

Survey of Paraprofessionals on Assignments Post-NCLB

Survey posted on AFT Web Site on
November 19, 2006
1,098 responses



A Union of Professionals

AFT PSRP

Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel

Respondents

- 1,098 Total
- 1,066 Usable
- 1,016 Currently working as Paraprofessionals (95.3%) (rest of data reported only for those currently working as a paraprofessional)



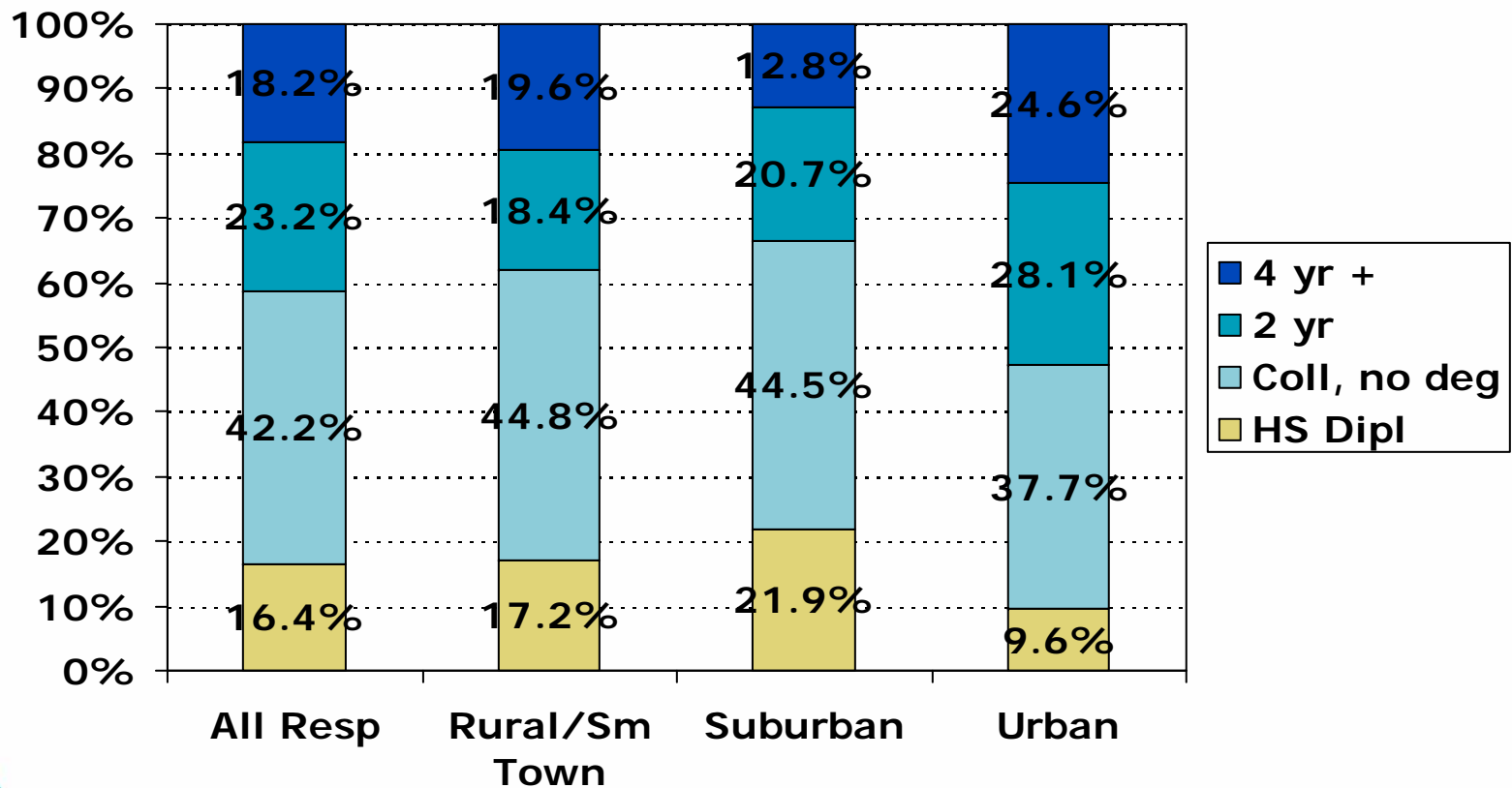
Who meets the requirements?

