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**A COMPILATION OF MODIFICATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS USED
BY REGULAR EDUCATION TEACHERS IN AN INCLUSION PROGRAM**

Susan F. McNally

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts Degree
in the Graduate Division of Rowan University
in Seminar and Research
in
Learning Disabilities
Spring, 1997

Approved by _____
Stanley Urban, Ph.D.

Date Approved April 28, 1997

Abstract

Susan F. McNally

**A Compilation of Modifications and Accommodations Used by Regular Education
Teachers in an Inclusion Program**

Spring, 1997

Dr. Stanley Urban

Learning Disabilities Master of Arts Degree

The purpose of this study was to compile a list of modifications and accommodations regular education teachers use in their classrooms to help classified students succeed in an inclusion setting. Data were collected using a questionnaire, observations, and interviews with teachers in kindergarten through grade six (with grade five omitted). Fourteen regular education teachers in two school districts, representing four elementary schools, participated in this study. Data were compiled in four areas: (1) classroom demographics; (2) teacher education; (3) specific modifications and accommodations used by teachers; and (4) specific teacher needs for future inclusion settings. Information was presented in the form of percentage of teachers using a specific strategy and a list of the modifications and accommodations used ranging in order from most used strategy to least used strategy.

Teachers participating in the study use a variety of modifications and accommodations to help classified students succeed; however, most individual teachers use a narrow range of strategies. Cooperative learning is frequently used; however, other innovative approaches such as, teaching study skills, teaching Strategies Instruction, use

of peer tutoring and use of special equipment are not widely employed by regular education teachers for classified students. Additionally, little time is available for consultation with paraprofessionals and co-teachers.

Mini-Abstract

Susan F. McNally

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The purpose of this study was to compile a list of modifications and accommodations regular education teachers use in their classrooms to help classified students succeed in an inclusion setting. Data collected through a questionnaire, observations, and interviews showed that a variety of modifications and accommodations are used by regular education teachers; however, most individual teachers use a narrow range of strategies. Cooperative learning is frequently used, however, other innovative approaches, such as teaching study skills, teaching Strategies Instruction, use of peer tutoring and use of special equipment, are not widely employed by regular education teachers for classified students. Additionally, little time is available for consultation with paraprofessionals and co-teachers.

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Chapter I

Statement of the Problem

Background

The word inclusion, unfortunately, has as many different meanings as the number of people who define it, and therefore has become an emotionally charged term. To adequately define inclusion, we need to briefly review the history of special education.

The passage of PL-94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHCA), required that all the states must provide a "free and appropriate education" (FAPE) for all handicapped children. One of the principles contained in the regulations for implementing the EHCA was the phrase "least restrictive environment" (LRE), which met the statutory requirement that children with disabilities be "educated with children who are not disabled" to the "maximum extent possible". The subsequent amendment of EHCA in 1990, The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), maintained the LRE principle.

Currently there is an emphasis on full inclusion which has its origins in the Regular Education Initiative (REI). The focus of the REI is including students with mild disabilities in regular education classrooms. A clear definition of inclusion is the practice of providing a child with disabilities with education within the general education classroom, with supports and accommodations needed by that student (NICHCY, 1995). Frustration among teachers who have students with significant educational and behavioral

difficulties in their regular education classroom is common. For inclusion to be successful, extensive modification of curriculum and instructional procedures will be necessary (Kauffman, Gerber and Semmel, 1988 and McKinney and Hocutt, 1988).

Research Question

The research question that will be addressed in this thesis is "What strategies are currently being used by regular education classroom teachers to support and teach children with disabilities who have been included in their classrooms?"

Need For The Study

With the trend to take students from segregated classes to partial or full inclusion in regular classrooms, teachers must know how to adapt and modify their curriculum, their classroom environment and their teaching methods.

Special education students, who have not been successful in the realm of the regular education classroom, are now being taken out of the special classes created for them and put back into the exact situations where problems began. Regular education teachers are being asked to accommodate these students. Unfortunately, regular education teachers have not been trained to teach special needs students. Hence, the need for a comprehensive collection of learning strategies that teachers can use to help these students succeed in the regular education classroom. This study will, also, enable teachers to help at-risk students, slow learners and regular education students as well.

Value Of The Study

Change is difficult for anyone. But change is exactly what many teachers will be asked to do in the future as more and more students with disabilities are included in regular education classrooms. McLeskey and Waldron (1996) state that studies and their

experiences in schools reveal that 80% - 90% of teachers are supportive of inclusion if the program is carefully developed and implemented.

While the following study of learning strategies for included students is only a small part of a total inclusion program, it will be of great value to educators as they search for concrete ways to deal with modifying and adapting their curriculum, environment and instruction.

Limitations

1. The sample population for this research was limited to four schools which represented a convenience sample.
2. The sample population was limited to the number of respondents to a survey sent to teachers in four schools.

Definition of Terms

The precise framework for this research depends on the explanation of many current terms being used in education today. Following is a summary of those terms that will be used throughout this study.

1. *Inclusion* – the practice of providing a child with disabilities with his or her education within the general education classroom, with supports and accommodations needed by that student (NICHCY, 1995).
2. *Mainstream* - the general education setting, where students without disabilities receive their education (NICHCY, 1995).
3. *Regular Education Initiative* - often used as another term for inclusion, it has to do with the associated partnership between regular and special education. This initiative

states that students with special needs could be taught most effectively in regular education classrooms.

4. *IEP (Individualized Education Program)* - a written plan developed at a meeting which sets forth goals and measurable objectives and describes an integrated, sequential program of individually designed educational activities to achieve the stated goals and objectives (N.J.A.C., Chapter 28, Special Education, 1994).
5. *Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)* – according to PL-94-142, the educational placement for students with disabilities that is as close to the regular classroom as feasible (McLoughlin, J. and Lewis R., 1994).
6. *Classified student* – a child eligible for special education services according to N.J.A.C. 6:28 of New Jersey Administrative Code Rules and Regulations.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Inclusion has become one of the most controversial topics in education today. Proponents state that "the vision of full inclusion is based on the belief that every person has the right and the dignity to achieve his potential within the vast and varied community of society. Full inclusion means open doors, accessibility, proximity, friends, support, right of association, values and diversity" (Westby, C., Watson, S., and Murphy, M., 1994). On the other hand, opponents feel that inclusion has become such a politically correct idea, replete with values impossible to oppose, that people are simply espousing an ideal and are not considering all of its implications. In the following review, the views of proponents and opponents of inclusion will be discussed.

