Analysis of Implementing Inclusion in a Local School District

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AN ANALYSIS OF IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION IN A LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

by

FAITH DEBORAH THOMAS

(Under the Direction of James F. Burnham)

ABSTRACT

The researcher’s purpose was to conduct an analysis of the implementation of an inclusion program in three schools in a southeastern Georgia school district. The sample consisted of two elementary schools and one middle school. One elementary school was implementing inclusion for the first time and consisted of 586 students with 50 staff members serving a mixed population, racially, economically, and socially. The second elementary school consisted of 504 students with 50 staff members serving a mixed population, but with a slightly higher economic and social status than the previously mentioned elementary school. This school was attempting to implement inclusion with a pull-out program still existing. The middle school was a feeder school for both elementary schools and consisted of 777 students with 70 staff members. This school was implementing and attempting to perfect its inclusion program for the 2nd year. All three schools are located within a three mile radius of each other.

The analysis was comprised of a qualitative questionnaire composed of 10 open-ended questions being provided to regular educators, special educators, paraprofessionals, and administrators participating in the implementation of an inclusion program in their individual school. Questionnaires were coded by an independent administrator and the researcher to determine major themes. The research also consisted of information
gathered by the researcher while fulfilling the role of participant(observer in the position of a district staffing specialist within all three buildings.

Findings from this research resulted in the following major themes: (1) a concern for having support staff for regular educators to enable them to be comfortable in the classroom with the special needs students, (2) a concern for having administrative support so each educator is comfortable in voicing their needs and concerns during the implementation of an inclusion program, and (3) a concern for having time to collaborate so that each educator understands their own role in the inclusion classroom.

The research presented in this study examined an inclusion for the purpose of giving voice to those involved in the study. The research makes a contribution in the field about inclusion programs in special education.

INDEX WORDS: Inclusion, School Culture, School Environment, Experiences, Faculty, Administrators, Staff
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AN ANALYSIS OF IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION IN A LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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DEDICATION

There are three people to whom I wish to dedicate this dissertation. The first person is my Nana, Myrtice G. Letendre. She created the desire within me to value an education and dared me to go as far as I could. She believed that when I was the first grandchild to complete a college education, and eventually, a Master’s Degree, that I would go no further. She dared me to do just that…go further. I have steadily worked to achieve that goal and now am fulfilling her dream and my desire to please her.

The second person to whom I wish to dedicate my dissertation is my mother, Arileen G. Richey, because she has shown true unconditional love for me by spending time sitting alone, cooking meals, doing laundry, ironing, and all the other things to run a household and be my secretary so that I could attend classes, work full time, sit in my room to study and write whatever was required to achieve this goal. I want to take this opportunity to put in writing that it has meant more to me than words can express and that the love she has always shown me as I worked to achieve whatever I wanted to do in life, especially this degree, has been realized and felt deeply. I love you, mom, and recognize all you do for me.

Finally, I wish to dedicate this dissertation to my dear friend, Dr. Troy A. Brown, for all the guidance, support, and loving kindness he has provided to me while I pursued this degree. I never dreamed that first day of class over five years ago that such a dear friendship would grow and develop. He has truly been a dear friend and an understanding ear during all the trials and tribulations it has taken to achieve this degree. His moral support has been immeasurable and will always be remembered and treasured. Thank you for always being there, Troy. And, I love you, too.
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There are two people whom I wish to acknowledge for their never-ending time, guidance, patience, and wisdom in assisting me to complete this document. These two men have truly shown what it means to be an educator, as well as a teacher. I know that through the years they have both been recognized for all that they do, but, once again, I, too, wish to acknowledge them for what they do as professors and instructors at Georgia Southern University. They are truly an asset to the school, the department, and the program.

I want to thank Dr. Michael Richardson for providing me with the helpful words of support and reassurance when I began this degree and as I completed it. You will never know what it has meant to have someone in your position provide me with the drive when it was needed to keep going to achieve the goal I had set for myself and to believe that I could do it when I was ready to quit. Having you nearby and contacting you as I plugged away at the dissertation has been just the thing I sometimes needed to keep going. You will never know how much your words have meant to me. Thank you for your support.

I also want to thank Dr. James Burnham for getting me to where I am going and for achieving what I have done. I truly appreciate all you have done for me and it will always be remembered dearly as a part of this goal in my life. From the first word I wrote to the last punctuation mark, you have been there to offer the words of wisdom, guidance, and support to keep me going. You have been the light through all the dark tunnels and you have been deeply appreciated. Staying in touch with me and sending that email just to check on me has meant a great deal to me. Thank you for being there.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

“Special education is adding to an already increasingly difficult, if not impossible job. I plan at a slower rate…need more support…feel overwhelmed and wonder if I’m doing anybody any good. It’s very stressful, and I feel extremely frustrated” (Baines & Baines, 1994, p. 39). These statements were expressed by regular educators forced to participate in an inclusion program started at the discretion of a school district by a noted principal who was trying to lower the failure rate of special education students. The result of such programs often led to burnout, absences, resignations, cynicism, confusion, and dissatisfaction by the teaching staff (Snyder, 1999; Baines & Baines, 1994). With inclusion becoming a necessity, it was believed that an analysis of the inclusion process as it was implemented may ease the procedure for everyone involved.

Creation of Inclusion Model

Inclusion began its rise in the 1970s. Inclusion was the ideal that led to the policy of normalization which offered “disabled people the chance to normal life routine, normal developmental experiences, independent choices, and the right to live, work, and play in normal surroundings” (Winzer, 1993, p. 381). This policy change may have lead to the end of stigmatization based upon labels and differentiation of programming associated with special education (Winzer, 1993; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991). The policy of normalization became the basis for inclusion, which led to
educational reform in special education. As a result, discussions still occur about in what environment exceptional children should be taught (Winzer, 1993). As inclusion programs were implemented, teachers became wary of the amount of support services available, the lack of training that special needs students were being provided, the extraordinary amount of demands required to conduct an educational program involving regular education and special education students, and the inordinate amount of time necessary to mold the educational program (Heflin & Bullock, 1999; Wood, 1998; Walther-Thomas, 1997). In addition, there have been legal parameters that have guided the development of inclusion as a viable educational program for special education children.

*Legal Parameters*

The Education of the Handicapped Act of 1970 consolidated programs for the education of children with disabilities (Bauer & Shea, 1999). The amendments to the Education of the Handicapped Act, passed in 1974, required states to establish a timetable for achieving full educational opportunity for children with disabilities; implementing procedural safeguards for the identification, evaluation, and placement of children with disabilities; and mandating integration into general classes when possible (Johnson, 2000; Bauer & Shea, 1999). Then people questioned the efficacy of special class placement and moved toward a resource room model as the service delivery trend (Idol-Maestas, 1983).

The passage of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ensured equal opportunities for children and youth with disabilities in schools receiving federal funds (Bauer & Shea, 1999; Heubert, 1999). In 1975 the Education for All Handicapped
Children Act was passed which required children with special needs to be educated in public schools and in regular public school classrooms wherever possible, ensured rights and due process, and financially supported state efforts to achieve these goals (Kavale, 2000; Bauer & Shea, 1999). This law was created because the parents of children with special needs wanted their children to attend their neighborhood schools with the other boys and girls who lived on their street (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000).

In 1997 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was amended to require that children be educated in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent possible (Bauer & Shea, 1999; Thomas & Rapport, 1998). The result of these amendments led to the establishment of six principles underlying special education today. These principles were: (1) a free appropriate public education; (2) a fair evaluation; (3) an individualized and appropriate education; (4) an education in the least restrictive environment; (5) procedural due process of law; and (6) parents’ participation and shared decision making (Bauer & Shea). The results have been that “hundreds of thousands of children who in the past were routinely excluded from school, shut away in prison like institutions, or isolated in depressing, dead-end programs are now learning, developing, and thriving” (Heubert, 1999, p. 205).

Court decisions have influenced the need for inclusion in special education, which has been necessary to protect children with disabilities and to bring about national reform desperately needed (Heubert, 1999). In Brown vs. Board of Education (347 U.S. 483, 349 U.S. 294), the U. S. Supreme Court ruled that a separate education was deemed not to be an equal education (Bauer & Shea, 1999; Heubert, 1999). In Pennsylvania Association of Retarded Children (PARC) vs. Pennsylvania (334 F. Supp. 1257, 1259)
the court ruled that all children with mental retardation must be provided an education and anyone previously excluded must be identified and provided an education (Bauer & Shea, 1999; Conrad & Whitaker, 1997). Also, in Mills vs. Board of Education (348 F. Supp. 866) the district court of the District of Columbia ruled that all children with disabilities must be provided an education (Bauer & Shea, 1999).

In Greer vs. Rome City School District (950 F. 2d. 688, 695, 696, 697, 698), the court ruled that the disruption of a special education student does not take up an inordinate amount of a regular teacher’s time and that the special education student can make progress in a regular education classroom (Heubert, 1999; Conrad & Whitaker, 1997). In Oberti vs. Board of Education of the Borough of Clementon School District (995 F. 2d 1204), the court ruled that a placement for a special education student needs to be more inclusive than a self-contained placement with supplementary aides and services provided to assist the student in functioning within that regular classroom placement (Heflin & Bullock, 1999; Conrad & Whitaker, 1997). Besides these legal parameters, regular educators, special educators, and administrators have stated numerous conditions, problems, concerns, and reasons for inclusion programs to be difficult to enact, follow, and maintain.

**Educators’ Perspectives**

Teachers were being forced to participate in inclusion programs regardless of financial constraints, public relations, legislation, and litigation. Teachers rarely had a say as to who would or would not be included in their classroom (Heflin & Bullock, 1999). “Full inclusion presents a change in educational philosophy regarding students with disabilities. Change can generate resistance among teachers, particularly when the
change is not initiated by those who will be affected” (Heflin & Bullock, 1999, p. 105).

General education teachers felt unprepared, uneducated, untrained, afraid, unsure, and concerned for what their classrooms would become. Special educators also expressed these feelings when inclusion was applied to students with severe emotional disorders (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham, 2000; Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999).

Problems noted by regular and special education teachers were insufficient support and training, the creation of classes that contain more students with special needs than would naturally occur, the inability to meet the educational needs of the included students, behavior management, the lack of extra time to make curriculum modifications, and the lack of time to talk with team members (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham, 2000; Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999).

Walther-Thomas (1997) noted that steady progress has been made in most of the schools by implementing successful inclusion programs. These programs had models that emphasize various instructional procedures proven effective with diverse learners and collaborative structures to facilitate problem solving and interaction among professionals. Yet, many unique elements existed that could easily hinder implementation and successful efforts which were supported and reiterated as examples and repetitions in other research and consisted of personality conflicts, irreconcilable differences in teaching philosophies, and dependence upon joint decisions concerning instructional materials, lesson planning, grades, objectives, and goals (Austin, 2001; Johnson, 2000; Heflin & Bullock, 1999).

A lack of time to consult, funding issues, and the large caseloads of special educators were also problems (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham, 2000; Cook, Semmel, &
Gerber, 1999). The main barrier could be the interpersonal and professional relationships between the general educator and special educator (Wood, 1998).

**Parents’ Perspectives**

Parents have been asked to express their opinions about their children’s participation in inclusion programs. Parents felt that they have knowledge, expertise, and information to offer to administrators and educators when it comes to providing educational programs for their children (Cook & Swain, 2001). Ritter (1999) reported the results of a qualitative research project in which parents were asked about their children being educated in a pull-out program versus an inclusion program.

Ritter (1999) found that the students demonstrated increased self-confidence due to the social and instructional support provided to the students, as well as an understanding of the individual differences being accepted by the teaching staff. Ritter also found that children enjoyed going to school, did not want to miss class for appointments, and showed age appropriate maturity. The special needs students were learning more, performing at higher levels, understanding more academic information, and demonstrating a positive attitude about school. This behavior pleased the parents who felt the reason for these actions was the increased teacher support provided in an inclusion classroom (Odom, 2000; Ritter, 1999).

Finally, Ritter found that the students felt that the teachers had higher expectations of the special needs students in an inclusion classroom and the students attempted to achieve or perform at that higher level of expectation. Inclusion classes, forced or not, were found to support these findings. However, the parents’ perspectives were not the only dimension that influenced inclusion programs.
Peculiarities of the Individual School

Inclusion programs were a design for change in schools. This change required alterations in the peculiarities of what an individual school was envisioned to be. It meant that space and capacity, security, technology, and the infrastructure of the school would not be the same (Loeffelman, 2001). The school needed to develop a communal sense of identity that can no longer be a maze of impersonal corridors and cells that all looked the same because flexibility existed to allow students to grow through their instruction (Cunningham, 2002; Loeffelman, 2001; Illanes, 1999).

Inclusion programs meant that teachers, administrators, and staff needed to develop an open concept in a building. When teachers were positive in their attitudes about open education, then their students showed positive self concepts and an increase in curiosity (Elias & Elias, 1978). This open concept allowed students to have a greater freedom of movement and a greater responsibility for independent work, which led to an increase in self concept and curiosity, as well as a higher self esteem (Elias & Elias, 1978; Flynn & Rapoport, 1976). An open classroom also led to hyperactive students being less distinctive, less disruptive, and more on-task (Flynn & Rapoport, 1976).

Inclusion programs even caused regular educators to become concerned with remediation of academic and social behavior problems in regular classrooms. This concern dealt with the systematic transfer of skills that had been remediated in special education settings and that needed to be transferred to regular classrooms (Cook & Swain, 2001; Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000; Ainscow, 1999). Regular educators needed to become familiar with each child as an individual, which special educators have always done (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000; Bauer & Shea, 1999). However,
because of a lack of planning time in many teachers’ schedules, a lack of experience in teaming, a lack of knowledge in collaboration, and a lack of educational background in co-operative teaching, the inclusion program often failed or was extremely difficult to implement (Austin, 2001; Johnson, 2000; Mamlin, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

More often than not, any inclusion program created in any school had been the result of someone deciding that the program must exist for some reason. The reason an inclusion program was usually created was due to politics, either national or local, or due to legal obligations, either national or local. When such a program was created it was forced upon all the educators involved. Forced involvement led to educators that do not have the opportunity to really understand what the program is, what it involves, what its educational process is, and what its educational results can and/or should be. As a result, educators did not realize that the success or failure of an inclusion program was dependent upon considerable trial and error. Any inclusion program, forced or voluntary, required much trial and error by numerous educators and administrators as they attempted to create a program that would be practical for the people who must use it and the students who must benefit from it. In addition, the special educator may influence and affect the regular educator enough to make the two educators become a smooth-working partnership educating any, and all, students with ease, agility, and adeptness.

It was believed that the implementation of an inclusion program with an analysis of the numerous components involved can be done to assist the administrators from eliminating the desire of the regular educators to no longer participate. Research studies have considered one or two components when studying the implementation of inclusion
programs. However, consideration of numerous components at the same time has not been done. Therefore, it was the intent of this researcher to look at the outcomes of an analysis involving numerous components when the implementation of inclusion occurs within a school. It was the belief of the researcher that the results of such an analysis would assist an administrator in implementing a successful inclusion program.

Research Question

In order to conduct the research, the following overarching question was asked: What were the experiences of three schools implementing an inclusion program in Blossom County as reported by a participant/observer within those schools? To further guide the research the following subquestions were asked:

1. What were the experiences of the individual faculties in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?

2. What were the experiences of the individual staff members in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?

3. What were the experiences of the individual administrators in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?

4. What was the researcher’s perception of the school environment as expressed by the teachers and administrators during the process of implementing an inclusion program in these three schools?

5. What was the school culture expressed by the teachers and administrators during the process of implementing an inclusion program in these three schools?
Conceptual Framework

The basis of this study was that most inclusion programs in schools have been forced inclusion programs because the program has been required to be implemented by law or political necessity. When the program has been implemented it has not been fully planned because there has been a lack of written knowledge about the implementation of inclusion programs and a lack of written experiences for the implementation of inclusion programs. Researchers have provided information about why inclusion programs have succeeded and/or failed without providing the step-by-step process for the implementation of the program. Researchers have also failed to provide the details of what has succeeded or failed as the inclusion program has evolved and changed due to experience, knowledge, and conditions of the educators involved. A graphic design of this framework is given in Figure 1.

Significance of Study

The researcher became interested in inclusion after using data-based instruction for teaching reading to students with learning disabilities and returning 85% of the population served by a pull-out program back to a regular classroom educational experience. In order to assure the smoothness of transition into the regular classroom, the researcher was personally involved in an inclusion classroom for science and social studies. During that experience the researcher worked on many of the roadblocks that tend to stall the implementation of an inclusion program. The researcher began to read the literature of the time that pertained to inclusion and shared it with the regular educator colleague who was also involved in the inclusion program. Together the regular educator and special educator talked, planned, altered, discussed, modified, justified, attempted,
and established methods, techniques and strategies that worked for them. The researcher read about more established methods, techniques, and strategies that worked and came to believe that it would take an understanding of all these components of education and relationships, as well as knowledge of the political and legal realm of education to make an inclusion program that would work. As the researcher read more recent research findings and attended more university classes, it became more apparent that these
Figure 1. Data Sources to Be Analyzed During the Implementation of Inclusion

Inclusion
In
Blossom
County
School
District

Experiences of Staff Within Individual School

Experiences of Administrators Within Individual School

Participant Observant Data From Within Individual

Individual School Environment

Individual School Culture
multiple components have influenced educators involved in inclusion and still determined the success and/or failure of an inclusion program. Therefore, by studying these multiple components, it was possible to develop an approach to inclusion that would succeed in schools.

The researcher has noted that inclusion programs of today have a variety of formats based on diverse beginnings, but most of them have had forced implementation. The researcher determined that a multi-dimensional approach to inclusion may alleviate the problems associated with inclusion programs. The researcher conducted a qualitative research by providing a multi-dimensional questionnaire to the three local educational agencies (LEAs) implementing an inclusion program. The researcher compared the results of the questions to determine if a successful program had been implemented incorporating the multiple components involved in an inclusion program.

