Evaluation of SPELD in New Zealand

Report of the Phase Two survey data prepared for SPELD NZ

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings from an evaluation which began in 2009 on the impact of SPELD in New Zealand, and is the second phase of the larger study. This phase has involved surveying key groups of participants about their perceptions of SPELD. The groups involved are SPELD teachers, RTLBs and school staff from across New Zealand.

The focus of the second phase of the evaluation was concerned with similar issues and questions as the first phase, but through the surveys we were able to obtain a larger number of viewpoints on these things and from a different range of participants than the first phase. The issues and questions in common with the first phase were:

• Shifts in achievement and attitudes to learning for students participating in SPELD;
• Components of the SPELD teaching programme that were perceived to contribute to positive shifts in student outcomes; and
• SPELD's effectiveness in building sector capability.

Data was collected from three different surveys:

• Every school in New Zealand (on-line)
• All RTLBs through their RTLB clusters (on-line)

• All SPELD teachers (hard copy).

Key findings from Phase Two of the evaluation were:

Participation

Surveys were sent to every school in New Zealand (2,385); to 690 TRLBs in RTLB clusters; and to 310 SPELD teachers. Response rates were low for the schooling sector (16 percent from schools and 28 percent from RTLBs), but higher for the SPELD teachers (85 percent).

Use of SPELD

Of the school sample that responded:
• Forty percent were not currently using SPELD
• Over half (58 percent) used SPELD.

Nearly half of those that used SPELD were parent initiated where parents contacted SPELD to teach their child and then informed the school. Half of these schools had one or two SPELD teacher teaching one or two students.

Very few schools appear to invite SPELD teachers into their school to teach SPELD students. Half of those who used SPELD said they had SPELD teachers teaching *in* the school, and RTLBs reported 5 percent of the schools in their clusters doing this.

SPELD costs of assessment and tuition appear to act as a deterrent to the parents of students in low decile schools.

Students in main urban centres have easier access to SPELD than students in rural areas.

Knowledge about SPELD

Schools and RTLBs don't know a lot about SPELD. A quarter of schools knew not much or nothing, but 43 percent said they'd like to know more. Two thirds of RTLBs knew very little about SPELD apart from reading assessment reports.

Perceptions of effectiveness of SPELD interventions

- About half the school respondents said SPELD teachers had a positive impact on students' literacy achievement and attitudes to learning; while one third of RTLBs said SPELD interventions were useful.

- Both schools and RTLBs rated one-to-one tutoring and targeting needs with specific strategies as the main strengths of the SPELD intervention, and diagnostic testing and assessments as the second highest strength.

- SPELD teachers had a very strong sense that they had a positive impact on students' achievement, especially in literacy (reading, writing and spelling). While 97 percent of these teachers claimed this, only half of the teachers from schools rated SPELD's impact as positive as this. However, until we collect hard data about this, we can come to no conclusive judgement.

- In terms of students' attitudes to learning, even more SPELD teachers (97–99 percent) said they had at least a positive impact. School data was in more agreement on this issue than on achievement.

- Three quarters of the SPELD teachers rated their personalised teaching approach, based on good assessment data and followed up with specific targeted teaching activities, as the most important component in their teaching programme to contribute to positive shifts in student outcomes. Schools also identified these components as the most effective. An additional component identified by 28 percent of SPELD teachers was using multi-sensory, fun activities with students, and another quarter noted the importance of teacher qualities such as their specialised knowledge and expertise. Only 10 percent mentioned phonics as an important component of the teaching programme.

- Half of the school respondents believed the ideal timetable for SPELD tuition would be at regular intervals several times a week, for short sessions.

Communication and collaboration between groups using SPELD

More effective collaboration between schools and SPELD so that they share their understandings, interventions and practices, was seen by schools and RTLBs as the most useful future for SPELD.

Support for SPELD services being government funded

Some RTLBs and schools believed the government should be paying for diagnostic testing.

Sustainability of SPELD

SPELD teachers are a very experienced cohort of teachers with half having more than ten years teaching experience as classroom/specialist teachers. However, they are an aging cohort, with 91 percent of these teachers over 50 years old. Half of the SPELD teachers who responded to the survey were aged over 60 years, and only 12 percent were under 50 years.

In terms of building sector capability overall, the age profile of SPELD teachers suggests that SPELD may need to attract more younger teachers in the future. The financial reimbursement of SPELD teachers may have an impact on fewer younger teachers' participation in SPELD.

Aspects of SPELD going well and recommendations for change

(a) Professional development:

Most SPELD teachers (over 90 percent) felt that SPELD was doing a good job to keep them well prepared professionally to do their jobs, and that the conferences and other kinds of professional development was at least "quite useful".

Very few school respondents or RTLBs had taken part in SPELD professional development. RTLBs also reported that most classroom teachers in their clusters did not receive professional development from SPELD. It could be worthwhile for SPELD to provide PD for these teachers.

(b) Assessment

Assessment reports are seen by schools and RTLBs as being potentially helpful, but need to be written in a clearer way, with less jargon, so that teachers can understand them.

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1. Introduction

This report covers the second phase of a two-phase evaluation of SPELD in New Zealand, conducted by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER), for SPELD NZ Inc. The first phase involved collecting and analysing interview data in 2009 from SPELD participants (students, parents, teachers, and assessors), and classroom teachers in case studies from two clusters of 20 schools from three major cities.

Our analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the case studies can be found in Brooking and Rowlands (2009).

This second phase provides information about the quantitative data which was obtained from surveys of:

- schools;
- RTLBs; and
- SPELD teachers.

The purpose of the phase two surveys was to:

- provide a more widely rounded picture of SPELD in New Zealand; and
- gain further information on various issues that had emerged from the case study data.

Background information about SPELD, the operational context, and the purpose and strategic importance of the evaluation are outlined in the first report (see pages 1–4).

This chapter outlines the research questions addressed by the surveys and describes the research methods, sampling and data analysis.

Research questions

The research questions for phase two of the evaluation are:

1. What evidence is there of shifts in achievement for students who participate in SPELD ?

2. What evidence is there of shifts in attitudes to learning for students who participate in SPELD?

3. What components of the SPELD teaching programme are perceived to contribute to positive shifts in student outcomes?

4. How effective are the activities designed by SPELD NZ to build sector capability (e.g., professional development, conferences) perceived to be?

Methods

Surveys were sent to three groups of participants. Hard copy surveys were sent to all the SPELD teachers registered with SPELD NZ. Links to on-line surveys were sent to all the RTLBs working in clusters of schools, and links to another on-line survey were sent to all schools involved in compulsory schooling in New Zealand.

A copy of the school, RTLB, and SPELD teacher surveys can be found in Appendices 1–3 respectively.

Response rates

Table 1 shows the response rates of participants in the three surveys.

Table 1   **Response rates for the three surveys**

	RTLBs	**Schools**	**SPELD teachers**
Number sent	690	2385	310*
Number of responses	192	379	264
Response rate	28%	16%	85%

*Number of teachers on SPELD's database

Only 379 schools responded to the schools survey. The response rate from schools of 16 percent is not unexpected, given the increasing number of requests for participation in surveys schools now receive and that many schools do not use SPELD. However, SPELD commissioned the survey to get a measure of how their organisation is perceived, and what the barriers to use of their services are perceived to be by both schools with a connection to SPELD and other schools. The sample is sufficiently representative to deliver on this. The responses came from schools that were not currently using SPELD (40 percent) as well as users. When we compare the characteristics of the responding schools with those of all schools, the proportions from urban and rural schools; state and private sector schools; and primary, intermediate, secondary and composite schools all matched very closely. There were responses from all decile groups, although, not surprisingly given the financial constraints on using SPELD, decile 10 schools were slightly over-represented, and decile 1-6 schools were slightly under-represented.

Sampling

The samples for each survey were drawn by different methods. All schools (including state, state integrated, private, primary, intermediate, secondary, and area schools) were sent an on-line survey using the MOE database. The survey went to schools that did and did not use SPELD. All RTLBs were sent surveys through their RTLB clusters. All SPELD teachers were sent a survey via their Member Associations, who keep a database of addresses.

Reminder notices were sent to all groups on two separate occasions.

Data analysis

Data from the surveys was analysed by the Statistics and Data Management team and tables were constructed to illustrate findings. These findings were then analysed according to themes.

Overview of the report structure

Chapter 2 of this report describes the compulsory schooling's experiences of SPELD. Chapter 3 reports on the RTLB survey findings; and Chapter 4 discusses the experiences and perceptions of SPELD teachers. Chapter 5 summarises the main findings derived from Phase Two in relation to the findings of Phase One.

2. The schooling sector's views of SPELD

This chapter describes the survey responses from the compulsory schooling sector in New Zealand.

It is important to remember that the response rate for schools was 16 percent, so the findings we present need to be understood as not representing the majority of schools. However, in spite of it being a low response rate, the schools that did respond were a good representation of schools across New Zealand, as some of the following tables reveal.

Demographic data of schools

Principals were asked to either complete the survey themselves or arrange for another staff member with knowledge of SPELD to do so. Over half of the school surveys were completed by principals, as Table 2 indicates.

Table 2   **Staff member who filled out survey**

	N=379 %
Principal	**56**
DP / AP	**15**
SENCO	**9**
Learning Support Teacher / Co-ordinator / Dean / HOD	**7**
Lit/Eng Teacher	**6**
Teacher	**3**

Four percent of responses were received from specialised leaders of literacy, senior team leaders, specialised teachers (e.g. Reading Recovery, R.TLit and SPELD), and secretaries and office managers.

Table 3 illustrates the types of schools that responded to the survey. Most schools were primary schools, which would be expected, as the majority of SPELD students are primary aged.

Table 3 **Type of School**

School Type	n=379 %	All schools n=2,585
Primary	74	74
Secondary	13	13
Intermediate	6	5
Area / Composite	6	6

Schools that responded were representative of the range of school types nationally.

Seventy four percent of responding schools were state schools, 14 percent were state integrated, and 4 percent were private schools.

Table 4 shows the percentage of school respondents by decile, in relation to the national representation by decile.

Table 4 **Decile Rating of School**

School Decile	N=379 %	National %
1–3	22	30
4–6	24	29
7	11	9
8	14	10
9	11	10
10	17	11

The schools with the highest response rate of surveys were decile 4–6 schools (24 percent), with the lowest decile category of 1–3 schools as next highest (22 percent). Decile 10 schools (17 percent) were the third highest, with decile 8 next, and deciles 7 and 9 with the lowest return rate (11 percent each).

Table 5 shows the location of the schools that responded.

Table 5 **Urban/rural**

	N=379 %	National %
Main urban	49	53
Rural	27	28
Minor urban	23	18

Nearly half the schools which responded were located in main urban areas.

Table 6 provides information about the school respondents' use of SPELD and the number of years they have had students attend SPELD at their school.

Table 6   **School use of SPELD**

	N=379 %
Never used SPELD	22
Used to have, not now	18
3–5 years	15
6–10 years	13
Up to 2 years	9
11+ years	7
Don't know	14

Table 6 shows that 44 percent of the schools who responded had SPELD students attending their school, and 18 percent used to have.

Schools that did not use SPELD

Forty percent of respondents were from schools who had never, or were not currently using SPELD. These schools were from all decile groups (approximately 10 percent from each, with 41 percent from decile 7-10 schools), unlike the schools that *did* use SPELD, which were predominantly (67%) higher decile schools (decile 7-10).

The reasons schools gave for not using SPELD are listed below in Table 7.

Table 7   **Reasons schools did NOT use SPELD**

	N=151 %
Our students cannot afford it	39
We do not know enough about SPELD	28
No SPELD teachers near by	9
Using other approaches in school	9
No parent requests	6
No students currently need SPELD (Not that school know)	6
Don't want students to take time out of the classroom	5
Parents contact SPELD	5

The most frequent reason schools gave for not using SPELD was the cost for their students. This reason was given by 63 percent of respondents from low decile (1-3) schools, and 18 percent of higher decile (7-10) schools. The finding about the high cost of SPELD for some families confirmed what Phase One data suggested. The case studies schools were mainly high decile, where the parents were more able to afford SPELD assessments.

It is interesting to note in Table 7 above, that 46 percent of the schools that responded to the survey, were lower decile schools (1–6), which shows an interest in SPELD, even though about half of these decile 1-6 schools (51 percent) were not using SPELD. What is not clear from the data is whether these schools would use SPELD if it was more affordable for parents.

One finding of interest to SPELD NZ is that 28 percent of these schools gave the response "we don't know enough about SPELD " as a reason for not using it.

Eight percent selected "other" reasons which included:

• They found SPELD difficult to work with
• Parents chose a variety of other programmes
• The principal or BOT had made a decision not to use SPELD
• The school didn't agree with interventions/methods used by SPELD
• They believed there was no evidence that SPELD teaching methods work
• SPELD was not considered value for money

Schools that did use SPELD

Only 221 of the 379 schools who responded, said they used SPELD. In considering the data in the rest of this section then, it should be remembered that findings relate to just 58 percent of the schools in the sample.

The following table illustrates how these schools originally became involved with SPELD.

Table 8 **How schools originally became involved with SPELD**

	n=221 %
Parent requested SPELD's help and informed school	**46**
School advised parent to contact SPELD for help with their child	**33**
The school approached SPELD	**11**
Staff member SPELD trained/school has history working with SPELD	**9**
SPELD approached school	**6**
A staff member requested SPELD's help	**4**
Don't know	**15**

Respondents could tick multiple options, and 25 percent gave two or more responses.

The most common way schools became involved with SPELD (46 percent) was when parents informed them they had already requested SPELD's help for their child. A third of school respondents (33 percent) said they advised parents to refer students for a SPELD assessment.

Two percent of school respondents reported that their students were already involved with SPELD prior to attending their school, and another two percent reported that their school had become involved through parents independently approaching SPELD.

Because the above table shows multiple responses, the following statement summarises who initiated the involvement. Twenty percent of respondents did not know how the school became involved with SPELD; 31 percent of respondents reported the school's involvement with SPELD was parent initiated; 29 percent reported it was school initiated; 19 percent said it was a mix of parent/school, and/or SPELD initiated; and 1 percent said it was SPELD only initiated.

We were interested in finding out how many students with SLDs were working with SPELD in these schools in the school year of 2009. Table 9 sets out the numbers of students working with SPELD.

Table 9 **Number of students per school that attended SPELD in 2009**

Number of students	% of schools (n=221)
1–2	**40**
3–4	**18**
5–6	**8**
7+	**7**
None	**7**
Don't know	**16**

The largest proportion of schools (40 percent) had one or two SPELD students in 2009, while another 18 percent had three or four. Forty two percent of respondents from secondary schools did not know how many students attended SPELD, compared with 9 percent of primary schools. Smaller schools (primary and area/composite) were more likely to have fewer students involved (45 percent of primary schools had 1–2 students involved), and larger schools were more likely to have 5 or more students involved (18 percent of intermediates, 24 percent of secondary, 13 percent of primary).

Decile 10 schools had more students across the board than low decile schools also, with 20 percent having 3–4 students, compared to 6 percent of decile 1–3 schools; 24 percent having 5 or more students, compared to 13 percent of decile 1–3 schools.

We were also interested to know how many SPELD teachers were working with students at these schools.

Table 10 **Number of SPELD teachers per school working with students in 2009**

Number of Teachers	% of schools (n=221)
None	**10**
1–2	**55**
3–4	**7**
5+	**2**
Don't know	**22**

Over half of the schools (55 percent) who responded had one or two SPELD teachers working with their students in 2009. Twenty two percent of respondents did not know if they had SPELD teachers working with their students, and 5 percent did not answer the question. Ten percent said they had no SPELD teachers working with their students

Approximately half the schools (47 percent) reported that SPELD teachers came into school to work with students *in* school time, and a similar number (46 percent) said SPELD teachers work with students *out of* school time. A small number of schools (8 percent) had SPELD teachers on the staff who worked with students in school time.

Schools' knowledge of SPELD

We were interested to know how much staff at schools offering SPELD knew about SPELD's approaches to teaching students with SLDs.

Table 11 **Knowledge about SPELD approaches to teaching students with SLDs?**

Teachers' knowledge about SPELD	n=221 %
A lot	**11**
Quite a lot	**27**
A little bit	**33**
Not much	**19**
Nothing	**5**

Respondents fell into three main camps, with approximately a third in each, with 38 percent knowing a lot or quite a lot; 33 percent knowing a little bit; and 24 percent knowing nothing or very little. However, while 43 percent said they would like to know more about SPELD and the interventions they use, 50 percent said they would not. Twenty three percent of those who would like to know more about SPELD said they already knew a lot or quite a lot about SPELD, compared to 51 percent of those who did not want to know more. So the interest was mainly, but not exclusively, from those who did not know much about SPELD.