Pro Inclusion Viewpoints

In the United States, the movement toward inclusion is reflective of the economic, political and philosophical changes we have seen in the 1980's and 1990's. Proponents have derived their ideas from the Regular Education Initiative proposed by Madeleine Will who was Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services in 1986. Will proposed the following:

1. Pullout services for students with learning disabilities had not met the educational needs of mildly disabled students.
2. Special education caused students to be stigmatized and segregated from their peers.
3. Special programs were reactive rather than proactive, and addressed failure rather than prevention.

Will did not describe; however, how her program was to be implemented. Organizations, parents, administrators and state departments of education have interpreted her statements independently, and along the way the Regular Education Initiative has come to be interchangeable with the term 'inclusion'.

Full inclusionists - those who will accept nothing less than total immersion in a regular education class by a disabled student, completely, regardless of his disability, are the extreme end of the spectrum. "You can't be a little bit integrated any more than you can be a little bit pregnant" (Westby et al. 1994). Varying degrees of inclusion can range from partial inclusion (the regular classroom is considered the student's home base with instruction specifically adapted to meet the student's special needs or where special support services take place in the context of the general education class) to 'mainstreaming' where the special needs student is separated or 'pulled-out' from the special education class to attend activities or non-academic instruction in the regular education classroom. Proponents cite a number of reasons as to why they feel inclusion is the best method of educating students with special needs. Perhaps the most popular advantage cited is socialization. Disabled children learn to interact, communicate, develop friendships, learn normalization skills and observe appropriate behavior from 'normal' functioning children. Regular education students also benefit from the socialization that

evolves from inclusion. Children without disabilities learn acceptance and tolerance toward children who are visibly different from them, and they begin to appreciate differences in fellow human beings.

Another advantage of inclusion is the elimination of the stigma attached to being in 'special education'. Children who are in self-contained classes or who have to leave the regular education class to go to 'specials' are often teased and labeled with many unattractive names. Inclusion eliminates this stigma because the classified children are accepted as being part of the regular functioning class. Studies have shown that children with special needs have higher self-esteem when they are included. Graduates of self-contained programs for special education are less likely to be employed and often have lower self-esteem than those who receive their education in the mainstream (Bradley, D., King-Sears, M., Tessier-Switlick, D., 1997).

Not only do students benefit as well, but teachers have noted professional gains. General education teachers who have accepted students with disabilities into their classes report that they have become more proficient in a variety of teaching styles, which benefits all their students (Bradley et al. 1997).

Proponents have cited the failure rates for students in traditional special education programs as reasons for inclusion. There have been and are many studies now being conducted on special education students being pulled from traditional programs and returned to the regular education classroom with much success. Parents and educators alike, even those from within the special education community, are voicing criticism of the lack of success special education has had in meeting student's needs. Supporters of inclusion, also, question the economic feasibility of operating several categorical programs

simultaneously in schools (Zigmond, N., and Barker, J., 1994). Also questioned by advocates are the diagnostic criteria for placement of students into categorical programs. How clear are these criteria and would we do just as well to eliminate the categorical programs altogether (Zigmond, N., and Barker, J., 1994)?

Many inclusion advocates feel that simply modifying programs and accommodating students with learning strategies is not enough. Educational reform needs to take place across the board in our school systems. The real reform of special education is linked to the reform of schooling in general. We simply need to rethink the system that too readily marginalizes rather than includes students. The success of inclusion is dependent on the success of fundamental reform in the way teachers and administrators conceptualize teaching and learning and implement new ways of doing business with all students, not only those with disabilities. Therefore, supporting inclusion means supporting the reform of special education as a part of whole school reform (Pugach, Knoster, Lengyel, McAfee, Schoenly, and Zigmond, 1996).

Dianne L. Ferguson (1995) states that to create generally inclusive schools we will need to see three shifts in the way our schools are structured. First, we need to move away from schools that are structured and organized according to ability and toward schools that are structured around student diversity and that accommodate many different ways of organizing students for learning. Second, we need to move away from teaching approaches that emphasize the teacher as disseminator of content that students must retain and toward approaches that emphasize the role of the learner in creating knowledge, competence and the ability to pursue further learning. And thirdly, we need to change our view of the schools' role from one of providing educational services to one of providing

educational supports for learning. Proponents of inclusion who have faced the realities of the undertaking of this gigantic reform, realize that for these changes to happen and be successful the necessary resources must be available; also, leadership and patience for the changes to be implemented will be necessary.

The underlying theme of all inclusion advocates is that students with disabilities have the same rights as those who do not have disabilities, and among those rights are equal access to the same educational opportunities. Inclusion supporters are facing a huge job. These advocates are asking the question, "If the way of dealing with students with disabilities in the past has not worked, do we not have the responsibility to these students to make the changes necessary for them to succeed"? According to proponents of inclusion the answer to this question is "yes" and inclusion and the necessary school reform to accompany it is the answer.

Viewpoints Expressing Reservations Regarding Inclusion

Opponents of inclusion believe that placing children with special needs back in the classroom where they met with little or no success in the first place, is a totally indefensible move. Many opponents feel that the movement toward inclusion is being driven by financial issues and not by the needs of students at all. Adequate resources, clear IEP goals and total administrative support must be present for inclusion to work. Will all schools offer these things? Opponents do not believe they will.

Many parents and educators are concerned about behavior problems of children who will be included in regular classrooms. The teacher's time will be devoted toward one or two children, trying to integrate them into the class and the rest of the students will not get the attention they need or deserve. In many cases, a question of safety has arisen

when violent or maladaptive behavior has been exhibited by children with special needs who have been placed back in the regular classroom. Opponents worry that the general education teachers, who will be having disabled children placed in their classrooms, do not have the correct education or the desire to meet the needs of these students. Full inclusion advocates are expecting regular education teachers to master all knowledge possessed by speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors and special education teachers (Westby et al. 1994). Teachers worry about practical concerns of time. Successful inclusion involves teacher collaboration and team teaching. Time for teachers to meet and discuss the many needs of their students simply is not always available.