The researcher’s findings were beneficial to several groups. The researcher’s findings provided superintendents, special education directors, and educators with a program design that could assure inclusion would be successful. The researcher’s findings also provided superintendents, special education directors, and educators with the knowledge about inclusion they may lack or the expertise they may need to implement a successful program. The researcher’s findings demonstrated to special educators and regular educators the importance of considering all the components when implementing an inclusion program. The researcher’s findings demonstrated to universities a methodology that is a viable perspective and an approach that stated, demonstrated, and reinforced the components that can cause the success or failure of an inclusion program, forced or voluntary.
Procedures

Research Design

The design of this research was a qualitative methodological design, consisting of two qualitative components. The first qualitative component consisted of the researcher’s open-ended questionnaire to gather the qualitative information. This qualitative data was gathered as a one shot questionnaire given in the schools implementing inclusion. This qualitative information was gathered from the regular educators, special educators, paraprofessionals, and administrators participating in the implementation of inclusion in that school. The second qualitative component consisted of the researcher’s gathered information through the role of participant/observer in the schools as a district staffing specialist. The role of district staffing specialist permitted the researcher to observe the classrooms implementing inclusion due to the need to review information and documentation for initial referrals to the student support team and initial and re-evaluation referrals for special education services; to make changes in teaching methods in classrooms implementing inclusion due to the need to participate in one meeting of the student support team’s initial referral process; to discuss inclusion with the faculty, staff, and administrators of the schools implementing inclusion to provide training about due process procedures; discuss inclusion with parents and students participating in schools implementing inclusion to facilitate eligibility and placement in special education; and provide in-services to faculty, staff, and administrators of the schools implementing inclusion to provide training about due process procedures. The qualitative information also consisted of anecdotal information gathered by the researcher during school visits to the buildings implementing inclusion.
Participants

The LEA director of special needs encouraged facilities in Blossom County to implement inclusion during the 2004-05 school year. The researcher was assigned to three of these facilities as a district staffing specialist. The director and district staffing specialist informed the principals of the three facilities of the research project, introduced the researcher to the principals, and discussed the role and purpose of the researcher with the principals. These three facilities and the staff, faculty, administrators, parents, and students within them became the participants of the research. The facilities were expected to be receptive and supportive of the project. The researcher was available to attend staff meetings at the three individual schools to meet the teachers involved where the inclusion programs were being implemented. The researcher assured the principals, faculty, and staff that anonymity would be guaranteed and upheld, as required by Georgia Southern University’s Institutional Review Board.

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of two to three questions covering the topics of experiences of faculty within the individual school, experiences of staff within the individual school, experiences of administrators within the individual school, the individual school culture, the individual school environment, and participant/observant data from within the individual school. The entire questionnaire consisted of ten questions. The topics for the basis of the questions came from two instruments previously used to measure attitudes about inclusion with items being selected and revised to address the issues of a an inclusion program appropriate to the setting in Blossom County School District (Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999; Monahan & Marino, 1996). The researcher also used
information for the development of the questions for the survey from instruments
developed to measure teacher perceptions of the regular education initiative, to discuss
responses to questions asked about inclusion programs, and to express teachers’ beliefs
about co-teaching (Austin, 2001; McLeskey & Waldron, 1996). Content validity for the
items was addressed by several methods (Gall, et al., 1996; de Vaus, 1995). First, the
items providing validity and application to the purpose of the study developed by Cook,
Semmel, and Gerber (1999) was used. Second, items used from the questionnaire
developed by Monahan and Marino (1996) were checked and incorporated into the final
instrument. Wording was changed to fit the needs of the questionnaire being developed.
Third, colleagues who had been involved in inclusion programs provided feedback for
refinements of the proposed draft of the instrument. The final draft was compiled and
reviewed by the methodologist and the researcher. No changes were made after the final
review.

Using the Instrument

The researcher compared the results of the questionnaire for the three facilities
selected. The comparison was a determination of any similarities and/or differences that
occurred from the responses of the faculty, staff, and/or administrators or in the school
culture or environment when inclusion was implemented for the three schools. The
researcher determined if one, more than one, or any combination of the components
blended to create successful inclusion within a school. The researcher also used
conversations that occurred with the faculty, staff, and administrators with the researcher
in the role as district staffing specialist to gather feelings, thoughts, and attitudes
concerning the inclusion program (Tashakkaori & Teddlie, 1998)
The researcher’s findings will be made available to the LEA for use as a presentation to the school board. It will also be made available to the university to be used in developing its educational program to include classes for regular educators in special education and classes in inclusion methods for all educators.

Data Analysis

The qualitative research questions followed a one-group survey design. This type of design involved three steps. The first step consisted of a survey being administered to each individual school. The second step consisted of the implementation of an experimental treatment or independent variable, which was the inclusion program. The third step consisted of the questionnaire’s results being coded to measure any differences and/or similarities noted (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). The results of the qualitative research questions demonstrated whether or not there was a relationship between any of the components used in implementing an inclusion program.

The open-ended qualitative questions were analyzed to determine if any patterns developed in the responses. A code sheet was created for each question (de Vaus, 1995). Coding themes required the researcher to remember to “…identify a concept, a central idea…” to use to categorize the answers given by the respondents (Glesne, 1999, p. 136). To check for consistency in coding responses, a second coder was asked to code the responses. The second coder responded independently and coded the respondents’ answers on a similar code sheet. The two coders had to be in 100% agreement, and therefore, had to discuss each item of discrepancy until consensus was reached regarding the proper classification for the response to the question.
Assumptions

An assumption held by the researcher was that the professionals involved in this study would be interested in the results of the research. Therefore, the researcher was assuming that the professionals involved would answer the qualitative questions honestly in order for the results to reflect the true results of the research and its parameters.

Limitations

The researcher was limited by the standards and guidelines set by the LEA because it determined the facilities involved in the research, the type of inclusion to be implemented, and the methods of inclusion to be used. The schedule of the researcher in meeting with the administrators of the facilities and/or staff involved caused some limitations. The LEA had already implemented inclusion in ten facilities. The second phase of the inclusion program, the implementation of the inclusion program on a voluntary basis in the facilities, provided administrators and educators with prior knowledge about inclusion because these administrators and educators heard about the previous year’s experiences with inclusion. They heard about the intent of the district to increase inclusion and, as a result, they already began to research, observe, discuss, plan, or test the implementation of inclusion. They might even have implemented a pilot program of inclusion of their own within their individual school to prepare for the required implementation of the inclusion program during the 2004-05 school year. This prior knowledge affected one or more of the components, legal parameters, employee/parental perspectives, conditions of the school, and/or parameters of the school schedule.
Delimitations

The researcher, who was a district staffing specialist, did not have any participation in deciding which three schools implementing inclusion during the 2004-05 school year to include in the research. The researcher determined which pieces of data collected to include and incorporate into the research. Due to the researcher’s role as district staffing specialist, the researcher was a participant/observer and had numerous opportunities and enormous amounts of data to collect as anecdotal material and personal information. The researcher determined which material was pertinent and vital to this research project.

Definitions

- **Forced inclusion** is “a movement in which all students attend the school to which they would go if they had no disability; a natural proportion of students with disabilities occurs at any school site; a zero-rejection philosophy exists so that no student would be excluded on the basis of type or extent of disability; school and general education placement are age and grade appropriate with no self-contained special education classes operative in the school site; effective instructional practices receive significant use in general educational practice at the school site; and special education supports are provided within the context of the general class and in other integrated environments” (Boyd & Parish, 1996, p. 479).

- **Inclusion** is “a process of increasing the participation of pupils in the cultures, curricula, and communities of their local schools” (Ainscow, 1999, p. 218).

- **Regular educator** is a “teacher who provides students with information, demonstrates, stimulates thinking, evaluates, provides empathy, promotes or
discourages independence, promotes or discourages self-esteem, and listens” (Berns, 1993, p. 251)

- **Special educator** is a “teacher trained to create diagnostic programs for children with special needs, to instruct children with special needs, to consult and interpret reports to professionals, and to screen students for placement in diagnostic programs” (Johnson & Morasky, 1977, p. 130).

Summary

The researcher conducted an analysis of the implementation of an inclusion program to determine the multiple components that affect that program. Research has shown that regular educators value their experience as an inclusion teacher, but do not maintain or return to the inclusion experience when their ‘term’ of service is concluded. There are numerous reasons for this phenomenon in education in the findings of many previous researchers’ work. However, putting all these components together to create a multi-dimensional approach to the implementation of inclusion had not been done. It was the goal of this researcher to be able to analyze the findings and create such an approach. The researcher planned to survey three facilities implementing inclusion by conducting a one-shot qualitative questionnaire utilizing items incorporating the multiple components discussed in the literature about inclusion to determine what components educators and administrators feel are imperative to include when implementing an inclusion program in a school. The qualitative information was used to determine which components were most successful and most unsuccessful for the implementation of an inclusion program. Since no research had been conducted with the purpose of creating a multi-dimensional approach to inclusion, it was hoped that the researcher’s findings would be beneficial to
educational leaders, as well as to the field of education since inclusion continues to be a part of the educational program in many public schools today.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND RELATED LITERATURE
Introduction

The implementation of inclusion programs in schools today “does not just happen, but takes hard work, dedication, cooperation, and planning” (Brown, 1997, p. 24). During this implementation process many schools tended to concentrate on one or a few of the aspects of the program as demonstrated through research which will be reviewed throughout this chapter. It was the contention of the researcher that a combination of numerous aspects being assessed through an analysis during the implementation process of an inclusion program has not been done. The purpose of this literature review was to demonstrate that contention.

Creation of Inclusion Model

Idol-Maestas (1983) presented a concept in which the special educator provided collaborative consultation to the regular educator for special education students placed in the regular education classroom. This concept was the first attempt at teaming a regular educator and special educator together to teach a special needs student (Idol-Maestas). It was believed that the special educator would be a consultant while being a special education resource teacher by offering strategies as a means of monitoring and communicating the performance and progress of the special education student (Idol-Maestas). The collaborative consultation model had the special educator provide assistance to the regular educator in programming, behavior management, and monitoring the special education student (Idol-Maestas). The model also used a data-based approach which was supported by Glomb and Morgan (1991). Although the teachers supported
this approach, it was suggested that regular and special educators have more time to consult and collaborate and receive more training consultation and collaboration, which were some of the teaching aspects of inclusion that were found to be unfavorable to the implementation of a program (Glomb & Morgan).

A meta-analysis of the features and effects of mainstreaming programs in which academic and social outcomes for special education students were reviewed (Wang & Baker, 1985). The meta-analysis looked at student demographics, research design and characteristics for the promotion of positive relationships between regular and special education students, and programming characteristics resulting in positive mainstreaming outcomes (Wang & Baker). The results of this meta-analysis were that mainstreaming improved the performance of special education students. Furthermore, the researchers found that more inclusive regular education should be implemented for special education students and that a program which includes continuous assessment, alternative routes and a variety of curriculum materials, individualized progress plans, student self-management, peer assistance, instructional teaming, and consulting teachers would be most beneficial to the special education students (Wang & Baker). These aspects were reviewed, but lacked being combined with the teaching methods used by Idol-Maestas (1983) or the teacher concerns reviewed by Glomb and Morgan (1991).

As inclusion programs improve and adapt to meet the needs of special education students, it became apparent that curriculum-based measurement, which assessed student performance and progress in basic skills and used the information as the basis for student-centered decision-making, was a sound practice and a good way to support accountability (Allinder & Beckbest, 1995; Idol-Maestas, 1983). An inclusion program that used
instructional techniques of class wide peer tutoring, peer buddies, class-within-a-class, ability awareness, sensitivity training, cooperative learning, computer-assisted instruction, integrated therapies, individualized instruction, integrated studies, curriculum matrixing, and team teaching has been found to be successful. Yet, a program using general curriculum alignment which measures achievement by criterion-referenced and norm-referenced tests, adapted curriculum alignment which entails modifications in the curriculum to meet the developmentally lower cognitive levels of the special needs child, and functional curriculum alignment which focuses on functional academics for pre-vocational training also supported a successful inclusion program (Curriculum Report, 1993).

Another analysis of inclusion was conducted in which secondary schools studied teachers’ images of change in Nova Scotia, Canada. The results of the study found that administrative disinterest and a lack of administrative support for the process of inclusion were barriers to an effective inclusion program (MacKinnon & Brown, 1994). The study also found that administrators must continually redefine the role of the regular and special educator based on previous inclusion successes and emerging student needs and modifications of the school’s organizational structure necessary to provide teacher collaboration and planning time (MacKinnon & Brown). Furthermore, a successful inclusion program would have educators working together in problem-solving teams to find innovative ways to teach students with widely diverse needs (MacKinnon & Brown).

In a study by Walther-Thomas (1997), the benefits and problems with co-teaching were reported by teachers and principals. This study was reviewed as an attempt to combine teachers’ concerns with the role of the administrator during the implementation
of an inclusion program. The models to be used for educating students in this review were peer tutoring, curriculum-based assessment, cooperative learning, cognitive learning strategies, adaptive education strategies, and integrated curriculum approaches. The collaborative structures recommended for effective communication and problem solving were cooperative teaching, collaborative consultation, peer coaching, and peer collaboration (Walther-Thomas). After three years, the participants continued to use co-teaching, professional collaboration, and inclusive support services, but problems with staffing limitations and scheduling problems decreased the amount of inclusive services being offered (Walther-Thomas).

Sanacore (1996) attempted to provide the ingredients for a successful inclusion program without considering teachers’ concerns, teaching methods, or the role of the administrator. When the inclusion program was implemented, the school staff should have developed a cooperative vision of what inclusion would be and then workshops should be provided to enable educators to develop pertinent activities to enrich the learning environment for all students (Sanacore). Afterwards, realistic learning expectations should have been established for the special needs students by the regular educator and special educator collaboratively (Sanacore).

King-Sears (1997) extended the existence of a successful inclusion program by listing the best academic practices to be used in inclusive classrooms. Initially, the educators needed to develop a shared vision. Then the educators needed to adopt, implement, and incorporate a planned educational change in the methods of instruction used in the classrooms followed by continuous support (King-Sears). The structures of inclusion should have incorporated such techniques as cooperative learning, strategy
instruction, differential instruction, self-determination for the students, explicit
instruction, curriculum-based assessment, generalization techniques, collaboration,
proactive behavior management, and peer support and friendships (King-Sears).
Successful inclusion required adequate support and assistance to teachers (Minke, et. al.,
1996). With the creation of inclusion models, legal parameters became a requisite of
special education to be considered.

Legal Parameters

To assure some support and assistance to parents of students with special needs,
the federal government realized that it became apparent for them to become involved.
The government’s concern for the education of students with special needs began with
the passage of compulsory school laws in 1909 (Winzer, 1993). Then the next major
legal action was the Supreme Court’s decision in Brown vs. Board of Education (347
U.S. 483, 349 U.S. 294) in 1954. This decision was a forecast of a fundamental change
in judicial attitudes toward children with disabilities by transferring the exclusionary
practices of racial discrimination to the disabled (Heubert, 1999).

Testing of this case occurred during the following years as seen in the case,
1257, 1259) in which the state court ruled that exclusion from compulsory education laws
and public schools based on a child’s mental abilities was not legal (Heubert, 1999). This
ruling reconfirmed the right to an education, as well as the legal concept of education for
handicapped children to occur in the least restrictive environment which ranged from
regular public school class to special public school class (Heubert, 1999).
Another test case came in the ruling for *Mills vs. Board of Education* (348 F. Supp. 866) in which the court in the District of Columbia ruled that all children with handicaps must be provided an education (Bauer & Shea, 1999). This ruling stated that all attempts to use supplementary aids and services must be made to educate handicapped children in the regular class setting and if the proof that the educational process was not satisfactorily being met under these conditions, then the child can be placed in a separate educational atmosphere (Heubert, 1999).

Immediately following these cases, Public Law 93-112, known as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, was passed (Bauer & Shea, 1999). Section 504 of this act ensured that equal opportunities for children with disabilities would be provided by schools receiving federal funds (Bauer & Shea). Proof of the enforcement of this law rested upon the administrator or teacher and had to be justified in each case (Heubert, 1999).

With the increase of education for disabled students, the government provided grants to educate personnel to work with these students. As awareness of education for handicapped children and the need to educate them grew, Public Law 94-142, known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, was passed by Congress in 1975 (Winzer, 1993). This act guaranteed a free appropriate public education for handicapped children while ensuring their rights and due process, as well as financially supporting the state’s efforts to provide the provisions of the law (Bauer & Shea, 1999).

Changes to the law were made in 1990 when Public Law 101-476, known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), was passed (Bauer & Shea, 1999). This law expanded discretionary programs, modified language, and included transition
services and assistive technology services as special education services. It also better
defined and expanded more fully the inclusion of children with autism and traumatic
brain injury (Bauer & Shea).

IDEA was tested in the courts. In 1992 in *Greer vs. Rome City School District*
(950 F. 2d. 688, 695, 696, 697, 698), the Circuit Court ruled that the disruption of a
special education student does not take up an inordinate amount of a regular teacher’s
time and that the special education student can make progress in a regular education
classroom (Heubert, 1999; Thomas & Rapport, 1998). This case supported Section 504
of the Rehabilitation Act in which the teacher and administrator had to provide the
burden of proof to ascertain whether a special education student should be removed from
a regular classroom placement and placed in a special education classroom placement
(Heubert, 1999).

Another test of IDEA was seen in *Oberti vs. Board of Education of the Borough
of Clementon School District* (995 F. 2d 1204) in 1993 when the Circuit Court ruled that
a special child’s difficult behavior does not justify a separate education placement
(Heubert, 1999; Thomas & Rapport, 1998). A special education student was to be placed
in the neighborhood school when feasibility allowed such a placement to occur (Heubert,
1999).