Table 12 shows what sorts of information about SPELD, schools would like more of.

Table 12   **SPELD information respondents would like more knowledge about**

	n=221 %
Everything / Overview	**11**
Specific strategies/programmes/resources	**10**
Ways teachers can replicate SPELD strategies in class / collaboration	**8**
Help interpreting assessment reports/strategies	**7**
N/A as already SPELD trained/work closely with SPELD	**5**
Effectiveness of SPELD interventions	**3**
Other	**4**

This table shows that 11 percent of schools would like to know more about everything SPELD offers, or at least an overview of what they can offer. Another 10 percent would like to know more about specific teaching strategies, resources and programmes, for example:

> How they assess the children to find the starting points for lessons. What sort of things they would do in a normal lesson. How would they assess whether their intervention is successful.

The following quote illustrates the desire for more collaboration between SPELD and schools so that both are teaching the same strategies to the student, which 8 percent of schools would like more knowledge of.

> How I can echo the teaching in SPELD into the class reading programme so we are working together closely for the good of the child

Our findings in the first phase of this research showed that the case study schools and SPELD teachers hardly collaborated at all, but would like to. A positive finding from this survey, as Table 13 illustrates, reveals that at least 44 percent of the schools that responded, do collaborate at least to some extent.

Table 13 **The amount of information sharing between classroom teachers and SPELD teachers about students with SLDs.**

	n=221 %
A lot	3
Quite a lot	18
A little bit	23
Not much	9
None	19
Don't know	9

As the above table shows only 21 percent of schools said they shared information about students between classroom teachers and SPELD teachers 'quite a lot" or 'a lot", while 28 percent said they shared no information or not much.

Professional development

We asked respondents whether staff at their school had attended professional development provided by SPELD and a third said they had, and just over a third (37 percent) said they hadn't, while a quarter were unsure.

Those who wanted to know more about SPELD were slightly less likely to come from schools where staff had had PD from SPELD (29 percent), than those who did not want to know more (41 percent).

We were interested to find out what sorts of professional development these schools were receiving from SPELD. Half of them had attended conferences and courses, and just over a third received PD at school, for example, in staff meetings.

Effectiveness of SPELD interventions

When we asked respondents whether they thought SPELD had any particular strengths in comparison to other literacy interventions, 37 percent believed they did; 9 percent believed they didn't; and 44 percent were unsure. As shown in Table 14, the main strengths respondents considered SPELD to have, included one-to-one tutoring and specialist teaching of strategies to help dyslexic children—a finding supported by the case studies.

Table 14 **The strengths SPELD offers**

	n=221 %
One-to-one tutoring targeting specific needs	**21**
Specific strategies to help dyslexic child taught by specialist teacher	**11**
Good diagnostic assessments	**8**
Tutors with in-depth knowledge/expertise/training	**5**
General positive	**4**
Other	**3**

Impact of SPELD teachers on students

Survey respondents rated the impact of SPELD teachers on various aspects of students' achievement, attitudes and behaviour, as shown in Figure 1. Between 19 and 43 percent of respondents did not know what impact SPELD had, depending on the aspects, and another 10–14 percent did not respond. Very few believed SPELD teachers had a negative impact on any aspect, and no-one said they had a strong negative impact on students.

Figure 1 **Impact of SPELD on students' attitudes, behaviour and achievement**
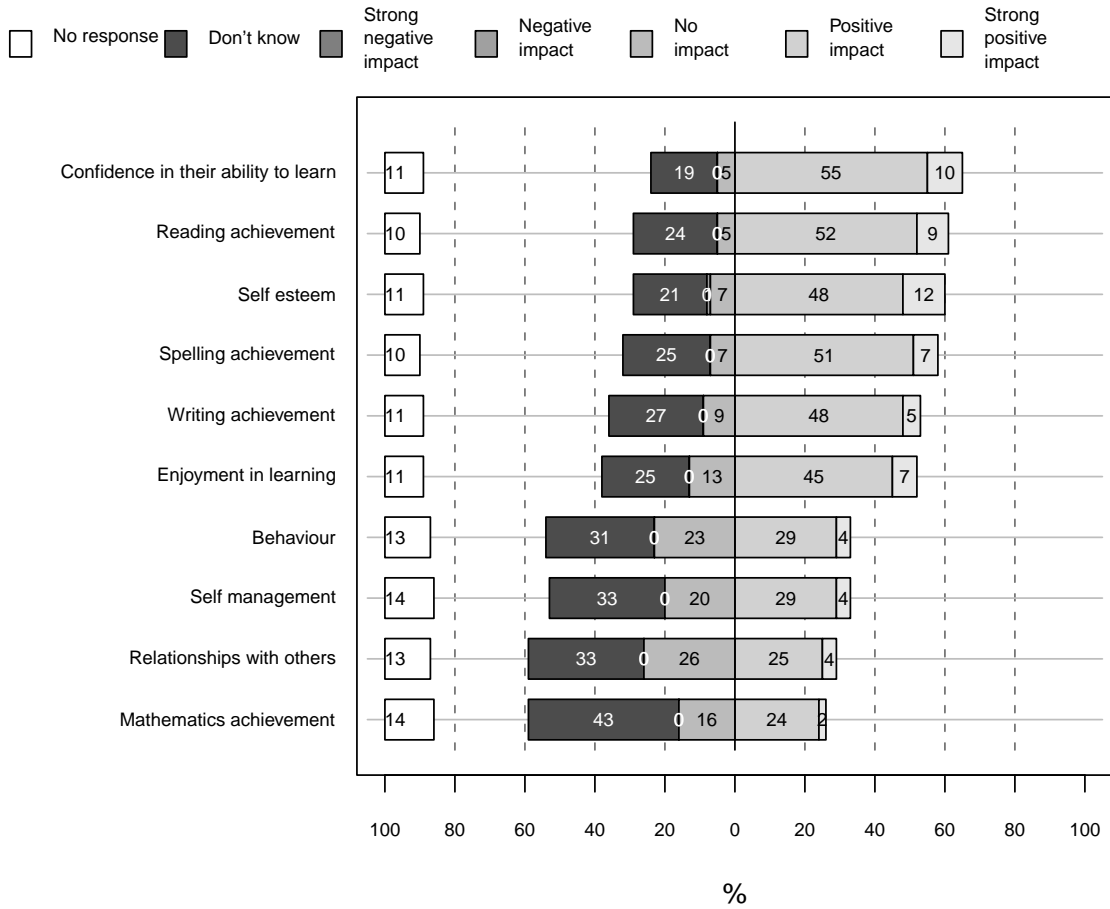
Perceptions of the impact of SPELD on student achievement

Over half the respondents rated SPELD teachers as having a positive impact on students' literacy (reading, spelling and writing). Only a quarter (26 percent) thought they had a positive impact on maths however, while 43 percent said they didn't know about the impact on maths.

Perceptions of the impact of SPELD on student attitudes and behaviour

SPELD teachers overall were seen by over half of the respondents to have a positive effect on students' attitudes. In terms of students' self esteem and confidence, 10–12 percent of schools rated SPELD teachers as having a strong positive impact. These findings confirm opinions cited in the case studies by students and parents. Approximately a third of the respondents felt SPELD teachers had a positive impact on students' behaviour, self management, and relationships with others, but just over 20 percent saw no impact on these aspects.

Frequency and length of SPELD lessons

We asked schools what they thought the ideal frequency of SPELD lessons would be, as this had risen as an issue in the case studies, with many SPELD teachers and parents saying once a week was not enough for most students. Table 15 shows their responses.

Table 15 **Ideal frequency and length of lessons for most SPELD students**

Ideal frequency and length of lessons	n=221 %
30 minutes twice a week	**26**
20 minutes 3–4 times a week	**26**
1 hour a week	**10**
Dependent on the student	**5**
Dependent on circumstances	**3**
Other	**11**
Don't know	**19**

About half of the respondents (52 percent) believed the ideal timetable for SPELD tuition would be at regular intervals several times a week, for short sessions (30 minutes twice a week, or 20 minutes 3–4 times a week). This finding confirmed what many case study participants also said. However, many schools responded in ways which took into consideration other factors, such as the child's age, needs, distance from a tutor, parent's commitments and so on, as the following quotes indicate, and these are classed as 'other' comments in the table.

> It varies according to the age and needs of the child and is also affected by travelling by the SPELD tutor to us.

> Depends greatly on distance from SPELD tutor; for some parents one hour a week is preferred because of inconvenience.

Changes to SPELD

We were interested to find out what changes schools considered needed to be made as far as SPELD was concerned. In the case studies we had been given two key messages by classroom teachers, who said:

(a) they didn't know enough about SPELD, and

(b) they thought there needed to be more collaboration between SPELD and schools if the situation was going to improve for students with SLDs.

Firstly we asked schools whether there were any changes that could be made by SPELD to better meet the needs of students at their school, and a third responded that there did need to be. Nearly

half (45 percent) however, said they didn't know whether there needed to be, reinforcing our finding in the case studies of a widespread level of lack of information about SPELD in the school sector.

Secondly, we gave schools the opportunity through an open-ended question to describe the kinds of changes they thought it would be useful for SPELD to consider making. Table 16 shows the responses.

Table 16 **Changes to SPELD considered desirable**

Suggested changes made by schools	n=221 %
Better collaboration between SPELD and Schools/Parents	**18**
Affordability/assessments free or cheaper/more resources	**6**
Specialist SLD teacher on staff, so all students with SLDs have access	**4**
Improved quality of SPELD tutors	**4**
Other	**5**

As shown in Table 16, the change schools most frequently identified as being needed (18 percent), was better collaboration between SPELD and schools and parents. This is consistent again with our case study findings. There were comments about collaboration that suggested SPELD needed to work at getting parents and schools on side, as one principal expressed, when asked to suggest changes that could better meet the needs of students:

> Not to pit the parents against the school programmes already in place. For many parents they part with money they can little afford because there are statements made by SPELD that this programme is essential and school can't provide that support. I also am not happy that parents are told they are to take their child out of school for the lesson, i.e. we have no after school appointments left so your child is to come at 9.30am for their lesson. This is not supportive for the quality of school programmes that are already in place for the child.

Another school offered advice on the need for better advertising and communication strategies with parents that SPELD could benefit from:

> We have families in our community that would benefit from SPELD but are unaware of you [SPELD] and seem rather hesitant to approach you [SPELD] as we don't have any paper resource (pamphlet) to give them to let you know who you [SPELD] are. I love your website but for parents as a first step some type of pamphlet that I could give to them would be really good. Also, an occasional verbal report would be good on the student's progress. It would be also good if SPELD tutors were aware of current classroom practice, e.g., one of mine was not aware of the Ready to Read series reading levels.

The affordability of SPELD for parents was another issue that six percent of schools would like to see change, including free or cheaper assessments. Two percent had other concerns about assessments including the quality of them and the long waiting times.

> We have concerns about some assessments and results. At times we feel the results do not reflect the child we work with.

> Staff have commented that they do not find the reports useful to use, so maybe some discussion to clarify how schools could use the reports better [would be useful].

The following two quotes were coded as 'other comments' and are included here to show how some teachers' views are clearly changing about SPELD.

> SPELD does not seem to be how I remembered it when I first started teaching. In the 80s it was quite prescribed and the training to me seemed more rigorous. This could just be my perception. Now, based on recent experience with a SPELD tutor in our school, she has used resources we use anyway such as brain-gym, Bannatyne, spelling programmes we also use. So it is almost as if, why are you paying the SPELD tutor to do that, when we as a school can provide at no cost?

> SPELD teachers should be recognised in the State system and paid with the same rates as other teachers as well as recognising their qualifications with pay rates, although they would also need to keep up with all current knowledge of the New Zealand Curriculum and any new developments from the Ministry.

Future of SPELD

Participants were asked an open question about what they saw as the ideal role SPELD could have with schools in the future, and most of the responses were positively inclined towards closer integration with public education.

Table 17 **Ideal role for SPELD with schools?**

	n=221 %
SPELD and schools collaborating for good of student / Support role	**36**
SPELD PD, tutoring, assessment Government funded (and offered in schools)	**23**
SPELD provides PD for teachers in schools	**10**
Parents continue to pay for SPELD services in or out of school time	**7**
Not sure / don't know / none	**5**

Collaboration between SPELD and schools to better support students was also seen by 36 percent of respondents as the ideal role for SPELD. The following comment was typical of many respondents expressing these ideas:

> Regular contact between classroom teacher and SPELD teacher to consider progress of the child aiming to tailor lessons for greater success. Involve parents as much as possible as the progress of the child requires all major stakeholders to work together.

Nearly a quarter of respondents believed SPELD should be government funded and offered in all schools. A clear minority (7 percent) believed the status quo should remain whereby parents paid for SPELD services privately. A small proportion (7 percent) made "other" comments. Most of these were suggestions for more flexible organisational structures, such as clusters and referral agencies, so that SPELD was more available to schools that have difficulty accessing its services.

The final open question gave respondents a chance to say whatever they wanted to about SPELD, and we coded these according to the categories shown in Table 18.

Table 18 **Further comments**

	n=221 %
(a) **SPELD doing a good job / A valuable organisation/resource**	**14**
(b) **No need to say anything further**	**9**
(c) **Funding issues**	**5**
(d) **Will do anything to help children with SLDs / What works best for the student**	**5**
(e) **Need for greater communication between SPELD and Schools/Teachers**	**4**
(f) **Other**	**5**

When invited to add their own comments about SPELD, most of the comments were positive and appreciative of the job SPELD is doing. For instance, for the first code—SPELD doing a good job, the following quote was typical:

> I think it is an excellent programme tailored for children with real learning difficulties.

Funding was also raised as an issue for schools to decide on, and the next quotes are in favour of spending it on SPELD services:

> I would like to see the testing and programme more affordable for our parents but I am unsure how that can happen.

> SLD students are a needed group who don't have the funds required. I would like to see all schools given funding to use for services which they deem appropriate for their needs. This funding should be what is now for Reading Recovery. If a school opts to use it for Reading Recovery [that's] fair enough. I would opt to use it for SPELD and PPP [Pause, prompt, praise].

Some respondents felt that what-ever was best for the student was the most important message, such as the following:

> As a Senior Teacher with 31 years experience, Reading Recovery trained, I have always valued a range of responses to meet the individual needs of our students.

> I would like to see SPELD teachers accepted like others such as R.T.Lit. etc. and perhaps they become part of the RTLB cluster and work to assist the team with the child as the

central focus. One size does not fit all and SPELD is another teaching method to try! Since more and more children are being identified as dyslexic it would be great to draw on expertise from the likes of SPELD to assist busy teachers in finding the appropriate programme to assist.

The final quote is included for SPELD's interest and is an example of the complexity of issues for schools involved with SPELD. It covers funding and collaboration issues, and the variable quality of tutors, as well as questions about the effectiveness of SPELD. The respondent says:

I have respect for what SPELD teachers do, but have seen often that students seem to reach a plateau occasionally and need a break from SPELD from time to time. There is no compulsion on parents to pass on their SPELD report to the school, so many of us are unaware that our students are having tuition out of school. It is in the student's interests for SPELD to forward a copy, preferably by email, for the specialist literacy/support teacher. Though most teachers don't bother to read them, they will read a summary—so I usually extract that from the report with the recommendations for teaching. As it costs parents a lot of money for SPELD assessments, I recommend that an update is not done until the end of Yr 10, so that it is valid for NZQA reader-writer applications the following year. As such supporting documents must be dated within the last three years, a report done at the end of Year 10 will be valid as supporting evidence for an application each year through to Year 13, without the additional cost of an update.

Summary of Findings

Lack of knowledge about SPELD was indicated at different levels. There was a very low response rate from schools generally. Twenty two percent who responded did not use SPELD. Schools that responded to the survey but said they didn't use SPELD used the 'not knowing enough about it' reason in over a quarter of the cases. Even schools that did use SPELD often responded that they didn't know enough about SPELD in various questions. Overall, this seems an important message for SPELD as a national organisation to be aware of.