The fact that socialization is such a major component of inclusion concerns many opponents. Opponents feel the focus on socialization puts academics in a back seat and we are losing the basic understanding of what schools are about. The need to accommodate all students in a classroom puts the teacher at odds with demands of other elements of school reform that promote higher academic standards (Westby et al. 1994).

A number of professional groups have expressed concern regarding full inclusion. The Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) states that it "does not support 'full inclusion' or any policies that mandate the same placement, instruction or treatment for ALL students with disabilities" (Westby et al. 1994). The National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD) and the Council For Learning Disabilities have also voiced concern about full inclusion (Westby et al. 1994). The NJCLD maintains that full inclusion violates the rights of parents and students with disabilities when it is defined as serving students with disabilities only within the regular classroom. The NJCLD advocates the use of a continuum of services for students. Some students may benefit

from full inclusion; others may need self-contained specialized classes, pull-out services, or some combination of services. The LDA, NJCLD, and CLD all maintain that decisions regarding educational placement of students with disabilities must be based on the needs of each individual student rather than administrative convenience or budgetary considerations and must be the result of a cooperative effort involving the educators, parents and the student when appropriate (Westby et al. 1994).

Clearly, those opponents of inclusion feel obliterating our special education system as it now exists and making the sweeping changes full inclusionists are calling for will not serve the many truly deserving disabled students in our school systems. Critics of inclusion will not deny changes need to be made in the way special needs children are being served, but they feel that the ideal of inclusive schooling for everyone is not the answer.

Teacher Perceptions of Inclusion

How do teachers feel about inclusion? Much research has been done over the years studying practices, attitudes, training and resources of educators. Following is a review of an article entitled: Teacher Perceptions of Mainstreaming/Inclusion, 1958-1995, A Research Synthesis, by Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996. Search procedures for this article included databases of: *ERIC* (1966 - 1995), *Psychological Abstracts* (1988 - 1995), *Current Index to Journals in Education* (1985 - 1995) and *Exceptional Child Education Resources* (1985 - 1995). Reference lists from relevant books (e.g., Horne, 1985; Jones, 1984, Yucker, 1988), literature reviews (e.g., Yanito et al. 1987) and all identified relevant reports were searched for additional references in this article. Finally, all major special education journals were hand-searched for relevant reports. Several key

questions concerning mainstreaming/inclusion were identified in these surveys and the overall findings will be reported.

Survey results showed:

Do Teachers Support Mainstreaming/Inclusion of Students with Disabilities in General Education Classes?

Eight surveys answered this question. Teachers interviewed totaled 7,385. Overall findings showed that 65.0% (4,801) of teachers indicated support of the concept. Teachers indicated different levels of support for including students with differing conditions of disabilities. Supporting mainstreaming/inclusion of students with learning disabilities were 71.9% of teachers, followed by 28.9% supporting mainstreaming/inclusion of students with emotional disturbances, and 27.8% supporting mainstreaming/inclusion of students classified educable mentally retarded. Overall, systematic variability in support of mainstreaming/inclusion appeared to be mostly due to degree of intensity of mainstreaming/inclusion and severity of students with disability.

Are General Education Classroom Teachers Willing to Teach Students with Disabilities?

Nine surveys had 2,193 respondents, 1,170 (53.4%) of whom expressed willingness to teach students with disabilities. Willingness appeared to depend on severity of disability and amount of additional teacher responsibility required.

Do Students Benefit From Mainstreaming/Inclusion?

A large number of general and special education teachers (3,348) responded to 15 surveys. Overall, 1,820 (54.4%) agreed with general statements that students with and/or without disabilities could benefit from inclusion experience. Overall, 269 of 404 special education teachers (66.6%) agreed it could be positive, while 1,100 of 2,167 (50.8%) of

general education teachers agreed mainstreaming/inclusion could have positive benefits for students.

Do Students with Disabilities Have a Negative Effect on the Classroom Environment?

Several surveys indicated that overall, 110 (30.3%) of 363 teachers agreed students with disabilities could be harmful to a general education classroom environment.

Do General Education Teachers Have Enough Time for Mainstreaming/Inclusion?

Four surveys showed that overall, 170 (27.7%) of 614 teachers agreed they had sufficient time to undertake mainstreaming/inclusion.

Do Teachers Have Sufficient Expertise and Training for Mainstreaming/Inclusion?

Overall, in ten surveys, 2,900 teachers responded. Twenty-nine percent (847) agreed that teachers do have sufficient expertise and training for mainstreaming and inclusion.

In summary, 28 survey reports were studied of teacher attitudes regarding mainstreaming/inclusion. Surveys varied in question type, geographic areas surveyed, time and sampling procedures. However, responses appeared highly consistent. Overall, many teachers have reservations or concerns about mainstreaming and inclusion and believe that substantial supports are necessary to enable these efforts to succeed.

Litigation Concerning Inclusion

The beginnings of inclusion can be traced back to the precedent setting case of *Brown vs. The Board of Education*, 1954. This decision outlawed segregation in public schools. Because inclusion is viewed by many advocates as a civil rights issue for disabled students, this is the case where inclusion finds its roots.

Following *Brown vs. The Board of Education* were PL 94-142 and the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These laws have already been discussed in Chapter One of this thesis. From the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act came the re-emphasis on least restrictive environment (LRE). Following are three cases influencing the interpretation of the least restrictive environment.

Daniel R. R. v. State Board of Education (1989)

This case developed what is known as a two-prong test that has been used extensively since 1989 to determine the least restrictive environment. Daniel was a six-year old child with Down's Syndrome. In order for his school to place Daniel in a self-contained classroom (where he eventually was placed) the school had to pass both criteria of this test. The first prong has to do with determining whether education in the general education classroom with use of supplemental aides and services can be achieved satisfactorily. Schools must show that they have taken sufficient efforts to accommodate the child. The second prong requires school districts to determine if they have mainstreamed the student to the maximum extent appropriate.

