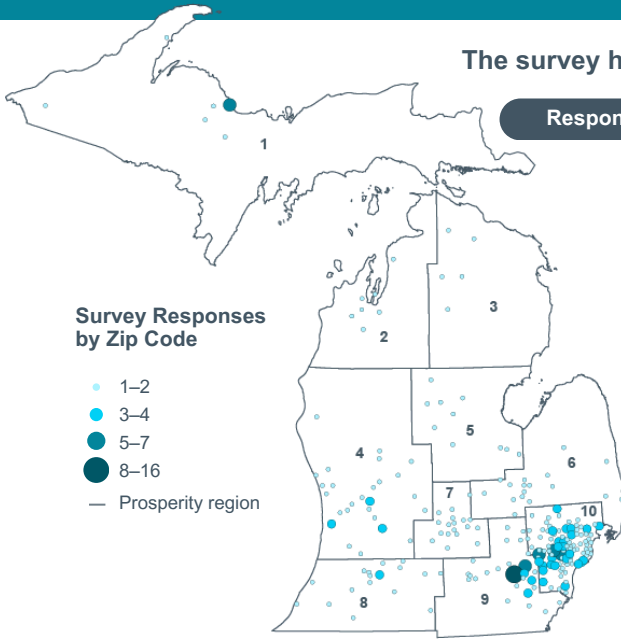
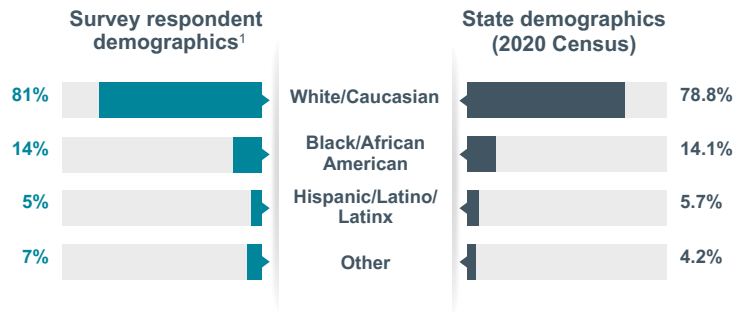


The Autism Alliance of Michigan (AAoM) was founded on the vision that people with autism will lead lives that meet their greatest potential. In 2023, AAoM fielded an unprecedented online survey to inform collective advocacy efforts to improve access and grow statewide opportunities for students with disabilities across the state.

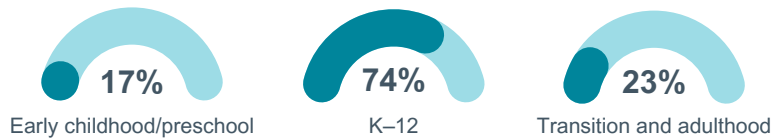
The survey had **890 responses** from across Michigan.



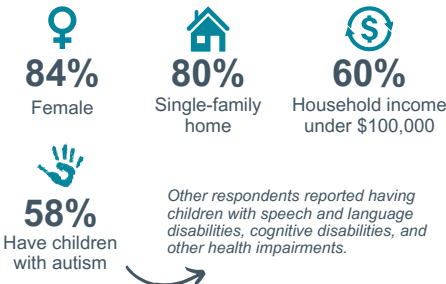
Respondents mirror Michigan's racial demographics:



Respondents included individuals with disabilities and parents of students with disabilities from various educational levels:



Respondent characteristics



What Is Special Education?

The system we refer to as "special education" is governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), enacted in 1975 and last reauthorized by Congress in 2004. Under IDEA, schools are obligated to provide a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to eligible students through an individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education program (IEP). IEPs and IFSPs are legal documents outlining the services and supports a student needs. With tools like these, IDEA helps prepare eligible children with disabilities for further education, employment, and independent living.

What Is Important to Families?

- Adequate and equitable school funding/resources
- Special education workforce shortage
- Placement of students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment
- Identification/special education eligibility
- Parent/student engagement
- Literacy
- High expectations for students with disabilities
- Behavior/discipline
- Leadership at the state level
- Graduating with a regular high-school diploma versus exiting with a certificate of completion
- Use of medical/health plans in school

When AAoM asked respondents to prioritize their top concerns about special education in Michigan, they ranked these 11 issue areas by order of importance (1 = most important, 11 = least important).

To learn more about Autism Alliance of Michigan or to get involved, go to: autismallianceofmichigan.org/education-initiatives/ or >>>

SCAN THIS CODE FOR MORE INFO