Amendments to IDEA were provided when Public Law 105-17 was passed in
1997 (Bauer & Shea, 1999). These amendments mandated that transition services be
provided to special needs children beginning at the age of fourteen instead of age sixteen
(Bauer & Shea).
“Federal regulations indicate that the continuum of alternative placements may include, but is not limited to, regular and special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions” (Thomas & Rapport, 1998, p. 66). This statement supported that consideration of the meaning of inclusion and least restrictive environment should occur when laws and court decisions were incorporated into action to create inclusion programs. Therefore, it was essential for each individual situation of programming for a child with special needs to consider the standards of least restrictive environment established by the federal circuit courts and to create alternatives that were more comprehensive and reflected the explicit mandates of IDEA (Thomas & Rapport). Educators must remember that parents do not have the right to compel a school district to provide a specific program or employ a specific methodology in providing an education to their child (Thomas & Rapport). Furthermore, a least restrictive environment should consist of a regular education classroom that provides more educational benefits with appropriate aid and services than a special education classroom, more benefits from social interactions, reasonable effects upon the regular educator and students, and reasonable costs (Thomas & Rapport, 1998; Boyd & Parish, 1996). In addition to legal parameters, one might want to consider the educators’ perspectives when developing an inclusion program.

**Educators’ Perspectives**

With the passage of P.L. 94-142 researchers began to look at the perceptions held by administrators and teachers concerning disabilities. It was believed that the placement of special children could be dependent upon how these children were viewed by the individuals involved in the educational process (Garvar & Schmelkin, 1989). It appeared
that teachers had lower expectations for children with handicaps and held negative stereotypes and negative behaviors toward children with handicaps due to selective biasing (Garvar & Schmelkin). Administrators tended to relate more to the disability label and grouped students for the purpose of instruction (Garvar & Schmelkin). The negative attitudes were found to be evoked most often toward students labeled as emotionally or behaviorally disordered and that general education teachers were more willing to deal with students perceived to have mild disabilities (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine, 1999). Even the practice of eliminating labels and identification of students with special needs did not improve the negative reaction to students having emotional or behavior disorders (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine).

Due to the changes in educational practices to be used with handicapped students, research was done concerning teachers’ perceptions in several areas. One change was in the least restrictive environment and the placing of handicapped children in the regular classroom. Teachers’ perceptions of this placement were important for its success. It was found that neither regular educators nor special educators were dissatisfied with the pull-out program (Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991). Regular educators felt the redistribution of special education resources to the regular classroom would decrease the instructional load placed on the regular educator and improve the instructional services for all students (Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar). Regular educators also felt that special needs students in a regular education classroom would not improve their achievement levels, would negatively affect the distribution of instructional time in the classroom, and would not have positive social benefits (Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar). Regular educators, therefore, regarded students with disabilities as their main
concern in the context of procedural classroom concerns and how these students will affect their responsibilities in that classroom (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine, 1999).

Further research in the area of regular educators working with special needs children found that regular educators felt unsure of themselves when working with students with severe disabilities (Werts, Wolery, Caldwell, & Salisbury, 1996). These teachers felt that as the severity of the disability increased so should the amount of resources and supports offered be increased (Werts, Wolery, Caldwell, & Salisbury). Requests for inservice training at the beginning of the school year, regular training throughout the year, ongoing training throughout the year, opportunities to attend conferences, opportunities to observe other teachers, written information for adaptation in classrooms, extra money for materials and supplies, reduced class size, in-class help, and time to meet with specialists and to attend meetings were issues that came from this research (Werts, Wolery, Caldwell, & Salisbury). The need to instruct special needs students in self-control, social skills, functional life skills, and prevocational and/or vocational skills has been found to be too demanding for regular educators (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine, 1999).

From the research and changes in educational practices, educators have found that as inclusion was implemented teachers need to be prepared by universities, funding procedures need to be reorganized, class sizes need to be settled, curriculum needs to be changed, and quality education for all children needs to be a priority (D’Alonzo & Giordana, 1997). Administrative support and support from the appropriate personnel needs to be available along with some assurances for the alleviation of teacher stress, assistance for classroom management, parental concerns, parental cooperation, and the
alleviation to the amount of paperwork, and ease with the bureaucracy involved in the new program (D’Alonzo & Giordana). Having the opportunity to collaborate, having the opportunity to learn about collaboration, and having the opportunity to develop the skills to be effective and efficient collaborative team members by having special and regular educators working together at the same time predicted positive attitudes toward inclusion (Thousand & Villa, 1999).

When substantial support to the general educator was provided in respect to favorable class size and the availability of special educators to assist in the education of special needs students in the regular class, dissatisfaction with time, training, personnel assistance, and resources became a problem (Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs, & Mastropieri, 1998). Building planning teams, scheduling time for teachers to work together, recognizing teachers as problem-solvers, conceptualizing teachers as front-line researchers were critical for the success of collaboration (Thousand & Villa, 1999). Researchers also found that a lack of administrative support, effective teaching skills for specific disabilities, effective general teaching skills, and a lack of special education support posed problems to the success of an inclusion program (Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs, & Mastropieri).

As students with more severe disabilities were included in the regular classroom, regular educators needed to have the ability to work with a sizable group of students and carefully sculpt a comprehensive solution for a safe classroom (Heflin & Bullock, 1999). Program development, curriculum-based student monitoring, personalized student monitoring, and the provision of support and training should be included as part of a teacher’s repertoire in dealing with students with more severe disabilities (Thousand &
Villa, 1999). Also, the integration of therapy services, supplementary aids and services, and computer-aided technology was found to be necessary as an important part of the educational program for students with severe disabilities (Thousand & Villa). However, the regular educator needed to remember that the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to educating students with severe disabilities does not always apply because the courts were supporting the exclusion of these students from the regular education classroom (Heflin & Bullock, 1999). “If the problem is appropriateness of curriculum or lack of social acceptance, then resources should be brought to bear to change the curriculum and foster social acceptance” (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine, 1999, p. 40). As a result, some special needs children required an individually tailored program within the full continuum of placement and service options based on each individual situation without a blanket decision being made (Heflin & Bullock). “Teachers…need the option to send the student back to a supportive or corrective environment if a crisis arises” (Heflin & Bullock, p. 105). Evidence showed that case management and crisis intervention services, therapeutic group discussions and meetings, effective behavior management programs, self-control and social skills training, individual counseling, prevocational and vocational training, safe environments, and interagency collaboration often were only available through special education programs (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine). Therefore, the challenge of inclusion was to provide these services and supports in the general education classrooms as well (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine).

As inclusion increased in practice, researchers found that educators have seen increased student confidence, interventions to accommodate improved learning and teaching have occurred, and improved academic progress by special needs children has
occurred (Ritter, Michel, & Irby, 1999). Researchers have also seen that regardless of the
type of disability or grade level of the special needs student when the education of that
student occurred in a regular classroom setting, the student did better academically and
socially (Thousand & Villa, 1999). Furthermore, researchers found a decrease in
competitive behavior (Thousand & Villa).

The teachers can see the changes in the special needs children, but the teachers
realized that they, themselves, needed to be taught more strategies and instructional
approaches to become more helpful for the child with special needs (Ritter, Michel, &
Irby, 1999). Teachers felt they needed to be instructed in the partnership and
responsibility models that have been successful with inclusion and included the co-
teaching model, the parallel teaching model, the co-teaching/consultant model, the team
model, the methods and resource teacher model, and the dually-licensed teacher
(Thousand & Villa, 1999). Teachers also felt that they needed to know how to make
adaptations appropriate for students with disabilities, as well as for all students and how
to make instructional strategies used in inclusive classrooms recommended practices for
all students (Thousand & Villa). These teachers found that cooperative learning,
curricular adaptations, students supporting other students, paraprofessional support, and
the use of instructional technology were the most important instructional strategies
supporting inclusive education (Thousand & Villa).

Snyder (1999) stated that “if inclusive education is going to work for special
education students, regular educators, special educators, and administrators are going to
have to take a more aggressive approach to preparing the general education teachers for
working with students with special needs” (Snyder, p. 180). This aggressive approach
needed to be an adjustment in course requirements for both undergraduate and graduate
students in general education which will include work to prepare educators to work with
special education students placed in regular education classes (Snyder). Administrators
needed to be more aware and supportive of the needs of general education teachers who
were working with special needs children, should take a more active role in providing
continuing inservice training for them, and should encourage collaboration between the
special educator and regular educator so the needs of all the students were met (Snyder).

Educators have reached the point where two-thirds of them agree with inclusive
placement for special needs children, but only one-third of them agreed that they have
sufficient time, skills, training, and resources necessary to participate in an inclusion
program (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000). As regular educators increased their
experience with special needs children, they increased their confidence to work with
them (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden). As regular educators increased their training with
special needs children, they gained a positive attitude toward working with children with
special needs (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden).

Johnson (2000) found that 37 of the 50 states do require at least one course in
teaching students with disabilities for its general education teachers. However, there
continued to be a need for inservice training so specialized competencies can be
established (Johnson). The inservice training should involve co-teaching, collaborative
consultation, methods to evaluate school action plans and inclusion practices, support for
the transfer of skills to the classroom, and the use of a specialist to assist in instructional
consultation skills (Johnson).
The collaborative consultation team of regular educator and special educator were in a unique position to assess students’ academic progress (Hargrove, 2000). The relationship allowed an assessment from a multiple number of perspectives to occur. The general educator would be able to determine if the student had knowledge of the curriculum and was growing and developing within a typical student growth curve (Hargrove). The special educator would be able to determine if the special education law was being met and if specific evaluation skills were being learned (Hargrove).

Further insecurity in the collaboration model held by administrators and regular educators was their concern with management because of their unfamiliarity with special education and inclusive practices (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham, 2000). Administrators must take the opportunity to increase their knowledge of special education and effective inclusion practices (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham). They must connect more directly with what teachers perceive as important to the successful inclusion of students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham). They must recognize the social benefits of including students with special needs in the general education classroom, but ease their concerns with the academic success of included students (Daane, Beirne-Smith, & Latham).

Rose (2001) found that regular educators still had concerns about practicing inclusion. Classroom support was found to be a vital element to enable the success of inclusion (Rose). Training and personal professional experience was necessary for regular educators to manage and adequately instruct in an inclusion classroom (Rose). Time to teach, time to plan, and time to meet played an important impact on the success of inclusion (Rose). Physical access to the classroom and toileting facilities was
necessary for the privacy and dignity of the special needs student being included (Rose). These factors were found to have the greatest impact on a school’s ability to be successfully inclusive or not, but the most important factor was the expectations held by the teachers about the inclusion program, itself (Rose). In addition to educators’ perspectives, parents’ perspectives should be considered, too.

Parents’ Perspectives

The perspectives of parents were important to the success of an inclusion program, too. Providing parents with family support and educational programs to engage them as co-learners with their children was important for the success of an inclusion program (Thousand & Villa, 1999).

When the parents of children with special needs were allowed to respond to questions about their child’s placement in an inclusion classroom, the parents noted that the students displayed increased self-confidence; camaraderie with regular education students was maintained; teacher support was provided so that the students gained more understanding, skills and knowledge, and positive attitudes; a lack of poor self-esteem; and higher academic expectations existed for their children (Ritter, Michel, & Irby, 1999).

Parents can provide insight about the special needs child that the teacher may not see. The child may report to the parent more readily the feelings or thoughts about attending a pull-out classroom. These feelings and thoughts consisted of the invention of stories to justify attendance to the pull-out classroom, being called a derogatory name, trying to understand that something is wrong, the missing of class work and what it would take to get it done, and being able to understand what could be done well
Inclusion of parents in decision-making, especially for the participation in statewide assessment, should be a vital part of the individualized educational plan of a special needs child (Crawford, Almond, Tindal, & Hollenbeck, 2002).

Researchers found that academic expectations were raised as a result of an inclusion program, which was confirmed by the teachers (Ritter, Michel, & Irby, 1999). Parents felt that a segregated special education class had an adverse affect on their students and felt that the playing field was equaled when they were placed in an inclusion classroom (Ritter, Michel, & Irby). Researchers found that low expectations of the cognitive achievement for special needs students resulted in a lack of cognitive effort by the special needs student (Howard-Rose & Rose, 1994). Working on individual responsibility also was an achievement for special needs students that needed to be accomplished according to researchers (Howard-Rose & Rose, 1994).

However, parents of regular education students also voiced their opinion about inclusion. These parents felt that the students with special needs would take time away from the students without special needs, as well as provide a bad influence or physical harm (Rose, 2001). It became apparent that parents of regular education students and special education students need to be considered so that everyone’s priorities in terms of social justice and the role of the world community are conveyed when implementing an inclusion program (Rose). It was not possible to make every classroom completely safe, but it was a basic responsibility of every school to attempt to ensure students safety from physical harm and the most effective ‘line of defense’ was effective instruction, personalized accommodations, and motivating learning (Thousand & Villa, 1999).
Parents felt that they should be included when an inclusion program was going to be implemented (Cook & Swain, 2001). They felt that they have knowledge and expertise that can provide greater understanding to meeting children’s special needs, especially when alternative plans needed to be considered (Cook & Swain). Involvement of parents alleviated feelings of bewilderment, anxiety, confusion, anger, frustration, and disempowerment (Cook & Swain). Parents’ concerns with an inclusion class usually consisted of the size of the classroom, the teacher/student ratio, safety, the educational progress of the special needs child, lack of experience with special needs children by staff involved in an inclusion class, allocation of resources, reduced access of medical facilities, teasing and bullying, and alienation of the special needs child (Cook & Swain). Parents should be included in meetings when their child was being considered for an inclusion program because parents have vital information to offer about the child and “placement relies on decisions about curriculum and treatment for individual students. Placement is simply a means to an end, not the end itself” (Coleman, Webber, & Algozzine, 1999, p. 36). Besides the perspectives of the teachers and parents, the peculiarities of the individual school, itself, should be considered.

**Peculiarities of the Individual School**

The peculiarities of a school, whether physical or not, should be considered when an inclusion program was going to be implemented. The school implementing an inclusion program should be one in which new organizational patterns can lead to more flexibility (Spodek & Walberg, 1975). More importantly, one needed to have leadership and a teaching staff that was willing to move away from traditional goals and methods and implement open communication, as well as a sense of cohesiveness (Spodek &
Educators in such a school were flexible and aware of the diversity of children’s learning styles (Spodek & Walberg). However, teachers needed to be careful as they abandon their traditional practices for more open, humanistic approaches so that a marked discrepancy between the emulated practices of open education and reality of the classroom does not occur (Spodek & Walberg).

One must remember that “if you are successful teaching students without disabilities, then you have the skills to be successful teaching students with disabilities” (Giangreco, 1997, p. 11). Teaching students with special needs required that you provide more active, participating, creative approaches to learning so that all students were motivated and effective learners in the class (Giangreco). Schools needed to develop expertise in the area of team planning for individual children and maintained a role as a place on continual change (Giangreco). Therefore, a school implementing an inclusion program should strive to “provide every conceivable service that might help…provide those services that are necessary for the student to receive an appropriately individualized education” (Giangreco, p. 107).

Researchers have justified something as minute as traditional furniture affecting the learning of a child. For example, in order to decrease the rocking motion in chairs and the sideways sitting in chairs and produce more attentive and orderly students school furniture design might be considered (Knight & Noyes, 1999). Teachers should recognize that students are individuals with personal preferences and know how to make choices. If school furniture provided guidelines for the correct major sitting positions so less ambiguous guidance needs would be produced by manufacturers and a decrease in rocking forwards and backwards in chairs could occur, then consideration of a variety of
components for the success of an inclusion program becomes apparent (Knight & Noyes).

When an entire school was established to use looping and inclusion, then the program proved to be successful (Jehlen, 2002). Each classroom has a second teacher in the room who was a special education teacher responsible for the development of lesson modifications, individualized instruction, and the introduction of activities to the whole class (Jehlen). The researcher’s results stressed that the program was not rigid or absolute, but that it evolved as teachers felt their way through the program and the changes necessary for its success (Jehlen).

Summary

The review of the literature dealing with the implementation of an inclusion program revealed numerous aspects that can be assessed by the researcher for analysis. In compiling these aspects from the literature review, the categories that occurred most often were administration, legalities, school building, student performance, teacher training, and teacher time.

Consideration of these aspects for analysis during the implementation process of an inclusion program was selected as the purpose of this research due to the review of the literature supporting that a compilation of these aspects into one research had not been done. The researcher’s contention was to compile these aspects and analyze them during the implementation process of an inclusion program to assist administrators in implementing a successful inclusion program.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to look at the outcomes of an assessment involving an analysis the implementation of an inclusion program. Results of such a research would assist an administrator in implementing a successful inclusion program. In conducting this analysis, the researcher intended to report on the process experienced by three schools as an inclusion program was implemented. The researcher also intended to report on the process experienced by the faculties, staff members, and administrators within these three schools as an inclusion program was implemented. Furthermore, the researcher was to express the components of the school environment and school culture of each of the three individual schools as an inclusion program was implemented.

The overarching research question developed to address this research was: What were the experiences of three schools implementing an inclusion program in Blossom County as reported by a participant/observer within those schools? To further guide the research the following subquestions were asked:

1. What were the experiences of the individual faculties in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?
2. What were the experiences of the individual staff members in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?
3. What were the experiences of the individual administrators in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?
4. What was the researcher’s perception of the school environment as expressed by the teachers and administrators during the process of implementing an inclusion program in these three schools?

5. What was the school culture expressed by the teachers and administrators during the process of implementing an inclusion program in these three schools?

Research Design

The design of this research was a qualitative methodological design, which used multiple methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell, 1994). The researcher proposed to use an open-ended questionnaire and the role of participant/observer to gather the qualitative data.

The researcher used an open-ended questionnaire to gather the qualitative data. The qualitative data were gathered from the regular educators, special educators, paraprofessionals, and administrators participating in the implementation of inclusion in that school. The items for the open-ended questionnaire were developed from the items used by Cook, Semmel, & Gerber (1999) and by Monahan & Marino (1996), but the items were altered to apply to the situation appropriate to the research being conducted.