Oberti v. Board of Education of Clementon School

Rafael Oberti was an eight-year old child with Down's Syndrome. He exhibited significant disruptive and antisocial behavior. The Federal Court upheld the right for Rafael to be educated in a general education classroom. This case showed that schools cannot limit options to regular education classes without supports or self-contained special classes. Schools must consider a full range of supportive services including resource rooms and itinerant instruction. The burden of proof is on the school districts to show

that a child cannot be served in a regular placement setting, and that the segregated special education placement is the least restrictive environment for an individual student.

Sacramento City Unified School District v. Rachel H. (1994)

Rachel was an eleven-year old girl with an IQ of 44. Her parents requested full placement in a regular education class. The school district proposed a special education class for academic instruction and general education classes for non-academic instruction. The two-prong test from Daniel R. was used to decide this case and elaborated on with a four-part test. The court found in favor of Rachel being placed in general education classes because the school district had not made sufficient efforts to try that placement.

The Future of Inclusion

The future directions of inclusion are not agreed on by all the involved constituencies, but are open to many interpretations. Mara Sapon-Shevin (1994/95) believes "inclusion will succeed to the extent that it links itself with other ongoing restructuring efforts." Sapon-Shevin believes the idea that we want to create a world where all children are supported is a widely shared belief. All children have a right to be full members of a community.

There is much discussion among educators and parents to take place concerning the future of inclusion and how it will be implemented. Some future considerations for any schools becoming involved in inclusion (Schoenly, D., 1996) are:

- Philosophy and legalities - shared with staff and community
- Shared decision making - Action plans
- Restructuring - Teaming
- Cooperative learning training

- Teacher in-service
- Student grouping
- Scheduling: Shared planning/prep time
- Monthly group meeting time
- Class size
- Placement of students
- Configuration of classes
- Availability of special education staff to cover needs of I.E.P. students
- Realistic goals for special education students- adaptations to curriculum and assessment
- Curriculum modifications
- Instructional adaptations and strategies
- Ongoing dialogue, teacher conferences
- Agreement of regular education staff to have special education student
- Agreement of regular education staff to co-teach
- Administrative support and recognition
- Specific needs of special education students
- Input of special area subject teachers (e.g., art, gym, etc.)
- Method to meet needs of students "at risk" as well as those with I.E.P's and spillover
- Summer in-service
- Networking

Many feel inclusion will involve a 'paradigm shift' or a period of rapid change in underlying beliefs about our educational system. Achievement and evaluation of students is moving from standardized testing to curriculum and achievement-based assessment. Teachers will not be lecturers who present information that is to be presented back in the same form, but they will become facilitators for students. They will guide students in their search for knowledge. Rote learning and the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy are being added to or replaced by higher levels of thinking skills, such as, analysis and synthesis. Collaboration, not the competition of the past, is being encouraged among students. Collaboration is being encouraged among the staff, as well. Collaborative and team teaching will make it possible for teachers to integrate and share knowledge, methods and strategies as well as philosophy.

This concept of inclusion is in its' earliest stages. As additional discussions and studies emerge, the proponents of inclusion are moving toward the understanding that the goal is not to simply find new 'methods' to take children with disabilities out of one setting (resource rooms and special classes) and put them back into the general education classroom with a few accommodations. The goal is to begin to restructure our current understanding and practice of educating all students as individuals who will be able to succeed in the community of the 21st century.

Chapter III

Methodology and Procedures

Introduction

The motivation for this study was to compile suggestions for regular education teachers who have classified students included in their classrooms. These suggestions are in the form of a compilation of strategies that will enable teachers to modify curriculum and classroom environments to assist classified students in succeeding in the regular classroom. The research question being addressed is "What strategies are currently being used by regular education classroom teachers to support and teach children with disabilities who have been included in their classrooms?"

Sample

The sample population for this study was limited to teachers who are teaching in an inclusion setting. The teachers involved were regular education teachers in kindergarten through grade six (excluding grade five). The four schools involved in the study were in the Gateway Regional School District and the West Deptford School District, both located in southern New Jersey.

Method of Sample Selection

Both schools involved in this study gave permission through administration for surveys, interviews and/or observations to be conducted by this researcher. The school

districts represented a convenience sample for the researcher and were chosen for their representation of per pupil expenditure, achievement, and reputation for quality educational programs. The teachers involved in this study were chosen by the researcher and/or by the cooperating principals of those schools.

Instrumentation

The instrumentation used in this study was a survey in the form of a questionnaire. This questionnaire was created by this researcher and another graduate student, Christine Gentile, who is researching a similar topic. A questionnaire by Brenda Myles, Ph.D., Dept. of Special Education, University of Kansas Medical Center was used as a reference to help create this instrument. The questionnaire asked respondents to answer questions of classroom demographics, teacher education, specific strategies currently being used in regular education classrooms and specific needs of responding teachers in future inclusion settings. The survey is contained in Appendix A.

Collection of Data/Research Design

Information for this research study was gathered through a questionnaire, observations and interviews. This researcher distributed a questionnaire regarding inclusion and strategies employed by fourteen regular education teachers. Regular education classrooms that included children classified as learning disabled and educable mentally retarded were observed on grade levels kindergarten, grade one and grade three. The interactions of a resource room teacher who cooperatively teaches with regular education teachers was observed, as well. Interviews were conducted with one district's child study team learning disabilities consultant, one district's child study team director, two principals, three regular education teachers and one resource room teacher.

Analysis of Data

The data gathered through the aforementioned methods of questionnaire, observations and interviews will be analyzed to compile a list of strategies that are used by regular education teachers to modify and adapt their curriculum and classroom environment to help classified students succeed in a regular education classroom. The responses to the questionnaire will be reported as frequency of response rate to each item. The data gathered during the observations and interviews will be reported in Appendix B under the category of 'other'.

Chapter IV

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to compile a list of modifications and accommodations that regular education teachers use in their classrooms for classified students. The following research question was addressed in this project: “What strategies are currently being used by regular education classroom teachers to support and teach children with disabilities who have been included in their classrooms”?