Over half of the respondents believed that SPELD has a positive impact on achievement. Most perceived SPELD had a positive impact on confidence, self esteem and enjoyment in learning. The two components that respondents believed contributed most to positive shifts in student outcomes, were one-to-one tutoring targeting specific needs, and specific strategies to help dyslexic students taught by the specialist SPELD teacher. However, over half of the respondents were not convinced that SPELD was more effective than other literacy interventions, and the rest were not sure. Another important message from schools concerned affordability of SPELD costs for parents. While some schools may have liked to use the expertise they saw SPELD providing, they did not advise parents to contact SPELD because they were aware it was too expensive an option for their parents.

Very few respondents had taken part in SPELD PD. Those that had were usually positive about the value of it. SPELD assessments were seen as a common way schools became aware of and involved with SPELD. Most respondents thought more collaboration between SPELD and schools

for the benefit of the students was needed in the future if SPELD was to make any future impact for students with SLDs. Nearly a quarter of respondents believed it was necessary to incorporate SPELD expertise and services into the public education system for this to happen.

It is important to remember that the data presented in this chapter represents the views of a very small sample of New Zealand schools. Sixteen percent of schools responded to the survey, but only 58 percent of these had actually used SPELD, and of those, between 15–22 percent didn't know how the school had become involved with SPELD, how many SPELD students they had or if there were any SPELD teachers working with students. However, the data does give a small snapshot of the views of a small proportion of schools who have in the main found SPELD to be helpful.

3. RTLBs' Views of SPELD

In this chapter we report on Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLBs') perspective of SPELD. This group of teachers are the most likely to have had dealings with students with SLDs in the compulsory schooling sector, and are therefore the most likely group to have knowledge of SPELD. SPELD has also worked with groups of RTLBs in some regions. We sent surveys to 690 RTLBs and had 192 responses—a response rate of 28 percent.

RTLBs' knowledge of SPELD

Our first questions were about how much RTLBs knew about SPELD's philosophy and teaching interventions, the research that underpins SPELD's approach and work, and SPELD assessment processes. Figure 2 shows the results.

Figure 2   **RTLB's knowledge of SPELD**
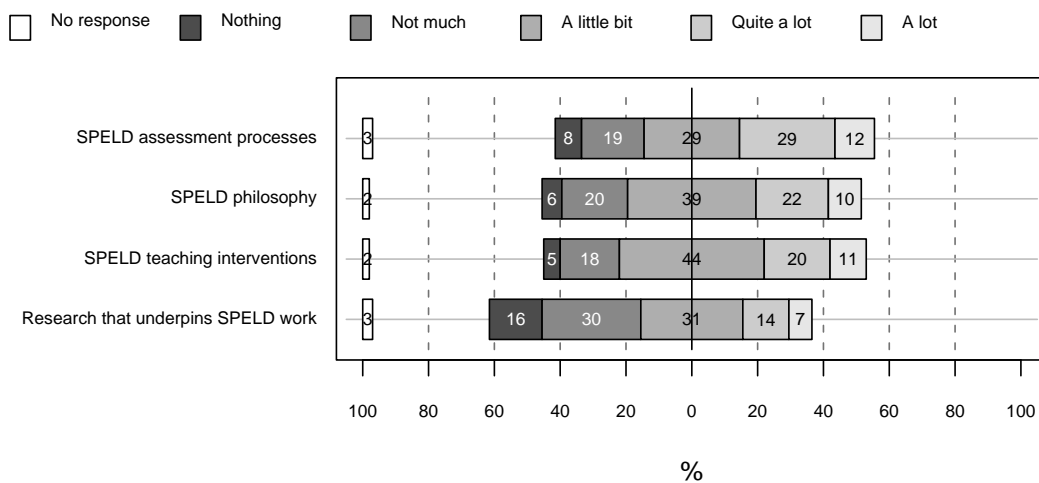
Approximately one third of RTLBs reported knowing "quite a lot" or "a lot" about SPELD philosophy and teaching interventions and well over one third (41 percent) reported knowing "quite a lot" or "a lot" about SPELD assessment processes. Only about one fifth (21 percent) reported this level of knowledge about research underpinning SPELD.

RTLB's involvement with SPELD

We asked RTLBs what activities with SPELD they had been involved in over the three years of 2007–2009, and the results are shown in Table 19.

Table 19 **SPELD activities RTLBs have been involved in over 2007–2009**

	n=192 %
Reading SPELD assessments of students	66
Working with SPELD teachers	35
Using SPELD interventions	25
Attending SPELD courses	16
Attending SPELD conferences	7
SPELD training or closely associated	7
Helping refer students to SPELD	4
Liaison role between teachers and SPELD	4
None	9
Other	4

Respondents were able to tick multiple options and almost half ticked two or more activities.

RTLBs were more involved with SPELD assessment reports than any other activity. About a third (35 percent) were involved with SPELD teachers working with students with SLDs, and 25 percent were using SPELD interventions. Only 9 percent had no involvement in any SPELD activities at all.

Usefulness of SPELD activities, in terms of RTLB's job

We were interested to find out the ways in which RTLBs found working with SPELD useful, if they worked with them at all. As the following graph shows, with the exception of reading assessment reports, between a third and a half of RTLBs do not take part in SPELD activities. We were more interested in what the RTLBs thought about the activities they were involved in with SPELD so have analysed the following results out of just the group who have taken part in these activities.

Figure 3 **Usefulness of SPELD activities**
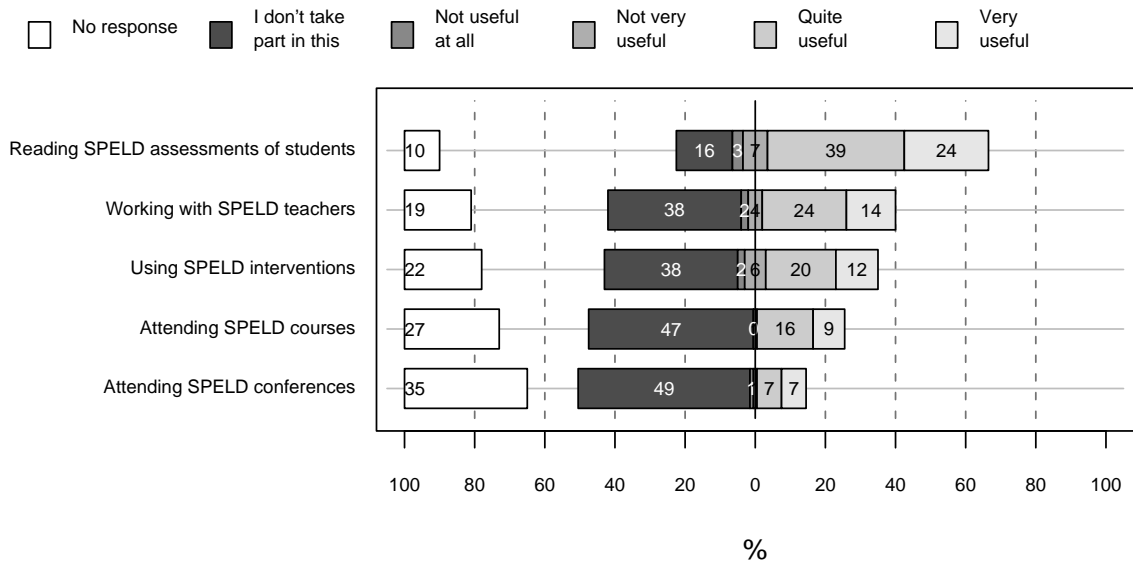
For those 73 percent who took part in reading SPELD assessments, one third (33 percent) found this activity "very useful" and just over half (53 percent) found it "quite useful".

For those 44 percent who worked with SPELD teachers, 32 percent found it "very useful" and over half (55 percent) found it "quite useful".

For those 40 percent who used SPELD interventions, 32 percent found them "very useful" and half (50 percent) found them "quite useful".

For those 25 percent who attended SPELD courses, 36 percent found them "very useful" and two thirds (64 percent) found them "quite useful".

For those 15 percent who attended SPELD conferences, nearly half (47 percent) found them "very useful" 47 percent found them "quite useful".

Relationship between SPELD and schools in RTLB clusters

RTLBs work in clusters of schools, and we asked them to comment on the proportions of schools in their clusters who work with SPELD in various ways. Again, a large proportion of RTLBs (between 21–44 percent) did not know or respond to the question about how their school clusters worked with SPELD, and between 5–33 percent selected "none".

Figure 4 **How SPELD worked with schools in RTLB clusters**
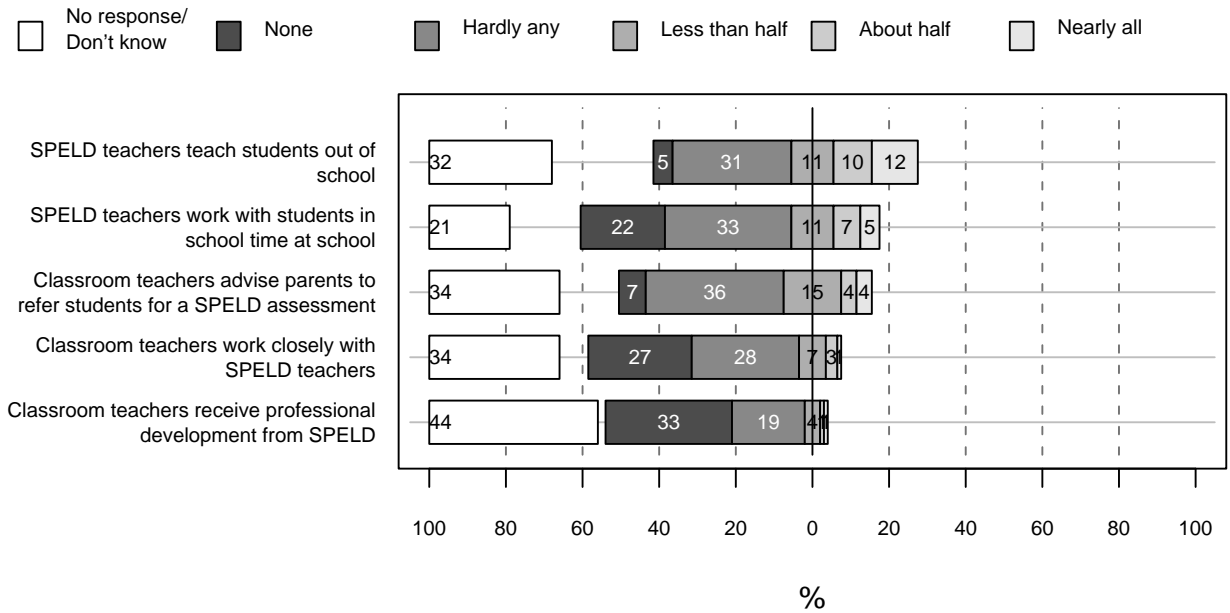
The most common pattern of the working relationship between SPELD and the schools in the RTLB clusters, was that SPELD teachers teach students out of school time and buildings. This finding confirmed what we found in schools in Phase One of the report.

Again, it appeared from the RTLBs' perspectives that there are very few schools where SPELD teachers work with students in school time. Only 5 percent said nearly all their schools did this, while 12 percent reported that in nearly all their school clusters SPELD teachers worked with students out of school time. The least common practice seemed to be classroom teachers working with SPELD teachers, but 3 percent said half their schools did this.

Only 4 percent of RTLBs reported that nearly all the teachers in their clusters advised parents to refer students for SPELD assessments. Another 4 percent said about half the teachers did.

RTLBs also reported that most classroom teachers in their clusters did not receive professional development from SPELD. This finding differs from the school survey where 34 percent of schools said staff had attended PD provided by SPELD.

RTLBs were given the opportunity to identify "other" ways their school clusters related to SPELD. There were responses from 27 percent of respondents explaining the lack of relationships between SPELD and schools, for reasons such as the expense of SPELD, lack of trained SPELD teachers in the region, and so on. One response as an illustration was:

> There's a real sense of 'us and them' in our District. Knowledge not shared. Families can't afford private tuition fees. Teachers want to meet student's needs but not able to access expertise/knowledge that SPELD tutors believe they have.

SPELD assessments

Eighty percent of RTLBs reported having seen a SPELD assessment report. We asked them how useful they thought the current SPELD assessment reports are for informing RTLBs, parents and classroom teachers.

Figure 5 **RTLBs' perception of the usefulness of SPELD assessment reports for informing different groups (n=153)**
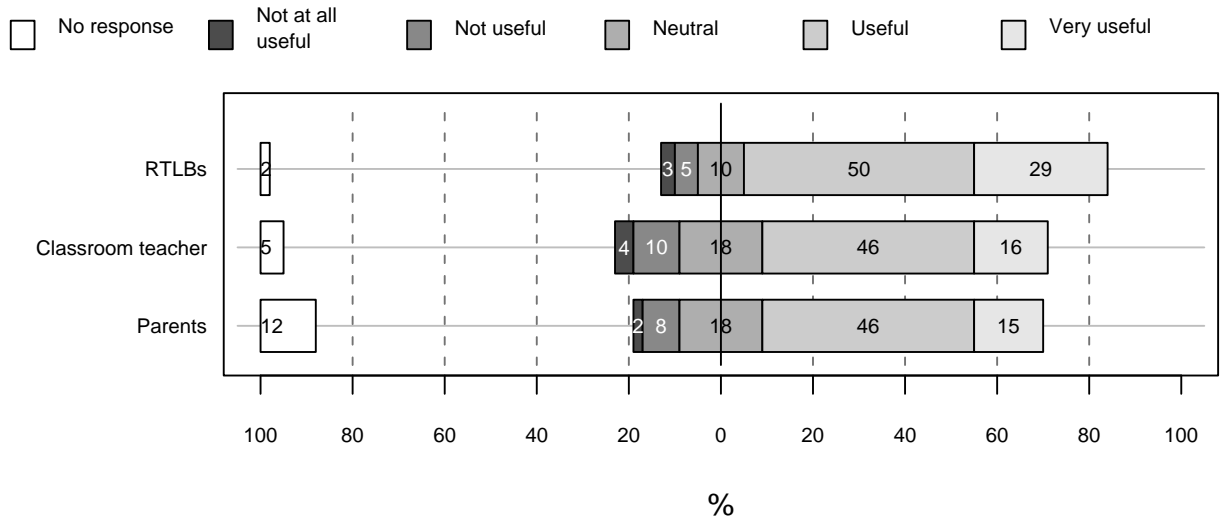
The majority of RTLBs considered the SPELD assessment reports to be either "useful" or "very useful" for all groups—RTLBs, teachers, and parents. RTLBs considered that the assessment reports were more useful to them than they would be for other teachers or parents. Of the 153 RTLBs who had seen an assessment report, over three quarters (79 percent) found it "useful" or "very useful" for informing RTLBs. Just under two thirds thought it would be "useful" or "very useful" for informing classroom teachers (62 percent), and a similar proportion thought it useful for informing parents (61 percent).

Table 20 shows the RTLBs' recommended improvements to an open-ended question about the SPELD assessment reports.

Table 20 **Recommendations for improvements to the assessment report**

	n=192 %
Assessment report needs to be clearly written for ease of understanding	**28**
Strategies and recommendations in report need to align with classroom practice	**14**
Need to improve negative tone of assessment reports	**7**
Assessment too expensive and associated tutoring too costly	**4**
Assessment reports vary in quality and consistency	**3**
Other	**3**

The most common recommendation from RTLBs (28 percent) was that assessment reports need to be clearly written so that all participants can understand them, as the following quote suggests:

> Yes—the reports that I have seen have been full of technical jargon and have contained very little information that is of any value to teachers or parents. In fact one report (which was also seen by a registered educational psychologist) had been computer generated after raw data had been fed into the computer programme. It contained no other comments or recommendations. And for that the parents had had to pay hundreds of dollars. It was a rip off and certainly brought the SPELD organisation into disrepute. A real concern I have regarding the reports is that the SPELD assessors never see the student in the context of the classroom, nor do they look at trends over time. They are just a snap-shot of the student on that day and do not take into account the fact the students may never have met the person administering the test before. Yet afterwards they make judgements around a child they barely know.

This reinforces the findings from some parents and classroom teachers in the Phase One report. Some considered that meetings should be arranged so that the assessment could be discussed.

> All assessment reports must be discussed with the appropriate adults so that total understanding can occur—too often a report is presented with NO explanations at all.

Fourteen percent also thought the strategies and recommendations in the report needed to align more closely with classroom practices to be useful.

> Many of the recommendations are great for assisting an individual child in a one-to-one capacity, but teachers are largely unable to meet these without extra funding/support, which is where difficulty lies. Could the layout be simplified to include a section for teachers with some suggestions as to how the needed skills can be integrated into classroom small group work.

