

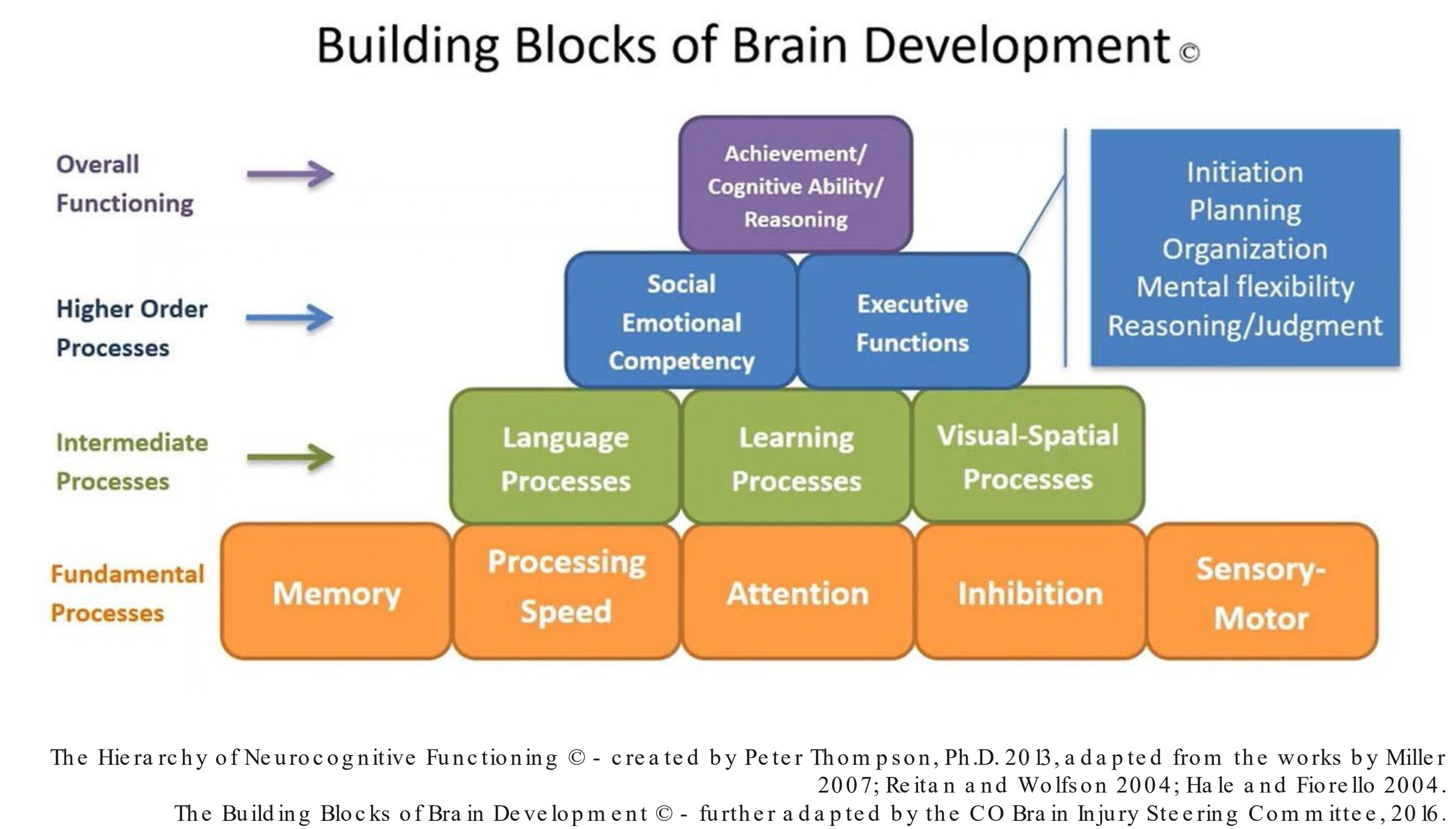
Background & Literature Review

Students living with brain injuries, including traumatic (TBI), non-traumatic, and congenital, commonly experience substantial, underrecognized barriers to participation across educational contexts. Differences in attention, processing speed, executive functioning, sensory-motor regulation, and postural control amplify the cognitive demands of routine academic tasks across all three populations (Stojanovski et al, 2021; Vanderlind et al, 2022; Van Hoon et al, 2010; Siffredi et al, 2018). Solis-Urra et al. (2024) and Veldman et al. (2021) further demonstrate that active breaks and physical activity promote attention, motor development, and cognitive engagement in school settings.

Despite an established evidence base, including structured environments, visual supports, explicit instruction, and predictable routines, best strategies remain inconsistently disseminated to school professionals (Clasby et al, 2023; Ylvisaker & Feeney, 2002). Educators often lack the resources needed to recognize neurologically based behaviors, children with brain injuries face significant unmet needs across medical and educational systems, and resource inequities, including limited staffing and collaboration time, further constrain consistent support (Detmer et al, 2018; Slomine et al, 2006; Gándara et al, 2003). As the early post-injury period is a critical window in which environmental supports interact with neuroplastic capacity to shape long-term outcomes (Micheletti et al, 2025), timely, accessible educator resources are essential.