Survey questions were compiled to formulate a questionnaire administered to teachers. The teacher questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section I asked information concerning classroom demographics. Section II asked about teacher education. Section III asked for specific teaching strategies used by the regular education teachers surveyed. An ‘adaptation checklist’ was presented in nine different areas: pacing; environment; presentation of subject matter; materials; social interaction support; assignments; self-management and follow through; testing adaptations; and motivation and reinforcement. Teachers checked the strategies they use in their classrooms. Also provided was space in which to include any strategies not listed on the checklist. Section IV asked teachers to check specific needs they feel are essential for future inclusive settings.

Results

Classroom Demographics (Section I):

Fourteen regular education teachers were surveyed. These fourteen teachers were employed in four different schools within two school districts. Responding to the survey were three-kindergarten teachers, one-first grade teacher, two-second grade teachers, three-third grade teachers, two-fourth grade teachers, and three-sixth grade teachers. Grade five teachers were not surveyed because no classified children were present in grade five in the four schools surveyed.

One classroom of the fourteen surveyed had less than fifteen children enrolled. Twelve classes had populations of 16 – 25 children and one class had 26 – 30 children. The number of classified children included in these fourteen classes totaled 32. Classifications were broken down as follows: Learning Disabilities – 24; Educable Mentally Retarded – 2 (Downs Syndrome), Hearing Impaired – 2; Emotionally Disturbed – 1; Neurologically Impaired – 1; Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder – 1; Autistic – 1.

Planning time for teachers was also surveyed. Two regular education teachers had 30 minutes or less a day allotted to them in planning time, ten teachers received 30 minutes to one hour per day and two teachers had one to one and one-half hours per day in planning time. These time allotments are average and vary on given days. When asked if they use this planning time to plan modifications and adaptations for their classified students, ten teachers responded yes, and four teachers responded no.

Six teachers were involved in team-teaching, and all six responded that none of them had scheduled planning time with their co-teacher. Nine of the fourteen teachers surveyed had a para-professional working with them. Five teachers responded that they

did not have para-professionals. Descriptions of the para-professionals were as follows: in-class support for reading and language arts; math aides, a shadow; one-on-one aides; and resource room teachers present for in-class support in language arts. When asked if instructional modifications were done by the para-professionals, eight of the nine teachers responded yes. These modifications were done after consultation with the teacher or by adapting teacher lesson plans.

Teacher Education (Section II):

The level of college education for the fourteen regular education teachers surveyed is as follows:

Bachelors Degree: N =14

Masters Degree: n = 2

Special Education Degrees: n = 2 (Teacher of the Handicapped Certificates)

Special Education Credits (9 credits): n = 1

(3 credits): n = 3

Post Graduate Credits (30 credits): n = 1

Specific Teaching Strategies (Section III):

This section of the survey centered on an adaptation checklist. This checklist was divided into nine different sections. The nine areas included were pacing, environment, presentation of subject matter, materials, social interaction support, assignments, self-management and follow through, testing adaptations, and motivation and reinforcement. Results of the survey are as follows:

Pacing - One hundred percent (14/14) of teachers surveyed extend time requirements for their students. Seventy-one percent (10/14) of teachers vary activities

often and allow breaks. Fifty percent (7/14) of teachers send home school texts for student review and 36% (5/14) of teachers have a home set of texts or materials for students to use for preview/review.

Environment - Seventy-nine percent (11/14) of teachers use preferential seating for special needs students, while 64% (9/14) use planned seating arrangements. Twenty-nine percent (4/14) of teachers alter the physical room arrangement for classified students and 14% (2/14) teach positive rules of space. Another adaptation, not listed on the checklist, is to seat the special needs student next to a child that can help him.

Presentation of Subject Matter - The most used adaptation in this section was the use of manipulatives as cited by 86% (12/14) of teachers. Following this strategy was teaching to students learning styles with 50% (7/14) of teachers doing this. The learning style taught to the most is bodily/kinesthetic (5/14), followed in descending order by linguistic (4/14), logical/math (4/14), spatial (2/14), Interpersonal (2/14), Intrapersonal (2/14) and musical (1/14). Fifty percent (7/14) of teachers, also, emphasize critical information. Presenting demonstrations (modeling) and pre-teaching vocabulary are techniques used by 43% (6/14) of teachers. Five out of fourteen teachers (36%) use visual sequencing and reduce language levels of reading assignments for students with special needs. Twenty-one percent (3/14) of teachers utilize special curriculum and provide teacher-written notes. Seven percent (1/14) of teachers make use of vocabulary files. No teachers surveyed tape lectures or discussions for replay by the special needs students. Other adaptations used by teachers are one-on-one presentation of subject matter and having students repeat important information.

Materials - In the area of materials adaptation and modification, 50% (7/14) of teachers alter the arrangement of material on a page to help their special needs students. Six out of fourteen teachers (43%) use supplementary materials and 29% (4/14) of teachers use special equipment. Special equipment utilized by teachers are computers and tape recorders, used by 3/14 teachers (21%), and calculators and video/recorders, used by 7% (1/14) of teachers surveyed. Other adaptations used by regular education teachers, not included on the checklist, are slant boards, special pencils, alpha-talkers, extra practice sheets and sticky tabs (teacher writes important information on the sticky tabs and student keeps it on desk in front of him).

Social Interaction Support - In this section, the two most used adaptations are cooperative learning groups, which are utilized by 71% (10/14) of teachers and structuring activities to create opportunities for social interaction among students. Fifty-seven percent (8/14) of teachers teach social communication skills (sharing, turn taking, greeting and negotiating) and 50% (7/14) of teachers teach friendship skills, sharing skills and negotiation. Some of the less frequently used adaptations and modifications are focusing on the social process rather than an activity or end product (3/14) 21% of teachers, and the use of peer advocacy, peer tutoring and structuring shared experiences in school and extracurricular activities, cited by 14% (2/14) of teachers. Another adaptation, used by teachers in this category, is a class constitution, where children create the classroom rules and sign an agreement to follow those rules.