A small proportion of respondent (2 percent) wanted more suggestions on how parents can help, to be included in assessment reports.

Another 2 percent made positive comments about the assessment tool.

SPELD initiatives that work well

RTLBs were also asked in an open question to specify which SPELD initiatives they considered worked well.

Over one third of the RTLBs (36 percent) did not answer this question; 12 percent said they did not know; and a small proportion (5 percent) reported that 'none worked well'.

The most common response from a quarter of respondents was the individualised teaching approach which focused on the specific skills the child needed to address their SLDs as the next two quotes illustrate. This finding is consistent with the findings from the Phase One report.

> One-to-one attention, tasks broken up into small chunks, instructions delivered clearly, one step at a time, breaks for physical activity between tasks.

> Skilled practitioners working with finely graded data delivering programmes matched to students needs.

The second most common response from 15 percent of RTLBs, was the collaborative approach between the school, SPELD, the family and the RTLB. Again this finding confirms initial findings from Phase One.

> The collaboration between a SPELD tutor, classroom teacher, parent and RTLB re programming for a student—all working on the same goals—good communication between everyone.

Interestingly, only 2 percent of RTLBs commented on SPELD initiatives raising student self esteem. This contrasts with the finding from the Phase One report, that many parents and students considered SPELD to have a considerable impact on students' self esteem.

Aspects of SPELD that could be improved

We asked RTLBs an open ended question about aspects of SPELD that could be improved. As shown on Table 21, over a third (35 percent) of respondents did not make any comment to this question, and 9 percent said they did not know enough about SPELD to comment.

Table 21 **Improvements to SPELD**

	n=192 %
More collaboration between SPELD and teachers	**33**
Assessments paid for by education system	**10**
Assessment reports written clearly	**8**
More understanding/knowledge of SPELD	**7**
Increase in SPELD assessors and teachers	**4**
Don't know / NA	**9**
Other	**3**

52 percent gave one recommendation and 13 percent gave two or more

The most common comment by a third (33 percent) of the respondents was that there needed to be more collaboration between all levels of the education system and SPELD. A typical response was:

> Communication for both the school and the community. Find ways of working within the local school so that it is not an add on for the students and parents, time-wise. Break down barriers that exist in some schools. Introduce themselves to the principal / SENCOs in schools. Attend planning meetings for students so that there are common goals for the student

Another 10 percent of RTLBs recommended the public education system pay for SPELD assessments.

> I totally support the teaching I am seeing. It's just a shame that it is not funded by MOE as it is beyond the reach of many. We have sought funding from charities for individuals, at times, but have had difficulty.

Another eight percent of respondents wanted changes to the way the assessment reports are written, including to be more clearly written, and in less deficit language, and with realistic expectations for teachers to administer.

> Reports read are very negative, some improvement needed here - reports that parents can understand. SPELD is only accessible to select few, i.e., those who have money!—like white, middle class.   Broaden access—don't know how long it has been since SPELD policies and practices have been updated. Perhaps that is an area which needs to be looked at also, making it more relevant to today's children.

These comments were very similar to the recommendations suggested by schools in their survey.

Seven percent want to know more about SPELD. Three percent wanted more research on the effectiveness of SPELD, and two percent said SPELD needed more culturally appropriate interventions and tests. Nine percent were unsure about improvements.

Summary of findings

RTLBs are a group of specialist teachers who work with students with SLDs, yet only about 10 percent claimed they knew "a lot" about SPELD. SPELD has worked with RTLBs in some regions but this appears to have been initiated by individual SPELD associations rather than by a national policy.

A third of RTLBs reported knowing "very little" about SPELD, and when this is added to the number who did not answer many of the questions, it suggests that about half the respondents were not well informed about SPELD or its activities.

The school and RTLB survey responses show that very similar views were held by both groups about SPELD and its activities. For both groups the SPELD assessment reports are the most common way of becoming involved with SPELD and both groups held similar views about them. In the main the reports are seen as being quite helpful, but could be much more so, if they:

(a) were written in a clearer way and with less jargon, so that teachers and parents could understand them; and

(b) related to classroom activities and practices more closely.

Many respondents indicated that more sharing of school and SPELD expertise, could greatly enhance the possibilities of helping students with SLDs. Many schools and RTLBs appreciate the expertise of SPELD but are frustrated that there is not more effective collaboration between schools and SPELD, and that they are not always 'on the same page' in terms of their understandings, interventions and practices.

There was also remarkable similarity of views from schools and RTLBs about the effectiveness of SPELD interventions. Both groups rated one-to-one tutoring and targeting needs with specific strategies as the main strengths of the SPELD intervention, and diagnostic testing and assessments as the second highest strength.

The high costs of SPELD for low income parent groups was another issue both groups agreed on, and some from both surveys agreed the government should be paying for diagnostic testing.

The clearest message from both surveys was that many teachers and RTLBs know very little about SPELD and would like to know more.

4. Results of SPELD Teachers' Survey

In this chapter we report on SPELD teachers' perspectives of SPELD. SPELD NZ were interested to know the variety of views and practices occurring across the country, as this information has never been collected nationally before. We sent multiple hard copy surveys to all the Member Associations who distributed the surveys to their 310 SPELD teachers, and we had 264 responses—a response rate of 85 percent.

The responses we received were often filled in with a great deal more detail and information than was expected or is normally received in other surveys conducted by NZCER. Several comments indicated the passion and seriousness in the beliefs of the need for the work of SPELD, and the benefits to students of these teachers' work with them.

SPELD teachers' history

SPELD teachers interviewed in Phase One had typically begun working for SPELD after a period of child raising at home, rather than returning to full-time classroom teaching. This pattern appears to be played out in the following survey results. As shown in the following table, some teachers also had specialist teaching experience, such as Reading Recovery (6 percent) or Special Needs (16 percent).

Table 22 **Number of years SPELD teachers have worked in various roles:**

Years N=264	Classroom teacher %	SPELD teacher %	Specialist teacher %
Up to 5 years	24	30	22
6 to 10 years	23	23	10
11 to 15 years	14	18	5
Over 15 years	31	26	6
None	2	0	24
No response	5	3	33

The most important finding in this table is that the cohort of SPELD teachers is very experienced and highly trained. Most of the teachers now working for SPELD have had many years experience of teaching, in regular classrooms, specialist areas, and as SPELD teachers. About half (48 percent) have had over ten years teaching experience as classroom and/or specialist teachers.

SPELD teachers' current teaching

SPELD teachers work independently and can choose the number of students they teach each year. Table 23 illustrates the range in the number of students taken on by SPELD teachers at the time of the survey in the 2009 year.

Table 23 **Number of students SPELD teachers were teaching at time of data collection in 2009**

Number of Students	N=264 %
1	13
2	13
3	12
4	8
5	11
6	8
7–10	15
11–15	8
16+	7

Just over a third of the SPELD teachers (38 percent) were currently teaching up to three students, and another 30 percent were teaching seven or more.

Most SPELD teachers (95 percent) taught students for an hour each a week, as Table 24 shows.

Table 24 **Length of tuition per week for students**

Number of students N=264	1 hour per week %	2 hours per week %	3 hours per week %
1	14	15	2
2	15	5	0
3	11	2	0
4	10	0	0
5 or more	45	1	0

Where SPELD teachers worked 2–3 hours per week with a student, they were more likely to be working with fewer students. Those teachers with five or more students were much more likely to work single hours per week with them.

Ninety-eight percent of those teaching in rural areas reported having students for one hour, 17 percent had students for two hours, and none reported having students for three hours per week. Compared to those teaching in urban areas, the one hour lesson was more common in rural areas due to distances and times for parents dropping off children.

Most SPELD teachers appear to work with a small number of schools, as shown in Table 25.

Table 25 **Number of schools SPELD students are from**

Number of schools	N=264 %
1	17
2	22
3	13
4	14
5	7
6	5
7	6
8	3
9	2
10	3
11+	3

Two thirds (66 percent) of SPELD teachers worked with students from up to four schools, while only 6 percent worked with students from ten or more schools. As expected, SPELD teachers working in rural areas are more likely to work with up to 4 schools (79 percent), compared to those working in urban areas (56 percent), again because of distances and travel time.

In our interviews with SPELD teachers in the case studies, many talked about the amount of work they did, which was over and above the actual time spent teaching. This work included building relationships with the student's family and classroom teacher, and designing a personalised programme for the student with appropriate resources and activities. Table 26 sets out the amount of time per student SPELD teachers spent on average, doing this work.

Table 26 **Amount of non-teaching time spent per week doing the following tasks for one student:**

Hours	Planning and preparing resources % (n=264)	Talking with parents	Talking with student's classroom teacher
No time	0	1	39
0–30	23	88	50
30–60	50	8	2
1–1.5	14	1	1
1.5–2	5	0	0
Over 2	7	0	0

Considering most SPELD teachers spend one hour a week contact time teaching each student, this table indicates that most of the non-contact time is spent on planning and preparing resources for the lesson (76 percent of teachers spent more than half an hour). Of the three activities, talking to the classroom teacher was the least common activity.

The approximate means for the three activities (including those who spent 0 hours), are:

- planning and preparation (54.7 min);

- talking with parents (17.5 min); and

- talking with the classroom teacher (9.6 min).

We were aware that not all SPELD students are the same, and we assumed that some high needs students would require a great deal more time and attention than the "typical" SPELD student. The next table gives a measure of the longest time spent by teachers in the three activities for "atypical" students.

Table 27 **Longest time per week spent doing tasks for atypical student**

Hours	Planning and preparing resources % (n=264)	Talking with parents	Talking with student's classroom teacher
No time	0	0	8
0–30	1	13	13
30–60	34	66	43
1–1.5	12	2	0
1.5–2	25	4	2
2–3	10	1	0
3–5	6	1	0
5–7	1	0	0
Over 7	2	0	0
No response	9	13	34

The longest time per week spent talking to parents about an atypical student was between 30–60 minutes for two thirds (66 percent) of teachers, while 6 percent spent between 1–2 hours.

Forty three percent of teachers spent between 30–60 minutes per week talking to an atypical student's teacher, with only 2 percent spending longer than that.

In terms of planning and preparing resources, the longest time for about a third of teachers (34 percent) was 30–60 minutes per week per atypical student, while another 37 percent spent between 1–2 hours as the longest time. For 10 percent of teachers the longest time they spent was 2–3 hours per week.

Table 28 shows the amount of time SPELD teachers took on average to read and interpret an assessment report on one student.

Table 28 **Time involved in reading and interpreting one assessment report**

Hours	Reading and interpreting one assessment report % n=264
Up to 1 hr	14
1–2	36
3–4	33
5–6	9
7–8	2
8–9	1
9+	2

Just over one third of SPELD teachers (36 percent) took between one and two hours on average to read an assessment report, and another third (33 percent) took three to four hours. It is interesting that 14 percent needed under an hour, while another 14 percent needed over five hours to read a report. We do not know whether this is due to a difference in assessors' reports, or a difference in teachers' use of reports, but it is likely to be a combination of these factors.

SPELD teachers in the case studies told us about the amount of extra unpaid, non-teaching time they spent on SPELD committee work, administrative work and their own professional up-skilling. We wanted to know how widespread these practices were and how much extra time they involved. Figure 6 below sets out the average amount of time teachers spent annually on these tasks.

Figure 6   **Time spent on non-teaching SPELD tasks over one year**
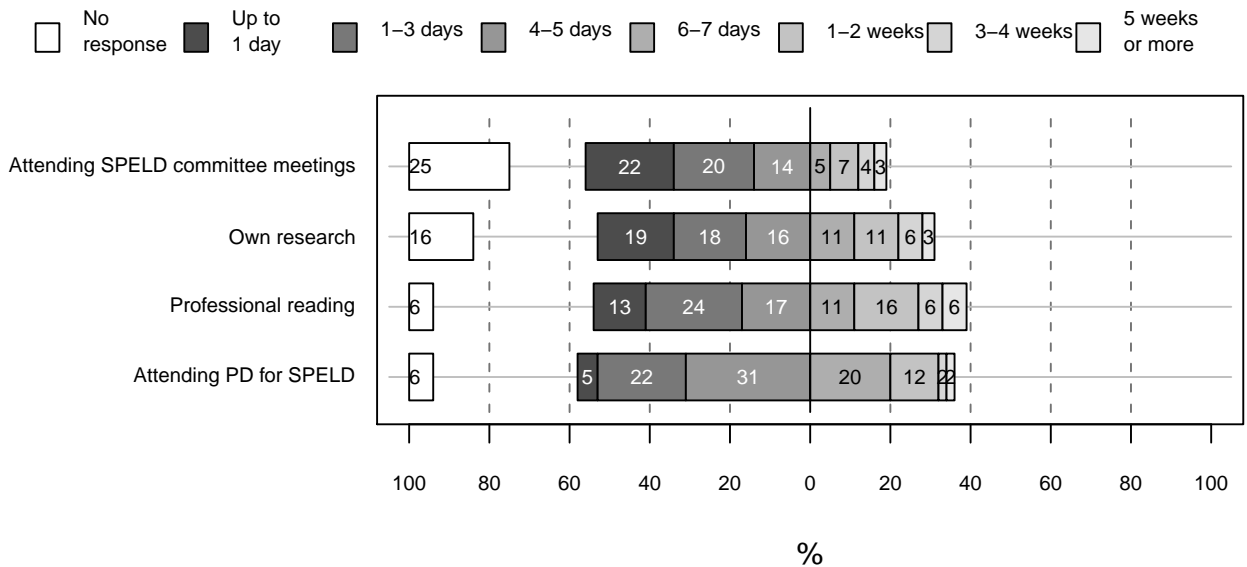
A high proportion of SPELD teachers spend time on their own professional up-skilling. Over two thirds (67 percent) attend SPELD professional development for at least four or more days each year; over half (56 percent) spend the same time doing professional reading; and nearly half (48 percent) spend the same time doing their own research.

Twenty five percent of SPELD teachers did not give the time they spent attending SPELD committee meetings, perhaps because not all are involved in committee work, but three quarters (75 percent) are involved in at least one committee meeting per year, and a third (33 percent) are involved for more than four days a year.

Clearly, SPELD teachers spend a lot of time doing other work than the contact teaching hours they are paid for. Reading and interpreting assessment reports, planning and preparation time, talking with parents and teachers, their own PD work, committee work, and the extra hours spent for atypical students all add up to many hours of unpaid work.

SPELD Assessment

We were interested in the professional interactions between the SPELD teachers and assessors, as it seems critical that SPELD teachers have a good understanding of the process of assessment, the implications of suggested teaching strategies, the progress being made by the students as well as the expectations for this, and the impact of these on expected behaviour and attitudes of students. We were interested therefore in how often they discussed these matters with assessors and how important they rated these. The following figure shows the frequency and perceived importance of various topics of discussion.

Figure 7 **Occasions and importance of discussion with assessor of students**
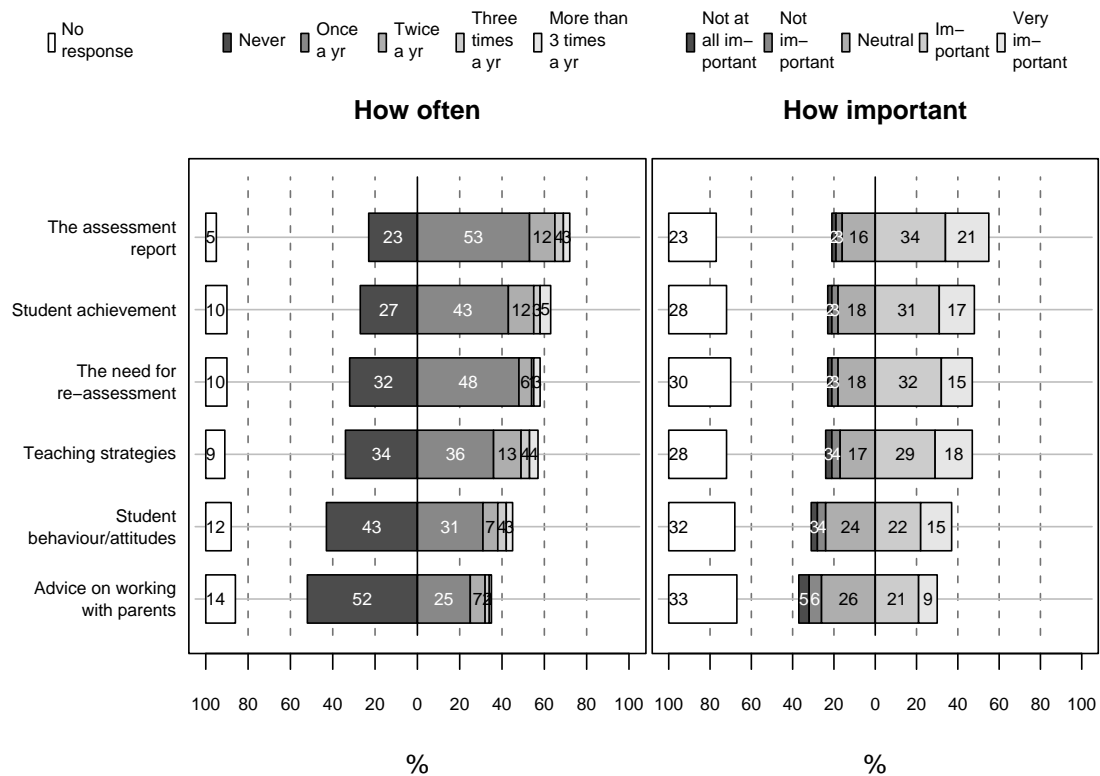
Over two thirds of SPELD teachers reported discussing at least once a year with SPELD assessors, the assessment report (72 percent) and student achievement (63 percent). Over half reported having conversations at least once a year about the need for assessment (57 percent) and teaching strategies (57 percent). In all of these cases "once a year" was the most frequently selected response. Less than half reported having conversations at least once a year on student behaviour and attitudes (45 percent), and advice on working with parents (34 percent).