- 937 working in positions where must meet NCLB requirements
- Summer 2002 – 53.4% meet requirements
 - 54% in urban districts
- June 2005 – 85.25% meet requirements
 - 88% in urban districts
- November 2006 – 87.1% meet requirements
 - 94.6% in urban districts
 - 84.2% working 5 years or less
 - 88.5% working 6 years or more



Level of education

Nearly 85% have education beyond a high school diploma.



Types of students

	All Respondents	Highest Group
Early childhood	8.7%	12.4% (Urban)
General education	27.4%	31.4% (Urban)
Title I	8.3%	9.4% (Rural)
Special needs	53.8%	58.2% (Suburban)
Work with ELL	32.5%	37.7% (Urban)
Do NOT work with ELL	65.6%	73.6% (Rural)



NCLB language assignment of paraprofessionals

- **LAW:** may not provide any instructional service to a student unless the paraprofessional is working under the direct supervision of a teacher consistent with section 1119



NCLB language assignment of paraprofessionals

GUIDANCE:

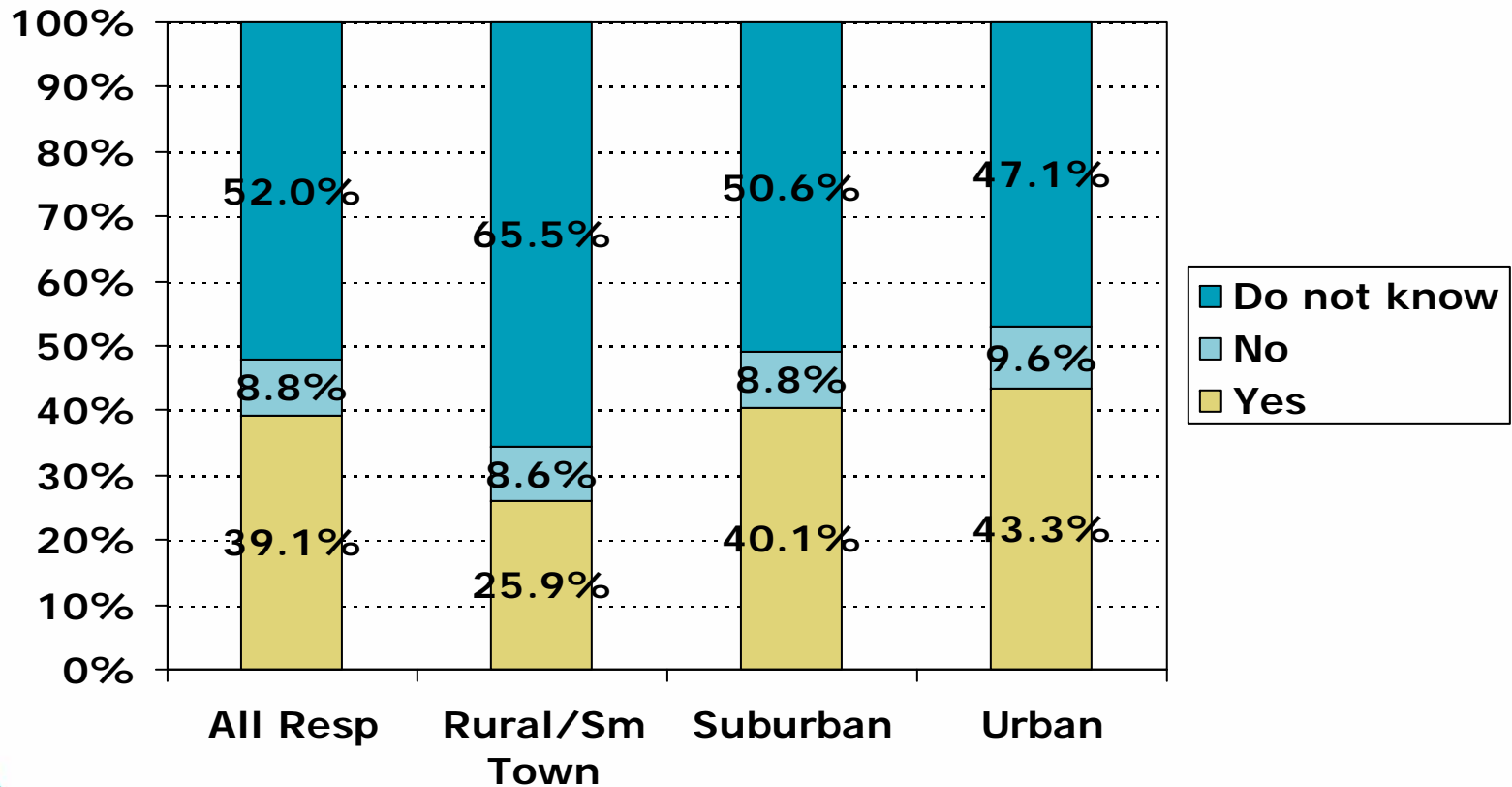
Paraprofessionals who provide instructional support must work under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher. [*Sections 1119(g)(3)(A)*]