Assignments - The largest section on the checklist found shortening assignments to be the most widely used modification by teachers at 79% (11/14). Giving directions in small, distinct steps, giving extra clues or prompts, and avoiding penalizing students for

penmanship, spelling errors and sloppiness are used by 64% (9/14) of educators. Fifty-seven percent (8/14) of teachers lower the difficulty level of assignments. Fifty percent (7/14) of teachers use story maps, use graphic organizers and adapt worksheets for students. Reducing paper/pencil tasks and using webbing follows next with 43% (6/14) of teachers using this strategy. Thirty-six percent (5/14) of teachers use Think-Pair-Share strategy, use compensatory procedures by providing alternate assignments/strategies when demands of the class conflict with student capabilities, use pictorial directions and provide written backup for oral directions. Three out of fourteen (21%) of teachers use flow-charts and allow students to record or type assignments. Fourteen percent (2/14) of educators use Strategies Instruction and use semantic maps. Finally, 7% (1/14) of teachers read or tape record directions to students and use tree diagrams. Additional strategies used by teachers are pre-reading and enlarging pictures or print for special needs students.

Self-Management/ Follow Through - Seventy-one percent (10/14) of teachers utilize the most popular strategy in this section of requesting parental reinforcement. Forty-three percent (6/14) of teachers use visual daily schedules, check often for understanding and review and have students repeat directions. Twenty-nine percent (4/14) of educators use calendars, teach skills in several settings/environments and review and practice in real situations. The least used methods at 7% (1/14 teachers) are using study sheets to organize materials, designing, writing, and using long-term assignment timelines and teaching study skills such as, test-taking strategies, organizing notebooks and study techniques. Another self-management/ follow through strategy is the use of assignment books.

Testing Adaptations - Fifty-seven percent (8/14) of teachers modify spelling tests for special needs students by shortening spelling lists, giving easier words, using larger paper and assisting the student during the test. They, also, extend the time frame of the test. Forty-three percent (6/14) of educators will read the test to students and will modify the test format. Testing administered by a resource person and testing administered to a student orally are strategies used by five out of fourteen teachers (36%). Twenty-nine percent (4/14) of teachers preview the language of the test questions for students. Three out of fourteen (21%) of teachers use pictures to enhance the test. Fourteen percent (2/14) of teachers shorten the test length and use multiple choice questions for classified students. Finally, 7% (1/14) of teachers use short answer questions in adapting tests. Teachers listed a number of extra adaptations and modifications in this section. They are re-testing essays orally and accepting correct oral answers, doing one-on-one evaluation and one-on-one re-teaching, giving tests privately, and using a 'scribe' (someone who writes the answers while a student dictates).

Motivation and Reinforcement - The two most used strategies in this section are verbal motivation and reinforcement and positive reinforcement used by 86% (12/14) of teachers. Non-verbal motivation and reinforcement follow at 64% (9/14) usage. Fifty-seven percent (8/14) of teachers use concrete reinforcement, end-of-day rewards, stickers, caught being good tickets, and free homework passes. Thirty-six percent (5/14) of teachers use strengths and weaknesses of students often. Lastly, 29% (4/14) of teachers offer choices to students. Extra adaptations suggested by teachers are to set goals with students, use time-out, and use a goal sheet for specific behaviors to be signed weekly by parents and teacher.

Specific Needs for Future Inclusive Settings (Section IV):

The fourteen teachers surveyed were asked what are essential modifications they need as regular education teachers to more successfully include classified children in their classrooms. The modifications the teachers were given to choose from were as follows: decreased class size, additional planning time, a para-professional, availability of support services, consultation with special educators and in-service workshops.

Eleven of the fourteen teachers felt availability of support services to be the most important modification they needed. Recommendations from occupational therapists were considered to be the most important followed by speech/language consultants, learning consultants, social workers and psychologists. Considered equally important by ten out of the fourteen teachers surveyed, as necessary needs of teachers, were consultations with special educators regarding instructional recommendations, team teaching and behavioral management. And considered important by nine out of fourteen teachers was decreased class size and in-service workshops. Five of the teachers surveyed felt class size should be reduced regarding regular education students while three of the teachers surveyed felt the number of special education students should be decreased. In-service workshops in the area of instructional techniques was preferred by nine teachers surveyed and behavioral management in-services were deemed necessary by nine of the fourteen teachers surveyed.

Twelve of the 14 teachers surveyed felt having an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process concerning modifications (e.g., decreased class size, in-services, etc.) was most important to them. One teacher felt having mandatory modifications (e.g., decreased class size, in-services, etc.) in place for all included students was preferable. All

of the teachers' responses to the adaptation checklist section of the questionnaire are contained in Appendix B.

Summary

As a group, regular education classroom teachers of classified students use an extensive and varied list of adaptations and modifications to help special needs students succeed; however, most individual teachers use a narrow range of strategies. In other words, they limit themselves to a restricted repertoire of possible strategies. The only modification used by 100% of teachers surveyed was extending time requirements for student assignments. Other popular strategies used by 86% of regular education teachers for classified students are verbal motivation and reinforcement and positive reinforcement. The use of manipulatives is, also, employed by 86% of teachers. The accommodations and modifications used least by 7% of teachers are use of vocabulary files, reading or tape recording directions to students, using tree diagrams, modifying tests by using short answer questions and teaching study skills.

Chapter V

Summary, Findings and Conclusion

Introduction

This study summarized and cataloged different modifications and accommodations regular education classroom teachers use to help classified students succeed in the inclusion classroom. A survey, observations and interviews were used to find the many strategies utilized by classroom teachers.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to compile a list of modifications and accommodations regular education teachers use in their classrooms to help classified students succeed in an inclusion setting. Data were collected using a questionnaire, observations and interviews with teachers in kindergarten through grade six (with grade five omitted). Fourteen regular education teachers in two school districts, representing four elementary schools, participated in this study. Data were compiled in four areas: (1) classroom demographics; (2) teacher education; (3) specific modifications and accommodations used by teachers; and (4) specific teacher needs for future inclusion settings. Information was presented in the form of percentage of teachers using a specific strategy and a list of the modifications and accommodations used ranging in order from most used strategy to least used strategy.

Teachers participating in this study use a variety of modifications and accommodations to help classified students succeed; however, most individual teachers use a narrow range of strategies. Cooperative learning is frequently used; however, other innovative approaches such as, teaching study skills, teaching Strategies Instruction, use of peer tutoring, and use of special equipment are not widely employed by regular education teachers for classified needs students. Additionally, little time is available for consultation with paraprofessionals and co-teachers.