Figure 7 illustrates that between one third and a half of the SPELD teachers rated their discussions with SPELD assessors as "important" or "very important". Very few indicated that these discussions were unimportant. Discussions about the assessment report with the assessor were rated as "important" or "very important" by 55 percent of SPELD teachers, Just under half of the teachers rated discussions about student achievement (48 percent), the need for re-assessment (47

37

percent) and teaching strategies (47 percent) as "important" or "very important". There were fewer teachers who rated discussions about student behaviour (37 percent), and even less who discussed advice on working with parents (30 percent), as "important" or "very important". There was relative consistency between the rated importance, and the rated frequency of all the matters discussed with assessors.

Forty percent identified "other" topics they discussed with the assessors, in response to an open-ended question and these are listed in Table 29.

Table 29 **Other things discussed with assessors**

Matters discussed	n=264 %
Suggestions / advice / general discussion	18
No discussion possible (assessor too busy) or discussion considered not necessary	8
Clarification of assessment report	4
Issues around assessment /reassessment, eg. expense	4

61 percent did not answer this question

Almost half (18 percent) of the 40 percent who responded to this open question had comments about the sorts of advice or suggestions they talked to the assessor about. The following quotes are examples of this:

> School placement, school subjects, careers, possible ongoing referral to other agency (mental health, OT, medical intervention), family or other abuse.

> I have discussed the options available for referring a child to other agencies—most often for extreme behaviour.

In the case studies, some of the SPELD teachers had mentioned that assessors were very busy, which is also commented on here by a small percentage of teachers (8 percent). Two percent were not aware that it was possible to discuss things with the assessor, and another two percent had a close personal relationship with assessors (eg. husband), so talked to them often.

We asked SPELD teachers what assessment tools most of the assessors used. Ninety four percent responded that assessors they worked with used the Woodcock Johnson III assessment tool. However 21 percent said assessors used other tools as well. These other assessment tools included the SPELD test battery (8 percent); Wechsler Tests (WISC / WIAT) (7 percent); Neale (3 percent); Burt Word Reading Test (3 percent); Schonell (2 percent); and Stanford Binet tests. A small proportion (5 percent) worked with a range of "other" tests.

SPELD have informed us that they are moving towards all their assessors using the WJ-III as the standard assessment tool. Assessors may also use other assessment tools in addition to the WJ-III if they feel they need additional information. However, it is generally considered among assessors

that none of the assessment tools listed above give the kind of comprehensive information that a full cognitive and achievement battery such as the WJ-III gives.

SPELD teachers' ideas about the usefulness of SPELD assessors' assessment reports was important to gauge, because we had had some varying opinions in the case studies about this topic. Several in the interviews commented that some assessors wrote clearer and more useful reports than others. In the survey we asked how useful a SPELD assessment report would be for the four possible recipients—RTLBs, Parents, classroom teachers and SPELD teachers.

Figure 8 **Usefulness of assessment reports for RTLBs, Classroom and SPELD teachers, and Parents**
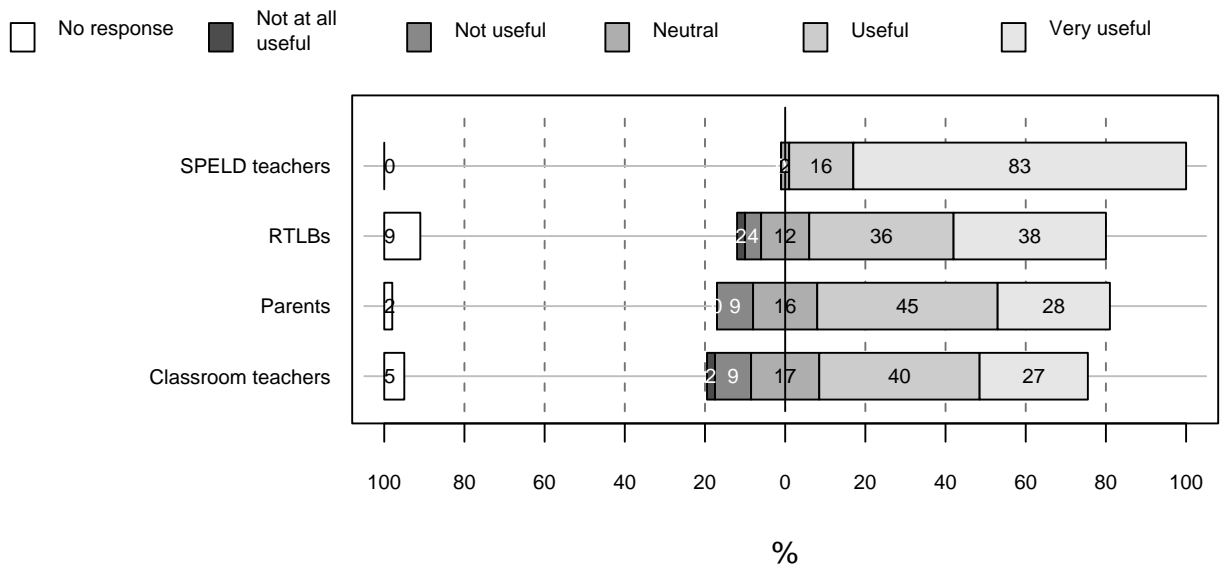
The majority (99 percent) thought the reports would be "useful" or "very useful" for SPELD teachers; and about three quarters thought they would be similarly useful for parents (73 percent) and RTLBs (74 percent); while slightly less (67 percent) thought they would be similarly useful for classroom teachers. These findings are similar to the RTLBs' responses to the same question.

We gave SPELD teachers in the survey an opportunity to describe how the assessment report could be improved, and 69 percent of the respondents made suggestions. A quarter gave two or more suggestions.

Table 30 **How could the assessment report be improved?**

Suggestions	N=264 %
More clearly written for ease of understanding	34
Including a short summary/easy to understand for teachers and parents	16
Providing practical/specific ideas for teachers	16
More consistent/better quality	6
Graphs/tables easier to understand /interpreted	5
Ideas for parent activities	5
Other	13

The first two categories in Table 30 (suggestions about making the assessment report more accessible to teachers and parents, and more clearly able to be understood), were the dominant messages from half the teachers.

> I think it needs to be more understandable to parents. Many cannot understand what is meant and need help in reading it. Phrases such as 'cognitive', 'efficiency', 'cluster abilities', 'deductive learning' mean nothing to parents. Some teachers also have questions about particular language used in assessment. I'm not sure how this can be done without an additional basic summary, which would be extra to the assessment as it is at present.

This is probably one of the most consistent message in the whole project and is mentioned by all groups in both phases of the research.

Ideas for practical activities and ideas that classroom teachers and parents could carry out were also suggested by 21 percent of the SPELD teachers. The following is a good example of what they considered is needed:

> The best reports give specific activity lists: e.g., 'To improve visual matching, do geometric form boards, jigsaws and spot the difference games several times each week.' Or 'Spelling: teach the short vowels and use exercises using both real single syllable words and pseudo words until these are secure—parents particularly need action plans they can manage. Also: add notes on supporting the 'good' stuff (often sport, but other interests too).

There were 'other' one–off comments from 13 percent of respondents, such as suggesting there needed to be refresher courses to interpret reports, more graphs in the reports, less American jargon, and so forth. The following quote is an example:

> Providing time or training for interested parents, classroom teachers or RTLBs to understand the assessment report.

The frequency of assessment and reassessment of SPELD students was discussed in the case studies by all participants, with issues about costs and useful lengths of time between assessments debated. We asked the SPELD teachers in the survey how often students are usually assessed after their first assessment, and how often they should be re-assessed.

Table 31 **Frequency of assessments for a typical SPELD student**

How often % (n=264)	Students usually re-assessed	How often they should be re-assessed?
Never	3	2
Every 2 years	41	37
Once a year	49	49
Twice a year	0	3

Almost half the SPELD teachers (49 percent) said students were usually re-assessed once a year after their first assessment, but another 41 percent answered every two years to this question.

Clearly there is some difference in practice on this issue. There was remarkable consistency overall in the teachers' views of what does and should happen, with 49 percent thinking once a year for re-assessments was enough, and 37 percent thinking every two years was enough.

A comment from another question about suggestions to improve SPELD that applies here, advocated a retest at the end of Year 7 as this would then last up to NCEA when the student might need reader/writer assistance.

SPELD teachers in the case studies told us they used their own assessment tools to monitor students' progress during the year, in between the SPELD assessor's assessments. We asked for information in the survey about the forms of assessments SPELD teachers themselves used with their students—the range of which are listed in Table 32.

Table 32 **Forms of assessment SPELD teachers use with students**

Forms of assessment	n=264 %
Informal observations and conversations	85
Running record/Probe	82
Burt Word Recognition Test	60
Schonnel spelling test	51
School assessments (STAR, PAT, asTTle)	35
Tests SPELD teacher has devised	28
Holborn Word Reading Test	21
Phonemic awareness tests (e.g., Kastler, Gough, Roper)	19
Peters	14
Other tests *(see below)*	46
None	3

Teachers could tick multiple boxes and 47 percent listed four or more forms of assessment they used. Only three percent of teachers reported not using any form of assessment. The majority of teachers (85 percent) used informal observations and conversations, basing their judgements on their experience as teachers.

Forty six percent of SPELD teachers mentioned other programmes used for teaching, which are generally not "tests". They included several phonics based systems for reading, such as Beve Hornsby's "Alpha to Omega" (mentioned by 8 percent); Mary Andrew's "Reading and Spelling Made Simple" (4 percent); The Bannatyne Reading Programme (3 percent); The Neale Analysis of Reading Test (2 percent); and the Lexia Learning System which is a computer driven programme (2 percent). Other tests/programmes included Joy Allcock's spelling programme (6 percent); Bryant (2 percent); computer programmes such as Nessy (2 percent); phonemic awareness programmes such as the Sonday System that Jean Schedler uses (2 percent); the Jerome Rosner programme (3 percent); and Tom Nicholson's phonic programme (2 percent).

Other tests teachers have devised themselves included a focus on phonics (7 percent); spelling (5 percent); maths (3 percent); and dictation, prior learning, and writing samples (all 2 percent).

SPELD teaching

We asked a number of questions about the impact of the teaching SPELD teachers did with students. Ninety three percent believed that SPELD had particular strengths when compared with other literacy interventions. Five percent were unsure and 2 percent did not answer this question. We asked an open question about these particular strengths, which are specified in the following Table. Sixty four percent of respondents cited two or more strengths.

Table 33 **Particular Strengths SPELD has compared to other Literacy Interventions**

Particular strengths	N=264 %
Personalised teaching informed by assessment data	75
Multi sensory activities and techniques	28
Diagnostic testing	26
Teacher qualities	24
Relationship support	14
Emphasis on phonics/phonemic awareness	10

The majority of SPELD teachers (75 percent) saw the main strength of SPELD as being the opportunity to individualise a programme to the needs of the student, based on assessment data, and to then carry out the teaching on a one-to one basis. This finding confirms findings from other participants in the research.

> SPELD teaching is geared totally to the individual student based on an assessment of their strengths and weaknesses as described in psychologist reports. SPELD tutors are trained to understand the specific difficulties of children/adults with SLDs, as well as having been already experienced teachers.

The next quote reinforces how this approach is seen to be different from what happens in most schools:

> I am a Reading Recovery teacher in a primary school [as well as a SPELD teacher]. Reading Recovery is a great programme which enables children who have fallen behind at 6yrs to catch up with their peers. It does this very successfully for most children. It is also good for SLD children and helps them on their way, to a certain extent. However SLD children usually reach a plateau and need something more—SPELD teaching. I trained as a SPELD teacher in 2008 (funded by my school) so that I could better help these children as a follow up to Reading Recovery. The excellent SPELD assessments allow very specific intervention targeted to their needs.

Just over a quarter of respondents (28 percent) believed the variety of activities and techniques designed for their students involved fun and multi-sensory experiences, which were enjoyed by students.

> Use a multisensory individual teaching programme, aiming to use the students' strengths to improve their weaknesses. Allowing the student to learn how they learn best enabling them to achieve their potential.

> We use a variety of learning tools, e.g. games, brain gym exercises, and memory discrimination games.

Another quarter of SPELD teachers (26 percent) described how the SPELD assessments had benefits in diagnosing student's strengths as well as weaknesses.

Another quarter (24 percent) believed teacher qualities were strengths, such as the expertise and knowledge they possessed, as well as their experience, training, and passion.

> The tutors are passionate about helping their students. The tutors have good resources available—library, PD. The tutors can build a good relationship with parents and child and can therefore gain an accurate understanding of the specific needs, strengths, and weaknesses.

The relationships SPELD teachers were able to establish between students and teachers, and teachers and families, gave both students and families support, which was another strength described by 14 percent of respondents.

> Building a relationship and fostering self-worth and confidence in themselves [students] as they use their strengths to improve their weaknesses.

> When pupil is taught away from school there is close contact with parent, no school tensions—more relaxed atmosphere without peer pressure etc.

Ten percent mentioned phonics as a strength, and seven percent mentioned other strengths.

In the case studies there were differing views expressed about the ideal learning timetable for students. Some SPELD teachers in the interviews expressed concern that an hour a week was too long and spaced out for some students. We asked all the SPELD teachers in the survey what they thought the ideal timetable to be, and Table 34 shows their responses.

Table 34 **Ideal learning timetable for most SPELD students**

	N=264 %
One hour a week	38
Twice a week for 45–60 minutes	17
Twice a week for half an hour	13
Three of four times a week for 20 minutes	12
Three of four times a week for 30–60 minutes	7
Daily	5

While there were a variety of views expressed, 38 percent of SPELD teachers considered an hour of SPELD a week to be the ideal. Seventeen percent thought twice a week for three quarters of an hour to an hour was ideal, while another 13 percent thought twice a week for half an hour was ideal.

Six percent commented that the ideal timetable depended on the student's age and needs, and 3 percent said follow-up at home after a SPELD lesson was ideal.

We were interested in how SPELD teachers judged their impact on SPELD students. As Figure 9 indicates, SPELD teachers see themselves as having a positive impact on all the listed aspects of students' behaviour, attitudes and achievement.