Theoretical Basis

ACCESS is grounded in the Building Blocks of Brain Development (BBBD) framework, developed by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Brain Injury Steering Committee, and implemented statewide through CDE's BrainSTEPS consulting teams.



BBBD's hierarchical processes align directly with the student factors and performance skills central to the OT Practice Framework (4th ed.), positioning occupational therapists as natural collaborative partners in brain-injury-informed educational planning. Its 'skill versus will' perspective, reframing student challenges as reflections of underlying skill needs, provides a shared interdisciplinary language that bridges OT practice, educator knowledge, and family partnership in support of meaningful student participation.

ACCESS: Advancing Classroom Connections for Every Student with Supportive Strategies

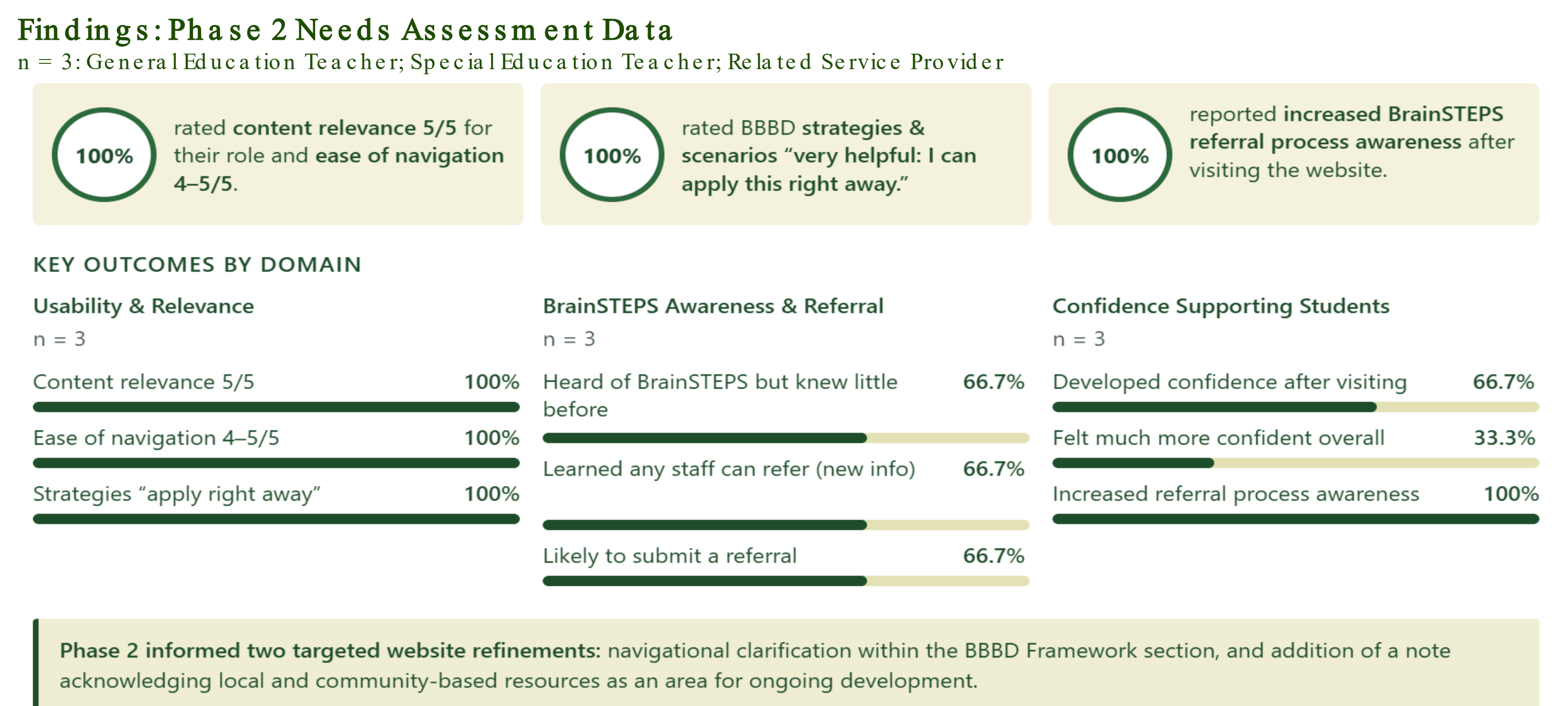
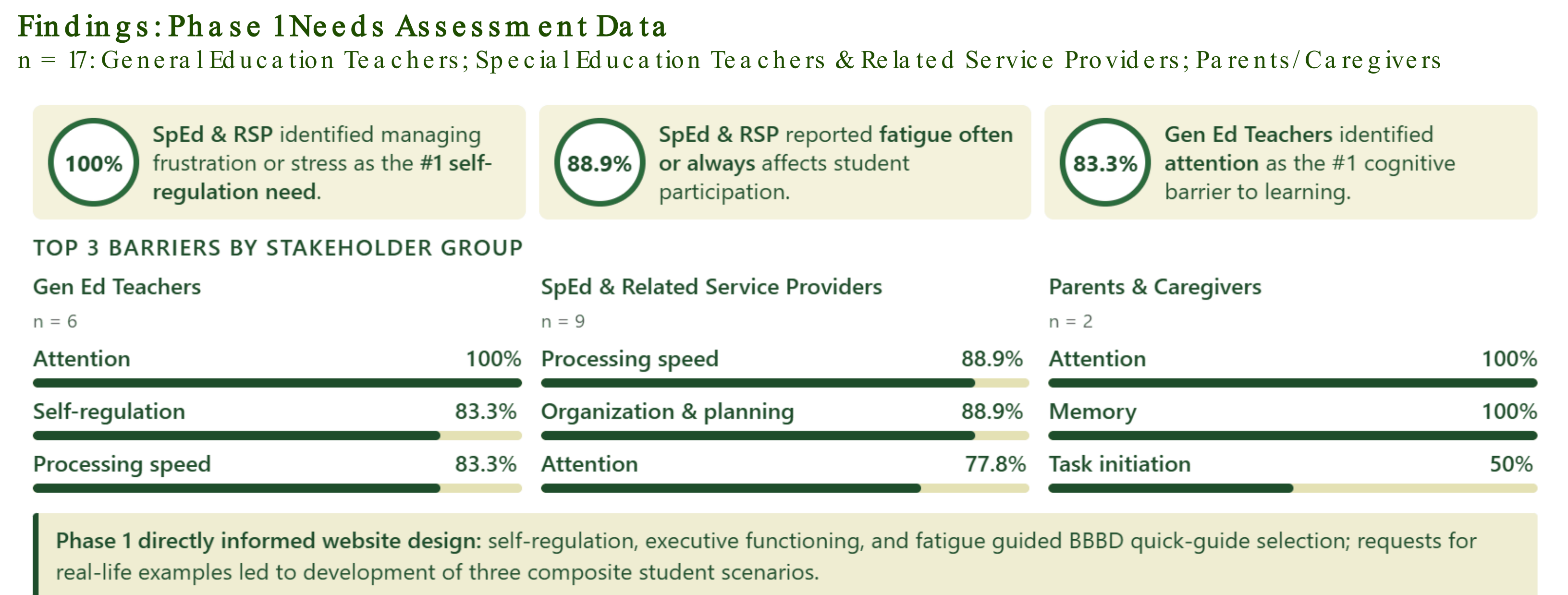
Goal, Objectives & Activities