Conclusion

All of the teachers interviewed use a variety of modifications and accommodations to help classified students succeed in an inclusion program. The methods compiled in the list (Appendix B), however, are not widely used by the majority of teachers. New and innovative methods that are being researched and deemed as successful methods for modifying or accommodating students with special needs such as teaching study skills, teaching Strategies Instruction, peer tutoring and use of special equipment, such as computers, are not being widely utilized by teachers. The exception to this is cooperative learning, which is employed by 71% of regular education teachers.

Discussion

Crucial factors in the success of an inclusion program are teachers who are able to: (1) structure their classroom; (2) present subject matter; (3) adapt assignments; (4) adapt materials; (5) pace their lessons; (6) promote self-management; (7) support social interaction among classified and non-classified students; (8) adapt tests; and (9) motivate and reinforce student performance so that classified students can succeed in the inclusion setting. To reach these goals, teachers need support from administration and need

education in instructional techniques and behavior management techniques. Also, of vital importance for success of special needs students in inclusion settings are support services for teachers, paraprofessionals and planning time for teachers to be able to utilize the modifications and accommodations compiled in this study. I felt the results of this survey were surprising in that few modifications and accommodations were used by all of the teachers. Out of the 85 modifications and accommodations listed on the teacher questionnaire, only 11 were used by 71% (10/14) or more teachers. If a teacher is to successfully include classified children in a regular education classroom, flexibility and a willingness to try new and different strategies is a must. Commonly used strategies such as, giving directions in small distinct steps, using manipulatives, pre-teaching vocabulary, teaching social communication skills and using story maps were not used by all teachers. These methods not only are helpful for classified students but, can be of great value to the regular education student, as well.

Implications For Future Study

The following recommendations are offered:

1. The sample size of teachers surveyed should be increased.
2. The grades represented should include all elementary grades from kindergarten through grade six.
3. The survey should focus on more specific modifications and accommodations in areas such as Strategies Instruction and study skills.

Appendix A

TEACHER SURVEY REGARDING INCLUSION

Directions: Please complete the following questionnaire in four sections.

I. Classroom Demographics

1. What grade do you teach? (circle one)
K 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. How many children are in your classroom? (check one)
Less than 15 ____
16 - 25 ____
26 - 30 ____
Over 30 ____
3. How many children in your class have special needs? ____
Please specify what these special needs are:
Learning Disabled ____
Educable Mentally Retarded ____
Hearing Impaired ____
Physically Impaired ____
Blind ____
Emotionally Disturbed ____
Other ____
4. How much planning time per day is allotted to you? (check one)
30 minutes or less ____
30 min. - 1 hour ____
1 hour - 1 ½ hours ____
More than 1 ½ hours ____
Do you use this time for planning modifications and adaptations for your special needs students? (circle one) YES NO
5. Do you have a paraprofessional working in your classroom? (circle one) YES NO
Are instructional modifications done by the paraprofessional? YES NO
Please specify _____
6. If you are team teaching, do you get extra planning time scheduled with this teacher? (circle one) YES NO

II. Teacher Education

1. What level of college education do you have? (check one)
Bachelors degree ____
Masters degree ____
Doctorate ____
2. Do you have any special education hours or degrees? YES NO
Please specify _____

III. *Specific Teaching Strategies*

1. The following page is a checklist with adaptations and modifications many teachers use for their special needs students. Please check what strategies you have found to be the most effective methods of helping children with disabilities.

* If you have any other strategies that you use which are not included on the checklist, please list them on the bottom and back of this page. They do not have to be validated strategies. I would appreciate as much input as you can give me.

ADAPTATION CHECKLIST

Pacing

- Extend time requirements
- Vary activity often
- Allow breaks
- School texts sent home for review
- Home set of texts/materials for preview/review
- Other: _____

Environment

- Preferential seating
- Planned seating Bus Classroom
- Lunchroom Auditorium
- Alter physical room arrangement
- Teach positive rules for use of space
- Other: _____

Presentation of Subject Matter

- Teach to the students learning style
- Linguistic Logical/Math Musical
- Spatial Bodily/Kinesthetic Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal Model Experiential Learn.
- Utilize specialized curriculum
- Teacher taped lectures/discussions for replay
- Teacher provides notes
- Present demonstrations (model)
- Use manipulatives
- Emphasize critical information
- Pre-teach vocabulary
- Make/use vocabulary files
- Reduce language level of reading assignment
- Use visual sequences
- Other: _____

Materials

- Arrangement of material on the page
- Taped texts and/or other class materials
- Highlighted texts/study guides
- Use supplementary materials
- Note taking assistance: Xerox copy of notes of other students
- Large print
- Special equipment
- Electric typewriter Computer
- Calculator telephone adaptations
- Video/recorder tape recorder
- Other: _____

Social Interaction Support

- Peer advocacy
- Peer tutoring
- Structure activity to create opportunities of social interaction
- Focus on social process rather than activity/end product
- Structure shared experiences in school, extracurricular
- Cooperative learning groups
- Teach friendship skills/sharing/negotiation
- Teach social communication skills
- Greetings Sharing
- Negotiating Turn Taking
- Other: _____

Assignments

- Give directions in small, distinct steps
- Use written backup for oral directions
- Lower difficulty level
- Shorten assignment
- Reduce paper and pencil tasks
- Read or tape record directions to student
- Use pictorial directions
- Give extra clues or prompts
- Allow student to record or type assignment
- Adapt worksheets/packet
- Use compensatory procedures by providing alternate assignments/strategies when demands of class can with student capabilities
- Avoid penalizing for spelling errors/sloppy
- Avoid penalizing for penmanship
- Use graphic organizers
- Use tree diagrams
- Use semantic maps
- Use flow charts
- Use webbing
- Use story maps
- Use Think-Pair-Share
- Use of Strategies Instruction
- Specify: _____

Self-Management/Follow Through

- Visual daily schedule
- Calendars
- Check often for understanding/review
- Request parent reinforcement
- Have student repeat directions
- Teach study skills
- Specify: _____
- Use study sheets to organize material
- Design/write/use long term assignment timelines
- Review and practice in real situations
- Plan for generalizations
- Teach skills in several settings/environments
- Other: _____

