

DARS, Division For Rehabilitation Services: Helping Students and Adults with ASD Obtain and Maintain Employment



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What is DARS?

Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)

is 1 of the 4 Departments overseen by The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)

- ✓ DADS
- ✓ DSHS
- ✓ DFPS
- ✓ **DARS**

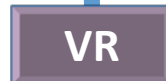
DARS contains 4 divisions and those divisions house many programs



Where is Vocational Rehabilitation(VR)?



Still Peeling...



BUT AS OF **SEPT 1, 2016**

VR will be moving to TWC (Texas Workforce Commission), but this will not cause an interruption in services- just a different name.





Autism Services in DARS

DARS Autism Program

-First started as a pilot in 2008

-In 2014, served 295 children 3 to 8 yrs.

-Providers are selected through a competitive procurement process.

Office Of Autism Services

-Autism Council

-TARRC

(Texas Autism Resource and Research Center)

Vocational Rehabilitation

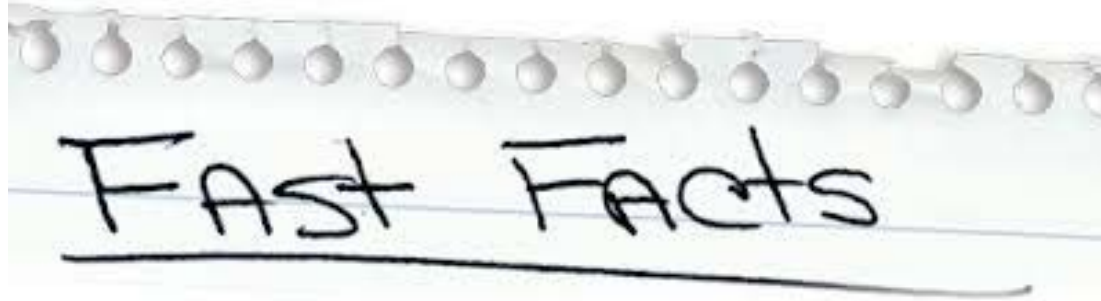
-NEW ASD & DD Services have been created



Let's talk VR!

It is all about Employment

Texas Vocational Rehabilitation



- There are approximately 600 VR Counselors
- VR has 116 field offices located across the state
- Last year, VR served 80,475 consumers

VR: Who is **Eligible**?

To be eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation Services, an individual **must**

- Have a physical or mental **impairment**
- The impairment must constitute a substantial **impediment to employment**;
- The individual **must require VR services** to prepare for, enter, engage in or retain gainful employment consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice and
- The individual must be **capable of achieving an employment** goal.

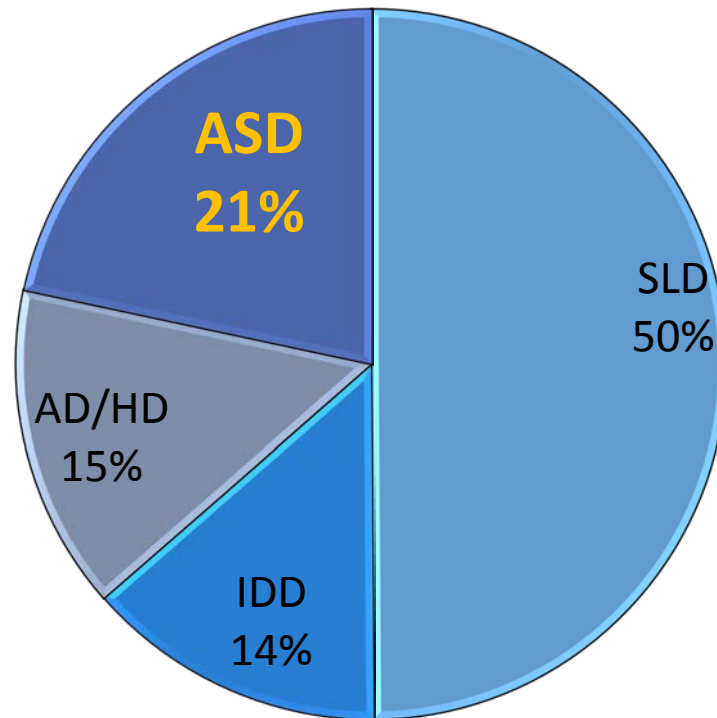
For **Social Security recipients**, there is a **presumed eligibility**. You must be receiving benefits for your disability, not as a child or survivor of a person with a disability.