Figure 9 **SPELD teacher's impact on student attitudes, achievement and behaviour**
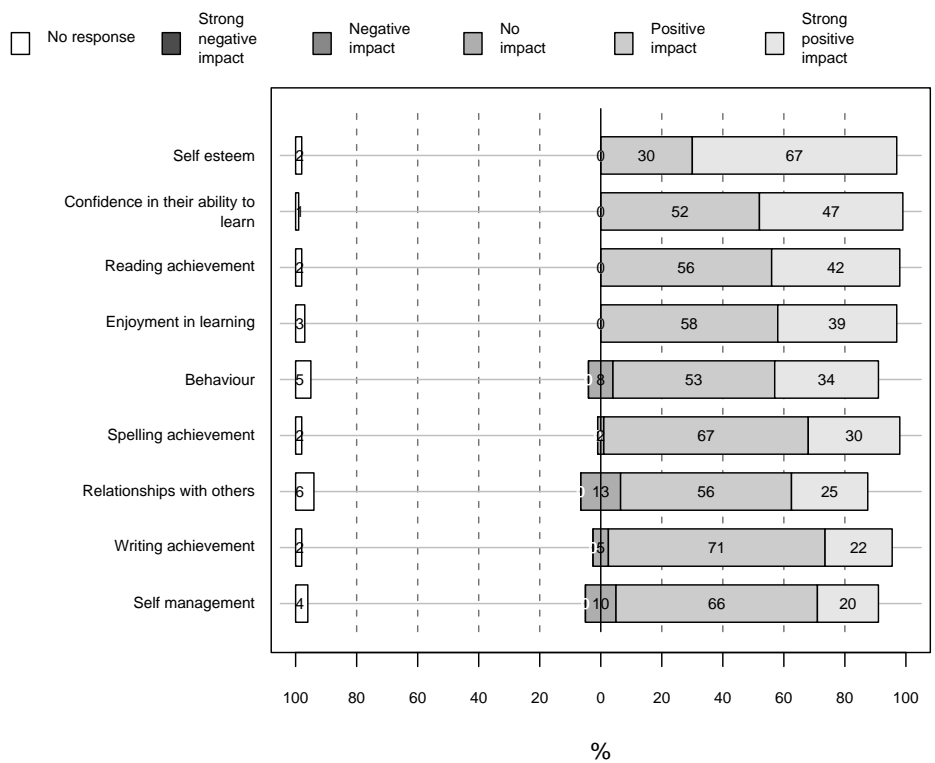
This finding differs from the schools' views of the impact of SPELD teachers on students, where no more than 65 percent of school respondents felt SPELD teachers had a positive impact on any aspect, and where between 20–40 percent said they didn't know what impact they had. It is interesting that SPELD teachers see themselves as having the most impact on attitudes to learning and literacy achievement, and slightly less on behaviour—just as the school respondents did.

Relationships with schools

We asked SPELD teachers to indicate the number of their schools they perceived to be happy about SPELD teachers working with their students.

Table 35 **Number of schools that are happy about SPELD teachers working with their students?**

	N=264 %
All	51
Nearly all	20
Some	8
About half	4
None	0
Don't know	15

Over 70 percent of SPELD teachers perceived all or nearly all of the schools they worked with students from, to be happy having SPELD teachers working with their students.

We were surprised in the case studies to find as many SPELD teachers as we did working in the schools their students attend. We were interested to see how widespread a practice this was, and as this is one possible indicator of the relationship between schools and SPELD, we included a question on this in the survey. Table 36 sets out the proportion of SPELD teachers' teaching time in different locations.

Table 36 **Proportion of SPELD teaching time spent:**

% N=264	At my home	At student's school	At student's home
All of my teaching	42	13	1
Most of my teaching	13	16	2
Some of my teaching	22	21	11
None of my teaching	10	17	34

This table shows that half of the teachers (50 percent) do at least some of their teaching at the students' schools, so it is a more widespread practice than we had originally thought. The dominant practice still seems to be teaching students in SPELD teacher's own homes with 77 percent doing at least some of their teaching there. Very few (14 percent) taught in the homes of students. Some teachers (9 percent) taught in other places such as SPELD rooms, community facilities, or other schools that the student did not attend.

To help ascertain the relationships between SPELD teachers and teachers in schools, we asked SPELD teachers to indicate what they had discussed in 2009 about student's learning and behaviour with classroom teachers, RTLBs, RTLits, and principals. The results are illustrated in Table 37.

Table 37   **Topics about students, discussed by SPELD teachers with school staff**

SPELD students'…	% (n=264)			
	Classroom teachers	**RTLBs**	**R.T. Lits**	**Principal**
Learning programmes	66	22	5	17
SLD Learning strategies	58	17	5	13
Attitudes to learning	56	17	3	19
Behaviour	52	17	3	20
Homework	46	10	2	6

These results show that more SPELD teachers have more discussions with their students' classroom teachers (73 percent), than other school staff, and least discussion with the Resource Teachers of Literacy (R.T. Lits) (8 percent). One or more topics were discussed with classroom teachers by 73 percent of SPELD teachers, compared to one or more topics being discussed by them with principals (31 percent), RTLBs (28 percent), or RTLits (8 percent). The topics most frequently discussed with classroom teachers were student's learning programmes (66 percent), SLD learning strategies (58 percent) and attitudes to learning (56 percent). Between 17 and 22 percent of SPELD teachers talk with principals and RTLBs about learning programmes, attitudes to learning, and students' behaviour.

Another indicator of the types of relationships SPELD teachers have with schools is how much school staff wanted knowledge about SPELD practices, and how willing the SPELD teachers were to share this knowledge. The question we developed in the survey to collect information on this was informed by the case study interviews, in which classroom teachers told us they knew very little about SPELD, but would like to know more. We asked SPELD teachers in the survey if they had ever been asked to provide support, advice or professional development to teachers in schools, and found that about half had (48 percent) and half had not (51 percent). That half the SPELD teachers provided support to school staff shows that there does appear to be a growing school awareness of SPELD's expertise and a valuing of it. This is a positive indicator of developing relationships towards the kinds of collaboration deemed necessary for interventions to operate successfully.

When we asked for details about the kinds of support, advice, and PD they had been asked for, it covered the range, illustrated in Table 38.

Table 38 **Types of support, advice and PD SPELD teachers offered**

Type of Support	N=264 %
Advice / support / explaining assessment reports	22
PD (staff meetings/courses/workshops/conferences)	21
Informal discussions	11
Individual Educational Programmes (IEPs)	8
Resources (e.g. spelling lists)	6
Other	5

Views on SPELD training / professional development (PD)

In our interviews with SPELD teachers in the case studies we had been alerted to the opportunities for professional development that these teachers have, and the requirements that SPELD NZ has set to keep their teachers up to date with the latest research and developments in the field of SLDs. We were therefore interested to know how well teachers felt SPELD had prepared them in their initial training and their on-going professional development.

Table 39 **How well prepared professionally SPELD teachers feel**

N=264	Very well prepared %	Well prepared %	Sufficiently prepared %	Not quite prepared enough %	Not prepared at all %
To become a SPELD teacher	40	28	25	6	0
By PD after initial training	35	37	19	5	0

The above table shows that the majority of teachers (93 percent) feel they had been at least sufficiently prepared by SPELD in their initial SPELD training, to become a SPELD teacher. Some of these teachers would have been trained many years ago, which needs to be taken into consideration. Most (68 percent) said they felt "well" or "very well" prepared.

Since initial training, a similar majority (91 percent) felt they had been sufficiently prepared in keeping up to date with PD, and most (72 percent) said they were "well" or "very well" prepared.

SPELD provides regular professional development opportunities for their SPELD teachers and requires them to take part in a range of these to earn credits for continued registration. We were interested in what respondents felt about the types of PD offered, so asked them to rate the usefulness of a number of them.

Figure 10 **Usefulness of SPELD PD opportunities**
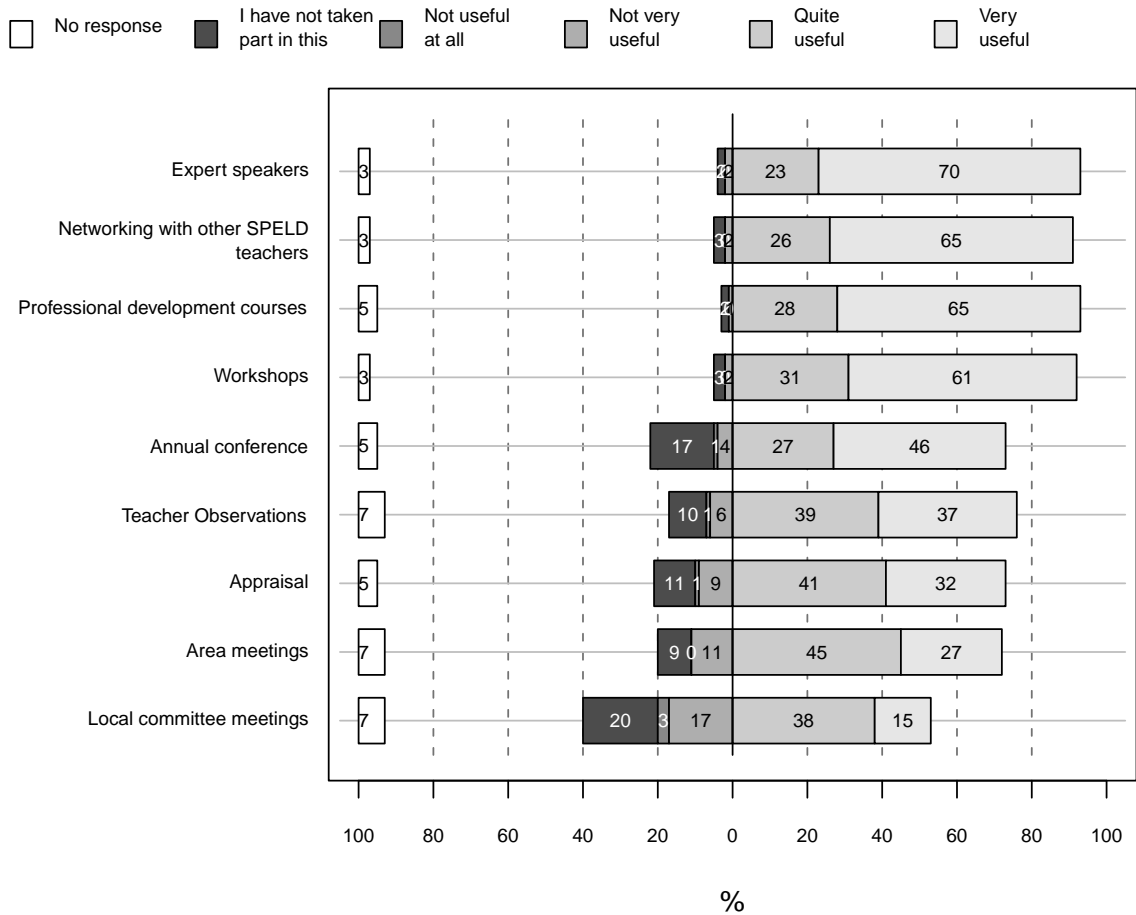
Overall, SPELD teachers considered PD opportunities to be of use. Over 90 percent of SPELD teachers rated expert speakers, networking with other SPELD teachers, and PD courses and workshops as "quite" or "very" useful. Approximately three quarters rated the annual conference, teacher observations, appraisals and area meetings as "quite" or "very" useful. About half (53 percent) thought the local committee meetings were "quite" or "very" useful. There is probably regional variation which may account for the 20 percent who have not found these useful. A further 20 percent had not taken part in these. It is interesting to note that 17 percent had not attended the annual conference. In comments elsewhere, the cost of travelling to, and attending, the conference was identified as a barrier to attendance.

We asked SPELD teachers if they had any suggestions for improving the professional development SPELD currently provides, or if there were other forms of professional support they would like SPELD to provide. Table 40 sets out teachers' responses to this open question.

Table 40 **Suggestions for improving PD**

	N=264 %
Need for more/better communication (information)	11
Focus on particular area (maths/resources/practical help/etc)	8
Buddy / mentoring system	7
Issues with cost (eg. going to conferences)	7
High quality conferences / workshops	6
More inter-tutor contact	6
SPELD involvement with teacher training/school teachers/educational institutions	4
Other	13

The most commented on suggestion by 11 percent of the teachers was the need for better communication and information. The next quotes illustrate what was meant by this:

> Have someone we can contact via email for advice re working with a particular child's difficulties or working more efficiently with a particular subject. Emailed newsletters containing tips and hints and useful strategies and websites, specifically for tutors.

> A website with bulletin board, where you can upload your notes from reading/research/experience, make recommendations etc. Also tutors could ask questions and have a greater number of others who may be able to answer.

> Could Member Associations please be offered information on courses, speakers, Ministry advice on curriculum matters, on a yearly basis, by bodies concerned: i.e., RTLB run courses, notification of visiting speakers, courses organized by area's schools.

Seven percent of respondents suggested changes that would reduce costs and distances involved in accessing PD, and six percent thought more contact with other experienced tutors to learn from each other would be useful, as the following quote illustrates:

> I personally feel that it would be more beneficial to hear from successful tutors at conference and meetings and to hear/discuss strategies that work for them, how they handle kids who come to us and have "given up". More time to share informally in groups on given topics like fun and games for memory, learning strategies/games, motivating reluctant learners (some have had such a hellish time and been to "everything" and failed). We have some brilliant tutors. Lets hear from them.

Six percent of teachers commented that, "the SPELD PD provided is great, just as it is".

There were "Other" suggestions from 13 percent of the teachers that included a variety of ideas, which are included below:

> To be active on marae. When tangis are taking place. These children are absent from school about 3 days at a time and sometimes several times a year.

Balance between expert speakers from outside and practical sessions given by experienced SPELD teachers.

Run more PD courses in the school holidays.

More emphasis must be placed on describing how particular resources can be used to form appropriate teaching strategies.

SPELD should just stick to the literacy skills, rather than use other methods which may improve literacy skills, but have not been scientifically proved, such as Brain Gym and perceptual movement programmes. These should be extra if the parent wishes and not under the SPELD umbrella.

Allowing more cross-crediting for those of us who are SPELD tutors and are operating professionally in other education type arenas. That is, less narrow and more inclusive and flexible, especially as SPELD tuition is by its nature usually a part-time occupation albeit an important one.

I think it would be of great help to many struggling readers to have SPELD teachers work within schools. Reading Recovery has an historical position and status and it may be to the detriment of failing readers.

The SPELD training course I did failed to spend any time on running training sessions on a core literacy programme e.g. Alpha to Omega, Bannatyne. I have doubts about the effectiveness of self-created programmes that have not been scientifically proven.

Three percent of teachers mentioned distance to travel as a difficulty in accessing PD, and another 3 percent suggested knowing more about the school curriculum and what is going on in schools would improve PD.

Future of SPELD

We were interested to know if SPELD teachers had any ideas for further improvements to any aspects of SPELD and over half (56 percent) gave one or two suggestions, which the following table illustrates:

Table 41 **Suggestions for improvement to SPELD**

	% N=264
Strengthening partnerships through collaboration (acceptance of SPELD in schools) / SPELD involvement with teacher training/school teachers/educational institutions	13
Funding / Cost	13
Issues about SPELD training / PD / registration (both positive and negative comments)	8
More/better communication within SPELD	7
Opinions (positive and negative) about SPELD becoming a National Body	6
More communication / education about SPELD and the services it offers (public profile)	6
More awareness/training about SLD's required in the school sector	5
Other	17

The idea suggested by the most teachers (13 percent) was to strengthen partnerships through collaborating more closely with schools and the education system more generally, so that SPELD became more accepted and utilised in the mainstream, including teacher training. The following quote expresses this wish:

> SPELD should continue along the path it was set up for of working to make its separate existence outside of the education system unnecessary. SPELD NZ needs to focus on the needs of the dyslexic learners at this time and on working to ensure these are being met for the majority within the system rather than setting up frameworks to become separate service providers. Training of sufficient specialist teachers and testers within the education system for those who need individual help. SPELD NZ has the largest body of knowledge over the years of what works in the NZ setting and it should not be lost. Help should not continue to be available only to those who can afford it or are able to get charitable funding. If classroom teachers were up-skilled in recognition and best classroom teaching practice for these learners (much of which is best practice for all learners) the need for individual tuition would be greatly reduced.

Thirteen percent of respondents mentioned funding issues and costs of SPELD, which covered a range of issues from more government funding, to SPELD conference costs needing to be reduced. The following quote expresses what a number of teachers thought:

> Yes… The MOE should be funding this service for parents. Many of my families have more than one dyslexic child and some have up to 3! Most people cannot afford SPELD and as qualified teachers we are very much undervalued and [under]paid.

There were once again a range of issues coded as "Other', which were mentioned by 17 percent of the teachers. They included the need for:

• Providing assessor training for RTLBs
• Less paper work and SPELD administration work

- Closer connections with the Dyslexia Foundation
- More qualified testers who are recognised by the MOE as specialists in the area of Dyslexia.
- More work on maths
- More support for parents
- Caution about being hijacked by some who make their area of knowledge and study the latest fad.
- Greater focus on testing, tutoring, and PD for teachers as well as training of tutors with paid people taking responsibilities rather than voluntary committees being bogged down with the day to day running of SPELD.

