

**THE PLANNED INTEGRATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
STUDENTS**

by

Shirley Fortney

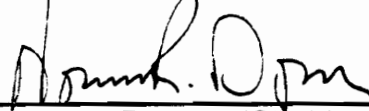
Dissertation submitted to the faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

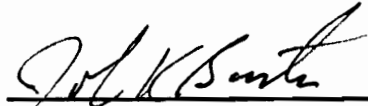
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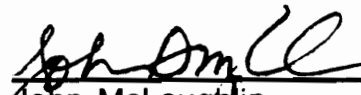
in

Curriculum and Instruction

APPROVED:


Norman R. Dodl (Chair)


John K. Burton


John McLaughlin


Bonnie Billingsley


Jan Nesper

May, 1993
Blacksburg, Virginia

ABSTRACT

This study examined the process of integrating special education students into a regular education program. The study focused on needs, successful strategies, role changes, supervision of teachers, and outcomes of the integration process for a school engaged in transition from more restrictive toward more integrated placements for students in self-contained special education classes.

Qualitative interviews were used to elicit self-perceptions of the director of special education, county task force members, principals, teachers of regular and special education, and ancillary staff. These interviews were triangulated with relevant documentation and observations of activities during school days.

The study found two distinct styles of supervision in place: 1) a bottom-up approach used by the special education director to guide the county task force as it developed district guidelines; and 2) a top-down approach used by the principal to guide implementation of increased integration at the school level.

The study found that progress in implementation of integration was impeded by the fact that teachers of regular education were not represented on the county task force. Other factors which contributed to and impeded integration during the first year of implementation were: 1) a lack of a

clear definition of integration at the school level; 2) a perception that positive outcomes of integration are primarily social benefits for students in both regular and special education; and 3) a premise held by all study participants that full inclusion was not feasible in their school. These findings from the local setting are generally consistent with findings from key studies in the literature. Other suggestions were made by participants to formalize integration procedures, to allow teacher choice in acceptance of students with disabilities, to mix classroom placements within the school, and to give a smaller class size to teachers who integrated students into their class. One further recommendation reducing the wide range of abilities within each integrated classroom, was found in the literature reviewed to be a barrier to integration success.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have been truly fortunate to have known the very best people and to benefit from their friendship. My time and energy does not allow me to eloquently and adequately acknowledge the many individuals who have contributed to the completion of this work. The following list represents the recollections derived from the few brain cells that are still functioning at this point:

- Dr. Ronald Fortney, my supportive husband, who became as much a part of this work as I did. Scott and Chris Fortney, our sons, who made many sacrifices so that I could pursue my goals.
- Mr. Junior Dillon and Mrs. Lela Dillon, my parents, who were the role models which made me believe I could do anything I wanted to do in my life. Mr. Cary Dillon, Mr. Robert Dillon, Ms. Donna England, and Ms. Betty Foster, my siblings, who kept me human and shared the part of me that is family.
- Dr. Norm Dodl, my advisor, who mentored a stubborn but charming graduate student through this trying process.
- Ms. Terry Stevers who did everything she possibly could to help me complete this work. Without her I would not have finished.

- Dr. John Burton, Dr. Bonnie Billingsley, Dr. Jan Nespor, and Dr. John McLaughlin, the remaining committee members, who stayed the duration and guided my efforts.
- Dr. Rebecca Anderson, Dr. Sue Conrad, Dr. Victor Hernandez, Dr. Jane Huffman, Mr. Ken Lawwell, Mr. Butch Morris, and many other fellow "grad" students who laughed, cried, and endured together when we all needed support.
- Ms. Jill Kozee who always encouraged and believed that we should aspire to our dreams.
- The Department of Education, West Virginia Wesleyan College, who employed me, befriended me, and became as supportive of my work as I would have dreamed.
- All my other friends, no less important to me just in the part of my brain that no longer functions without sleep, who encouraged, supported, and believed I could accomplish this work. You were there when I needed you. Thank you.
- All those individuals who discouraged, did not support, and did not believe I could, should, or would accomplish this work. You made me reassess what I was doing and determined to reach my goal. Thank you.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

The education of students with handicaps has changed in the last five years. This change is best characterized as "progressive inclusion" (Davis, 1989, Stainback & Stainback, 1989), in which the placement of students with disabilities has changed from restrictive, self-contained programs to less restrictive, regular classrooms. This integration of special education students into the mainstream may emanate from an external policy decision, but is conducted at the local level in a process affecting the entire school.