For Ages 16-24,
What is the *Largest* Disability
Population Coming to VR?

Developmental Disorders

18,000

Developmental Disorders: Ages 16-24



“Developmental Disorder” is defined as the following disabilities:

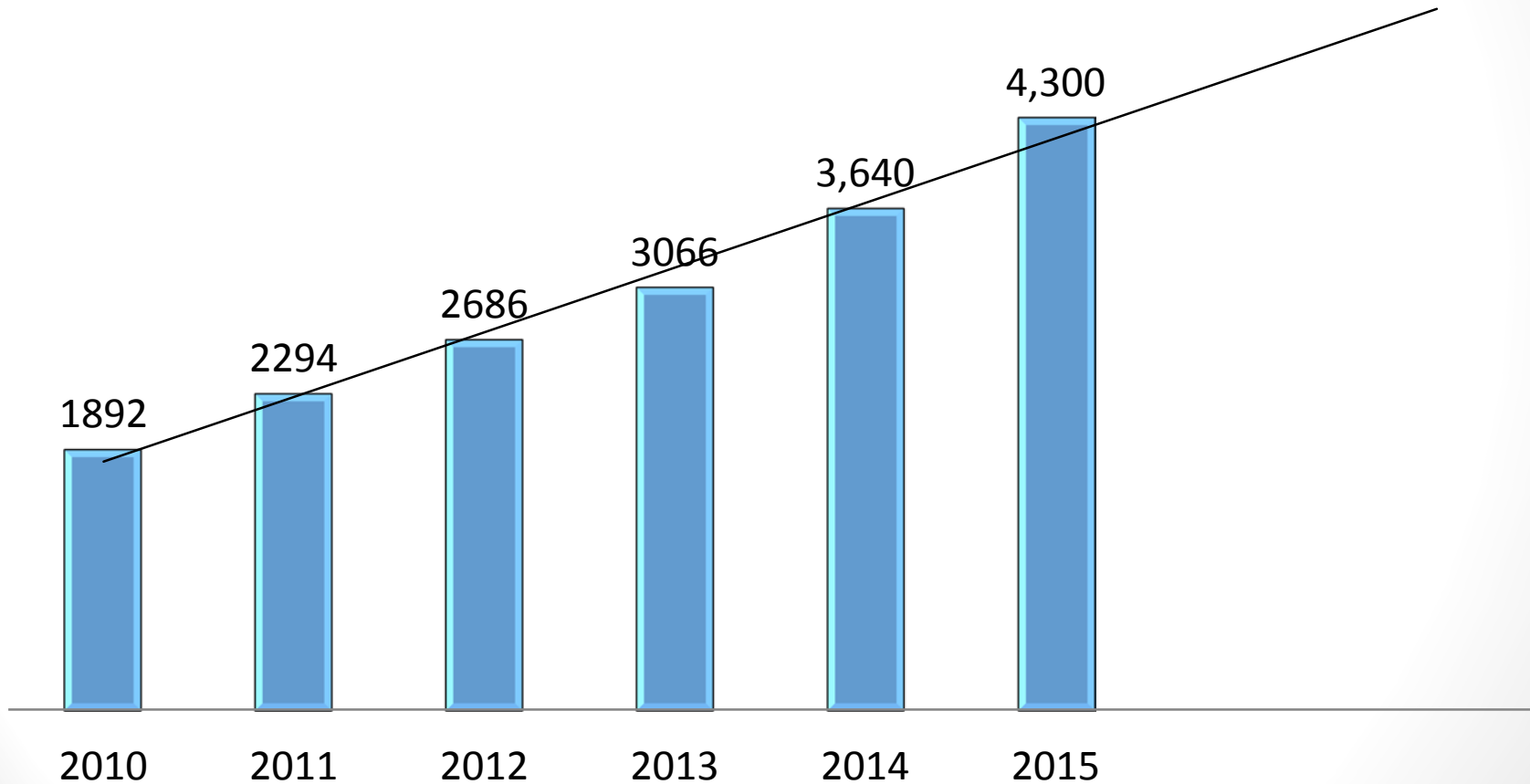
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity -Disorder (AD/HD)
- Intellectual Developmental Disorder(IDD)
- Specific Learning Disorder (SLD)

For Ages 16-24,
What is the *Fastest* Growing
Developmental Disorder?

