



# NLTS2 Update

Fall 2003



The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) is an exciting study being conducted for the U.S. Department of Education. It includes more than 11,000 youth nationwide who were ages 13 through 16 in 2000, receiving special education, and in at least the seventh grade. We are following the progress of these youth by collecting information from parents, youth, and schools at various points over 9 years. The result of this important study will be a national picture of the experiences and achievements of young people with disabilities that will guide future educational policy and programs, and ultimately will help youth achieve success in adult life. Thank you to the thousands of teachers, school staff, parents, and youth who have taken the time to fill out a survey or be interviewed. We greatly appreciate your efforts.

## Data Collection Update

We are now beginning our second round of data collection for NLTS2. This round of data collection includes the following activities:

**Parent and youth interviews** began in the spring of 2003 and continue through September 2003. Parents are asked to update us on the recent experiences of their youth and on their family life. We also contact youth with disabilities who are able to complete a telephone interview or a mail questionnaire about their experiences.

**Student assessments** will begin in January 2004. These face-to-face assessments/interviews of youth with disabilities ages 16 to 18 provide information about students' academic performance, self-advocacy skills, and attitudes toward school and learning. Professionals are hired and trained to arrange and conduct these assessments. Many experienced field assessors are returning for this round of assessments.

**School data collection** will begin in the fall of 2003. To avoid overburdening teachers and principals with study activities, we are recruiting

study coordinators. At each school attended by a study participant, district and school staff will be asked to select someone to be a point of contact for the study. These school site study coordinators update NLTS2 on student participant enrollment, distribute surveys to teachers, and provide transcripts. They also complete the **School Characteristics Survey** about the policies and characteristics of their schools. Coordinators or their schools receive stipends as a "thank-you" for their effort and time.

Teachers will complete surveys about students in the study. The **Teacher Survey** provides information about students' instructional goals, classroom experiences, assessments, accommodations, social adjustment, and educational progress in general education academic classrooms. The **School Program Survey**, completed by the school staff person who knows each student's school program best, provides information about the student's placement, program, and progress.

### NLTS2 welcomes feedback!

Call our toll-free number: 1-866-269-7274 E-mail: [nlts2@sri.com](mailto:nlts2@sri.com)

Visit NLTS2 on the Web: <http://www.nlts2.org>



NLTS2 is conducted by SRI International, 333 Ravenswood Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025

## Recent Findings from NLTS2

Below are a few of the interesting findings regarding the school experiences of students with disabilities from the first round of NLTS2 school surveys. Full reports can be found at [www.nlts2.org](http://www.nlts2.org).

The majority of students with disabilities take classes in a combination of general education and special education settings. According to the graph below, 27% of students take all classes in a general education setting and only 9% of students take all classes in a special education setting.

In general education academic classes, students with disabilities and their general education peers participate in the same types of instructional groupings

and instructional activities at similar rates. Whole class instruction is most common; small group and individual instruction from a teacher or other adult are less common. Differences are found in classroom participation. Students with disabilities are less

likely to respond orally to questions, make presentations, or work independently than their general education peers.

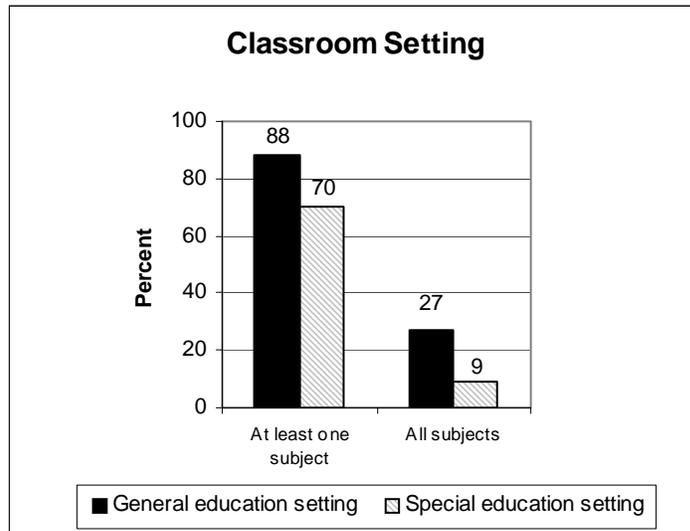
Grades can play an important role in reflecting a student's understanding of a subject content area. Criteria for grading differ in general education and special education settings. Teachers in special education classes are more likely than teachers in general education classes to focus on attitude and behavior, class participation, daily work, and attendance in determining grades. In comparison, teachers in general education classes are more likely than

those in special education classes to emphasize homework and performance relative to a standard in determining grades.

Grades vary for students in different disability categories. For example, students with autism, or hearing, visual, and orthopedic impairments are the most likely to receive mostly A's and B's in both special and general education classes (e.g., about 40% of students with visual impairments

receive mostly A's and B's in both types of classes). In contrast, students with emotional disturbances are among the least likely to receive A's and B's in either type of class (20% or fewer) and are the most likely to receive mostly D's and F's (18% and 33% in special and general education classes, respectively).

Almost all students with disabilities have a transition plan by the tenth grade (90%), with 65% of students starting their transition planning by age 14. The most common post-high school goals for students with transition plans are 2- or 4-year college, postsecondary vocational training, competitive employment, and living independently. School personnel report that 58% of students provide some input into their transition plans and an additional 12% take a leadership role.



*Please check our Web site for additional NLTS2 findings and reports at [www.nlts2.org](http://www.nlts2.org).*