Goal: To develop an accessible, evidence-based, user-friendly website for educators and school professionals in Greeley-Evans School District 6 that offers curated resources and strategies to enhance classroom accessibility, participation, and performance for students living with brain injuries.

Objectives	Focus	Activities
Objective 1 Weeks 1 – 4	Professional Development & Needs Assessments	BBBD professional development courses; 10 article appraisals; Phase 1 surveys distributed; OT services; website development initiation
Objective 2 Weeks 5 – 8	Stakeholder Analysis & Website Development	Analyzed and synthesized Phase 1 survey data; completed 3 professional development (PD) courses; critically appraised 10 additional articles; continued literature website development and OT service delivery
Objective 3 Weeks 9 - 11	Prototype & Phase 2 Feedback	Developed functional website prototype; distributed phase 2 survey; completed 3 PD courses; continued OT service delivery
Objective 4 Weeks 12 – 13	Refinement	Synthesized Phase 2 feedback; made targeted revisions; continued OT service delivery
Objective 5 Weeks 14 – 15	Finalization & Dissemination	Finalized all website content; disseminated to District 6 BrainSTEPS team (May 8, 2026) and CSU OTD community (May 11, 2026)

Evaluation Methods & Findings

Evaluation Methods: Project quality was evaluated through a two-phase stakeholder-driven data collection process using Google Forms surveys, supplemented by ongoing reflection with the capstone team.



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Discussion & Conclusion

ACCESS achieved its overarching goal by delivering an accessible, evidence-based website that addresses identified gaps in educator training, access to resources, and interdisciplinary collaboration within Greeley-Evans School District 6.

From an occupational therapy perspective, the site reduces informational and environmental barriers to students' participation in the core occupations of childhood: education, play, and social participation. Composite student scenarios translate BBBD-aligned principles into everyday practice, making the resource applicable across professional roles. Phase 2 outcomes confirmed usability and meaningfully increased educator confidence and BrainSTEPS awareness. Anticipated long-term indicators of impact include growth in BrainSTEPS referrals, gains in brain-injury-informed knowledge, and broader use of BBBD-aligned strategies districtwide.

Hosted on Google Sites, the resource can be updated over time and, pending district legal review, has potential for wider reach through the Colorado BrainSTEPS network. ACCESS reflects occupational therapy's core values: occupational justice, student-centered practice, and equitable opportunity for every student to participate fully in the educational occupations that shape their development, identity, and future.

Acknowledgements

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References