Testing Adaptations

- Oral Short Answer
- Taped Multiple Choice
- Pictures Modify format
- Read test to student Shorten length
- Preview language of test questions
- Applications in real settings
- Test administered by resource person
- Extend time frame
- Modification of spelling tests
- Specify: _____
- Other: _____

Motivation and Reinforcement

- Verbal
- Non-verbal
- Positive reinforcement
- Concrete reinforcement, e.g. _____
- Offer choices
- Use strengths/interests often
- Other: _____

IV. *Specific Needs For Future Inclusive Settings*

1. What are essential modifications you need for having special needs children included in your classroom? (check answers that apply)

_____ Decreased class size:	Special education students _____ Regular education students _____
_____ Additional Planning Time:	With paraprofessional _____ With Co-Teacher _____
_____ A Paraprofessional:	Entire Day _____ Half Day _____
_____ Availability of Support Services:	Psychologist _____ Social Worker _____ Learning Consultant _____ Speech/Lang. Consultant _____ Occupational Therapist _____ Other _____
_____ Consultation With Special Educator Regarding:	Instructional Recommendations _____ Behavioral Management _____ Team Teaching _____ Other _____
_____ In-service Workshops:	Instructional Techniques _____ Behavior Management _____ Other _____

2. Which one of the following is more important to you as a teacher of included, special needs children? (check one)

_____ Having an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process concerning modifications (i.e., decreased class size, in-services, etc.)

_____ Having mandatory modifications (i.e., decreased class size, in-services, etc.) in place for all included, special needs students.

- YES NO I would like a copy of the results of this study of teaching strategies for regular education teachers of special needs students.

I am at _____ school.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

Appendix B

SUMMARY OF ACCOMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS USED BY REGULAR EDUCATION TEACHERS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Following is a list of the most commonly used modifications and accommodations by regular education teachers. The percentages tell how many teachers use this strategy.

Pacing

- Extend time requirements – 100%
- Vary activity often – 71%
- Allow breaks – 71%
- Send home school texts for review – 50%
- Use a home set of texts/materials for preview/review – 36%

Environment

- Preferential seating – 79%
- Planned seating – 64%
 - Classroom – 64%
- Alter physical room arrangement – 64%
- Teach positive rules of space – 14%
- Other: seat special needs child next to child who can help

Presentation of Subject Matter

- Use of manipulatives – 86%
- Teach to students learning styles – 50%
 - Bodily/Kinesthetic – 36%
 - Linguistic – 29%
 - Logical/Math – 29%
 - Spatial – 14%
 - Interpersonal – 14%
 - Intrapersonal – 14%
 - Musical – 7%
- Emphasize critical information – 50%
- Present demonstrations (model) – 43%
- Pre-teach vocabulary – 43%
- Use visual sequences – 36%
- Reduce language level of reading assignments – 36%
- Utilize special curriculum – 31%
- Teacher provides notes – 21%
- Make use of vocabulary/files – 7%

Materials

Arrangement of material on page – 50%

Use of supplementary materials – 43%

Use of special equipment – 29%

Computer – 21%

Tape recorder – 21%

Calculator – 7%

Video/recorder – 7%

Other:

Slant board

Special pencil

Alpha-talker

Extra practice sheets

Sticky tabs

Social Interaction Support

Cooperative Learning groups – 71%

Structure activities to create opportunities for social interaction – 71%

Teaching social communication skills – 57%

Teach friendship skills, sharing, negotiation – 50%

Sharing – 57%

Turn taking – 50%

Greeting – 36%

Negotiating – 36%

Focus on social process rather than activity/end product – 21%

Peer advocacy – 14%

Peer tutoring – 14%

Structure shared experiences in school, extracurricular – 14%

Other: Class constitution (children create class rules and then sign agreement to follow those rules)

Assignments

Shorten assignments – 79%

Give directions in small, distinct steps – 64%

Give extra clues or prompts – 64%

Avoid penalizing for penmanship – 64%

Avoid penalizing for spelling errors/sloppiness – 64%

Lower difficulty level of assignments – 57%

Use story maps – 50%

Use graphic organizers – 50%

Adapt worksheets – 50%

Reduce paper/pencil – 43%

Use webbing – 43%

Use Think-Pair-Share – 36%

Assignments (cont.)

Use compensatory procedures by providing alternate assignments/strategies when demands of class conflict with student capabilities – 36%

Use pictorial directions – 36%

Use written backup for oral directions – 36%

Allow student to record or type assignments – 21%

Use flow charts – 21%

Use of Strategies Instruction – 14%

Use semantic maps – 14%

Read or tape record direction to student – 7%

Use tree diagrams – 7%

Other:

Pre-reading

Enlarge pictures/print

Self-Management and Follow Through

Request parent reinforcement – 71%

Visual daily schedule – 43%

Check often for understanding/review – 43%

Have student repeat directions – 43%

Teach skills in several settings/environments – 29%

Review and practice in real situations – 14%

Design, write or use long term assignment timelines – 7%

Use study sheets to organize materials – 7%

Teach study skills – 7%

Test-taking strategies

Organized Notebooks

Study techniques

Testing Adaptations

Modification of Spelling tests – 57%

Shorter list

Easier words

Larger paper

Teacher assisted

Extend time frame – 57%

Read test to students – 43%

Modify format – 43%

Test administered by resource person – 36%

Preview language of test questions – 29%

Use pictures to test/enhance test – 21%

Shorten test length – 14%

Use multiple choice questions – 14%

Use short answer questions – 7%

Testing Adaptations (cont.)

Others:

- Retest essays orally and accept correct oral answers
- One-on-one evaluation
- One-on-one re-teaching
- Tests taken privately
- Use of scribe (someone writes while student dictates answers)

Motivation and Reinforcement

Verbal motivation and reinforcement – 86%

Positive reinforcement – 86%

Non-verbal motivation and reinforcement – 64%

Concrete reinforcement – 57%

End-of-day rewards

Stickers

Caught being good

Tickets

Free homework passes

Use strengths/interests often – 36%

Offer choices – 29%

Others:

Set goals with student

Time-out

Goal sheet for specific behavior modification, signed by parent/teacher weekly

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