The researcher gathered the qualitative data by being a participant/observer in the three schools through the role of district staffing specialist when interacting with the teachers, staff, and administrators, which allowed the researcher to have an interacting part of the total field of experience (Jacobs, 1970). The role of district staffing specialist permitted the researcher to observe the classrooms implementing inclusion due to the need to review information and documentation for initial referrals to the student support team and initial and re-evaluation referrals for special education services; to make
changes in teaching methods in classrooms implementing inclusion due to the need to participate in one meeting of the student support team’s initial referral process; to discuss inclusion with the faculty, staff, and administrators of the schools implementing inclusion to provide training about due process procedures; discuss inclusion with parents and students participating in schools implementing inclusion to facilitate eligibility and placement in special education; and provide in-services to faculty, staff, and administrators of the schools implementing inclusion to provide training about due process procedures. The researcher was then able to consider and record what consciously influenced the evaluation of the data and the conclusions to be drawn (Jacobs). However, the researcher had to be ever mindful of what must be seen, heard, and felt since the researcher became a part of the interactions and grew with the experiences (Jacobs). The qualitative data consisted of anecdotal information because human behavior was being seen in a variety of contexts (Jacobs). The qualitative data was also instructive because the personal information was a crucial aspect of the participant observation (Jacobs).

Participants

The participants were the faculties, staff, and administrators of three facilities in which the researcher was employed as a district staffing specialist and in which the LEA director agreed would be implementing an inclusion program in Blossom County during the 2004-05 school year. Blossom County has a school district of 35,000 students served in 30 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, and six high schools.

The researcher was assigned to three facilities as a district staffing specialist. The three facilities were two elementary schools and a middle school, which was a feeder
school for the elementary schools. The three schools were in a three-mile radius of each other. The director and district staffing specialist informed the principals of the three facilities of the research project, introduced the researcher to the principals, and discussed the role and purpose of the researcher with the principals. The LEA director matched these facilities for geographic location, and therefore, somewhat matched them for socioeconomic status and similarities in knowledge and experiences concerning inclusion. The parents and students within these three facilities also became participants of the research due to the researcher’s role as a district staffing specialist which involved being case conference coordinator for individualized education planning for students being placed in inclusion classes. The researcher was available to attend staff meetings at the three individual schools to meet the teachers involved in the inclusion programs being implemented. The researcher assured the principals, faculty, and staff that anonymity would be guaranteed and upheld, as required by Georgia Southern University’s Institutional Review Board. The researcher also provided information regarding the importance of the research, appealed to the participants’ sense of altruism, and created a sense of professional trust in hopes of reducing the probability of intentional misinformation and/or controlled behavior (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Instrumentation

The survey consisted of two questions covering each individual topic category that needed to be discussed as determined by the researcher and methodologist and based on the work of Cook, Semmel, and Gerber (1999) and Monahan and Marino (1996). The entire questionnaire consisted of ten questions. The topics for the basis of the questions came from two instruments previously used to measure attitudes about inclusion with
items being selected and revised to address the issues of an inclusion program appropriate to the setting in Blossom County School District (Cook, Semmel, & Gerber; Monahan & Marino). The researcher listed the items from these two works in the discussion of research design. The topics covered the academic achievements and apprehensions of all the students in an inclusion program, the social achievements and apprehensions of all the students in an inclusion program, the professional achievements and apprehensions of the all the educators and administrators involved in an inclusion program, the effect of inclusion on test results of students, what educators and administrators need to learn to improve professionally, and whether ample support was provided during the implementation of inclusion. The researcher also used information for the development of the questions for the survey from instruments developed to measure teacher perceptions of the regular education initiative, to discuss responses to questions asked about inclusion programs, and to express teachers’ beliefs about collaboration and co-teaching (Austin, 2001; McLeskey & Waldron, 1996).

Content validity for the items was addressed by several methods (Gall, et. al., 1996, de Vaus, 1995). Items providing validity and application to the purpose of the study developed by Cook, Semmel, and Gerber (1999), as well as those developed by Monahan and Marino (1996), were used. Then, colleagues who had been involved in inclusion programs provided feedback for refinements of the proposed draft of the instrument. To further support the development of the questionnaire an analysis of the questions was done to determine the resources that supported the incorporation of the question into the questionnaire. From the analysis the final draft of the questionnaire was developed. The final draft was compiled and reviewed by the methodologist and the researcher. This
analysis is provided in Table 1. No changes were made after the final review. Thus, a group of experts evaluated the degree to which the items of the questionnaire measured the intended instructional content desired by the research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Table 1. An Analysis of Questionnaire Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Design/Analysis</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hargrove, 2000; Cook, Semmel, &amp; Gerber, 1999; Monahan &amp; Marino, 1996; Wang &amp; Baker, 1985</td>
<td>Determine teacher expectations of academic success in an inclusion classroom</td>
<td>7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel</td>
<td>Qualitative: Survey Open-ended</td>
<td>Meet the curriculum with modifications and students will succeed Teacher and student collaboration would occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook, Semmel, &amp; Gerber, 1999; Monahan &amp; Marino, 1996; Semmel, Abernathy, 1991; Butera, &amp; Lesar, 1991</td>
<td>Determine teacher expectations of social success in and inclusion classroom</td>
<td>7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel</td>
<td>Qualitative: Survey Open-ended</td>
<td>Collaboration would occur with modeling, communication, acceptance, and respect existing Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avramidis, Bayliss, how to &amp; Burden, 2000; Cook, Semmel, &amp; Gerber, 1999; Monahan &amp; Marino, 1996</td>
<td>Determine professional expectations held by teachers of an inclusion classroom</td>
<td>7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel</td>
<td>Qualitative: Survey Open-ended</td>
<td>How to collaborate, modify instruction, and how to be flexible More professional learning opportunities and the necessary support Student success will occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hargrove, 2000; Cook, Semmel, &amp; Gerber, 1999; Monahan &amp; Marino, 1996; Wang &amp; Baker, 1985</td>
<td>Determine academic apprehensions teachers had for students in an inclusion classroom</td>
<td>7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel</td>
<td>Qualitative: Survey Open-ended</td>
<td>Not enough will occur with unrealistic expectations for special needs students existing Students will succeed More support staff is needed Collaboration will occur Classroom disruptions will occur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman, Webber, &amp; Algozzine, 1999; Cook, Semmel, &amp; Gerber, 1999; Monahan &amp; Marino, 1996; Werts, Wolery, Snyder, Caldwell, &amp; Salisbury, 1996; Glomb &amp; Morgan, 1991</td>
<td>Determine professional apprehensions as a teacher of an inclusion classroom</td>
<td>7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel</td>
<td>Qualitative: Survey Open-ended</td>
<td>Inability to meet all the needs of the children Acceptance will not occur Classroom disruptions will occur Behavior will be modeled Lack of support in the classroom Inability to individualize or modify instruction with a slow pace occurring Insufficient amount of student acceptance will occur Classroom disruptions will occur Collaboration needs to occur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999; Monahan & Marino, 1996

| Determine how state mandated tests will be affected by inclusion classroom | 7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel | Qualitative: Survey Open-ended | One elementary said scores will go up One elementary and middle school said scores will go down |

Johnson, 2000; Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999; Snyder, 1999; Monahan & Marino, 1996; Sanacore, 1996

| Determine professional growth expected by teachers working in an inclusion classroom | 7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel | Qualitative: Survey Open-ended | Gain professional development on inclusion Learn to modify, classroom management, flexibility, and individualization Working with support staff Need to learn how to collaborate |

Johnson, 2000; Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999; Snyder, 1999; Monahan & Marino, 1996; Sanacore, 1996

| Determine professional growth needed by teachers working in an inclusion classroom | 7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel | Qualitative: Survey Open-ended | Professional learning about inclusion and teaching strategies Provided with inclusion models to review |

Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999; Minke, Bear, Deemer, & Griffin, 1996; Monahan & Marino, 1996

| Determine if enough support is given to inclusion classroom teacher | 7 elementary staff personnel 28 elementary staff personnel 18 middle school staff personnel | Qualitative: Survey Open-ended | Lack of professional learning that has been provided Support does exist More collaboration and planning time is needed |

Using the Instrument

The researcher provided the open-ended questionnaire to each teacher, paraprofessional, and administrator in each building with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research and the deadline for the completion of the questionnaire. When the first deadline passed and there were not enough questionnaires completed, the researcher requested the assistance of the administration in requesting the completion of the questionnaire and set a second deadline. When the second deadline passed and there were not enough questionnaires completed, the researcher offered a monetary prize to the staff if the required number of questionnaires were reached by the third deadline. By the third deadline the number of required questionnaires had not been reached and the researcher continued the research with the questionnaires that were completed.
The researcher compiled notes from the role of participant/observer while performing the role of district staffing specialist that were used to provide the anecdotal information for the research. The notes were about conversations, meetings, discussions, in-services, and faculty meetings in which the district staffing specialist participated. These anecdotal information provided feelings, thoughts, and attitudes concerning inclusion and its implementation, as well as the participants’ participation in the program (Tashakkaori & Teddlie, 1998).

Data Analysis

The qualitative research questions followed a one-group survey design. This type of design consisted of giving a questionnaire to a group after an independent variable has been introduced, which was the implementation of an inclusion program. When the questionnaire was completed, then it was coded for similarities and differences in the responses with the anecdotal information and personal information used to support or dispute the results of the questionnaire (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996).

A code sheet was created for each question (de Vaus, 1995). Coding themes required the researcher to remember to “…identify a concept, a central idea…” used to categorize the answers given by the respondents (Glesne, 1999, p. 136). The researcher anticipated that the code sheet would develop themes applicable to topics covering the collaboration and co-teaching of the regular educator and special educator, the instructional skills of the regular educator, the atmosphere of the inclusion classroom, the improvements or lack of improvement socially and academically of regular education and special education students, the use of resources in an inclusion classroom, and the
consideration of problems that exist when inclusion programs are implemented because these themes tend to be the topics noted in past research about implementing inclusion programs. The researcher hoped to create a code sheet that incorporated more components than what had arisen in the past individual research studies. To check for consistency in coding responses, a second coder was asked to code the responses. The second coder responded independently and coded the respondents’ answers on a similar code sheet. The two coders had to have 100% agreement, and therefore, had to discuss each item of discrepancy until consensus was reached regarding the proper classification for the response to the question (Glesne). Total agreement was desired so a lack of discrepancy occurred and the discussion between the two coders was incorporated into the research results for consideration when implementing an inclusion program (Glesne).

Summary

The methodology of this research was a one group questionnaire combining a qualitative open-ended questionnaire with anecdotal information and personal information. The qualitative open-ended questionnaire was to be given after the implementation of inclusion while the qualitative information was gathered by the researcher in the role of district staffing specialist. The data were to be coded to create a multi-dimensional analysis for the implementation of an inclusion program in a school.
CHAPTER 4

REPORT OF DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The researcher’s purpose was to analyze an assessment involving a multi-dimensional approach to the implementation of inclusion. Results of the analysis done in this research would assist an administrator in implementing a successful inclusion program. In conducting this analysis, the researcher reported on the process experienced by three schools as an inclusion program was implemented. The researcher also reported on the process experienced by the faculties, staff members, and administrators within these three schools as an inclusion program was implemented. Furthermore, the researcher conveyed the components of the school environment and school culture of each of the three individual schools as an inclusion program was implemented.

To conduct this analysis, the researcher conducted an open-ended questionnaire to gather qualitative data that was analyzed for major themes. The researcher then used the role as district staffing specialist to gather additional qualitative data that was compared with the questionnaire through the use of code sheets to create a multi-dimensional analysis for the implementation of an inclusion program in a school. After this comparison was completed the researcher determined any similarities and/or differences that occurred among the faculty, staff, and/or administrators or in the school culture or environment when the inclusion program was implemented. The researcher determined if one, more than one, or any combination of the components was blended to create inclusion within a school.
Research Question

The overarching question asked by the researcher was: What were the experiences of three schools implementing an inclusion program in Blossom County as reported by a participant/observer within those schools? To further guide the research the following subquestions were created:

1. What were the experiences of the individual faculties in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?

2. What were the experiences of the individual staff members in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?

3. What were the experiences of the individual administrators in the three schools implementing an inclusion program?

4. What was the researcher’s perception of the school environment as expressed by the teachers and administrators during the process of implementing an inclusion program in these three schools?

5. What was the school culture expressed by the teachers and administrators during the process of implementing an inclusion program in these three schools?

Research Design

Demographic Profile of the Facilities

The three facilities used for this research consisted of two elementary schools and the middle school to which they feed. The researcher was the district staffing specialist for all three facilities. One elementary school was implementing inclusion and the other elementary school did not have an inclusion program in place, but was told at the end of
the 2004-05 school year that during the 2005-06 school year implementation of an inclusion program would occur. The middle school had an inclusion program in place for the second year. The elementary school that implemented inclusion had 586 students with 50 staff members while the elementary school that did not have inclusion had 504 students with 50 staff members. The middle school that had inclusion in place had 777 students with 70 staff members. All three schools were located in a geographic area within three miles of each other; therefore, the socioeconomic status of the students was approximately the same.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The respondents in all three schools consisted of personnel with no experience to over twenty years of experience as classroom teachers. The personnel in all three schools had educational backgrounds ranging from the completion of one bachelor degree to the completion of two doctorate degrees by one administrator. Few of the staff in the buildings implementing inclusion had any formal education in inclusion. The two buildings that implemented inclusion had been provided in-service experiences by the district as an effort to assist in the implementation of the program.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Respondents to Schools Used for Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Schools</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary, included (Ei)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary, unincluded (Eui)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle, included (Mi)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Ei = Elementary included; Eui = Elementary unincluded; Mi = Middle included
Findings

The questionnaire was distributed prior to the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), which was started the last two weeks of April, 2005. The coding of the results of the survey was done independently by the researcher and an administrator knowledgeable in inclusion, statistical analysis, coding, and education. The coding of the results of the survey was compared for similarities. The similarities became the major themes for discussion as findings for this research document.

The anecdotal information and personal information was added to the results of the coding to support or refute the findings. The components that occurred from the survey findings, anecdotal information, and personal information provided the multi-dimensional analysis for the implementation of an inclusion program in a school.

Questionnaire Question One

What do you expect to achieve academically for students in a full inclusion class?

The first question of the questionnaire pertained to what teachers expected to achieve academically for students in a full inclusion class. When comparing the two coders’ results one of the major themes for the elementary school not using inclusion was that the curriculum would be met. Examples illustrating this statement were seen in responses such as “students would have exposure to the full curriculum,” (Eui2) “students in an inclusion class are expected to complete the same assignments as regular students,” (Eui7) “I expect students to be on grade level,” (Eui11) “to work on grade level objectives,” (Eui18) “to meet grade level requirements,” (Eui22) and “the curriculum should be taught in its entirety and learned” (Eui24). A second major theme that arose was that modifications would occur. This theme was affirmed by statements
such as “students will be on grade level and complete work with modifications,” (Eui11) “I expect the students to achieve academically the same as I always have with the teacher assigned to the special need student providing adaptations,” (Eui15) “students will achieve satisfactory progress while working on grade level objectives with modifications,” (Eui18) “to meet grade level requirements with modifications,” (Eui22) and “every child can learn with modifications” (Eui27). The final theme that occurred from the elementary school not using inclusion was that success by the students would result. Examples of success by the students were stated by teachers through such comments as “students would display academic growth,” (Eui23) and “all students are expected to show measurable academic growth” (Eui28).

In the elementary school using inclusion one of the main themes that emerged was that student success would occur. Examples of this theme were seen in such comments as “students with special needs will be as close to their chronological peers as possible depending on the disability,” (Ei1) “for every student to improve by at least 1 year from where they start, even below grade level,” (Ei2) “students will achieve beyond what they were predicted to be able to achieve when they were first identified as special education students,” (Ei3) “that each child will make gains and grow academically,” (Ei5) “I expect for the inclusion students to grow socially, behaviorally, and academically while the regular education children are able to learn without interference and will learn tolerance,” (Ei6) and “I expect all my students to achieve at their highest potential which is at or above grade level by the end of the school year” (Ei7).

The second theme was that students would demonstrate improvement. This theme was confirmed with such comments as “every student will improve by at least one
year from where they started, even if they began below grade level,” (Ei2) “special
education students will achieve beyond what was predicted they’d be able to achieve
when they were first placed in special education and some will even test out of special
education,” (Ei3) “each child will make gains and grow academically,” (Ei5) and “each
child will grow socially, behaviorally, and academically,” (Ei6) and “all my students will
be performing at or above grade level by the end of the school year” (Ei7).

In the middle school using inclusion one of the main themes that arose was that
collaboration by the students and teachers would occur. Examples of collaboration by
students and teachers were expressed in the comments “it is hopeful that the non-special
education students will benefit and model the special education students who will
perform at a higher level,” (Mi8) “to work together to find a way to reach most of the
students and help them learn and progress,” (Mi9) “teachers in a full inclusion class
should expect students to benefit from the academic strengths of their peers just as they
do in regular education classes,” (Mi11) “I expect my students to learn the necessary self
help techniques and strategies that will allow them to adapt and excel in the inclusion
classroom setting,” (Mi13) and “inclusion students will be exposed to and able to
participate in activities and information provided by a teacher with expertise in the
content area and along with the discussions and questioning with the general education
students will allow the inclusion students to increase their enthusiasm and knowledge in
that particular subject area” (Mi15).

Another theme that occurred was the use of modifications. This theme was
demonstrated by the following comments, “I expect to meet the students needs and help
them work up to their fullest potential,” (Mi3) “to be high achievers regardless of
strengths or weaknesses,” (Mi4) “I expect to reach all students, to offer inclusion students the same opportunities as regular education students by offering them real life situations that will require them to be successful as any other student,” (Mi5) “I think students who are not significantly below grade level could perform well with modifications,” (Mi7) “I expect students to better understand applications of strategies and skills targeted in the IEP and how they relate to real life through a broader exposure to the curriculum,” (Mi14) “I expect the students to perform higher because of the exposure to higher expectations,” (Mi17) “I expect learning take place with mastery of skills at 70%-75% because of the modifications” (Mi18).