Important to the success of integration is the restructuring of the roles and responsibilities of several groups (principals, teachers, and ancillary staff) and their ability to work cooperatively during the implementation of the integration process (Thousand & Villa, 1989, Weisenstein & Peiz, 1986).

As a result of this shift toward education of all students in regular education settings, the roles and responsibilities of those who are charged with the education of this population have changed. They not only are performing their jobs differently, but also in many cases have new

objectives to accomplish. The traditional labels and roles of professionals (regular education and special education teachers) are no longer applicable to collaborative teaching teams (Thousand & Villa, 1989). Additionally, the resources and facilities necessary for the education of all students must be distributed to any professional who has responsibility for the student (Stainback & Stainback, 1989).

Likewise, supervision of personnel engaging in changing roles and responsibilities must change to accommodate the reorganization in integrated schooling. Supervision has been defined by Glickman (1985) as "...the actions that enable teachers to improve instruction for students" (p. 6). Therefore, the goal of educational supervision when broadly stated is to assist professionals so that they are able to perform their expected duties. It is this definition of supervision that guided the proposed inquiry.

A review of the current literature in both special education and supervision revealed that there was not a clear understanding of the needs teachers have for supervision in the integration process at the building level. What was missing was case by case evidence as to how supervision actually works in school settings where integration is being implemented and needs for assistance have changed. What are their needs? What provisions are in place or

needed to meet their needs? This study used qualitative methodology to investigate these questions.

Purpose

In this dissertation I explored, through in-depth interviews, informal observation, and document review, the process used by one school district and one school within that district for integration of students with disabilities taught in self-contained classes. My interest centered on what happens within the school environment when this integration process was being implemented.

The study examined the process of integrating special education students into the regular education program at a school which housed the majority of students with disabilities in the district. My primary focus was on the needs, successful strategies, role changes, the supervision of teachers, and outcomes of the integration process for a school engaged in the transition from more restrictive toward more integrated placements for students in self-contained special education classes.

Specifically, I attempted to analyze the perceptions, thoughts, and behaviors of classroom teachers, administrators, supervisors and ancillary support staff. From this information I developed an understanding of how supervision "worked" in the setting selected for the research. It was

necessary to identify the real outcomes of integration in the selected setting, the actual activities employed to achieve these outcomes and the resources required to implement the integration changes at the selected site.

The perspective of the study was the perceptions of individuals within the two groups affected by integration changes in the school setting: 1) policy makers, such as the director of special education and the task force convened to study improved least restrictive placements in the county schools; and 2) implementors, such as the principal, teachers of regular and special education, and ancillary staff.

Research Questions

The study examined the process of the integration of disabled students into the regular education program. To focus on this process the following questions were posed:

1. What constituted integration in the school setting (i.e., the site definition)?
2. What activities were used to implement the integration plan? Who initiated these activities? Who supervised these activities?
3. What role changes have resulted from the integration process for the special education director, school principal, teachers, aides and ancillary staff? How were these role changes facilitated? Who assisted individuals in implementing the role changes?

4. What supervisory philosophy guided the implementation of the integration process?
5. What were the problems which have been encountered thus far in this integration? What have been the resolutions of these problems?
6. What have been the positive outcomes resultant from this program change?
7. What are the plans for continued implementation?

Background

The inclusion of special education students into the regular education mainstream has precedent in legal mandates issued by the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) (Note 1). Legal mandates from this law include provision that disabled students would be educated with children who are not disabled "to the maximum extent possible" (20 U.S.C. 1412 [5] [B]). Additionally, pressure from advocates of "progressive inclusion" (Davis, 1989, Stainback & Stainback, 1989), effective schools movement (Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove & Nelson, 1988, Gartner & Lipsky, 1987, Hallahan, Keller, McKinney, Lloyd & Bryan, 1988), the regular education initiative (REI) (Stainback & Stainback, 1989, Wilson, 1989) and mandates from state and federal educational agencies (e.g. Federal Register 42(163), 1977, p. 42491) have influenced some school systems to re-evaluate the placements of their

special education students to provide greater integration into the mainstream.