A paraprofessional works under the direct supervision of a teacher if (1) the teacher prepares the lessons and plans the instructional support activities the paraprofessional carries out, and evaluates the achievement of the students with whom the paraprofessional is working, and (2) the paraprofessional works in close and frequent proximity with the teacher. [*§200.59(c)(2) of the Title I regulations*]
As a result, a program staffed entirely by paraprofessionals is not permitted.

A program where a paraprofessional provides instructional support and a teacher visits a site once or twice a week but otherwise is not in the classroom, or a program where a paraprofessional works with a group of students in another location while the teacher provides instruction to the rest of the class would also be inconsistent with the requirement that paraprofessionals work in close and frequent proximity to a teacher.

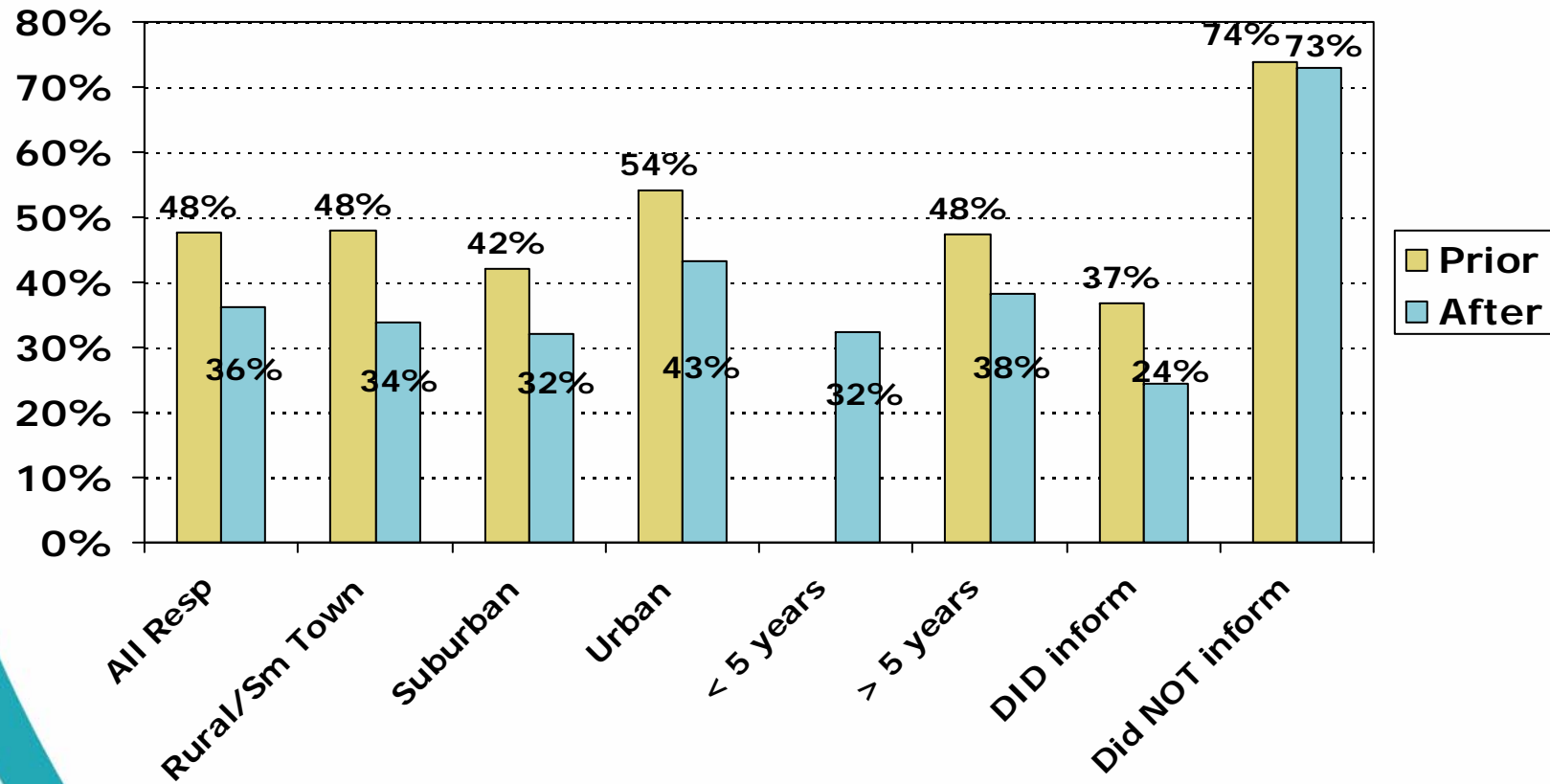


District Informing Administrators



To your knowledge, did your district inform principals of this NCLB provision?

Providing instruction under direction of teacher



Prior to passage (and after passage) did you provide instructional support WITHOUT working under the direction of a teacher?



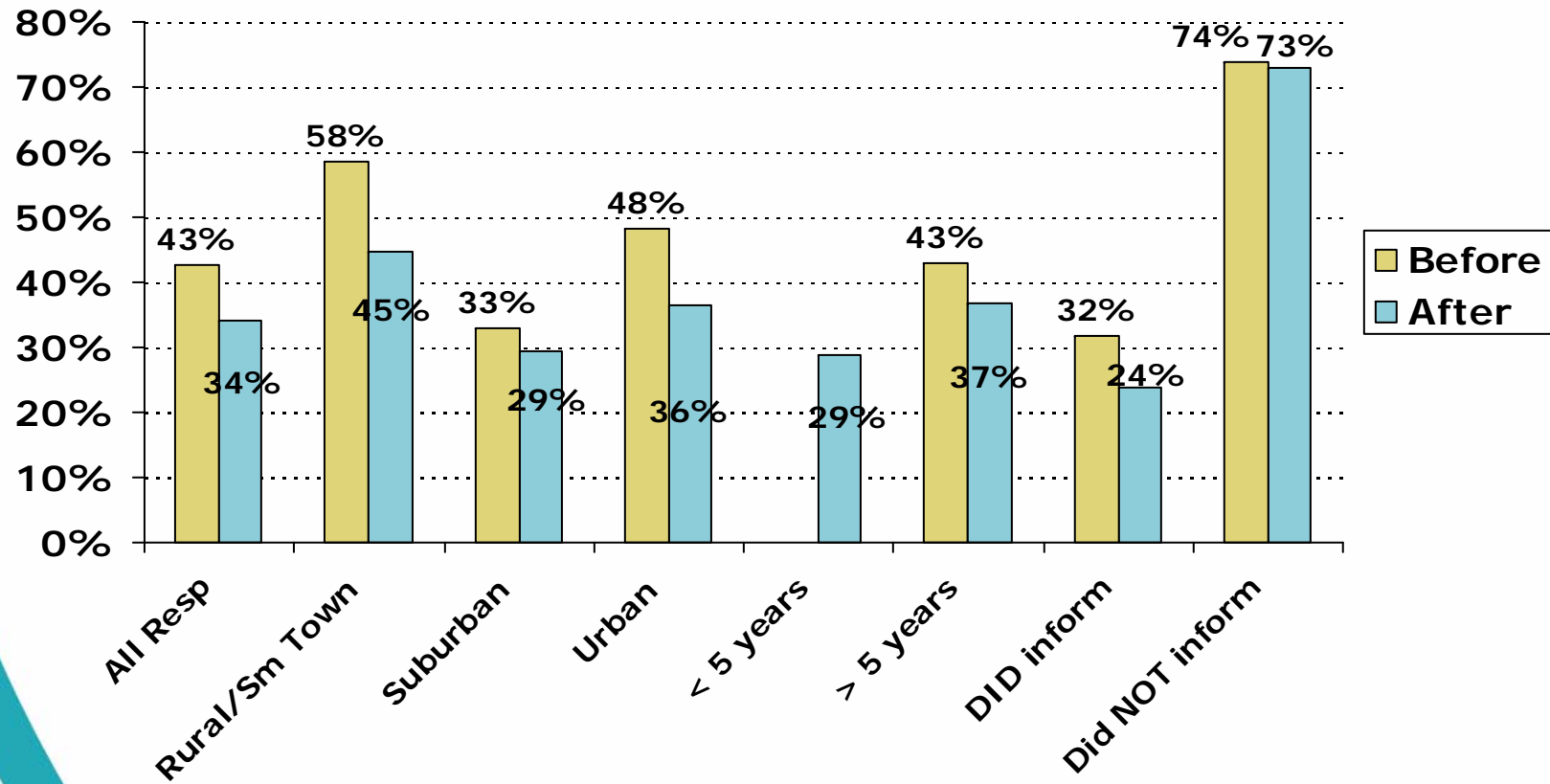
What paraprofessionals say about “instructional”