Another common theme that occurred was that learning will take place. Comments establishing this theme were “that they will be able to learn what the regular education students learn,” (Mi1) “that positive steps in improving academic ability will occur,” (Mi2) “ideally all students will achieve all the information in order to do well while realistically they will learn at a pace that does not hold one group back,” (Mi6) “academically an increase in achievement would be expected,” (Mi12) “inclusion students will be exposed to activities, information, discussions, and questions that will allow them to increase their knowledge in that particular subject area,” (Mi15) “I expect students to do as well as the regular education students,” (Mi16) “the special education students should perform higher because of the exposure to higher expectation,”(Mi17) and “academically, I would like to see students in full inclusion progress with 70%-75% mastery of the skills being taught so I expect to see learning take place” (Mi18).

The final theme that existed in the middle school using inclusion was that improvement by the students did exist. Evidence for improvement by the students was
seen by comments such as “they will be able to learn what the regular education students learn,” (Mi1, Mi16) “I expect positive steps in improving academic ability,” (Mi2) “to be high achievers regardless of strengths or weaknesses,” (Mi4) “I would expect the students to be exposed to a broader range of objectives in the general education classroom,” (Mi7) “by being exposed to the modeling of the non-special education students the special education students will perform at a higher level,” (Mi8) “teachers in a full inclusion class should expect students to benefit from the academic strengths of their peers just as they do in regular education classes,” (Mi11) “academically an increase in achievement would be expected,” (Mi12) “I expect my students to learn the necessary self-help techniques and strategies that will allow them to adapt and excel in the inclusion classroom setting,” (Mi13) “I expect students to better understand applications of strategies and skills targeted in the IEP and how they relate to real life,” (Mi14) “the special education students should perform higher because exposure to higher expectations,” (Mi17) and “I expect to see learning take place” (Mi18).

*Questionnaire Question Two*

What do you expect to achieve socially for students in a full inclusion class?

The second question pertained to what the teachers expected to achieve socially for the students in a full inclusion class. The first theme that arose from the elementary school not using inclusion was the expectation that the students collaborate. This theme was expressed by the following comments, “I expect students to learn how to work in groups collaboratively without disturbance,” (Eui9) and “I would expect the students to develop a working relationship with most of their classmates,” (Eui21)
Modeling was another theme that occurred from this school’s results. Comments illustrating modeling were “special education students will have better role models to observe and learn from in the regular classroom,” (Eui1) “better peer role models for special education students will exist,” (Eui2) and “I expect that students who are special education will learn from those who are not and vice versa” (Eui24).

Communication was the third theme that arose in the elementary school not using inclusion. This theme was indicated by such comments as “I expect that each student will gain communication skills that will carry him throughout their lifelong careers” (Eui5) and “I expect each student to be able to communicate with others in life” (Eui6).

Teachers also anticipated that students would show acceptance of each other socially, physically, and academically. This expectation was demonstrated in the comments “I expect a gaining of acceptance of the special education students by the regular education students,” (Eui2) “acceptance should be exhibited by all students,” (Eui4) “children will accept others who are not just like them,” (Eui12) “young children are very accepting of everyone,” (Eui20) “I expect to provide acceptance in a positive social experience” (Eui22).

Finally, the teachers in the elementary school not using inclusion had a theme in which they expected respect to be shown. A comment showing this theme was noted by the statement, “all students in my class will be treated with respect,” (Eui7) “I expect the students to possibly gain some understanding of others,” (Eui16) “the students will develop an accepting attitude toward special needs students,” (Eui23) and “I expect my students to understand that we are all different and that being different makes us individuals” (Eui27).
The elementary school practicing inclusion had two themes arise from this question. The first theme dealt with support to the educators incorporating inclusion in their classrooms. Comments were that “I am the support and I am enough,” (Ei1) “I have had great support from the special educator when I was an inclusion teacher, but I did not have too much support from the administration,” (Ei2) “I feel that the principal has supported inclusion,” (Ei3) “I feel that I have had support as an inclusion teacher, but I have been spread thin because I have had to serve 6 different classrooms making me frustrated because I never seem to be in any one place long enough in a day,” (Ei4) “there seemed to be support provided before the school year, but then many inconsistent changes occurred throughout the year,” (Ei5) “no at the beginning of the year I wasn’t served the appropriate hours for my children’s IEPs, I had no training, and I was extremely frustrated because I was worried that the regular education children were not learning everything that was expected of them due to the behaviors that were occurring in the classroom and now I am more comfortable since things have mellowed, but I still feel training is needed before the next school year begins,” (Ei6) and “I feel that I’ve had ample support in implementing inclusion in my classroom because I’ve had additional training and I’ve been able to work with some wonderful support teachers within the classroom” (Ei7).

The second theme dealt with the need for more professional learning. Comments for this theme were “yes, I’ve been allowed to attend many workshops,” (Ei3) “before the school year enough professional learning was provided, but many inconsistent changes happened throughout the school year,” (Ei5) “at the beginning of the year there was not enough training and I feel that more training needs to be provided before the beginning of
the next school year,” (Ei6) and “I’ve had additional training so I can reach my ultimate goal of recognizing each student as a unique individual and to do all I can to help each student become a successful learner” (Ei7). The one area that occurred most often in the elementary school using inclusion was for support to the teachers being provided. Teachers stated “I am the support and if inclusion with the proper supports and services can work for most children then it seems like a grand experiment,” (Ei1) “the support from the special educators is great, but the support from the administration has not been satisfactory,” (Ei2) “the principal has been very supportive of inclusion,” (Ei3) “the support staff coming into the inclusion room is consistent so they know the students and can work with them effectively and inconsistent changes do not occur during the school year,” (Ei5) “adequate support to both the regular education and special education students with coverage being offered to meet the IEP hours and the special needs children’s screaming fits, throwing of objects, etc. during any given day at any given time,” (Ei6) and “I’ve been able to work with some wonderful support teachers within my classroom who have worked toward my ultimate goal of recognizing each student as a unique individual” (Ei7).

The middle school teachers using inclusion expected the students to learn respect. Comments validating this theme were noted in statements like “all students will be treated equally,” (Mi4) “that all students will learn to accept other students for who they are as they realize that people are different and it is okay to be so,” (Mi9) “teachers should expect students to demonstrate respect that not everyone learns in the same way or at the same pace,” (Mi11) and “the world is not artificially segregated by regular people and special people, therefore inclusion mirrors society in a better way” (Mi17). The
middle school which used inclusion had minor concerns arise from the questionnaire. These concerns were student improvement, student learning, respect, distractions, pace, support, flexibility, use of pre-planning, and professional training. Statements demonstrating the teachers’ awareness of the students’ learning abilities were expressed as “I expect to meet the students needs and help them to work up to their fullest potential, but I’m not sure these students get all the help they need in order to understand totally what is being taught,” (Mi3) “the pace will be slower than usual so you can have high achievers regardless of strengths or weaknesses,” (Mi4) “I expect to reach all students, to offer the same opportunities, to offer them real life situations that will require them to be successful, to have many of the social skills to be utilized to ensure a healthy life full of friendship and great experiences as any child would want,” (Mi5) “there are students that will misbehave and fall behind, but that is where you pick up the slack and provide peer tutoring, all the information so they can do well, move at a pace that does not hold them back, and to create group levels that can work together a different paces and still get the work done,” (Mi6) “to benefit from non-special education students so the special education students can perform at a higher level,” (Mi8) “to find a way to reach most of the students and help them learn and progress by realizing they are people with differences and that’s okay and preventing them from falling through the crack and being left behind,” (Mi9) “fairness, friendliness, acceptance in a good, safe learning environment for all students,” (Mi10) “expect students to benefit from the academic strengths of their peers, to demonstrate sensitivity, respect, and understanding about everyone who does not learn the same way or at the same pace while still feeling adequate about themselves,” (Mi11) “academically an increase in achievement would be
expected with an increase in social skills while receiving instruction at their ability level,” (Mi12) “to be independent in a classroom, to become positively interactive socially, and to allow accommodations to exist to prepare the student to deal with the world,” (Mi13) “I expect the students to have a broader exposure to the curriculum, to benefit from seeing general education students engaging in appropriate interactions, and to be more receptive to content,” (Mi14) “to participate in regular education with activities, information, discussions, and questions by using opportunities to interact with friends and peers, and making a diverse group more appreciative of a content area” (Mi15). “I expect these students to do as well as the regular education students,” (Mi16) “special education students have higher expectations, making it a mirror of society,” (Mi17) and “I expect teaching to take place with skills being mastered at 70%-75% by following all classroom procedures, with the gaps by students” (Mi18).

Respect is a lesson that was used daily in the announcements at the middle school and stressed as an important aspect of middle school life. The teachers conjectured that respect would occur if all students saw it, demonstrated it, experienced it, and lived it.

*Questionnaire Question Three*

What do you expect to achieve professionally as a teacher of a full inclusion class?

The third question dealt with what the teacher expected to achieve professionally in a full inclusion class. The elementary school not using inclusion wanted to know three things. The first thing the teachers wanted to know was how to collaborate. The comments demonstrating this statement was that professionally the teachers expected to learn how to “collaborate with the special education teachers to provide a safe and supportive learning environment that promotes student achievement”
(Eui23) and “I hope to achieve an understanding of how to work with special needs students” (Eui26).

The second thing the teachers wanted to know was how to alter the instruction to meet the individual needs of the special education student. Comments substantiating this statement were noted in that the teacher expected to have “a better understanding of the full curriculum and therefore better ways to link my instruction to the curriculum for the inclusion classroom,” (Eui2) “to enhance my instruction,” (Eui14) “how to teach special education students in a regular education environment,” (Eui17) “how to include special needs students in daily activities by making needed adaptations and modifications,” (Eui18) and “I expect to achieve more of the skills needed to teach to such a diverse group” (Eui24).

The third thing the teachers wanted to know was how to be flexible. Comments indicating this statement were seen in such quotes as “one needs to be more flexible,” (Eui7) “to achieve a flexible working environment mentality,” (Eui8) and “to test my ability to be flexible” (Eui22). Individualization was shown through the statements “individualization is more likely to occur in smaller classes with special education teachers than in regular education classrooms,” (Eui1) “individualization will not occur if every service model in the least restrictive environment spectrum is not considered individually for each student’s situation,” (Eui2) “as long as I am able to individualize, then I am able to implement inclusion,” (Eui5) “my regular education students will not receive a quality education,” (Eui15) and “I feel inclusion needs to be a fair setting for all learners” (Eui24).
The elementary school using inclusion wanted to have more opportunities for professional learning. Statements illustrating the desire for professional learning were noted by the following comments, “how will I diversify the content knowledge as well as dealing with behaviors,” (Ei2) “my ability to grow as a teacher and strengthen my ability to adapt,” (Ei5) and “my expectation is to become better prepared to teach diverse students so I can meet all their needs” (Ei7).

These teachers also wanted the necessary support to be successful with inclusion. The comments that illustrated the need for having the necessary support within the classroom were “working to keep the typical children from falling behind,” (Ei1) “the satisfaction of teaching a diverse group in my classroom,” (Ei2) “the satisfaction of being able to provide all children with a great education,” (Ei4) “adequate support being available to teach both the regular education and special education children” (Ei6).

The final theme that arose in the elementary school having inclusion was that success of the students would occur. Comments confirming this theme were that “higher academic achievement for the kids with disabilities, perhaps getting some on grade level and able to pass the CRCT while keeping the typical children from falling behind will occur,” (Ei1) “the satisfaction of teaching those in the room content knowledge is quite an experience,” (Ei2) and “the satisfaction that all students are receiving a great education was occurring” (Ei4).

The middle school using inclusion had a theme concerned with teaching strategies for inclusion students arise. Comments demonstrating this theme were noted in such statements as “to learn more about the proper way inclusion should be done by increasing my bag of tricks to help students achieve success in the classroom,” (Mi1) “enhance my
abilities to diversify instruction to meet the needs of the various learning styles in my classroom,” (Mi2) “improve upon teaching students with various learning styles and abilities,” (Mi3) “I expect to learn how to better teach and support inclusion students, to increase my learning and enhance the skills I know to better service my students,” (Mi5) “we hope that the teachers will learn skills that will enhance their ability to reach all students depending on their level,” (Mi8) “I expect to learn more ways to successfully work with an inclusion class,” (Mi9) “teachers should expect to benefit from the opportunity of the co-teaching experience to be made aware of the effective strategies and techniques of another colleague that improve student achievement,” (Mi11) and “I expect to learn how to better integrate learning techniques and teaching strategies to varied ability levels in one lesson,” (Mi14) “helping a more diverse group of students to appreciate and learn about my content area by experiencing new ways to reach these students I will be better able to reach and teach all my students,” (Mi15) “how to better reach students with disabilities,” (Mi16) and “professionally I want to find new techniques and strategies for teaching concepts so I’m seen as a teacher and not a helper” (Mi18).

Questionnaire Question Four

What are your academic apprehensions for students in a full inclusion class?

The fourth question dealt with the academic apprehensions teachers encountered when working with students in a full inclusion class. One of the themes that the elementary school not using inclusion perceived as existing was that not enough individualization was occurring. Comments showing this statement were “that individualization during the school day may not occur satisfactorily in the inclusion
setting and may be more appropriate in the smaller special education setting of a resource room,” (Eui1) “some students may get lost in the crowd,” (Eui8) “making sure all of the needs of the children are met,” (Eui14) “I will not be able to help every child to achieve to their greatest potential,” (Eui16) and “provision of individualized lesson plans for numerous students is not feasible” (Eui22). Another theme that arose was that expectations by the regular education teachers for the special needs child were unrealistic. The corroborating comments consisted of the following statements, “very little progress is actually made,” (Eui15) “students will not be able to keep up with their peers,” (Eui17, Eui21) and “students would fall behind” (Eui20). The school using inclusion was more student-oriented and was working toward trying to make sure that students succeeded. The school staff assumed that academic success would result when the students demonstrated improvement every day.

The elementary school using inclusion had success of students as a theme. Comments illustrating this theme were noted in the following statements, “some regular education students might be slowed down because of the teacher re-teaching, but it won’t be too bad for them,” (Ei2) “some days despite modifications, adaptations, manipulatives, 2 teachers, small groups, one-on-one instruction, and the best effort from the student and the teacher, grade level work can be too difficult and frustrating for the child because huge gaps of learning are missing from earlier school years and there isn’t enough time in the day to teach what they’ve missed and the grade level material, too,” (Ei3) “students may be shut off to education,” (Ei4) “students need to bring the desire and motivation to become successful in their academic endeavors” (Ei7). These teachers also suggested that more support staff was needed. Comments referring to this statement consisted of
the following, “support staff is needed to prevent the typical kids from losing ground because of disruptions,” (Ei1) “support is needed so the regular education students are not slowed down too much by the teacher re-teaching,” (Ei2) “the support of the staff coming into the classroom needs to be consistent so they can work more effectively with the students,” (Ei5) and “I am concerned about the lack of academic support for the special education students that may occur” (Ei6).

The middle school using inclusion had a theme concern dealing with collaboration. The comments that affirmed the collaboration theme were “inclusion classes are often so large that the special education students are looked over or missed and therefore they may not ask questions,” (Mi3) “because of the large class size it is hard to work one-on-one with the students that need special help and instructions,” and (Mi4) “being a special education teacher, the regular education teacher may not want to work to make inclusion mesh well” (Mi6). The second theme that existed concerning this question was classroom disruption. The comments indicating this theme were “safety because many emotional behavior students can be too impulsive and resort to very inappropriate behaviors,” (Mi10) “there may be too many distractions in a large group setting for some of the students to perform well academically,” (Mi12) and “some students will never be able to adapt to this type of educational setting” (Mi13).

*Questionnaire Question Five*

What are your social apprehensions for students in a full inclusion class?

The fifth question dealt with the social apprehension teachers surmised to exist for the students in a full inclusion class. The elementary school not using inclusion was concerned in trying to meet all the needs of the special education student as a major
theme. The comments demonstrating this theme were that “meeting the needs of all of the children will be difficult to do,” (Eui12) “students will not learn proper social interactions,” (Eui13) “regardless of how hard a teacher tries children know when someone is different and can cause social isolation,” (Eui16) “the students will feel awkward because of their disability and I won’t be able to help them,” (Eui17, Eui18) “I might not be able to help the inclusion child be accepted when intimidated or embarrassed by their older peers,” (Eui21, Eui24) and “will I be able to help the child fit in socially, especially when teased or made to feel different” (Eui25, Eui26). The second theme of concern dealt with the special education student being accepted by his peers. Comments verifying this theme were “the lower functioning students will be ostracized,” (Eui2) “some students may be unkind to the inclusion students,” (Eui3) “students will not be tolerant of the special needs students,” (Eui13) “students will feel left out by their regular education peers,” (Eui18) “the special needs students will not have many buddies in the class,” (Eui22) “special education students may feel intimidated or embarrassed by the regular education students,” (Eui24) “the special needs children will not fit in socially,” (Eui25) and “the special needs students will not fit in with the rest of the class because they will be teased or made to feel different” (Eui26).

In the elementary school using inclusion one of the themes of concern of the teachers was the disruptions that the special needs students would cause in the classroom. The comments exemplifying this concern were “hazing, bullying, and mocking by the typical children will occur in the classroom,” (Ei1) “disruptions of the emotional behavior students will cause most of the disturbances in the classroom,” (Ei2) “special education students are teased and picked on by their peers because they are not mature,
streetwise, tough, or grown-up acting like their regular education classmates,” (Ei3) and “special education students tend to be the scapegoats for inappropriate behaviors of others” (Ei4).