The responsibility for planning the implementation of a change in policy and programming, such as integration of disabled students, lies both at the central office and building levels (Ball, 1987, Havelock, 1973). These activities constitute the policy or public arena of a change (Ball, 1987). Individuals of these groups have the responsibility for interpretation of policy statements for school implementation, the procedures necessary to implement the policy and the decisions made in the daily operation of the program. This constitutes the practice or private arena of a change (Ball, 1987).

Both of these arenas are subsumed by the highly complex culture of the school in the context of change where conflicting forces both serve to oppose and support the integration. Ball (1987) points to the micro-politics which exist in the arenas of policy and practice that should be recognized when implementing change. "...innovation processes in schools frequently take the form of political conflict between advocacy and opposition groups...factional groups will seek to advance or defend their interests, being for or against the change" (Ball, 1987). Individuals find themselves in the position where neutrality is not sustained

for long. A choice must be made. Their rhetoric and behavior must conform to one side of the issue.

At the same time that the tensions of debate and resolution over the issue of change is occurring, individuals must adjust to the modifications in practice of their roles that the change requires. Individual self-interests, belief systems, self-concepts and vested interests can be altered by the proposed change (Ball, 1987). The perceived roles of the central office staff, principal, teachers and ancillary staff, the conflicting forces surrounding the proposed change and the barriers to implementation they face are compounded by the conflict with the need to establish new relationships and roles during the integration process (Weisenstein & Peiz, 1986).

Concurrently, the proposed change may be undergoing modifications as it is implemented. "Negotiations and compromises may produce amendments to initial proposals, certain groups or individuals may be exempted, trade-offs arranged, bargains arrived at" (Ball, 1987).

My study utilized qualitative methods of in-depth interview and observation to explore the change to integration within the complex culture of one school district. In order to analyze these supervision activities, I first obtained a perspective on what integration changes have been made at the county and school levels and how these changes

were implemented. Then I identified the problems that are typically encountered by teachers and the perceived needs of teachers to overcome these challenges. Finally, I established an understanding of the participant's views of the future of the integration changes.

Significance of the Study

The study was intended to contribute 1) information to central office staff, principals and teachers concerning the status of their progress in implementing the integration process; 2) information enabling the central office staff, principal and teachers to make informed decisions concerning future plans for the change; and 3) to the existing knowledge focused on the principal's and teachers' roles in special education integration.

An in-depth study of the integration process in an elementary school provided school division administrators, as well as the individual school staff, with detailed information about the process during the first year of its implementation. They were afforded the opportunity to assess perceptions of various participating groups related to principal and teacher roles and behaviors. They were aided in examination of supportive and restraining forces along with the activities which have been initiated to deal with these forces. The findings provide the detailed information

during the implementation stage of the change assisting district and school staff in making decisions concerning the future focus of the integration process.

Finally, the study contributes to the knowledge of the principal's role in the implementation of an integrated special education program. Recommendations have been made by experts as to the considerations that a principal may need to make (e.g. Davis, Knight, Patterson, 1987) "...but very little information can be found in the professional literature concerning the principal's role for special education. This area is wide open for research" (Mayer, 1982). Unfortunately, the same can be said for the most recent information concerning special education integration elicited from the professional literature (Ball, 1987). In fact scrutiny of some of the most recent texts for courses in special education provide only general recommendations that teachers and principals should work together to bring about integration (Gearheart, Weishahn & Gearheart, 1992, Reynolds & Birch, 1988, Wood, 1993). Therefore, the proposed research contributes to the limited information not only in the realm of the principal's role but of the best practices for implementation of the integration process.

Special Education Integration

Background

Integration of disabled students has its origin in mandates identified in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142, 1975). The original mandates have continued to remain unchanged through three amendments to the act, the last of which included renaming the act as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (Public Law 101-476, 1990). The legislated mandates of PL 94-142 culminated the efforts of parents and advocacy groups dissatisfied with segregated placements of disabled children (Blackhurst & Berdine, 1981). Their push for the normalization of the disabled led to the deinstitutionalization of many and the mainstreaming in the public school setting as legislated by PL 94-142 (Blackhurst & Berdine, 1981).