Autism Spectrum Disorder

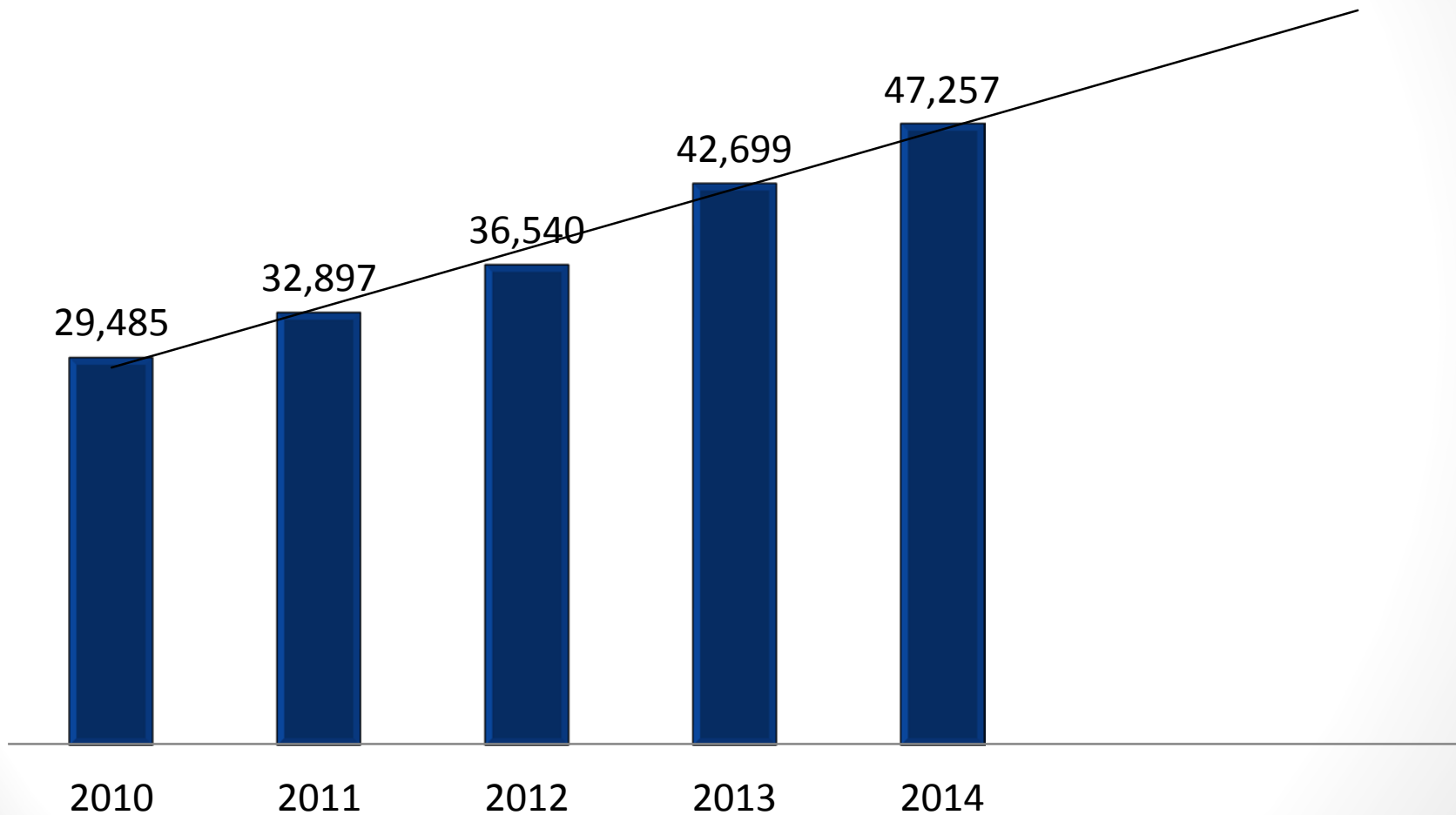
4,300

Vocational Rehabilitation ASD Growth Trend (16-24)