In the middle school using inclusion the teachers were concerned with the modeling of behavior, both good and bad. The comments showing these statements were “inappropriate behaviors will be allowed due to having been placed in small class sizes which kept those behaviors in check,” (Mi2) “interactions may not always be positive or accepted by all,” (Mi4) “other students may model negative social skills of others,” (Mi8) and “some special needs students may latch onto other students who are behavior problems and imitate these examples” (Mi15).

Questionnaire Question Six

What are your professional apprehensions as a teacher of a full inclusion class?

The sixth question was concerned with the professional apprehensions that teachers had in teaching full inclusion classes. The elementary school not using inclusion had misgivings about conducting an inclusion class due to not having enough support for the regular educators in the class. Comments indicating this theme were “the regular educator may not be able to give the special education students the one-to-one attention that they need without assistance,” (Eui17) “the regular educator will not have sufficient support to provide the individual attention needed for student success,” (Eui19) and “whether I can meet the needs and requirements of all my students is always my concern but in the case of a full inclusion classroom it increases, especially if there is not enough support,” (Eui22) “to have that many students of different levels in one classroom is a disservice, especially without enough support to provide the one-on-one help they often
need,” (Eui24) “they will not have the one-on-one instruction they need,” (Eui25) and “I would not have the support to provide the one-on-one instruction or individual attention the student needs to be successful” (Eui26).

The elementary school using inclusion was not sure they could individualize the instruction enough for the special needs students. The comments illustrating this theme were “at times I’m afraid I cannot give the inclusion students the individual attention that they received in a self-contained class,” (Ei3) “that I am not in control of what my students are being taught hourly because I’m not in one room all day,” (Ei4) “I don’t feel properly trained to do a good job with inclusion because I only had 1 course in special education and it was years ago and I feel I need to be trained in specific teaching strategies for inclusion,” (Ei6) and “my teaching experiences have allowed me to grow more professionally so I feel I can individualize enough to meet any situation in an inclusion class” (Ei7).

Another theme that arose was the uncertainty of the amount of acceptance the special needs students would experience in the regular classroom. The comments establishing this theme were “the children labeled emotional behavior will create such disruptions that little learning and acceptance by teachers and students will occur,” (Ei1) “teachers tend to accept the behavior of the emotional behavior students and do not try to correct them equally thus giving them more power in the room,” (Ei2) “the administration will not show consistency in the way special education students are confronted socially, academically, and behaviorally,” (Ei5) and “students will be accepted, regardless of the label they have as it relates to special education or life, in general” (Ei7).
Finally, the disruption that the severe special needs students may cause in the classroom was a theme that occurred. The comments confirming this theme were displayed by the statements “children labeled emotional behavior disordered will create such a disruption that little learning will occur,” (Ei1) “because a child is labeled emotional behavior disorder teachers tend to accept their behavior more often than try to correct them thus giving them more of the power to control the classroom for the remainder of the year,” (Ei2) and “consistency from the administration will not exist as it pertains to dealing with classroom disruptions by special needs students” (Ei5). The staff in this building displayed a negative attitude in their responses to the questionnaire, even to the point of the teachers stating “I do not have any inclusion students in my classroom and don’t expect to have any,” (Eui3) “I am not a viable participant favoring inclusion because I have almost no experience with inclusion and don’t expect to have any,” (Eui4) “I really don’t support inclusion,” (Eui10) “Inclusion is a joke that is a burden on the regular education teacher and if I had wanted to be a special education teacher then I would have majored in special education,” (Eui11) “the bottom line is that I am not trained for inclusion and that I find too many adults in the room distracting and with inclusion my regular education students will not receive a quality education, but if I have to do then the college level classes to prepare me for it should be paid by the state as I become a political underpaid magician experiencing a higher level of frustration trying to educate children,” (Eui15) “I am not in favor with the inclusion program,” (Eui19) “If I had wanted to teach special education, then I would have majored in special education,” (Eui20) and “we don’t do inclusion here” (Eui25).
The middle school that used inclusion had three themes occur for this question. The first theme was the desire to be sure that a sufficient pace of learning existed. The comments verifying this theme were “I don’t always feel like these students get all the help they need in order to understand totally what is being taught,” (Mi3) “the pace will be slower than usual because if you go too fast you will lose the slow learners,” (Mi4) “it’s difficult to develop a teaching system that’s consistent with academic structure when you are in the inclusion room,” (Mi13) and “that both groups could suffer and receive less instruction than they could be given” (Mi14).

The second theme was that modifications would occur. The comments that substantiated this theme were “I don’t always feel like these students get all the help they need in order to understand totally what is being taught,” (Mi3) “that I may not be able to meet all students needs appropriately done in a classroom setting,” (Mi9) “not having adequate training and knowledge base to meet the academic needs of all students,” (Mi11) “there are so many modifications that take away from a consistent routine,” (Mi13) “that both groups could suffer and receive less instruction than they could be given,” (Mi14) and “how do I meet the needs of the special education students who are identified in one area but are not technically inclusion students in the area I’m teaching” (Mi15).

The third theme was that support services needed to exist. The comments validating this theme were “finding help with the students,” (Mi2) “the work load and who has responsibility for what,” (Mi6) “a lack of support in the classroom,” (Mi8) “I may not be able to meet all students needs appropriately alone in a classroom setting,” (Mi9) “what are the rules for conducting an inclusion class as to my legal
responsibilities,” (Mi15) “classes will be too heavily loaded with special needs students,” (Mi17) “is full inclusion the best practice for all students as a beneficial practice” (Mi18).

The area of the most concern was collaboration. Teachers expressed that collaboration should be “to learn more about the way inclusion should be done,” (Mi1) “to work in an inclusion setting to learn the different successful models for inclusion,” (Mi3) “how to accommodate all students without using some form of separation,” (Mi4) “planning should precede implementation of inclusion,” (Mi8) “continued hands-on examples of teachers who are successfully teaching in the inclusion classroom to the same kinds of students I deal with on a day-to-day basis,” (Mi9) and “teachers should expect to benefit from the opportunity of the co-teaching experience as they are made aware of effective strategies and techniques of another colleague that improve student achievement and work with lower achieving students as well as higher ability level students” (Mi11).

*Questionnaire Question Seven*

How do you think state mandated tests will be affected through full inclusion?

The seventh question dealt with how teachers thought the state mandated tests would be affected by full inclusion. The elementary school that did not use inclusion surmised that test results would go down if inclusion was used in the schools. Comments affirming this downward trend were “the more severe special needs students will do worse,” (Eui2) “not every student will accomplish the requirements,” (Eui5, Eui6) “the teacher that has the inclusion group test scores will be low and not considered a good teacher by the administration,” (Eui11) “scores will go down,” (Eui13, Eui14, Eui15)
“special education students already do not do well on the tests.” (Eui17, Eui18, Eui25) and “I don’t think it matters because the test scores are continuously dropping” (Eui26).

The elementary school that did use inclusion predicted that the test results would go up after inclusion was used. The comments demonstrating this belief were that “the test scores will rise for the children with special needs, but it may depend upon the type of disability,” (Ei1) “I hope test scores for inclusion students would improve,” (Ei3) “an increase in scores for special education students,” (Ei4) and “the students’ attitudes going into testing might be better which could affect the scores positively” (Ei5).

The middle school using inclusion anticipated that the test scores would go down after inclusion was used. The comments confirming the drop in scores were “without the use of adaptations the test scores will fall, scores will fall some anyway,” (Mi1) “in my experience the inclusion student will have trouble passing the tests,” (Mi2) “I believe they will drop because some of these students aren’t used to being in large classes, don’t ask questions, and just sit quietly,” (Mi3) “some of the inclusion students will not test well,” (Mi10) “we may see a drop in scores due to adjusting to a different setting for the students,” (Mi16) and “huge deficits in the learning of special education students will cause the scores not to increase” (Mi18).

*Questionnaire Question Eight*

What do you expect to learn professionally about inclusion classrooms by being a teacher in an inclusion classroom?

The eighth question pertained to what the teacher would expect to learn professionally about inclusion classrooms by being a teacher in an inclusion classroom. Three themes occurred for this question in the elementary school not practicing inclusion.
The first theme dealt with professional development on inclusion. The comments on professional development was that the “how to do a better job of multi-tasking,” (Eui1) “how to reach each student without hindering the ones who are capable of learning at a faster pace,” (Eui8) “how to master the content needed to assist underachievers,” (Eui9) “I expect to learn how to handle greater diversity than I already have in my classroom,” (Eui12) “more learning and teaching styles,” (Eui13) “which techniques may or may not work for specific students,” (Eui14) “I will learn how to manage and control the class,” (Eui16) “modifications that will meet the needs of the special education students and special education policies and procedures,” (Eui17) “learning styles and modalities; special education laws, where appropriate; modifications and adaptations for success; time management to address needs of special education students,” (Eui18) “I think I would be able to differentiate instruction more so, and learn not to be so stuck in my ways,” (Eui21) “professional development opportunities should be provided to the support teachers because the regular educators are not trained to be teachers of special needs students,” (Eui22) “a thorough understanding of the process and its advantages,” (Eui23) “I expect to learn how to make modifications,” (Eui25, Eui26) and “regular education teachers need more training in special needs children” (Eui27).

The second theme was how to make modifications in the classroom. The comments on this theme were “I make sure all regular education teachers are implementing modifications and adaptations,” (Eui1) “I expect to learn modifications that will meet the needs of the special education students,” (Eui17, Eui25) and “I expect to learn modifications and adaptations for the success of the special needs students” (Eui18, Eui26).
The third theme dealt with classroom management. The comments pertaining to this theme were that teachers would “learn how to manage and control the class because I will need to do so in order to survive” (Eui16) and “expect to learn time management to address the needs of the special education students” (Eui18).

The themes in the elementary school practicing inclusion consisted of three topics for this question. The first theme was the expectation of support services being provided. The comments demonstrating this theme were “with proper support and services inclusion can work for most children then it seems like a grand experiment,” (Ei1) “I am learning more about core knowledge and grade level curriculum so I can be a better support person to the regular educator,” (Ei4) and “on-the-job-training because I feel like an inclusion teacher thrown into a system that hasn’t properly set up training” (Ei6).

The second theme was that increasing one’s ability in instruction was necessary. The comments for this theme were “I need to learn techniques for teaching so diverse a group of students,” (Ei2) “I am learning more about core knowledge and grade level curriculum as a special educator doing inclusion,” (Ei4) “how to be a better teacher by broadening my abilities,” (Ei5) “to continue to improve upon my ability to fully recognize my students’ needs and to do my very best to help them become successful learners” (Ei7).

The third theme was the need to increase one’s teaching strategies. The comments indicating this theme were “more techniques for teaching are needed,” (Ei2) “to broaden my abilities because I have learned more about core knowledge and grade level curriculum and its application to all students,” (Ei4) “how to be a better teacher
because I have learned more teaching strategies,” (Ei5) and “on-the-job-training since the system has not provided proper training” (Ei6).

The teachers in the middle school practicing inclusion had two themes arise from this question. The first theme was to learn collaboration. The comments were that “trial and error from which I hope to learn what works and what does not as well as polish my skills and hopefully include some new ones,” (Mi1) “I would learn tools that can be used effectively in a heterogeneous class setting,” (Mi3) “how to accommodate all students without using some form of separation,” (Mi4) “the old saying two heads are better than one could accurately describe my attitude because teamwork should enable the teachers to better meet the needs of the students by learning from each other and appreciating each other’s expertise,” (Mi7) “full inclusion teacher may gain a greater awareness that strategies that have proven to be successful with lower achieving students are just as successful with students with higher ability levels,” (Mi11) and “I hope to learn from the special education teacher some strategies, skills, and ideas that will help me teach all my students and improve my teaching skills as well” (Mi15).

The second theme was that flexibility was necessary. The comments illustrating that theme were “an opportunity to work with a larger variety of students at different levels,” (Mi2) “how to accommodate all students,” (Mi4) “how to teach and reach all students,” (Mi5, Mi16) “new management procedures,” (Mi6) “a variety of strategies to help students be successful,” (Mi8) “I expect to learn more ways to teach a diverse group of students,” (Mi9) “I expect to learn about being able to provide accommodations to every student regardless of their exceptionalities,” (Mi13) “what additional strategies or content could be given to special education students to improve test scores and their
ability to function in general education classes,” (Mi14) “flexibility,” (Mi17) and “strategies for diverse learners at the middle school level” (Mi18). “I would not be a viable participant in responding to questions about inclusion because I have no experience with inclusion and do not want to have any,” (Eui4) “I haven’t had classroom support when I have had inclusion experiences,” (Eui8) “I really don’t support full inclusion,” (Eui10, Eui19) “if I had wanted to teach special education, then I would have majored in special education,” (Eui11) “I have received no classroom support since the first couple of weeks of school for the special needs student in my classroom,” (Eui12) “before I do inclusion, then I expect the inclusion teacher and myself to have time to plan subject matter, teaching assignments, meeting of Georgia Performance Standards, review IEPs, and set expectations,” (Eui13) “I have had no classroom support for one inclusion child in my classroom and inclusion is just some political thought in which teachers are expected to be underpaid magicians, besides, from my experience too many adults in a room is distracting to other students,” (Eui15) “the administration will show support for inclusion, but some special education teachers are supportive and some are not,” (Eui16) “hopefully I won’t be put in the position of having an inclusion class because if I had wanted to teach special education I would have majored in special education and those teachers who have had inclusion classes have felt as if they have been thrown to the lions without a whip and chair,” (Eui20) “I did not have classroom support, at first, but that improved as the year went on,” (Eui21) “I have never been a full inclusion teacher and do not support answering questions on the topic, but many changes will have to be made,” (Eui24) and “classroom support exists for some grade levels and at other schools, but I am not an inclusion teacher because we don’t do that here” (Eui25).
Individualization was shown through the statements “individualization is more likely to occur in smaller classes with special education teachers than in regular education classrooms,” (Eui1) “individualization will not occur if every service model in the least restrictive environment spectrum is not considered individually for each student’s situation,” (Eui2) “as long as I am able to individualize, then I am able to implement inclusion,” (Eui5) “my regular education students will not receive a quality education,” (Eui15) and “I feel inclusion needs to be a fair setting for all learners” (Eui24).

Questionnaire Question Nine
What do you think you need to learn professionally to improve yourself as a teacher in an inclusion classroom?

The ninth question was concerned with what the teacher needed professionally to improve as a teacher of an inclusion classroom. The teachers in the elementary school not practicing inclusion had two themes arise from this question. The first theme was that professional learning was needed. Comments demonstrating this theme were “how to make personal adaptations as a classroom teacher,” (Eui1) “to be more qualified in the areas of special needs children,” (Eui5, Eui6) “to be trained in how to write an IEP (individualized educational plan),” (Eui7) “of course, a person who has not worked with special needs children would need proper training,” (Eui10) “more differentiation techniques to meet the academic needs of a diverse class,” (Eui12) “more specific data on teaching styles and learning styles,” (Eui13) “how to teach a variety of special needs students,” (Eui14) “college level classes paid for by the state on any disorder that might be placed in my room,” (Eui15) “I need review on how to deal with various disabilities,” (Eui16) “the policies and procedures as they apply to each student,” (Eui17) “I need more
special education type training,” (Eui21) “how to stretch myself to meet the needs of 20
individual students without support,” (Eui22) “more about the exceptionality; how to
handle situations that may arise; how to make adaptations,” (Eui23) “I would need to
learn more about the types of special education students I would be getting,” (Eui24)
“you should learn the characteristics of a special needs child,” (Eui25, Eui26) and “I
would need special education courses and training” (Eui27).

The second theme was that knowledge of teaching strategies needed to be
provided. The comments showing this theme were “I need to know what is expected of
me in the regular education classroom,” (Eui2) “how to reach each student without
hindering the ones who are capable of learning at a faster pace,” (Eui8) “more
differentiation techniques to meet the academic needs of a diverse class while preparing
for the CRCT,” (Eui12) “more specific data needs to be provided on teaching styles and
learning styles,” (Eui13) “how to teach a variety of special needs students,” (Eui14) and
“how to use a variety of learning styles and modalities” (Eui18).

The teachers in the elementary school practicing inclusion had the theme of
needing more teaching strategies. Comments corroborating this theme were “teaching
techniques that work for all kinds of learners and ways to convey to students through the
use of multi-sensory techniques and still meet curriculum guidelines are needed,” (Ei1)
“more teaching strategies and techniques to use specifically with autistic children,” (Ei2)
“my teaching strategies will be improved by classroom experience in inclusion,” (Ei3)
“prior to each new school year I need co-teaching training with the individual regular
educators I will be working with,” (Ei4) “any and all workshops would be appreciated,
especially on differentiated instruction and special programs like Kurzweil,” (Ei5) and
“specific teaching strategies for specific special education areas,” (Ei6) and “if research indicates new and/or improved methods to help students become more successful academically and socially, then I’m more than willing to try those methods” (Ei7).

The teachers in the middle school practicing inclusion had two themes from this question. The first theme was a desire to see more modeling of inclusion. The comments for modeling were that the teacher would like an opportunity “to practice a proper model of inclusion in order to achieve more confidence,” (Mi1) and “I am willing to teach in an inclusion setting, I would like to learn the different successful models of inclusion,” (Mi3) “how to write lesson plans that will include special needs students and not be overwhelming,” (Mi5) “it would be great to visit other schools similar to ours to see how they successfully implement full inclusion in addition to reading research, articles, and books related to inclusion,” (Mi7) “continued hands-on examples of teachers who are successfully teaching in the inclusion classroom to the same kinds of students I deal with on a day-to-day basis,” (Mi9) “inclusion teachers should carefully study strategies presented about inclusion workshops, select 2 that are most appropriate for the dynamics of their student grouping and integrate them into their instructional plans,” (Mi11) “I need to know how to read, locate, and understand the IEP paperwork and the IDEA guidelines,” (Mi15) “how to teach and plan with another teacher how to present the information effectively,” (Mi16) and “how to get the general education teacher to make the classroom inclusive for all learners” (Mi18).