Although not specified as mainstreaming or integration "...the terms have evolved around the concept of the least restrictive environment..." (Heward & Orlansky, 1992, Wilson, 1989). The legislation requires that "...to the maximum extent possible, handicapped children...are educated with children who are not handicapped..." (20 U.S.C. 1412 [5] [B]). Students are to be placed in special classes or

separate schools only when they could not be educated in the regular classroom, even with special aids and services (20 U.S.C. 612 [5] [B]) .

Therefore, an integrated educational environment is to be the preferred model unless "...the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily,..." (20 U.S.C. 1412 [5] [B]). This point is further supported by the requirement that an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) must include a statement as to the extent to which the student will be able to participate in the regular educational programs (Federal Register 42 (163), 1977, p. 42491). With these mandates, consideration for the placement of a student begins in the realm of regular education environment and moves toward more restrictive environments only when the child's needs cannot be accommodated in the regular classroom.

Along with the adoption of PL 94-142, the focus of special education for the 1960s and 1970s was "greater access to the mainstream" (Skrtic, 1987) with PL 94-142 providing criteria and conditions for services in the mainstream (Loucks-Horsley & Roody, 1990). More recently, the 1980s have been a time of continuation in the push toward "progressive inclusion" (Stainback & Stainback, 1989) with the "...concern for the quality of services and the quality

of life experienced by student with disabilities..." (Loucks-Horsley & Roody, 1990) and "...full access to a restructured mainstream..." (Skrtic, 1987a).

Development of Regular Education Initiative

It is the "restructured mainstream" that has become the crux of an intensifying debate over the principles advocated by the proponents of the Regular Education Initiative (REI). The proposal to restructure the educational delivery system for the disabled received its impetus from several forces. The progressive inclusion supported by advocacy groups may have contributed subtle pressure to the idea of full integration of the handicapped student into regular education (Davis, 1989). Additionally repercussions from the effective schools movement which critically examines all school practices gave credence to the principle that all students would benefit from "...curriculum adaptations and individualized educational strategies..." in a unitary system (Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove & Nelson, 1988, Gartner & Lipsky, 1987, Hallahan, et al., 1988). A significant impact was also felt by criticisms posed by researcher's efficacy studies which produced unclear results of the benefits from the efforts of the existing special educational system (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987, Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987, Stainback & Stainback, 1989).

Further sanction was given to the REI movement when panels of experts appeared to criticize special education practices and effectiveness. The National Academy of Sciences Panel in 1982 stated that the programming for categories of children are practically indistinguishable when matching content with disability type (Gerber, 1988, Heller, Holtzman & Messick, 1982). The Task Force for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the Fall of 1985 made supporting arguments for the increased integration of disabled students and the acceptance by regular education for the primary responsibility to educate all students in the public schools (Will, 1986).

Finally, advocacy groups have taken up the call for the re-evaluation of the practices in special education. Several have issued position papers which urge the experimental redesigning of programs such as "Position Statement: Advocacy for Appropriate Educational Services for All Children" (National Coalition of Advocates for Students & National Association of School Psychologists, 1986). Leaders of several of the national advocacy groups have collectively issued a statement entitled, "Rights Without Labels" detailing a three-step approach to the integration of students with special needs in regular classroom settings (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987).

Assumptions of REI

William & Susan Stainback (1989), early advocates of REI, base the rationale for merger of special and regular education on two premises. First, "...the instructional needs of students do not warrant the operation of a dual system" (Stainback & Stainback, 1989). Since all students are on one continuum of individual characteristics, the idea that two distinct systems are necessary is an artificially imposed view of children. A merged system would serve to meet the unique needs of all students. The stigma of the "deviant" label would be removed and a broader range of curricular options would be open to all students.

Second, the rationale for merger centers on efficiency of operation. A unitary system would eliminate the need for expensive classification of students conserving resource dollars. The merger would also conserve human resources by relying on one administrative staff to supervise all educational programs and by halting cases of unnecessary duplication of service and fostering of professional relationships which "...share expertise and pool their resources in order to get maximal 'mileage' from their instructional efforts" (Stainback & Stainback, 1989). Conservation of time and effort would be achieved by a merger which eliminates the need to base service on "...an elaborate procedure for classifying/categorizing students..." (Stainback &

Stainback, 1989). Need would be the only criteria for service to any student.

Additionally, proponents of REI have proposed experimental trials of integrated forms of education by state and local school districts (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987, Stainback & Stainback, 1989, Will, 1986). This would give the schools an opportunity to develop programs with federal and state agencies which would demonstrate the effective practices of an integrated system during a period of temporary suspension of compliance with rules and regulations (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987).