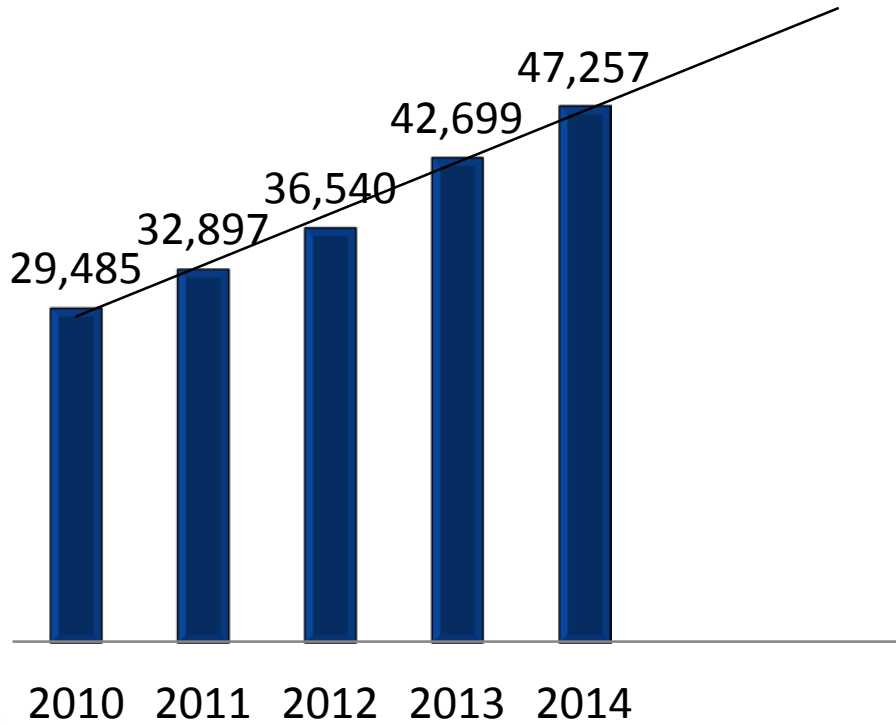


Texas Education Agency

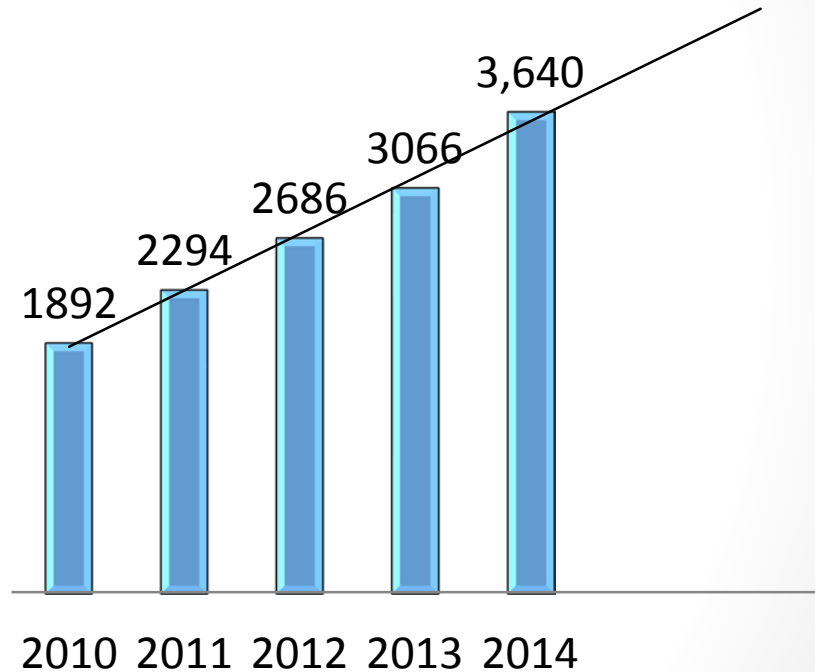
ASD Growth Trend (3-21)