The second theme was a desire to see more teaching strategies. Comments exhibiting this theme were “how to look for certain signs that will allow me to understand if the student is receiving what is needed to be successful,” (Mi5) “continued hands-on
examples of teachers who are successfully teaching in the inclusion classroom to the same kinds of students I deal with on a day-to-day basis,” (Mi9) and “more specific descriptors, interventions, and effective teaching strategies that work specific to a given disability” (Mi17).

*Questionnaire Question Ten*

Do you think you had ample support in implementing inclusion in your classroom? Why or why not?

The tenth question pertained to whether or not teachers felt there was enough support for the implementation of inclusion in the classroom being provided and then requested the teacher to give a reason why or why not. The elementary school not practicing inclusion had a lack of professional learning as the theme for this question. Comments were that “regular education teachers did not have the proper staff development training prior to implementing full inclusion,” (Eui1) “I don’t believe just do it is ample support,” (Eui2) “I have never had a full inclusion class,” (Eui4) “it takes months to get anything implemented which means months without service for the child and more burden on the teacher and support being provided to the special needs child by people who are not teachers,” (Eui11) “I feel we need more training,” (Eui14) “many teachers with special needs children in their room feel that they are thrown to the lions without a whip and chair,” (Eui20) “I was given training on exceptionalities, but not on inclusion,” (Eui21) and “no staff development or special training has been provided” (Eui22).

The elementary school practicing inclusion had two themes arise from this question. The first theme dealt with support to the educators incorporating inclusion in
their classrooms. Comments were that “I am the support and I am enough,” (Ei1) “I have had great support from the special educator when I was an inclusion teacher, but I did not have too much support from the administration,” (Ei2) “I feel that the principal has supported inclusion,” (Ei3) “I feel that I have had support as an inclusion teacher, but I have been spread thin because I have had to serve six different classrooms making me frustrated because I never seem to be in any one place long enough in a day,” (Ei4) “there seemed to be support provided before the school year, but then many inconsistent changes occurred throughout the year,” (Ei5) “no at the beginning of the year I wasn’t served the appropriate hours for my children’s IEPs, I had no training, and I was extremely frustrated because I was worried that the regular education children were not learning everything that was expected of them due to the behaviors that were occurring in the classroom and now I am more comfortable since things have mellowed, but I still feel training is needed before the next school year begins,” (Ei6) and “I feel that I’ve had ample support in implementing inclusion in my classroom because I’ve had additional training and I’ve been able to work with some wonderful support teachers within the classroom” (Ei7).

The second theme dealt with the need for more professional learning. Comments for this theme were “yes, I’ve been allowed to attend many workshops,” (Ei3) “before the school year enough professional learning was provided, but many inconsistent changes happened throughout the school year,” (Ei5) “at the beginning of the year there was not enough training and I feel that more training needs to be provided before the beginning of the next school year,” (Ei6) and “I’ve had additional training so I can reach my ultimate goal of recognizing each student as a unique individual and to do all I can to help each
The middle school had three themes arise from this question. The first theme was the need for more collaboration. The comments for this theme were “teachers need to learn to work together,” (Mi2) “training and planning should have preceded its implementation and the hiring of the support staff,” (Mi8) “frequently I only receive modifications on the day I am doing report cards so that I have taught the students for 9 weeks without knowledge of the IEPs,” (Mi10) “there possibly needs to be more communication between the regular education and special education teacher,” (Mi12) “I cannot meet with my inclusion teacher to plan, as we are supposed to do, because we have different planning times and after school has proven difficult to arrange so the
school system needs to do a better job finding the right teachers for the job, both regular and special educators, and give them the time and resources to be trained for observing teachers, giving specific examples of what has worked, etc. and for working together to determine what is best for the students,” (Mi15) and “there was no pre-planning so the teachers could sit down and decide how these students could be best served or how the regular educator and special educator can work together” (Mi16).

The second theme for this question was that more planning time together needed to occur. Comments substantiating this theme were “what I view around my school is a lack of support through the special education teachers,” (Mi2) “teachers need to use pre-planning to know how the classes were to be structured,” (Mi3) “As an itinerant special educator I plan with my regular educators, as well as my special educators, serving the students identified by the disability I serve,” (Mi7) “training and planning should have preceded its implementation,” (Mi8) “all classrooms with more than 15 students should have another professional teacher alongside them to successfully implement inclusion in the classroom,” (M9) “there needs to be more communication between the regular education teacher and the special education teacher,” (Mi12) “I cannot meet with my inclusion teacher to plan, as we are supposed to do, because we have different planning times and after school has proven difficult to arrange so the school system needs to do a better job finding the right teachers for the job, both regular and special educators, and give them the time and resources to be trained for observing teachers, giving specific examples of what has worked, etc. and for working together to determine what is best for the students,” (Mi15) and “there was no pre-planning done to decide how these students
could be best served or how the inclusion teacher was to work with the regular education teacher” (Mi16).

The third theme was the need for more professional learning. Comments confirming this theme were “professional training is provided and can be attended when your work is done,” (Mi1) “we should have professional training for such programs so we should not have to suffer loss because we are not equipped to meet those special needs,” (Mi5) “the inclusion training I have had was good,” (Mi7) “no, training and planning should have preceded its implementation,” (Mi8) “the school system needs to do a better job finding the right teachers for the job, both regular and special educators, and give them the time and resources to be trained for observing teachers, giving specific examples of what has worked, etc. and for working together to determine what is best for the students,” (Mi15) “general education teachers and special education teachers should attend training together before implementing an inclusion class” (Mi18).

After reviewing the ten questions, it became apparent to the researcher that the elementary school not using inclusion had several areas of concern arise from the questionnaire. The minor areas of concern consisted of success, modeling, communication, respect, flexibility, individualization, unrealistic goals, classroom support, classroom management, teaching styles, and learning styles.

A lack of support for the teachers using inclusion was expressed by statements such as “I do not have any inclusion students in my classroom and do not wish to respond to any questions about such a teaching situation,” (Eui3) “I would not be a viable participant in responding to questions about inclusion because I have no experience with inclusion and do not want to have any,” (Eui4) “I haven’t had classroom support when I
have had inclusion experiences,” (Eui8) “I really don’t support full inclusion,” (Eui10, Eui19) “if I had wanted to teach special education, then I would have majored in special education,” (Eui11) “I have received no classroom support since the first couple of weeks of school for the special needs student in my classroom,” (Eui12) “before I do inclusion, then I expect the inclusion teacher and myself to have time to plan subject matter, teaching assignments, meeting of Georgia Performance Standards, review IEPs, and set expectations,” (Eui13) “I have had no classroom support for one inclusion child in my classroom and inclusion is just some political thought in which teachers are expected to be underpaid magicians, besides, from my experience too many adults in a room is distracting to other students,” (Eui15) “the administration will show support for inclusion, but some special education teachers are supportive and some are not,” (Eui16) “hopefully I won’t be put in the position of having an inclusion class because if I had wanted to teach special education I would have majored in special education and those teachers who have had inclusion classes have felt as if they have been thrown to the lions without a whip and chair,” (Eui20) “I did not have classroom support, at first, but that improved as the year went on,” (Eui21) “I have never been a full inclusion teacher and do not support answering questions on the topic, but many changes will have to be made,” (Eui24) and “classroom support exists for some grade levels and at other schools, but I am not an inclusion teacher because we don’t do that here” (Eui25).

Individualization was shown through the statements “individualization is more likely to occur in smaller classes with special education teachers than in regular education classrooms,” (Eui1) “individualization will not occur if every service model in the least restrictive environment spectrum is not considered individually for each student’s
situation,” (Eui2) “as long as I am able to individualize, then I am able to implement inclusion,” (Eui5) “my regular education students will not receive a quality education,” (Eui15) and “I feel inclusion needs to be a fair setting for all learners” (Eui24).

The areas of major concern in the elementary school not using inclusion were modifications, curriculum, acceptance, collaboration, meeting the needs of the students, and professional development. Statements supporting the failure to meet the needs of the students were provided by teachers in such ways as “I have concerns about the number of special education students placed in one regular education classroom at the same time,” (Eui1) “some students may miss the more direct teaching needed to learn critical skills, as well as the skills necessary in some of the least restrictive environments existing in the service model spectrum,” (Eui2) “I may not have the training to meet each child’s needs,” (Eui5) “that I will not be able to push the students to the next level and they will not exceed because I will spend my time helping those students with stronger needs,” (Eui6) “Some students may get lost in the crowd and I will hinder the ones capable of learning at a faster pace,” (Eui8) “that students will not learn and achieve what they need,” (Eui10) “the outbursts by students and the expectations of the regular educator to deal with them are unrealistic, noticeable by the regular education students to the point that the regular education students realize that the special needs students do not have to follow the same rules as the regular education students, and the time the regular educator has to use to deal with the outbursts takes away from the whole class,” (Eui11) “I will not be able to meet the needs of the children,” (Eui12, Eui14, Eui19) “I will not be able to help every child achieve to their greatest potential,” (Eui16, Eui18, Eui23) “I worry whether the included child will be able to keep up, their feelings about being in a regular classroom if
they will fit in with their peers, and if they will fall through the cracks,” (Eui20) “the special needs child will feel inferior, not be able to keep up, and will not be accepted by peers,” (Eui21, Eui24) “the special needs students will distract from the classroom so much that the needs of the regular education student will not be met,” (Eui22) “the special needs child will feel left out, not be able to keep up, and will not fit in socially,” (Eui25) and “I would worry about the students being singled out or having a low self-esteem” (Eui26).

When reviewing the results of the ten questions, it became discernable that the elementary school using inclusion had several themes arise from the questionnaire as areas of concern. Minor areas of concern dealt with improvement, modeling, academic growth, curriculum, and workshops. Academic growth was affirmed through the statements “higher academic achievement for the kids with disabilities will occur, perhaps getting some on grade level and able to pass the CRCT,” (Ei1) “every student will improve by at least 1 grade level from where they start, even if that is below grade level,” (Ei2) “they will achieve beyond what was predicted they’d be able to achieve when they were first placed in special education, even to the point that hopefully some will test out of special education,” (Ei3) “that each child will make gains and grow academically,” (Ei5) “I expect for the inclusion student to grow socially, behaviorally, and academically,” (Ei6) and “that all students will fully achieve at their highest potential by performing at or above grade level by the end of the school year” (Ei7). Improvement was verified by the statements “the students with special needs would be as close to their chronological peers as possible depending on the disability,” (Ei1) “every student will improve,” (Ei2) “I would hope that test scores on inclusion students would improve,”
(Ei3) “that each child will make gains and grow academically,” (Ei5) “I expect for the inclusion student to grow socially, behaviorally, and academically, while the regular education students learn tolerance and patience,” (Ei6) and “I expect all students to achieve at their highest potential by performing at or above grade level by the end of the school year, as well as be successful academically and socially” (Ei7).

The areas of major concern for this school were success, acceptance, disruptions, and teaching techniques. Teachers expressed the desire for acceptance through statements like “acceptance, and if not acceptance, at least tolerance from their peers,” (Ei1) “for the regular education students to learn to accept all other students,” (Ei2) “that they will be more accepted by their peers and not even known as special education students any longer,” (Ei3) “a feeling of normalcy and belonging with a sense of special education being gone,” (Ei5) and “I expect each of my students to feel like an important and contributing member of the classroom family” (Ei7).

Continued review of the ten questions resulted in the evidence that the middle school which used inclusion had minor concerns arise from the questionnaire. These concerns were student improvement, student learning, respect, distractions, pace, support, flexibility, use of pre-planning, and professional training. Statements demonstrating the teachers’ awareness of the students’ learning abilities were expressed as “I expect to meet the students needs and help them to work up to their fullest potential, but I’m not sure these students get all the help they need in order to understand totally what is being taught,” (Mi3) “the pace will be slower than usual so you can have high achievers regardless of strengths or weaknesses,” (Mi4) “I expect to reach all students, to offer the same opportunities, to offer them real life situations that will require them to be
successful, to have many of the social skills to be utilized to ensure a healthy life full of friendship and great experiences as any child would want,” (Mi5) “there are students that will misbehave and fall behind, but that is where you pick up the slack and provide peer tutoring, all the information so they can do well, move at a pace that does not hold them back, and to create group levels that can work together a different paces and still get the work done,” (Mi6) “to benefit from non-special education students so the special education students can perform at a higher level,” (Mi8) “to find a way to reach most of the students and help them learn and progress by realizing they are people with differences and that’s okay and preventing them from falling through the crack and being left behind,” (Mi9) “fairness, friendliness, acceptance in a good, safe learning environment for all students,” (Mi10) “expect students to benefit from the academic strengths of their peers, to demonstrate sensitivity, respect, and understanding about everyone who does not learn the same way or at the same pace while still feeling adequate about themselves,” (Mi11) “academically an increase in achievement would be expected with an increase in social skills while receiving instruction at their ability level, (Mi12) “to be independent in a classroom, to become positively interactive socially, and to allow accommodations to exist to prepare the student to deal with the world,” (Mi13) “I expect the students to have a broader exposure to the curriculum, to benefit from seeing general education students engaging in appropriate interactions, and to be more receptive to content,” (Mi14) “to participate in regular education with activities, information, discussions, and questions by using opportunities to interact with friends ad peers, and making a divers group more appreciative of a content area,” (Mi15) “I expect these students to do as well as the regular education students,” (Mi16) “special education
students have higher expectations, making it a mirror of society,” (Mi17) and “I expect teaching to take place with skills being mastered at 70%-75% by following all classroom procedures, with the gaps by students” (Mi18).

Areas of major concern were modifications, teaching strategies, and modeling. Substantiation for the concern for teaching strategies was seen in the statements “enhance my abilities to diversify instruction to meet the needs of the various learning styles in my classroom,” (Mi2) “by accommodating all students without using some form of separation,” (Mi4) “how to look for certain signs that will allow me to understand if the student is receiving what is needed to be successful and how to write lessons that will include them and not be overwhelming,” (Mi5) “to learn new management procedures,” (Mi6) “the teachers will learn skills that will enhance their ability to reach all students depending on their level and for the students to be successful,” (Mi8) “to find a way to reach most of the students and help them learn and progress,” (Mi 9) “expect to benefit from the opportunity of the co-teaching experience as they are made aware of effective strategies and techniques of another colleague that improve student achievement and that are successful with lower achieving students and higher ability level students,” (Mi11) and “expect students to better understand applications of strategies and skills targeted in IEP and how they relate to real life, as well as integrate the learning techniques and teaching strategies to varied ability levels in one lesson” (Mi14). Modeling was expressed in a positive way through the statements “I think it is good socially for students to be around their peers in the general education environment particularly those who may need improvement in the area of social skills,” (Mi7) “other students may model negative social skills of students,” (Mi8) “I expect students to benefit from seeing general
education students engaging in appropriate interactions,” (Mi14) and “students tend to latch onto other students who are behavior problems and imitate their examples” (Mi15).

Discussion

In reviewing the responses to the questions, the elementary school that did not have an inclusion program demonstrated negative responses with negative overtones being reflected. The elementary school and middle school that did implement inclusion demonstrated positive responses with positive reflections for improvement being reflected. The elementary school not implementing inclusion did not portray an atmosphere to learn and participate in inclusion in the future. The elementary school and middle school that did implement inclusion reflected a desire to learn about inclusion, improve their teaching methods and techniques to refine their inclusion program, and to collaborate to reach a common goal of maintaining inclusion as an educational option in their building. This difference became an instrumental aspect of the research because it assisted in reflecting the positive and negative portions to analyze when implementing an inclusion program.

Summary

The results of the open-ended questionnaire were reported for all three schools for each individual question. The results consisted of quoted comments for the question by the participants and anecdotal information provided by the researcher in the role of participant/observer when performing the duties of district staffing specialist. The comments and anecdotal information was reviewed through discussion to determine any patterns that may have occurred in the results.
Results for the responses to the first questionnaire question which dealt with the academic success of students were that students in an inclusion class would achieve or improve academically by learning the required curriculum through collaboration and modification. These results were consistent in all three schools.

Responses for the second questionnaire question which dealt with the social achievements of students were that all students would demonstrate communication, modeling, respect, and acceptance of each other. However, the elementary school not implementing inclusion demonstrated less positive responses to this question than the two schools implementing inclusion.

Questionnaire question three dealt with professional achievements of teachers with responses being that teachers wanted to know how to collaborate, how to individualize instruction, and how to be more flexible. They also wanted to state that they wanted more opportunities to learn about inclusion and more support to conduct inclusion in the classroom. The elementary school that was not implementing inclusion was not as positive as the other two schools that were implementing inclusion, again.

Results from questionnaire question four which dealt with student academic apprehensions demonstrated that not enough individualization would occur and not enough teacher collaboration would occur to prepare for classroom instruction. All three schools were consistent in their responses to this question.

Responses for questionnaire question five which dealt with student social apprehensions were that not all the needs of the special needs students would be met, too many classroom disruptions would occur, and the modeling of good and bad behavior would occur. All three schools were consistent in their responses to this question, too.
Questionnaire question six which dealt with teachers’ professional apprehensions with inclusion were that a lack of support would exist from the administration and through colleague collaboration, not enough individualization would occur with a slower pace of instruction resulting, failure of student acceptance would occur, and severe classroom disruptions would occur. The elementary school not implementing inclusion was more concerned with the students’ productivity and socialization as opposed to the teachers’ instruction and meeting the educational goals of the school.

Results for questionnaire question seven dealt with state mandated tests which had the elementary school implementing inclusion anticipating test results improving, while the elementary school not implementing inclusion and the middle school anticipating test results decreasing. The elementary school not implementing inclusion demonstrated very negative responses to this question.

Responses to questionnaire question eight which dealt with teachers’ expectations for learning from the experience of working in an inclusion class were the development of the ability to multi-task, to improve teaching skills, to improve classroom management skills, and to utilize support services correctly. Collaboration, individualization, and flexibility were the skills teachers expected to learn from the experience. Again, the elementary school not implementing inclusion provided negative responses to this question.

