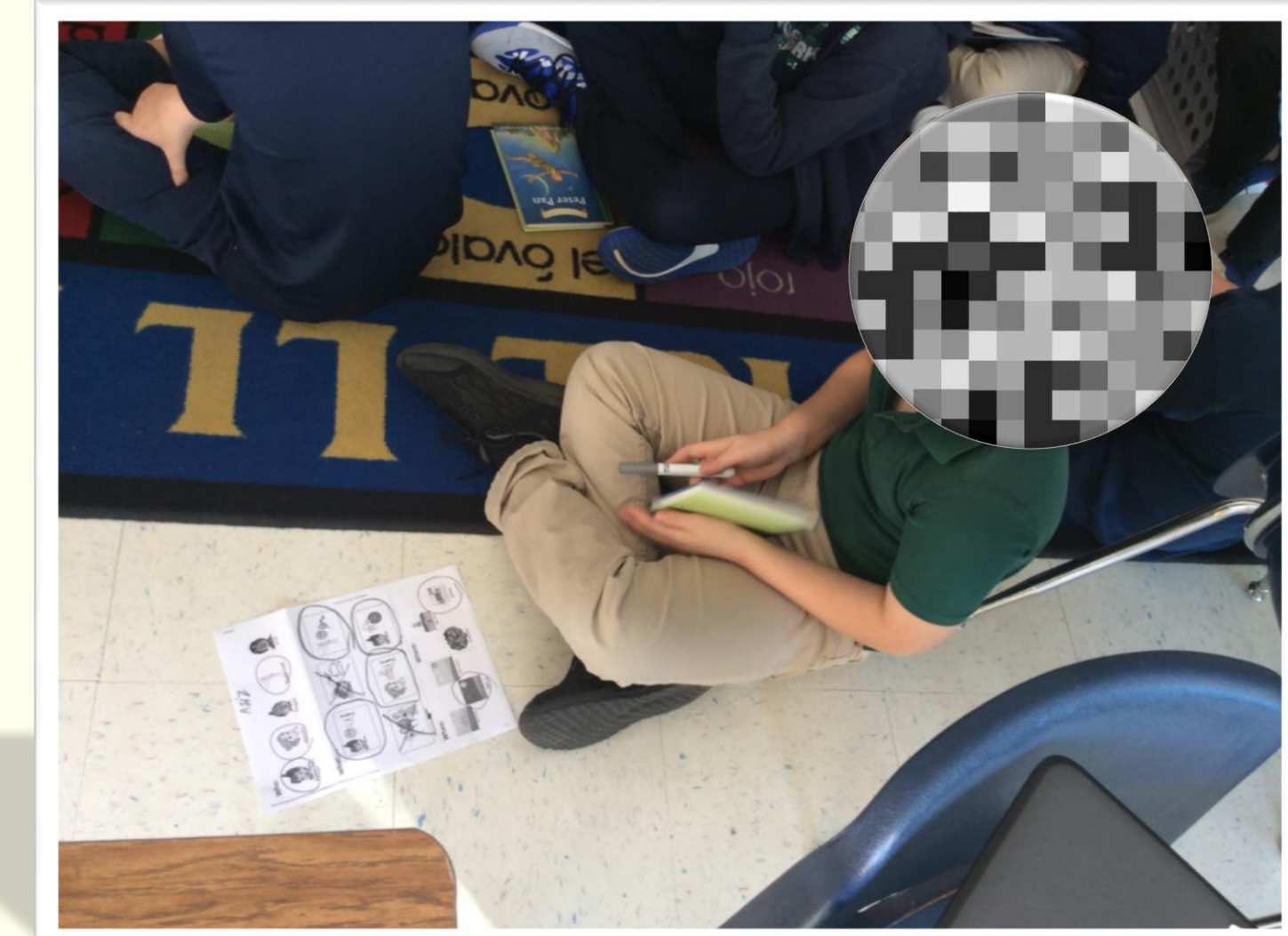
Survey Instrument
25 Questions:
- 5 Categories: reading, listening comprehension, reading comprehension, writing, and literacy
- 9 Multiple choice questions
- 12 Multiple *selection* questions
- 2 Open response questions
- 2 Rank order questions

Results

Elementary School Parents

Most important: Understand what they read and read to navigate their environment
Least important: Identify common words

Most frequent: Sight words, listening comprehension, and vocabulary
Least frequent: Writing conventions

Most frequent: Easily distracted, uninterested, do not understand the content, and unable to stay in seat
Least frequent: Lack of appropriate models and lack of accessible materials

Middle School Parents

Most important : Follow written directions (e.g., a recipe) and understand what they read
Least important: Identify common words

Most frequent: Reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and vocabulary
Least frequent: Print awareness and letter knowledge

Most frequent: Easily distracted, uninterested, and do not understand the content
Least frequent: Lack of appropriate models and lack of accessible materials

Learning to read is very important

Reading leads to better future outcomes

High School Parents

Most important : Follow written directions (e.g., a recipe) and understand what they read
Least important: Identify common words

Most frequent: Listening and reading comprehension
Least Frequent: Print awareness, letter knowledge, and phonological awareness

Most frequent: Easily distracted, do not understand the content, and instruction does not meet needs
Least frequent: Lack of appropriate models and disruptive behaviors

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