Research Findings

REI proponents use two research based arguments to support the merger of regular and special education (Hallahan, et al., 1988). The first type of research is used to assess the effectiveness of special education in what is called efficacy studies. These studies compare "...handicapped students in special versus general education settings and handicapped students in less versus more intensive special education placements" (Hallahan, et al., 1988). Efficacy studies are held by REI proponents as proof that special education practices show little or no effects for students placed in special education programs (Bickel &

Bickel, 1986, Heller, Holtzman & Messick, 1982, Reynolds, 1988, Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987).

The second body of research centers around the Adaptive Learning Environments Model (ALEM) developed by Wang and her colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh (Hallahan, et al., 1988, Reynolds, 1988, Wang, 1981). This research reviews a model program which embodies the best teaching practices used to educate disabled children without removing them from general education classrooms for special education services (Hallahan, et al., 1988).

Criticisms of REI

As stated earlier, REI has caused a debate that compels many to choose a side for or against (Davis, 1989) and is predicted to "...continue in every educational forum for many years to come" (Lieberman, 1990, pg 562). The opponents of REI have several areas of disagreement with the research behind the initiative and the basic assumptions supported by REI.

Lieberman (1990) points to a major problem with REI in that there is a lack of consensus of definition by the supporters of the initiative. He cites one example in which Will (1986) supports "...not the consolidation of special education in regular education ...(but) a partnership with regular education". Others support the integration of not

all but some of the categories of disabled, especially the mildly disabled (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987). Still others define REI as the complete merger of the two systems of education and the education of all students under the one delivery system of regular education (Stainback & Stainback, 1989).

Opponents of REI state that PL 94-142 has already answered the needs of all disabled children with an individualized education in the least restrictive environment which makes the definition of REI a moot point (Lieberman, 1990, McKinney & Hocutt, 1988). As they recognize the criticisms that are leveled against the present special education system, they suggest that "if special education is broken, let's fix it" but not abandon it altogether (Lieberman, 1990, pg 562). Davis (1989) even points to the benefits that resolutions to the REI debate can bring to "...the quality-of-life issues..." for the disabled students served by PL 94-142 without the need to dismantle the entire system.

Further criticisms of REI fault it for exclusion of consumers from the debate (Davis, 1989) leaving the arguments to be waged among researchers and scholars in special education departments of universities. They maintain that balanced views can not be achieved without inclusion of special and regular educators, local administrators,

principals, advocates and students (Davis, 1989, Heller & Schilit, 1987, McKinney & Hocutt, 1988). Implementation of special education integration would require collaboration and cooperation from these stakeholders.

Lieberman (1985) used the analogy of "a wedding in which we, as special educators, have forgotten to invite the bride (regular educators)" (pg 513). This breach of etiquette could have negative consequences for the entire wedding party "unless regular educators, for reasons far removed from 'it's best for children,' decide that such a merger is in their own best interests" (Lieberman, 1985, pg 513). Determination of their willingness and their preparedness to participate in a merger has not been made according to critics of REI.

Critics also question the research that is the basis for discrediting special education and the belief that full integration of all disabled students would be better served in a merged system (Hallahan, Keller, McKinney, Lloyd & Bryan, 1988, McKinney & Hocutt, 1988). They list several methodological flaws that seriously limit the acceptable impact of supportive research literature cited in efficacy and ALEM studies. They contend that after removal of the questionable elements of the research the evidence is too little to warrant the abandon of special education as it exists at present.

Additionally, concerns have been expressed by those who must implement the education of special education students placed if they were placed in regular education programs exclusively. School administrators are concerned that sufficient resources and personnel may not be present in a merged system (Davis, 1989, Heward & Orlansky, 1992, Stainback & Stainback, 1989). Teachers are concerned that students may not receive an appropriate education if teachers do not have the skills necessary to meet their needs (Biklen, Bogdan, Ferguson, Searl, 1985, Stainback & Stainback, 1989, Davis, 1989, Keogh, 1988) and/or "receive little or no training or support when exceptional children are placed in their classes" (Heward & Orlansky, 1992). Some parents have also expressed concerns over the merging of the two systems and the effect it will have on students in regular and special education (Davis, 1989, Heward & Orlansky, 1992).