Questionnaire question nine dealt with teachers’ anticipated professional improvements needed to be an inclusion teacher. Results demonstrated were that professional instruction was needed for teaching strategies and models of inclusion.
However, the elementary school not implementing inclusion was negative about needing professional improvement for this program.

Results for questionnaire question ten which dealt with having ample support in the classroom with inclusion were mixed. The two schools with inclusion programs stated that administrative support was present, but more support was needed in terms of professional instruction, collaboration, time, and paraprofessional staff. However, these two schools provided their comments in a positive tone. The elementary school not implementing inclusion stated mixed results for administrative support, professional support, and paraprofessional support. However, this school provided its responses in a negative tone.
CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this research was to look at an assessment involving an analysis of the implementation of an inclusion program. Results of such a research would assist an administrator in implementing a successful inclusion program.

To conduct this analysis, the researcher provided the schools with an open-ended questionnaire to gather qualitative data, which would be analyzed for major themes. The researcher then used the role as district staffing specialist to gather additional qualitative data, which was compared with the qualitative data of the questionnaire through code sheets, to create a multi-dimensional analysis for the implementation of an inclusion program in a school. After this comparison was completed the researcher would determine any similarities and/or differences that occurred among the faculty, staff, and/or administrators or in the school culture or environment when the inclusion program was implemented. The researcher determined if one, more than one, or any combination of the components could be blended to create a successful inclusion program within a school.

Analysis of Research Findings

As a result of the open-ended questionnaire conducted by the researcher, these three diverse schools in the same district illustrated three major concerns when dealing with inclusion. These three concerns were the need for support staff for the regular educator, collaboration between the regular educator and special educator, and support from the administration. The support staff was needed to provide the regular educator
with the second person in the classroom to control the students, to provide the modifications for the student, and to provide the academic support the student needed to be successful in the class.

The collaboration between the regular educator and special educator was necessary for the program so the staff members would know who is doing what, when, where, and how. It also explained who was responsible for what roles within the classroom during the lesson, what expectations existed during the lesson for the staff, and what expectations prevailed for the students.

The administration’s support was necessary for the inclusion program to be initiated and operated successfully. Without administrative support for the assurance of the success of an inclusion program, the perception of the real world for the special education child is likely not to occur. These three concerns were important concerns to this district for the success of an inclusion program in any of its buildings.

Discussion of Research Findings

These three concerns that were indicators appearing most often from the researcher’s results were those of having support staff for teachers, having time to collaborate, and having administration support. D’Alonzo and Giordana (1997) supported the researcher’s findings by relating that support from the appropriate personnel was needed to assist in the implementation of an inclusion program since the regular educator was already facing a difficult new experience. The need for this support was found to be an item of concern to the staffs in the buildings implementing inclusion as demonstrated in their responses to question ten of the questionnaire which specifically asked if the teacher thought ample support had been provided and why or why not. The
staff from these two buildings had positive responses in that support was present for the majority of the time. When support was not present, it gradually was added until it was sufficient enough for the regular educator to become comfortable and at ease in the classroom.

The second concern was collaboration between the regular educator and special educator. According to the researcher’s findings, collaboration needed to occur so each educator knew and understood his/her individual role within the classroom. Thousand and Villa (1999) had shown that the prediction of positive attitudes toward inclusion occurred when the educators involved in inclusion had the opportunity to collaborate, learned about collaboration, and developed the skills to be effective and efficient collaborative team members. This need for collaboration was also demonstrated when staff members requested the district staffing specialist to provide materials, information, and support for the implementation of the program to them, such as an individual teacher requesting an observation being conducted to determine the proper use of inclusion, a principal requesting instruction for the staff about inclusion modifications allowed in a classroom, and an individual teacher requesting an observation being conducted to determine if the proper teaching techniques are being utilized with special needs students in the regular education classroom setting. These requests continued to occur throughout the year as the knowledge base and experience level of the teachers increased.

The researcher explored the area of collaboration through four questions dealing with professional achievements expected through the inclusion program, professional apprehensions the teacher would have in an inclusion program, professional learning the
teacher would gain through participation in an inclusion program, and professional improvements the teacher would gain through participation in an inclusion program.

The apprehensions of staff members participating in the implementation of inclusion in the two buildings was noted by the district staffing specialist due to the questions asked about the management of the program. These questions consisted of concerns as to what was the special educator’s role in the regular education classroom and which teacher was responsible for grades for the special education student. Danne, Beirne-Smith, and Latham (2000) found that the basis for these questions is the teachers’ unfamiliarity with special education and inclusive practices. Rose (2001) stated that by providing teachers with time to teach, time to plan, and time to meet so that if provision of these times were increased and put into place, as well as the experience in doing inclusion occurred, then the questions decreased and the success of inclusion increased.

Spodek and Walberg (1975) found that when collaboration exists as it does in the two buildings used for the implementation of inclusion, then a few favorable organizational patterns leading to more flexibility and teaching staffs that are more willing to move away from traditional goals and methods to ones that implement open communication and a sense of cohesiveness transpires.

The third concern was the support of the administration for the implementation of an inclusion program. Question ten of the questionnaire referred to ample support being provided for the inclusion class was the one that provided information for this concern. Researchers have found that a lack of administrative support posed problems for the success of an inclusion program (Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs, & Mastropieri, 1998). The lack of administrative support as seen in one of the elementary schools demonstrated
problems for the success of an inclusion program as noted in the responses provided to the open-ended questionnaire when compared to the responses provided by the elementary school and middle school which did implement inclusion programs.

In the two buildings implementing inclusion the administrators supported the program and the teachers were comfortable in voicing their complaints and needs to the administrators as the program was implemented, which supported D’Alonzo and Giordana (1997) findings for support and better flow of communication being needed during inclusion. Administrators working in the buildings using inclusion demonstrated more awareness and support of the needs of general education teachers who are working with special needs children, took a more active role in providing continuing inservice training for them, and encouraged collaboration between the special educator and regular educator so the needs of all the students were met which Snyder (1999) found to be important for the success of inclusion.

This researcher found that inclusion needed to work toward providing the services and supports in the general education classrooms that existed in special education classrooms, according to Coleman, Webber, and Algozzine (1999). Administrative support for these services and supports would consist of implementing and/or providing case management and crisis intervention services, therapeutic group discussions and meetings, effective behavior management programs, self-control and social skills training, individual counseling, prevocational and vocational training, safe environments, and interagency collaboration. The researcher also noted the need for these services, especially when the regular educator was dealing with students with severe emotional problems or students with autism. The researcher noted the need for these services when
regular educators frequently requested assistance in how to provide behavior
management programs, self-control training, and social skills training for the students in
their classrooms.

Jehlen (2002) found inclusion to be successful, which was noted by the
researcher, when each inclusion classroom had a second teacher in the room who was a
special education teacher responsible for the development of lesson modifications,
individualized instruction, and the introduction of activities to the whole class. The
researcher’s findings related that the program was not rigid or absolute, but that it
evolved as teachers experienced the program and realized that changes necessary for its
success needed to occur. Jehlen (2002) supported the need to make these changes to an
inclusion program because of the increased participation and increased learning that
occurs by educators when implementing inclusion.

Conclusions

Teachers participating in inclusion needed to become aware that there is no set
type of inclusion program that is successful, but that it needs to use instructional
techniques that are comfortable for the teachers involved and should consist of class wide
peer tutoring, peer buddies, class-within-a-class, ability awareness, sensitivity training,
cooperative learning, computer-assisted instruction, integrated therapies, individualized
instruction, integrated studies, curriculum matrixing, and team teaching.

When inclusion was implemented in the schools, the teachers, staff, and
administrators began to realize its purpose and need for the education of the special needs
child. The personnel in the three schools used for this research found that the need to
have ample support personnel, appropriate collaboration, and appropriate administrative
support were important to the success of the implementation and maintenance of an inclusion program.

The results of the questionnaire provided the conclusion that the individual experiences of the two schools implementing and using inclusion had many similarities. The regular educators had the same complaints about the special needs students being served. Students with severe emotional problems were the ones most difficult to serve and often caused the most problems in the classroom. The regular educators complained about the lack of awareness of what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and whether what was being done was right or appropriate for the special needs child in their classroom. Yet, the regular educators also reported to the researcher that they did learn professional material during the year due to being involved in inclusion and that involvement in inclusion would occur again after another educator had a turn at the experience.

The results of the questionnaire provided that the school that did not have inclusion still maintained the philosophy that the individual classroom belonged to the individual teacher. For an inclusion teacher to go into the classroom meant the inclusion teacher did what needed to be done and did not interfere or ask the regular educator to do anything educationally for the special needs child. The researcher noted through observation that if teachers had complaints, then the chain of command was the direction used or teachers talked among themselves creating hard feelings. The teachers, staff, and administrators involved in the implementation of inclusion programs were constantly reviewing and making changes and alterations to the program, both individually and within the team.
Implications

Implications from this research can be important to the director of special education in the district, the administrators implementing inclusion, and to the literature in the field of educational practice. The director of special education can use the information from this research to plan and execute the continuation and expansion of the inclusion program in the schools using inclusion throughout the district. The information from the research provides some insight to the director of special education as to what needs to be done to improve and alleviate the problems teachers experience while implementing and conducting inclusion programs in the schools. The director of special education can also use the study to present to the school board to support and relate what problems exist with the inclusion programs in the schools in the district. Based on this research, a plan for improvement can be developed and discussed for the improvements of the inclusion programs in the school district, as well as to gain support for more inservice trainings for the educators using inclusion programs.

The administrators can use the information from this research to plan and execute their school’s schedules to alleviate and facilitate the solution of the concerns expressed as the results of the research. By addressing the school’s concerns through scheduling the administrators can improve the inclusion programs in their school and allow the educators practicing inclusion to improve their instruction for the special needs students, as well as the regular education students.

Finally, the literature in the field of education will benefit from this research because it provides another contribution to the qualifications and ramifications that occur when an inclusion program is implemented within a school. Support for the
implementation of inclusion in this district came from the director of special education and the immediate staff and the individual building’s administrative staff and special education staff. This support was important to the success of the implementation of the inclusion program, as well as its maintenance and future continuation. This research has shown that these ingredients are vital to the implementation of an inclusion program, have been important to the implementation of inclusion programs in the past, and still have a position of significance in the implementation of inclusion programs in the present.

Dissemination

The researcher anticipates providing the information from this research to the director of special education through a presentation to the district staffing specialists of the district, which the director oversees. The researcher anticipates the information being used by the director of special education as a presentation to the school board as a means of support for inclusion and the researcher will assist the director of special education in preparing and presenting this information to the school board.

The researcher also anticipates providing the information to the administrators of the buildings using inclusion. The results which expressed the concerns of the teachers, staff, and administrators during the implementation of inclusion are important for the administrators to use during the creation of the schedules, in-services, and planning time of the teachers involved in inclusion settings so the teachers can learn, explore, and discuss the program of inclusion and what it should be for those individual teachers and their collaborative teams. The researcher anticipates being a productive member of the
administrative team as plans to improve and change the inclusion program within each building practicing inclusion used in this research occurs.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends that the research be repeated with other schools throughout the district to get a better picture of what is happening within the district. This repetition would provide the district’s director of special education, school board, and administrators with a more complete picture of how the teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators in the district regard the inclusion program.

The researcher recommends that if the research is expanded to the entire district, then the use of a computerized coding of the questionnaires be done. The use of a computerized coding system may provide results that are more objective than subjective. However, the information still would be beneficial to the district’s director of special education, school board, and administrators because it still would provide a picture of how the teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators in the district regard the inclusion program, but only from a different perspective.

As the two schools face their concerns of providing more support for the educators involved in inclusion, more collaboration between special educator and regular educator is needed so improvements in inclusion can be on-going and applicable to the teachers and students involved each year. Administrative support for the work of the inclusion teachers is needed so educators will continue to provide a program that is unique and individual to the classroom that is created each year. Through these supports the two schools will improve their inclusion programs, as well as their educational staffs that provide those programs.
Concluding Thoughts

This research was a culmination of a desire of the researcher to delve into the area of inclusion, which has been a passion of the researcher for over twenty years. It has demonstrated to the researcher the importance of implementing inclusion in schools to improve the educational opportunities of the special needs child. It has reinforced to the researcher the need for higher education facilities to work to provide college coursework that combines regular education and special education classes for both types of educators as a part of the curricular guidelines in the requirements for education throughout the country. It has supported the findings and conclusions that the researcher has personally and educationally conducted throughout the last twenty years concerning inclusion and what it needs to consider and incorporate in order to be successful. But, most of all, it supports the belief of the researcher that inclusion is the educational goal for which all educators should strive as the mainstay for educating special needs children, yet that goal is as individualistic as the special needs child, himself or herself, because of the two educators working together to provide that educational experience for that child, as well as all children in the class and no two classrooms are ever alike.
REFERENCES


*Greer v. Rome City School District, 950 F. 2d. 688, 695, 696, 697, 698 (11th Cir., 1992)*


Retrieved April 21, 2002 from Academic Search Premier.


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

VIEWS ON IMPLEMENTING AN INCLUSION PROGRAM: THE RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE
As a doctoral student in the field of educational leadership, I am interested in comparing the views of participants involved in implementing an inclusion program in a school. I hope this information will help educators create better inclusion programs. Please return your responses to me by May 31, 2005. I assure you that your responses will be confidential. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Debby Thomas, at Heard Elementary, 303-6684.

1. What do you expect to achieve academically for students in a full inclusion class?

2. What do you expect to achieve socially for students in a full inclusion class?

3. What do you expect to achieve professionally as a teacher of a full inclusion class?

4. What are your academic apprehensions for students in a full inclusion class?

5. What are your social apprehensions for students in a full inclusion class?

6. What are your professional apprehensions as a teacher of a full inclusion class?

7. How do you think state mandated tests will be affected through full inclusion?
8. What do you expect to learn professionally about inclusion classrooms by being a teacher in an inclusion classroom?

9. What do you think you need to learn professionally to improve yourself as a teacher in an inclusion classroom?

10. Do you think you had ample support in implementing inclusion in your classroom? Why or why not?
APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

I am a graduate student at Georgia Southern University working on my doctorate in educational leadership. The purpose of my study, An Analysis of Implementing Inclusion In a Local School District, is to analyze the implementation of an inclusion program in a local school district. To conduct my study I will be asking the faculty and staff of two schools in a local school district implementing an inclusion program to respond to ten questions pertaining to their professional expectations, apprehensions, and growth they experienced and their personal opinions about the achievements and/or lack of achievements of their students during the year the program was implemented. I will be asking the questions in March, 2005 and May, 2005. Since some preliminary test results have been released pertaining to the CRCT test scores, I would like to take the opportunity to gather the second response to the questions at this time. I know everyone is busy at this time of the year, but your time and attention to the questions will be greatly appreciated as I conclude the final chapters of my research. There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life. Some of the questions may cause uneasiness. As a result of this study, you might realize that you can teach all kinds of students. You might learn that you can broaden your professional and individualize your lessons even more than what you have done in the past. You might realize how to read students better, such as when they do not understand a concept, what learning style applies to what student, what teaching method applies to what student, and that variety is necessary as a part of your teaching repertoire at a moment’s notice. Also, a school district may realize how to establish a good inclusion program. The questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete. Only the person in charge will know your identity. If the research is published, no information that would identify you will be written. You can ask questions about the research. The person in charge will answer your questions. Contact Debby Thomas at 303-6684 with questions or you can contact Dr. James Burnham at (912) 681-5567. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs at (912) 681-7758, or . There is no compensation for participating in this research other than the satisfaction of voicing your opinion and helping a colleague achieve a higher education goal. You do not have to participate in this research. You can end your participation at any time by telling the person in charge. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty for deciding not to participate in this study. You may decide at any time you don’t want to participate further and may simply withdraw. You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to participate in this research study. If you consent to participate in this research study and to the terms above, please sign your name and indicate the date below.
You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your records.

Title of Project: An Analysis of Implementing Inclusion in a Local School District
Principal Investigator: F. Deborah Thomas, 43 Putters Place, Savannah, GA 31419
(912) 303-6684
Faculty Advisor: Dr. James Burnham, P. O. Box 8131, Statesboro, GA 30460,
(912) 681-5567

Participant Signature ___________________________ Date ____________

The informed consent procedure has been followed.

Investigator Signature ___________________________ Date ____________
Georgia Southern University  
Office of Research Services & Sponsored Programs  
Institutional Review Board (IRB)  

To:  
Faith Deborah Thomas  
43 Putters Place  
Savannah, GA 31439

cc:  
James Burnham, Faculty Advisor  
P. O. Box 8131

From:  
Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs  
Administrative Support Office for Research Oversight Committees  
(IACUC/IRB/IBC/IRB)

Date:  
March 1, 2005

Subject:  
Status of Application for Approval to Utilize Human Subjects in Research

After a review of your proposed research project numbered: H05115, and titled “An Analysis of Implementing Inclusion in a Local School District”, it appears that (1) the research subjects are at minimal risk, (2) appropriate safeguards are planned, and (3) the research activities involve only procedures which are allowable.

Therefore, as authorized in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, I am pleased to notify you that the Institutional Review Board has approved your proposed research.

This IRB approval is in effect for one year from the date of this letter. If at the end of that time, there have been no changes to the research protocol, you may request an extension of the approval period for an additional year. In the interim, please provide the IRB with any information concerning any significant adverse event, whether or not it is believed to be related to the study, within five working days of the event. In addition, if a change or modification of the approved methodology becomes necessary, you must notify the IRB Coordinator prior to initiating any such changes or modifications. At that time, an amended application for IRB approval may be submitted. Upon completion of your data collection, you are required to complete a Research Study Termination form to notify the IRB Coordinator, so your file may be closed.

Sincerely,

Julie B. Cole  
Director of Research Services and Sponsored Programs