- I work as a 1:1 for an autistic child. Every lesson the teacher gives I go over for further understanding for my student. I do this with just my student and myself.
 - Under certain reading reforms, paras provide instruction without working under the direction of a teacher on a daily basis.
 - The school I am at really bends the rules on this law. The teacher will be gone with students for over an hour 3 days a week. Myself and the other para in the room have 4 kids we are in the room with doing instruction for that hour.
 - I work as a literacy aide. I am expected to take small groups of students on my own in the afternoon for instructional support in reading. In the morning I work in the classroom.
 - But I will teach the class when a teacher is not present. Someone has to take charge!
- I feel that I am perfectly capable to assist students in their work without the direct supervision of a teacher.



Asked to work as a substitute

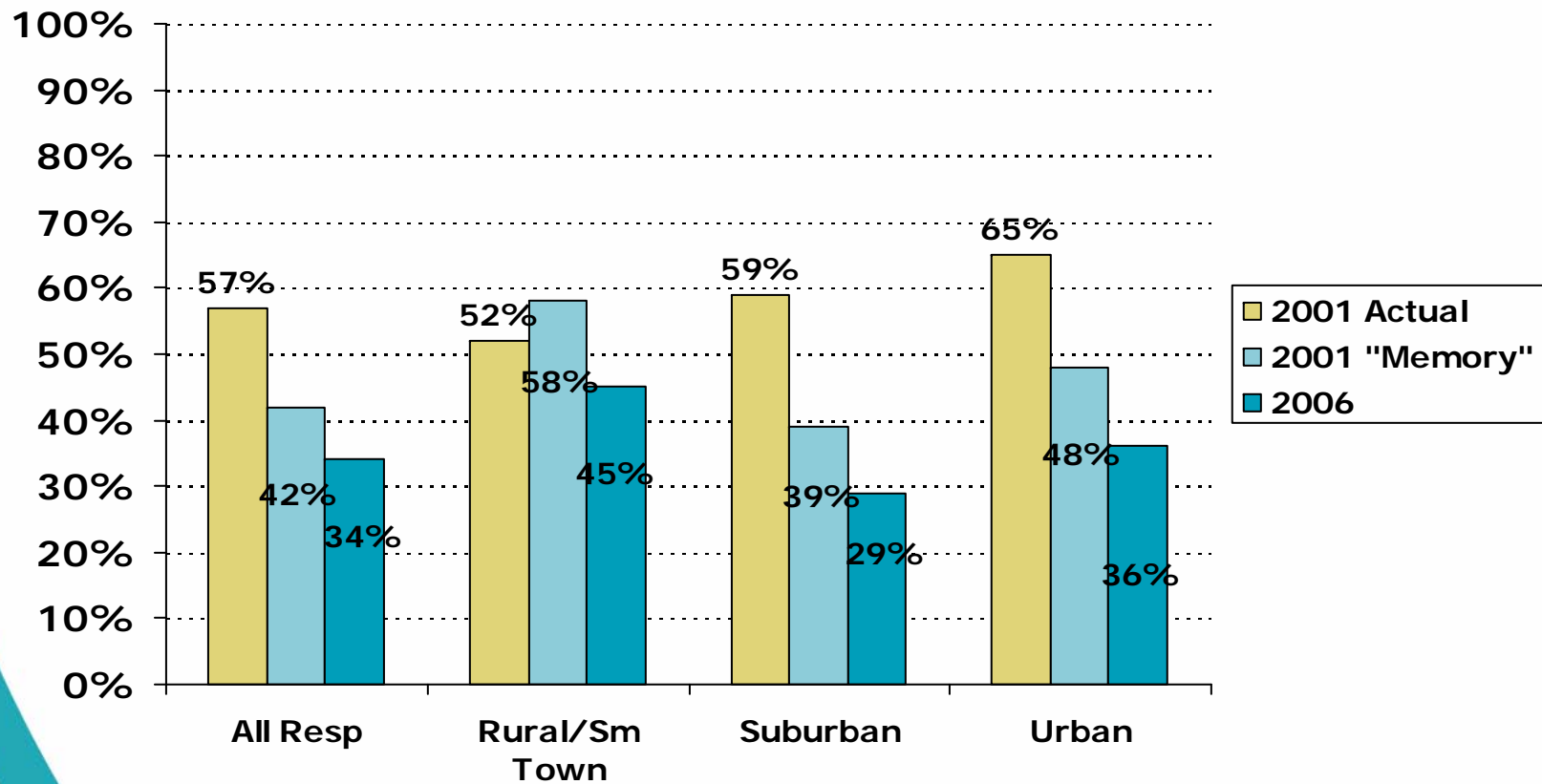
57% in 2001 survey on paras as substitutes.



Prior to passage (and after passage) were you ASKED to work as a substitute?