Same growth trend- straight



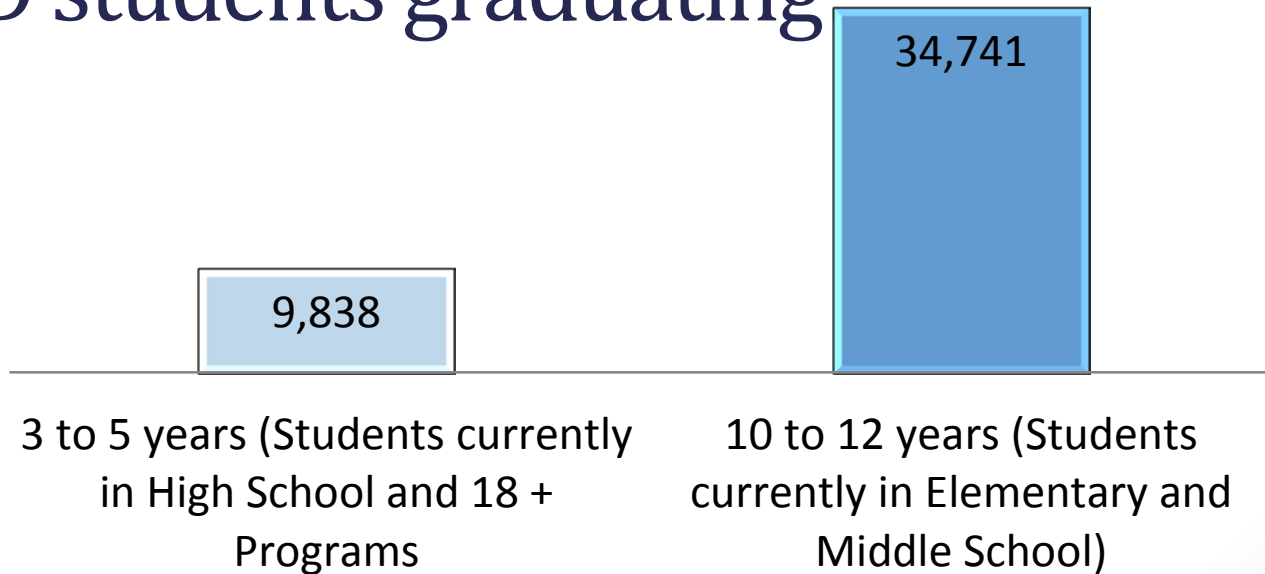
Schools



VR



In 10 to 12 years,
Texas will have **3 times** the number of
ASD students graduating