Three percent of teachers also made comments about the time-consuming nature of the job and how it required significant personal commitment and was underpaid for that input; another 2 percent mentioned assessment issues; 2 percent suggested recognising accredited qualifications; and others made generally positive comments (2 percent).

Demographics

We collected demographic information on the sample of SPELD teachers.

Gender

SPELD teachers are mainly women with 96 percent filling out the survey, but a total of seven men (3 percent) were also respondents of the survey. One respondent did not identify their gender.

Ethnic Groups

The majority of SPELD teachers are Päkeha (92 percent); with the rest being 5 percent other European; 3 percent Mäori and 2 percent Pacific. Respondents could tick more than one ethnicity.

Age

Most SPELD teachers (87 percent) who filled out the survey were aged 50 years or over, with 52 percent aged over 60 years. Ten percent were between 40–49, and 2 percent between 30–39, or 12 percent under 50. One percent did not respond.

Location SPELD teachers work in

The majority of the SPELD teachers (81 percent) work in urban areas with half (50 percent) in cities or main urban centres, and another 31 percent work in smaller towns or minor urban centres. Only 16 percent live in rural areas. Three percent did not answer.

Qualifications of SPELD teachers

As shown in Table 42, the majority of SPELD teachers (81 percent) had a Diploma of Teaching, which was usually two years training, and was the type of teaching qualification available when many of the older teachers trained. The 19 percent who have a 3 year teaching degree matches

with the smaller number of younger teachers in SPELD, as the data on age shows earlier. In addition all held the SPELD qualification.

Table 42 **Qualifications held by SPELD teachers**

Qualifications	n= 264 %
Teaching Diploma (typically 2 years)	81
Other Bachelors degree	27
Teaching Degree (typically 3 years)	19
Postgraduate Diploma	15
Diploma	8
Certificates (e.g. A wide variety including ESOL, counselling, Special Needs, etc.)	8
Masters degree (included 1 PhD)	4
ESOL / TESOL qualification	4
Reading Recovery	3
Other (e.g. music, business, and a variety of other professional qualifications)	11

Thirty-six percent of SPELD teachers had two qualifications; 16 percent had three; and 6 percent had more than 3.

Final Comments

At the end of the survey we asked respondents if there were any final comments they would like to make and 47 percent responded to this open question. Their responses were coded according to the categories shown in Table 43.

Table 43 **Other comments**

	N=264 %
Positive general comments about SPELD	17
Funding and cost implications for students	11
More awareness and training about SLD's required in the school sector	8
More recognition of SPELD needed in the school sector	8
Role of SPELD teacher (time-consuming / underpaid / significant personal commitment required)	6
Need for more and better communication with other SPELD teachers	6
More publicity and education needed about SPELD's services	5
Benefits of targeted/individualized assistance to students	5
Fears about changes to SPELD at national level	4
SPELD's work is basis for life-long learning/success for students with SLDs	3

There were positive comments made by 17 percent of respondents about SPELD generally, but particularly about the value of SPELD to students with SLDs and their families, and the satisfaction of the work for SPELD teachers. There were also several comments calling for the expertise of SPELD to be used more widely to benefit students with SLDs, as the following comment exemplifies:

> SPELD teachers make a significant and positive impact on our student's learning and lives. However I feel that we are viewed or placed outside the mainstream and our qualities, capabilities and resources are not being recognised or used. It seems we are the last port of call when we should be first in aiding a student with learning difficulties/dyslexia.

The comments on funding and costs implications made by 11 percent of the respondents reflect comments made in other parts of the survey, particularly the call for the costs of assessment and tutoring to families to be re-thought.

> As always it would help if there was more financial assistance to enable more students to benefit from the programme. Also providing useful resources is a constant battle, to source them or produce them oneself.

The theme from this list not previously covered in the rest of the survey, was from the four percent of teachers who were apprehensive about the changes occurring for SPELD at a national level, as the following quotes show:

> I hate the though of SPELD becoming dominated by a national office rather than being run at a local, community level. It would be nice if more funding for tuition was available to put our parents under less financial strain. Even working full-time as a SPELD tutor doesn't provide enough income to survive on.

> It's time the national body stopped making their own decisions without discussion of members. It's time to talk around the table. Look at the problems. Provide solutions. All members choose the best solution. Let teachers get on with their job. Thank you for the opportunity of making my thoughts known.

'Other' comments mentioned by 13 percent of respondents included comments about the survey, other resources, theories and programmes teachers think would be useful to SPELD and explanations about individual teachers' circumstances that impact on their SPELD work.

During the analysis of the surveys of SPELD teachers' responses, we spent a lot of time identifying and coding themes from the long, complex comments we received to many of our open questions. This is obviously necessary to do in an analysis of text, but it simplifies the quotes we have used throughout this report to one or two comments, where they were often embedded in a much longer, more thoughtful dialogue. To illustrate the depth of thinking and the development of a certain argument or point of view, the following quote—presented in its entirety, is an example of the concern and seriousness many respondents presented in their comments.

> I hope SPELD becomes a national body. Locally we have a dedicated SPELD organisation but I get frustrated by 'politics' that happens. I have for several years felt the need for a central building(s)/schools/centre/where the whole process, [including] assessment etc. can

be completed—where students can come for their specialised needs [to be] met and a centralised building could be used for workshops and education in a user-friendly, organised manner. Videos etc. that I believe can help parents/teachers understand better. Dyslexia or being dyslexic is not often viewed as a positive for those with dyslexia. Avoiding schools, classes, situations, writing and feeling of shame and anger seem the norm. Awareness of prison population researched. Greater education for school teachers, principals [is needed] (a few still don't understand). SPELD does a great job and fills a great need. Mostly students need to know they're different not 'weird'. Ex students are successful and grateful for my help. I keep a folder [that] I add to about them.

Summary of Findings

The findings from the SPELD teachers' survey have added another dimension to this research. We have a much more comprehensive idea about the views of this group, compared to the views of RTLBs and school respondents, due to the much higher response rate. This group of SPELD teachers is also the one that knows the most about both schools and SPELD, having worked in both, whereas the other two groups surveyed knew about schools but not as much about SPELD. We gained a very strong impression from the comments of SPELD teachers that they are on the whole a group of extremely dedicated, committed teachers. As such, they were also very positive in their views about SPELD, which is not unexpected, but may need to be taken into consideration in the interpretation of these findings.

Our main findings are that:

1. Nearly all SPELD teachers had a very strong sense that they had a positive impact on students' achievement, especially in literacy (reading, writing and spelling). In contrast, only half of the teachers from schools rated SPELD's impact as positively as this. Until a statistical analysis of student achievement data has been carried out, we cannot comment on the impact of SPELD on student achievement.

2. In terms of students' attitudes to learning, nearly all SPELD teachers said they had a positive or very positive impact—a finding that was more consistent with school survey respondents, when compared with the topic of achievement.

3. Three quarters of the SPELD teachers rated their personalised teaching approach, based on good assessment data and followed up with specific targeted teaching activities, as the most important component in their teaching programme to contribute to positive shifts in student outcomes. Schools also identified these components as the most effective. An additional component identified by 28 percent of SPELD teachers was using multi-sensory, fun activities with students, and another quarter noted the importance of teacher qualities such as their specialised knowledge and expertise. Only 10 percent mentioned phonics as an important component of the teaching programme.

4. Most SPELD teachers (over 90 percent) felt that SPELD was doing a good job to keep them well prepared professionally to do their jobs, and that the conferences and other kinds of professional development was "quite" or "very" useful.

5. In terms of building sector capability overall, the age profile of SPELD teachers suggests that SPELD may need to attract more younger teachers in the future, as the majority of SPELD teachers (87 percent) are over 50, and only 12 percent are 49 or younger.

5. Discussion of findings from Phase One and Two

In this research project we have canvassed the views of several different groups involved with SPELD. We began with in-depth interviews with a small number of participants in the Phase One case studies including SPELD teachers, assessors, students, their parents and their classroom teachers. We broadened the number of participants in Phase two in our surveys of schools, RTLBs and SPELD teachers.

We found overall, that the groups most involved with SPELD had the most positive views about it. So SPELD teachers and assessors, and students receiving SPELD tuition and their parents, were the most positive on the continuum, with less positive perspectives from school respondents and RTLBs. It should be remembered that this is a generalised finding, with some individuals in all groups expressing different points of view.

Use of SPELD

The sample of schools sent surveys was large (2,385 schools), and the response was very small (16 percent). This could have been for a number of reasons, such as lack of knowledge about SPELD; little regard for SPELD; survey over-burden; or the general busy nature of schools. From the sample of schools that responded (379 in total), 58 percent are currently using SPELD and 40 percent are currently not using SPELD. Most of the schools using SPELD were positive about it. Half of those schools using SPELD said they had SPELD teachers working in the school, and RTLBs reported 5 percent of their schools inviting teachers in to work with students.

Of the schools not using SPELD, about one third (34 percent) are low decile (1-3) schools. Many of the schools not using SPELD made it clear they were interested in using SPELD, but were not doing so for two main reasons. The costs involved with SPELD assessment and tuition were too great for many of the lower decile schools where parents were unable to afford them, and many teachers and RTLBs did not know enough about SPELD to warrant using their services.

Knowledge about SPELD

Perhaps the most important message that came from the school and RTLB surveys was the general lack of knowledge about SPELD by New Zealand teachers. This was shown at several different levels. Lack of knowledge about SPELD may be one reason for the low overall response rate to the surveys. It could also be one of the reasons why so few schools use SPELD. Lack of

knowledge about SPELD was certainly a reason given by the survey respondents that didn't use SPELD. However, even more to the point, there was a high no response rate or "don't know" response to many of the questions even from the schools who said they *did* use SPELD, so even within those schools who are open and willing to use SPELD, there is still a lack of knowledge. Likewise the lack of knowledge consistently reported from RTLBs was another indicator that SPELD NZ has a lot of work to do to ensure New Zealand schools are well informed about SPELD. Forty three percent of schools said they would like to know more. In Phase One of the study, most schools also reported lacking current knowledge and understanding about the expertise SPELD offers.

In addition very few school respondents or RTLBs had taken part in SPELD professional development. RTLBs also reported that most classroom teachers in their clusters did not receive professional development from SPELD.

Perceptions of the effectiveness of SPELD interventions

Half of the schools using SPELD, thought SPELD teachers had a positive impact on students' literacy achievement, while virtually all the SPELD teachers thought their interventions were effective. SPELD assessors, students and parents in Phase One generally thought SPELD interventions were effective as well. However, until actual student achievement data is collected and analysed we can not comment on the impact of SPELD on the achievement of students with SLDs.

There was evidence reported from both phases of the research about the components of the SPELD teaching programme perceived to contribute to positive shifts in student outcomes. Both schools and RTLBs rated one-to-one tutoring and targeting needs with specific strategies as the main strengths of the SPELD intervention, and diagnostic testing and assessments as the second highest strength. These findings were endorsed in the first phase by participants as well. The Phase One participants also included SPELD teachers' specialist knowledge and experience in teaching students with SLDs, and focused learning times with the students as additional strengths.

Communication between groups using SPELD

Participants throughout both phases of the project indicated a lack of communication between various groups involved in SPELD, at different levels. There were reports of little communication between SPELD teachers and classroom teachers, or schools generally; and similarly there was little communication reported between SPELD teachers and RTLBs. Assessors seemed to communicate mainly with SPELD teachers and rarely with parents or classroom teachers. Parents and classroom teachers sometimes did not communicate, or if they did it could be a negative experience, particularly for parents. There were even a few reports where classroom teachers from the same school did not communicate effectively with each other about SPELD. More effective

collaboration between schools and SPELD was therefore seen as an important improvement needed in the future for SPELD, so that all involved can help students by sharing their understandings, interventions and practices.

The most commonly reported way of schools being aware of SPELD was through SPELD assessment reports. However, there was a communication problem reported here as well, by participants in both phases of the research. Schools and parents generally found the assessment reports of limited use because of the way they were written with jargon and unclear messages. School respondents suggested that it would be helpful to classroom teachers and benefit students more, if assessors had more understanding of classroom practices, so that suggested strategies fitted more closely with the classroom situation, enabling more reinforcement of the interventions by both sets of teachers.

There were also comments from SPELD teachers that there needed to be more effective communication within the SPELD organisation itself. This included both administration matters, and SPELD providing support and resources to teachers through a website or by electronic means.

Support for SPELD services being government funded

There was support from participants in both phases of the research to have SPELD diagnostic and tuition services publically available and accessible to all students with SLDs through government funding. Several SPELD teachers believed classroom teachers are not currently trained or equipped to teach students with SLDs, especially dyslexia, and that Reading Recovery assistance only helps these students up to a certain point. School respondents and RTLBs who work with SPELD teachers in their schools, were more aware of and positive about the effectiveness of SPELD interventions with their students, than schools and RTLBs who did not. Most of the former commented that the expertise and experience of SPELD assessors and SPELD teachers should be available to more students, especially those whose parents cannot afford SPELD.

Sustainability of SPELD

Responses from SPELD teachers in both phases of the research revealed a highly committed cohort of teachers who were passionate about their work with SLD students. Many spoke or wrote about family members who had dyslexia, or students in their classrooms who they had felt unprepared to help when they were newly trained classroom teachers earlier in their careers. Many had dedicated their later careers to working with these students because they could see they were not being adequately helped in schools. This had meant they had worked as SPELD teachers often in a part-time capacity, being paid only for their contact teaching time. While this may have suited those who did not have to rely on an independent salary, and who had chosen the part-time working life-style, it raises questions about sustainability in the future. The two main issues it raises are:

(a) The low financial compensation for the work SPELD teachers do when they are paid only for contact teaching hours, and not for the additional hours spent talking to assessors, parents, and/or teachers; the administrative and committee work many do; and the professional development work required of them.

(b) The current aging workforce of SPELD teachers where only 12 percent are under 50 years old, which may be a consequence of the financial issues discussed above. SPELD NZ may need to consider succession planning for the future to keep its teaching numbers up, which may involve rethinking costings.

Participants' views on aspects of SPELD that are going well and recommendations for change

(a) SPELD professional development

One of the initiatives implemented by SPELD NZ that appears to be very successful is the professional development the organisation provides for its members. Assessors and SPELD teachers commented very favourably on the quality of the annual conferences, the overseas experts that were invited to speak to them, and the up-to-date research they were exposed to. As well as the conferences and meetings teachers are expected to attend, there is also a requirement for them to keep their registration up-to-date through their own professional reading. These initiatives appear to have resulted in a workforce with high levels of expertise, based on research evidence.

SPELD could consider capitalising on this strength, by offering to share this expertise with schools in a more systematic way than currently, so that classroom teachers could also benefit. Some assessors and SPELD teachers reported providing PD to schools in their local areas, but SPELD as an organisation could do this in a less ad hoc fashion. It would be one way of improving the communication with schools, and may lead towards enhancing more effective collaboration with classroom teachers. This approach could extend to teacher training institutions to ensure that all teachers know about SPELD.

(b) Assessment

The majority of SPELD assessors were reported to be using the diagnostic testing tool Woodcock Johnson III. The organisation is streamlining the use of this one tool so that all data can be used in the same form for national analyses. This is necessary for the future viability of SPELD, as the evidence from this nationally collected data is needed to demonstrate any impact SPELD interventions may have on student achievement. Until schools and the Ministry of Education can see the results of this analysis, there is unlikely to be many changes in the ways SPELD is regarded.

While the data obtained from the diagnostic testing is reported to be thorough and reliable, it is mainly of value to a limited audience at this stage. SPELD teachers are the main recipients and analysers of this data, to use to formulate teaching programmes. However, this information could be put to more general use for the benefit of the student if it was written for two additional audiences – classroom teachers and parents.

The cost of assessments and re-assessments are another factor for SPELD NZ to consider. The timing of re-assessments may need to be re-thought so that they fit more strategically with factors within mainstream education, such as applying for reader/writers for NCEA.

SPELD may also consider how they might best work strategically in the new national standards environment in terms of assessment.

Appendix A: School survey

SPELD: Schools survey

1. SPELD Survey for Schools

Schools that fill out this survey will go into the draw for $100 worth of book vouchers. Should you win the draw we need your email address to contact you - we ask for it at the end of the survey.

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) is undertaking a research project for SPELD NZ about the effectiveness of SPELD in New Zealand, and to provide them with information about how they can improve their services. Your response to this survey will contribute to a fuller understanding of what schools think about SPELD and how they see SPELD helping students with specific learning disabilities (SLDs).

This survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

If you have any queries about this survey, please contact Keren Brooking (Keren.Brooking@nzcer.org.nz or (04) 802 1380).

Thank you.

2. Your position and school demographics

This survey may be completed by the Principal, the DP, the AP or the school's literacy leader.

1. What is your position in your school? (For the person who fills this survey in)

◯ Principal ◯ Literacy/English teacher ◯ DP or AP

◯ Other (please specify)

[   ]

2. Please indicate your school type:

Type of school   Authority

The school is: [   ]   [   ]

3. Please indicate the decile rating of your school:

◯ 1-3 ◯ 4-6 ◯ 7 ◯ 8 ◯ 9 ◯ 10

4. Please indicate whether your school is:

◯ Main urban, e.g. Wellington

◯ Minor urban, e.g. Ashburton

◯ Rural, e.g. West Coast

3. Your school and SPELD

5. How many years has your school had students who attend SPELD?

○ Our school has never used SPELD

○ Our school used to have students that used SPELD, but not currently

○ Up to 2 years

○ 3-5 years

○ 6-10 years

○ 11+ years

○ Don't know

4. School's use of SPELD

6. How did your school originally become involved with SPELD?

☐ We approached SPELD

☐ We advised parent to contact SPELD for help with their child

☐ Parent requested SPELD's help and informed school

☐ SPELD approached us

☐ A staff member requested SPELD's help

☐ Don't know

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

7. How many students at your school attend SPELD this year?

○ Don't know   ○ None   ○ 1-2   ○ 3-4   ○ 5-6   ○ 7 or more

8. How many SPELD teachers are working with your students this year?

○ Don't know   ○ None   ○ 1-2   ○ 3-4   ○ 5 or more

9. How does your school work with SPELD?

☐ We advise parents to refer students for a SPELD assessment

☐ We have SPELD teachers come into school to work with students in school time

☐ SPELD teachers teach students out of school time

☐ We have SPELD teachers on the staff who work with our students in school time

10. Are there other literacy interventions or programmes your school offers to support students with specific learning disabilities (SLDs)?

○ Yes   ○ No

5. School's use of SPELD (contd.)

11. If yes, what are the interventions?

☐ Reading recovery

☐ An intervention with a Resource Teacher of Literacy (RTLit)

☐ An intervention with a Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB)

☐ An intervention with a teacher aide

☐ A parent-tutor or adult-tutor literacy intervention

☐ Hei Awhiawhi Tamariki ki te Panui Pukapuka (HPP)

☐ Pause, Prompt, and Praise (PPP)

☐ Supporting At-Risk Readers (SARR)

☐ Third Chance

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

6. Relationships and information sharing between SPELD and class teachers

12. How much do you know about SPELD approaches to teaching students with SLDs?

◯ A lot   ◯ Quite a bit   ◯ A little bit   ◯ Not much   ◯ Nothing

13. Would you like to know more about SPELD and the interventions they use?

◯ Yes   ◯ No

If yes, please describe what:

[   ]

14. How much information sharing between classroom teachers and SPELD teachers about students with SLDs, currently occurs at your school?

◯ A lot   ◯ Quite a bit   ◯ A little bit   ◯ Not much   ◯ None   ◯ Don't know

15. Have any staff at your school attended PD provided by SPELD?

◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ Not sure

If yes, please describe:

```
                                                      ▲

                                                      ▼
```

7. Effectiveness of SPELD interventions

16. Do you see SPELD having any particular strengths in comparison to other literacy interventions?

◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ Not sure

If yes, please describe:

```
                                                      ▲

                                                      ▼
```

17. How would you rate the impact SPELD teachers have on your students?

	Strong positive impact	Positive impact	No impact	Negative impact	Strong negative impact	Don't know
Self esteem	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Confidence in their ability to learn	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Enjoyment in learning	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Reading achievement	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Writing achievement	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Spelling achievement	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Mathematics achievement	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Self management	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Behaviour	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Relationships with others	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

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18. What do you see as the ideal learning timetable for most SPELD students?

○ One hour a week

○ Twice a week for half an hour

○ Three or four times a week for 20 minutes

○ Don't know

○ Other (please specify)

[ ]

19. Are there any changes that could be made to SPELD to better meet the needs of students at your school?

○ No   ○ Don't know

○ Yes (please describe)

[ ]

8. Future of SPELD

20. What do you see as the ideal SPELD role with schools in the future?

[ ]

21. Do you have any further comments you would like to make about SPELD?

[ ]

9. Schools that currently do not use SPELD

22. Why does your school not currently have students who use SPELD?

☐ We do not know enough about SPELD

☐ We do not agree with interventions or methods used by SPELD

☐ There is no evidence that SPELD teaching methods work

☐ We do not want students to take time out of the classroom

☐ We do not think SPELD provides value for money

☐ Our students cannot afford it

☐ We have found SPELD to be difficult to work with

Other (please specify)

```
[                                                    ▲]
[                                                     ]
[                                                    ▼]
```

10. Thanks and how to contact a winner

Thank you for taking the time to fill this survey in.

23. If you would like your school to be entered for the draw, please type the email address of the contact person:

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[                            ]
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Appendix B: RTLB Survey

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) is undertaking a research project for SPELD NZ about the effectiveness of SPELD in New Zealand. Your help in answering this survey as a RTLB who may be working with students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs), will contribute to a fuller understanding of this.

This survey will take less than 10 minutes to complete.

If you have any queries about this survey, please contact Keren Brooking (Keren.Brooking@nzcer.org.nz or (04) 802 1380).

Thank you.

2. Knowledge of SPELD

1. How much do you know about SPELD?

	A lot	Quite a bit	A little bit	Not much	Nothing
SPELD philosophy	○	○	○	○	○
SPELD teaching interventions	○	○	○	○	○
Research that underpins SPELD work	○	○	○	○	○
SPELD assessment processes	○	○	○	○	○

2. Which activities with SPELD have you been involved in during the last three years (2007-2009)?

☐ Attending SPELD courses

☐ Working with SPELD teachers

☐ Reading SPELD assessments of students

☐ Using SPELD interventions

☐ Attending SPELD conferences

☐ Other (please specify)

_____

3. Please rate the usefulness of these activities, in terms of your job as a RTLB:

	Very useful	Quite useful	Not very useful	Not useful at all	I don't take part in this
Attending SPELD courses	○	○	○	○	○
Working with SPELD teachers	○	○	○	○	○
Reading SPELD assessments of students	○	○	○	○	○
Using SPELD interventions	○	○	○	○	○
Attending SPELD conferences	○	○	○	○	○

3. Relationship between SPELD and schools

4. At what proportion of schools in your cluster do ...

	Nearly all	About half	Less than half	Hardly any	None	Don't know
Classroom teachers advise parents to refer students for a SPELD assessment	○	○	○	○	○	○
SPELD teachers work with students in school time at school	○	○	○	○	○	○
SPELD teachers teach students out of school	○	○	○	○	○	○
Classroom teachers work closely with the SPELD teachers	○	○	○	○	○	○
Classroom teachers receive professional development from SPELD	○	○	○	○	○	○

Other (please specify)

4. SPELD assessment

5. Have you ever seen a SPELD assessment report?

○ Yes   ○ No

5. SPELD assessment (contd.)

6. How useful do you think the current SPELD assessment report is for informing the following groups?

	Very useful	Useful	Neutral	Not useful	Not at all useful	Don't know
RTLBs	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Parents	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Classroom teacher	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

7. Do you have any recommendations for improvements to the assessment report?

6. Overall views of SPELD

8. What SPELD initiatives do you observe working well?

9. What aspects of SPELD and its operations could be improved?

Thank you taking the time to fill in this survey.

Appendix C: SPELD Teacher Survey

NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
TE RŪNANGA O AOTEAROA MŌ TE RANGAHAU I TE MĀTAURANGA

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SPELD Teacher Survey

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) is undertaking a research project for SPELD NZ about the effectiveness of SPELD in New Zealand. Your help in answering this survey will contribute to a fuller understanding of this. Please fill out this questionnaire by ticking the boxes or circling the numbers that apply and by writing in the spaces provided. Thank you.

(A)   Teaching history

1. Please circle the number of years you have worked in each of the following categories:
(Circle one number in each line that applies)

	None	Up to 5 years	6 to 10 years	11 to 15 years	Over 15 years
a) Classroom teacher	1	2	3	4	5
b) SPELD teacher (even if part-time)	1	2	3	4	5
c) Specialist teacher, e.g. reading recovery, special needs *(please specify)* _____	1	2	3	4	5
d) Other *(please state)* _____	1	2	3	4	5

2.   This year how many students are you currently teaching for SPELD ? _____

3.   This year how many of your students have had:

a) 1 hour's tuition per week	1	2	3	4	5 or more
b) 2 hour's tuition per week	1	2	3	4	5 or more
c) 3 hour's tuition per week	1	2	3	4	5 or more

4.   This year how many schools do you have SPELD students from? _____

5. **While we realise every student is different, on average how much *non-teaching* time do you spend per student, per week doing the following tasks?**

		No time	0–30 min	30–60 min	1–1.5 hrs	1.5–2 hrs	2 hours or more
a)	Planning and preparing resources	1	2	3	4	5	6
b)	Talking with parents	1	2	3	4	5	6
c)	Talking with student's classroom teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6

6. **What would be the longest time you would spend per week doing these tasks, with an *atypical* student?**

		The most hours per week
a)	Planning and preparing resources	hrs
b)	Talking with parents	hrs
c)	Talking with student's classroom teacher	hrs

7. **On average how long does it take to read and interpret an assessor's report on one student?**

○[1] Up to 1 hour   ○[2] 1–2 hours   ○[3] 3–4 hours   ○[4] 5–6 hours   ○[5] 7–8 hours   ○[6] 8–9 hours   ○[7] 9 hours or more

8. **On average how much non-teaching time do you work for SPELD annually doing the following tasks?**

		Up to 1 day	1–3 days	4–5 days	6–7 days	1–2 weeks	3–4 weeks	5 weeks or more
a)	Attending PD for SPELD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b)	Attending SPELD committee meetings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c)	Professional reading	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d)	Own research	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

(B) SPELD Assessment

9. i) On average how often do you *talk* with the assessor of each student you teach about each of the following, and how important do you rate this contact?

	How often					How important				
	Never	Once a year	Twice a year	Three times a year	More than 3 times a year	Not at all important	Not Important	Neutral	Important	Very important
a) The assessment report	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
b) Student achievement	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
c) Teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
d) The need for re-assessment	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
e) Student behaviour / attitudes	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
f) Advice on working with parents	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

ii) Are there any other things you discuss with the assessor? (*Please describe*)

10. What assessment tool do most of the assessors you work with use? (*Please tick)*

○ ^a Woodcock Johnson 111

○ ^b Other (*please list*)_____

11. How useful do you think the current SPELD assessment report is for informing the following groups?

	Very useful	Useful	Neutral	Not useful	Not at all useful
a) SPELD teachers	1	2	3	4	5
b) Parents	1	2	3	4	5
c) Classroom teachers	1	2	3	4	5
d) RTLBs	1	2	3	4	5

12. How could the assessment report be improved?

13. We are interested in your ideas about frequency of assessments for a typical SPELD student

	Never	Every 2 years	Once a year	Twice a year
a) Once a student has had their first SPELD assessment how often are they usually re-assessed?	1	2	3	4
b) How often do you think they should be re-assessed?	1	2	3	4

14. What forms of assessment do *you* use with your students? *(Tick all that apply)*

○ a Running record /Probe

○ b Schonnel spelling test

○ c Burt Word

○ d Holborn

○ e Peters

○ f Gough

○ g Kastler

○ h Roper

○ i Informal observations and conversations

○ j Other running records

○ k School assessments (e.g. STAR, PAT, Teacher tests) *(please specify)*_____

○ l Tests you have devised *(please describe)*_____

○ m Other tests *(please describe)* _____

○ n None

(C)   SPELD Teaching

15. a) Do you see SPELD having any particular strengths *in comparison* to other literacy interventions?

○ 1 Yes

○ 2 No

○ 3 Not sure

(b) If *yes* please describe:

16. What do you see as the ideal learning timetable for most SPELD students?

    ○ [1] One hour a week

    ○ [2] Twice a week for half an hour

    ○ [3] Three or four times a week for 20 minutes

    ○ [4] Other *(please state)*_____

17. How would you rate the impact you have on your student's:

	Strong positive impact	Positive impact	No impact	Negative impact	Strong negative impact
a) Self esteem	1	2	3	4	5
b) Confidence in their ability to learn	1	2	3	4	5
c) Enjoyment in learning	1	2	3	4	5
d) Reading achievement	1	2	3	4	5
e) Writing achievement	1	2	3	4	5
f) Spelling achievement	1	2	3	4	5
g) Self management	1	2	3	4	5
h) Behaviour	1	2	3	4	5
i) Relationships with others	1	2	3	4	5

(D)   Relationship with schools

18. How many of the schools that your students attend are happy that you are working with their students?

    ○ [1] I don't know

    ○ [2] None

    ○ [3] Some

    ○ [4] About half

    ○ [5] Nearly all

    ○ [6] All

19. Please rate the proportion of your SPELD teaching time in each of the following places:

	All of my teaching	Most of my teaching	Some of my teaching	None of my teaching
a) At my home	1	2	3	4
b) At the student's school	1	2	3	4
c) At the student's home	1	2	3	4
d) Other (*Please describe*)_____	1	2	3	4

20. Please indicate whether you have discussed *this year*, any of the topics below with the school staff listed (*Please tick all that apply*):

	Classroom teachers	RTLBs	RT Lits	Principal
a) Behaviour of SPELD student/s	○	○	○	○
b) Attitudes to learning of SPELD student/s	○	○	○	○
c) Learning programmes of SPELD student/s	○	○	○	○
d) Strategies to help students with SLDs	○	○	○	○
e) Homework of SPELD students	○	○	○	○

21. i) Have you ever been asked to provide support, advice or professional development to teachers in schools?

○ [1] Yes   ○ [2] No

ii) If *yes*, please describe:

(E)   Views on SPELD training / PD

22. How well has SPELD prepared you through professional development?

	Very well prepared	Well prepared	Sufficiently prepared	Not quite prepared enough	Not prepared at all
a) In the preparation and training to become a SPELD teacher	1	2	3	4	5
b) In the professional development after initial training	1	2	3	4	5

23. Please rate the usefulness of each of the following professional development opportunities SPELD provides?

	Very useful	Quite useful	Not very useful	Not useful at all	I have not taken part in this
a) Professional development courses	1	2	3	4	5
b) Annual conference	1	2	3	4	5
c) Expert speakers	1	2	3	4	5
d) Workshops	1	2	3	4	5
e) Area meetings	1	2	3	4	5
f) Local committee meetings	1	2	3	4	5
g) Networking with other SPELD teachers	1	2	3	4	5
h) Appraisal	1	2	3	4	5
i) Teacher Observations	1	2	3	4	5
j) Other *(please state)*					

24. Do you have any suggestions for improving the professional development that SPELD currently provides, or for other forms of professional support you would like SPELD to provide?

(F) Future of SPELD

25. Do you have suggestions for further improvements for any aspects of SPELD ?

<div style="border:1px solid black; height:400px;"></div>

(G) About you

26. Please indicate your gender.

    ○ [1] Female   ○ [2] Male

27. Which ethnic group/s do you identify with?

    ○ [a] New Zealand European/Päkehä

    ○ [b] Other European_____

    ○ [c] Mäori

    ○ [d] Pacific

    ○ [e] Asian

    ○ [f] Other:_____

28. Please indicate your age.

    ○ [1] Under 30 years

    ○ [2] 30–39 years

    ○ [3] 40–49 years

    ○ [4] 50–59 years

    ○ [5] 60+ years

29. What qualifications do you have? *(Please tick all that apply)*

○ [a] Teaching Diploma

○ [b] Teaching Degree

○ [c] Other degree *(please specify)*_____

○ [d] Post graduate qualification *(please specify)*_____

○ [e] Other:_____

30. Please tick the location you work in as a SPELD teacher.

○ [1] Main urban, e.g. Wellington

○ [2] Minor urban, e.g. Ashburton

○ [3] Rural, e.g. East coast

(H)   Your final comments

31. Do you have any further comments you would like to make?

Thank you for your time in filling in this survey.

Please return to NZCER in the stamped addressed envelope by Dec. 10th.