Asked to work as a substitute – then and now

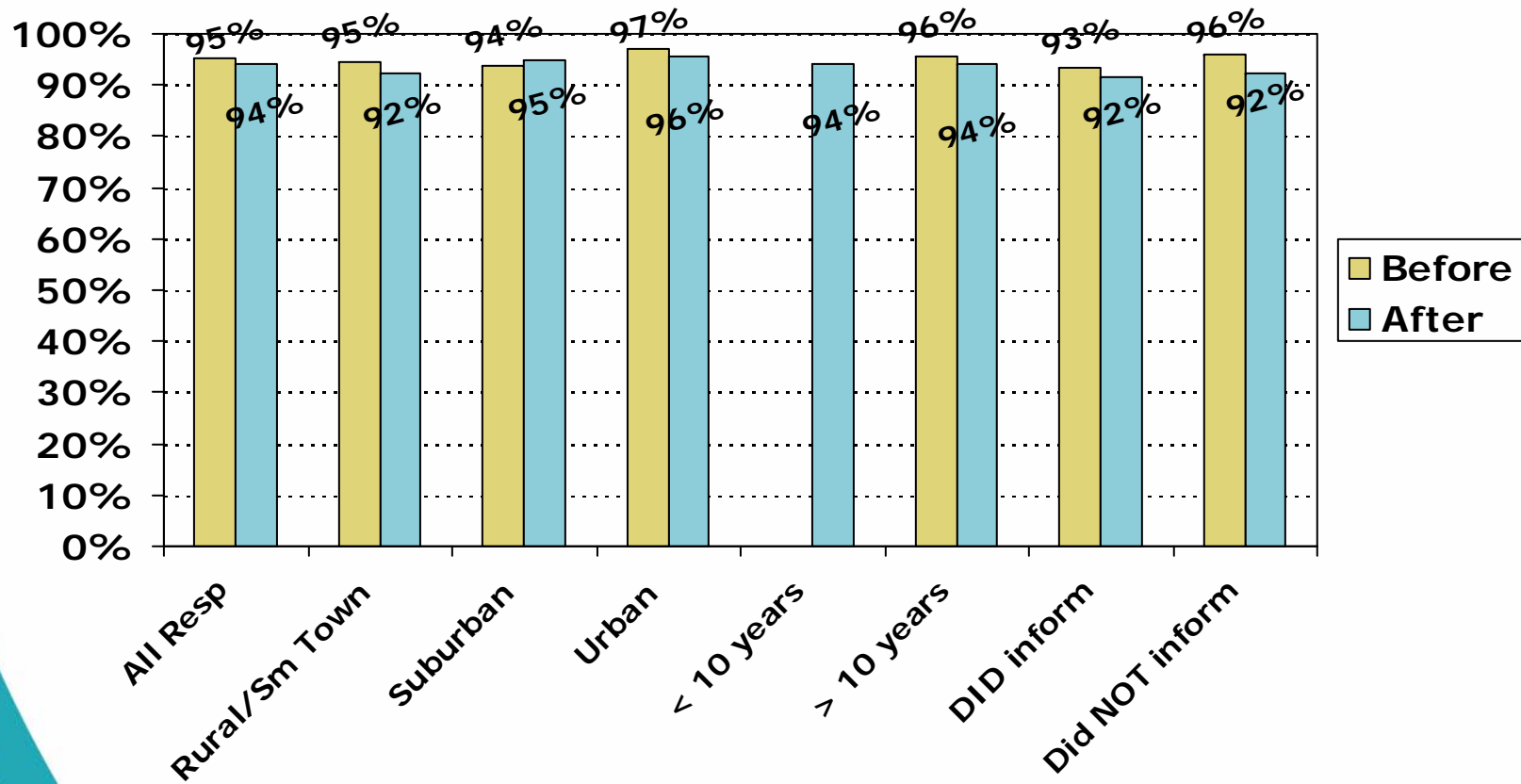


2001 Actual – from a survey in 2001 of paraprofessionals working as substitutes

2001 "Memory" – from the current survey asking members their "memory" of working as a substitute prior to 2001