Conclusions

Weighing the arguments of both proponents and opponents, it may be difficult to reach definitive conclusions about the future of the REI debate or the position one should take concerning best practices in education of the disabled. However, Davis (1989) concludes that "the wedding has already taken place" whether the bride and groom were

"willing, enthusiastic participants in the ceremony...the impact of P. L. 94-142 has produced a wedding of sorts...Now, the real question is how do we make this marriage work?" (pg 441).

Following the above stated analogy, we may accept that the mandates of P. L. 94-142 and subsequent legislation has bound regular and special education together. Then we could simply focus on the consideration of the individual needs of the child as a primary guide to decision-making by teachers of both regular and special education. Placement would be made in the least restrictive environment and adherence to integration into regular education would be to the maximum extent possible.

However, this focus does little to evaluate the current system of special education or the proposed merger of a dual system as recommended by REI. What may be the most prudent position is that which complies with the recommendations of all parties to the debate, seeking the results of methodologically sound research. Proponents of REI support the investigation of experimental approaches to the integration of the disabled conducted by a collaboration of federal, state and local agencies (e.g. Skrtic, 1987b). While opponents of REI support the establishment of research proof to the benefits of REI before they are ready to accept its assumptions (e.g. Fuchs & Fuchs, 1988). Continued research

into current special education practices and into experimental models of integration would help improve the field of special education and guide the best practices recommendations of the regular education initiative.

While the "experts" and researchers continue to debate the theoretical constructs of REI and education for all under one service delivery system "...many school systems are trying out the elements of REI, although not often in the systematic way suggested by the REI advocates" (Kirk, Gallagher, & Anastasiow, 1993, pg 74). As Kirk and others have surmised:

The immediate effect of REI has been to increase the alternatives to current practice and to introduce new service delivery models for exceptional children and general education students as well as we try to balance the needs of students and professionals.

Integration as a Change Process

Introduction

Schools are caught in the position of initiating a program which will greatly change the delivery of services to all students and the roles of the personnel who are responsible for education in their school. In order to implement a change, such as the integration of special

education students into regular education, the school district's administration must determine the manner in which the process will be conducted. Those reformers, researchers and administrators desiring to implement change would do well to remember that the basis of successful change efforts reside in the hands of classroom teachers who are the ultimate implementers of change programs (Eisenhart, Cuthbert, Shrum & Harding, 1988). The elements affecting teacher acceptance and participation in educational changes has been investigated extensively over the past few years. The fact that teachers have resisted change has been the subject of extensive description and classification by researchers such as Carlson (1987), Fenstermacher (1987), Fullen (1985), Margolis & McGettigan (1988), Richardson-Koehler, 1987, Trumbull (1987).

Traditional Perspective

Recommendations have been set forth to supervisors and administrators to assist them in dealing with teacher change. These recommendations generally have taken the form of circumventing teacher resistance to change with the goal of "fixing" the teacher. Glickman (1989) associates this stance with the "top-down" management system while Wise (1987) terms it "legislated learning". This attitude was fueled by reports of mediocrity in education and calls for

school improvement inducing an environment in which reform advocates "viewed teachers and administrators as the problem of poor schools" (Glickman, 1989).

Supervision under this philosophy would take the perspective that experts had the cures for educational ills. The job of the supervisor then would be to prescribe changes which would bring the teacher back into line with the best practices of teaching. The result of this type of supervision may be the illusion of compliance by teachers when in reality they resent outside interference in their job (Carlson, 1987) and often sabotage change efforts (Richardson-Koehler, 1988). The depth of this feeling is described by Glickman (1989) in his conversations with a twenty year teaching veteran who portrayed the plight of teachers as "the punching bag recipients of someone else's plan".

An Alternative to External Control

An alternative method of supervision is based upon the empowerment of teachers. The rationale for this type of internal control can be traced back to Dewey (1915, 1933) and is gaining the attention of researchers, reformers and teachers alike. The basis for Dewey's theory is that the individual using critical reflection is led to take transformative actions which improve not only her immediate environment but the institution as a whole. This critical

reflection engages teachers in an examination of practices, their efficacy and alternatives which could better achieve the desired goals of the individual.