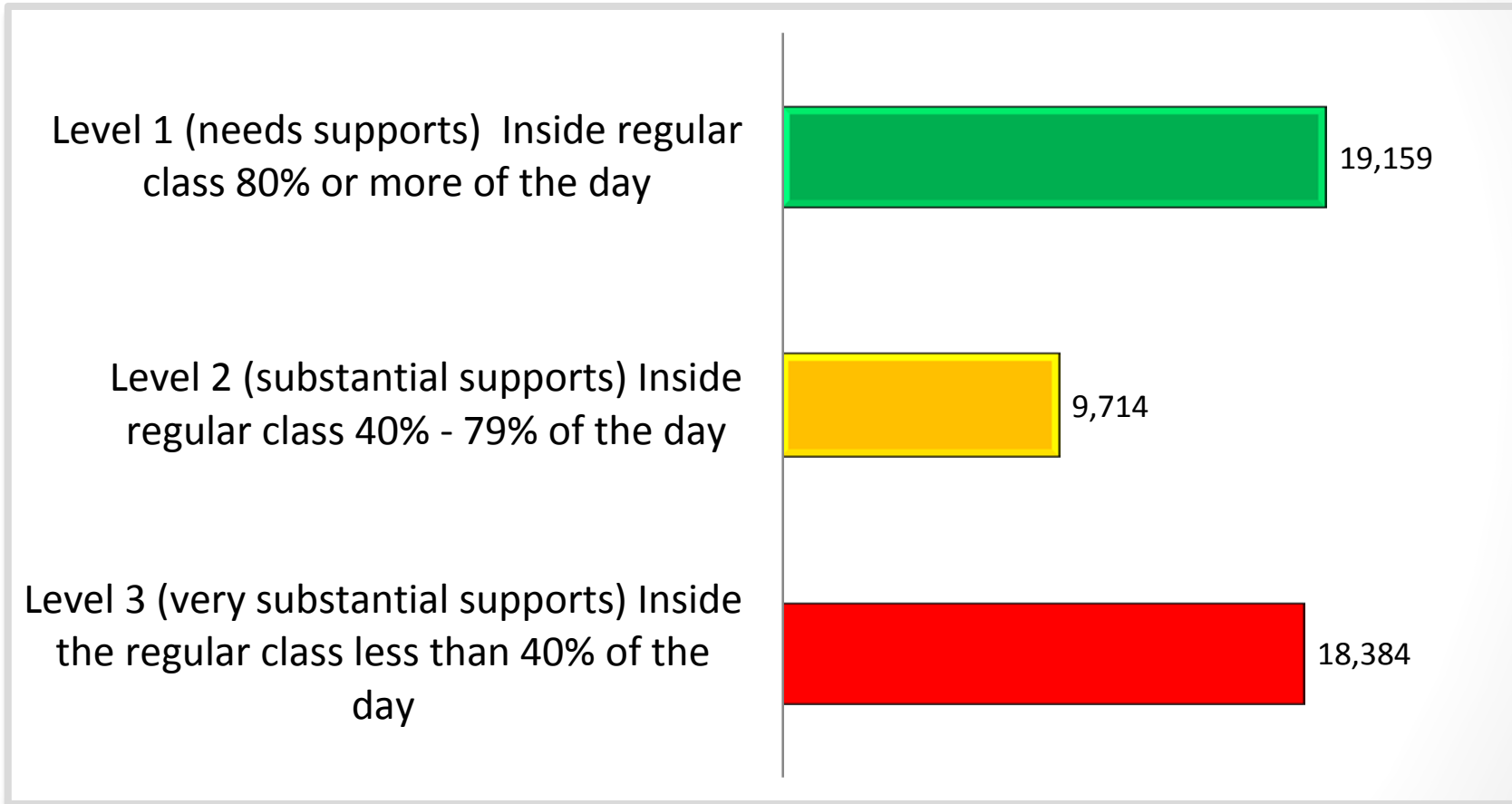


Over 47,000 in school
right now

Where will they **go**?

What **types of support**
will they need ?

47,257: Current Level of Support



Data based on the DSM level of severity and Federal Settings reported by TEA, July 2014 .

Post Secondary Options

The **40%** of those with ASD that do attempt college, **less than half** will NOT complete it.

Only **55.1 percent** of young adults with autism held paying jobs **during their first six years out of high school**, the lowest percentage among the disability categories examined.

9 out of 10 people with Autism are either **unemployed or underemployed** *regardless of their IQ or education level*

WIOA: helping transitioning young adults



Congressional finding is added ...

Congress finds that many students with disabilities are leaving secondary school without competitive integrated employment or being enrolled in postsecondary education, and there is a need to support such students as they transition from school to postsecondary life.

There is more emphasis on Transition and youth services throughout. In particular, there is emphasis on transition to postsecondary life, not just to employment or postsecondary education.

How **WIOA Impacts** the way we work with transition consumers

1. We will work with students earlier- focus can be on pre-employment skills
2. If a student is ready, their case may be closed while in high school (ex. If we help get them their 1st job)
3. Attending ARDs, when invited.

Examples of **Pre-Employment Services:**

Job Exploration Counseling, which may include Academic Assessments and Vocational Counseling and Guidance.

Work-Based Learning Experiences, which may include in-school and after-school opportunities and experiences outside of the traditional school settings. Examples of Work-Based Learning Experiences include On-the-Job Trainings, Apprenticeships, Internships, Summer Work Experiences, Work-Based Trainings, Job Search Assistance, Job Placement Assistance, On-the-Job Supports and Customized Employment.

Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities, which may include Vocational Counseling and Guidance and Academic Assessments.

Workplace Readiness Training for the development of social skills and independent living skills. This may include Job Readiness Training and Life Skills Training.

Training on Self-Advocacy, which may also include Peer Mentoring, Self-Determination Training and Life Skills Training.

Services **in place:**

- Statewide Specialist: Me
- 5 Regional Specialists
- Statewide Developmental Disorder Team
 - 86 VR Counselors
 - 35 Employment Specialists
- Applied Behavior Analysis- Can provide this treatment for social, life and vocational skills.

New Services for Consumers with ASD

- **Specially Trained Staff:** Employment Specialists can earn an Autism Endorsement through UNT
- **New Premium:** Employment Specialists who have the Autism Endorsement are eligible for the Autism Premium
- **New Service:** “ASD Supports” is the middle ground between job coaching and therapeutic services.
- **New Assessment:** “Environmental Work Assessment” designed to identify the best fit work environment along with identifying social and emotional skill deficits. This can be done for any consumer with a developmental disorder, not just autism.

Specialized Programs

- Project Hire
- Project Higher
- Project Search
- Project CASE
- Texas Tech Burkhart Center
- Austin Dog Alliance
- Providence Place

Just a few examples.....