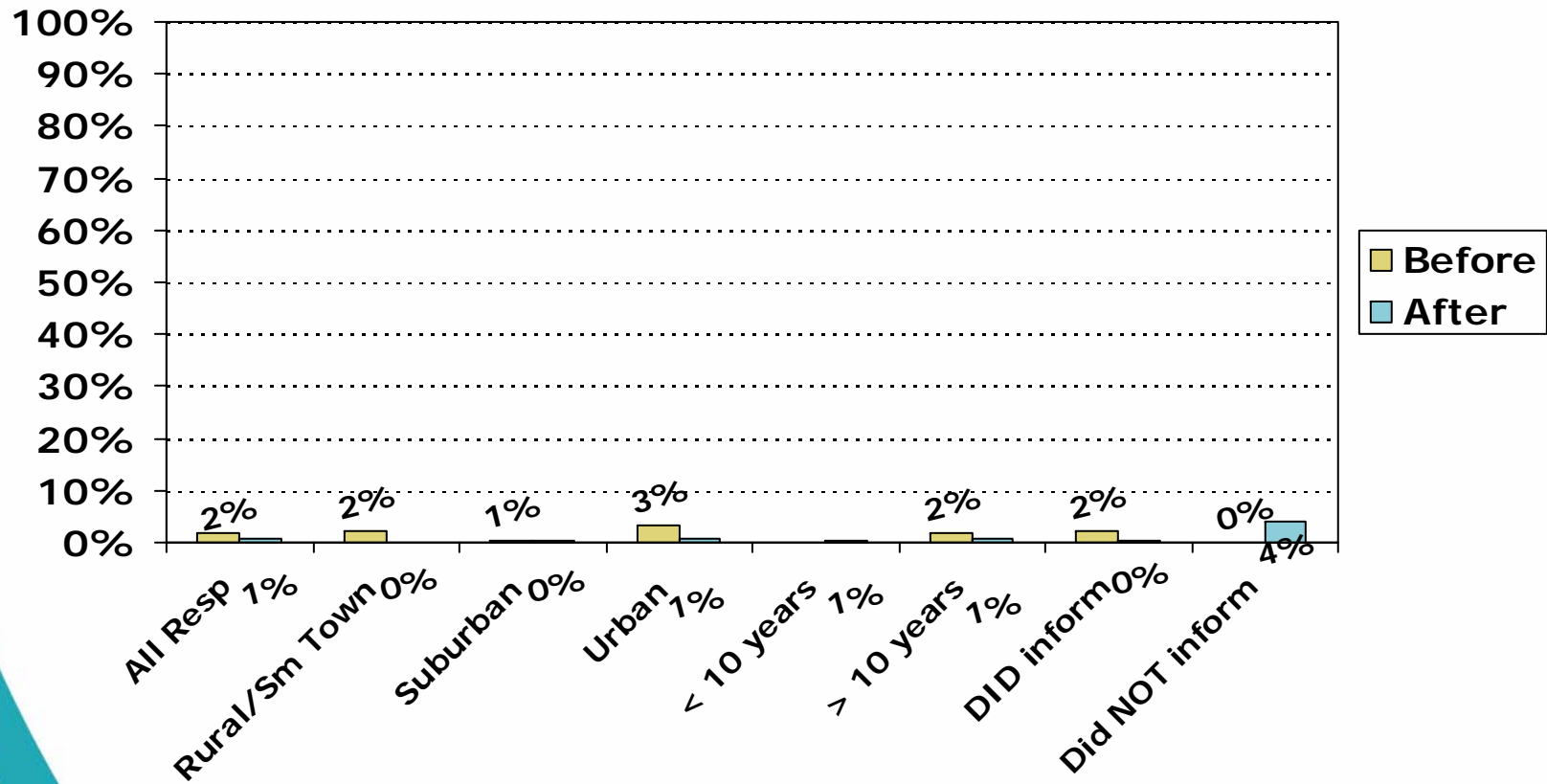
Asked to work and DID



Prior to passage (and after passage) DID you work as a substitute? (Only those who were also ASKED)



Were NOT Asked to work and DID



Prior to passage (and after passage) DID you work as a substitute? (Only those who were NOT ASKED)



Paraprofessionals DO NOT Self-Assign

- Prior to Passage
 - 42.7% of all paraprofessionals were ASKED to work as a sub and 95.4% of those DO as ASKED
 - 53.7% were NOT asked to work as a sub and 1.8% of those DO so anyway
- Since Passage
 - 34.2% of all paraprofessionals were ASKED to work as a sub and 94.5% of those DO as ASKED
 - If the District did NOT inform principals, the percentage asked goes up to 72.4% and 92.1% of those DO
 - 64.2% were NOT asked to work as a sub and 0.6% of those DO so anyway



Frequency

- In the end, the number of days paraprofessionals work as subs is quite low although higher without notification:
 - All respondents -- 53% work between 1 and 10 times a year as a substitute
 - 47% work as a sub more frequently
 - 52% work between 1 and 10 times a year as a substitute in our 2001 survey
 - Principals are not notified -- 28% work between 1 and 10 times a year
 - 62% work as a sub more frequently



Comments on substituting

- We are told we don't have to sub more than one hour per day but to refuse is to provoke your immediate supervisor and would require a grievance be filed with the union which puts you on the outs with the person responsible for your evaluations.
- Support staff are always called on to sit in a classroom when a teacher has to go to a meeting because a parent came in for an unscheduled meeting, or the parent is late for an IEP meeting so the teacher is late getting to their class.
- My understanding is that my job description states my duties plus "other" duties. Principals have told me that "other" means that I could be used in any capacity depending on the need. This is why we need collective bargaining!



Misassignment continues to be a problem

- While it happens less frequently since 2001, there are still districts and schools where paraprofessionals are asked to take on responsibilities for which they **SHOULD NOT BE RESPONSIBLE** and **ARE NOT PAID**.
 - Pulled as subs
 - Pulled to cover classes
 - Asked to cover for teachers and others
- They aren't doing their 'real' jobs and their students are the ones who 'lose.'