Supervision models which incorporate Dewey's theory are included in varieties of the clinical supervision model. The seminal works of Goldhammer (1969) and Cogan (1973) stress the empowerment of teachers to improve their practice through collegiality and collaboration with the supervisor. "Their argument is that if you want teachers to change then it is necessary to work with them, rather than on them!" (Smyth, 1984).

In the twenty years since its inception, clinical supervision has evolved several variations. For the purposes of this discussion these variations can be discussed as supportive of teacher empowerment or supportive of traditional external decision-making power base. Tracy and MacNaughton (1989) take this stance in their classification of these variations as neo-traditionalist (external controlled) and neo-progressive (internal teacher controlled).

Neo-traditionalist such as Madeline Hunter and her student Erlene Minton are emphatic in associating their approaches with clinical supervision theory. However, their models use the effective schools research to make prescriptive recommendations on how the teacher may improve her teaching (Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989). This aligns their

models with the external control of "experts" and places teachers in the position of being unquestioning channels for expert method. According to Smyth (1985) "we have used clinical supervision as a subtle way of controlling and manipulating teachers and as an agency for endorsing and perpetuating existing curriculum and teaching practices" (pg 14).

The neo-progressives adhere to the Goldhammer-Cogan definition of clinical supervision based on Dewey's progressive movement (Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989). The basis for this supervisory model is collaborative inquiry. Its purpose "...is never to evaluate but rather to empower the individual" (Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989, pg 252). Variations of the neo-progressive clinical supervision include "lived experiences" (Smyth, 1984a, pg 26), Schon's coaching reflection (Nolan, 1989), and horizontal evaluation (Gitlin, 1989).

Common to all of these variations is the power which is vested in the teacher to question, critically analyze and explore alternatives to all aspects of their teaching practice. For example, 20 elementary teachers worked in small groups in which collaboration and reciprocal observations were practiced. They used horizontal evaluation throughout one school year to question such basic concepts as basing instruction solely on textbook content. They further "contested assumed teacher and student roles as well as the

structures that reinforced those roles" (Gitlin, 1989, pg 329). At the close of the school year these teachers were taking actions which developed out of their own evaluations to transform their school environments in ways that had never occurred to them to do previously (Gitlin, 1989). Although the ready acceptance of the method may have been enhanced by the fact that these twenty teachers were all volunteers, the success which this study witnessed leads to encouragement for those educators looking for a means to transform schooling from within the present system.

Clinical supervision in the neo-progressive view "...has the capacity to enable us to examine, understand and challenge the institutional conditions and circumstances of our work" (Smyth, 1985, pg 5). This type of critical questioning by teachers (empowerment) can lead to tension in the current hierarchial structure of education which is unaccustomed to bottom-up management (Mertens & Yarger, 1988, Mitchell & Gallogher, 1987). One solution to easing this type of tension would be to include all levels of the structure in the clinical supervision process. Administrators could take the same critical view of their own environments leading to transformative actions for their practices as well.

Implications for Special Education Integration

The above described view of teacher empowerment through clinical supervision has benefits which apply equally to the domains of regular and special education teachers. Clinical supervision may also have particular benefits for a system as it implements the integration of special education students. The following represents a merged list of these benefits from proponents of clinical supervision with possible applications to special education integration (Nolan, 1989, Smyth, 1984a, Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989, Trumbull, 1987):

1. A collegial relationship in which teachers feel safe, supported, and respected.
2. Teacher control over the supervisory agenda.
3. Problem reframing and reflection by both teachers and supervisors as the heart of the supervisory process.
4. Reliance on an inquiry-oriented collaborative search for ways of improving learning.
5. Wider range of options presented for the solution of dilemmas.

Additionally, there is the potential benefit of breaking down the barriers which separate regular and special educators in traditional formats of prescriptive supervision. Instead of remaining within their respective disciplines to examine teaching practices, clinical supervision

could open teachers to observation, dialogue and critical examination of the premises which set their teaching apart.

At the minimal level of transformative change an understanding and empathy could be developed among teachers from regular and special education. At the maximum level, restructuring could be implemented to accomplish creative change which may not have been conceived as being possible under the constraints of the past.

Introduction

In this section I will describe the methodology selected as most appropriate to the study of supervision in special education integration. The components of the methodology include the basis for choosing in-depth interviewing and observation as the instruments for investigation of the experience of another person; the setting; the manner for obtaining access to the setting; the selection of participants to be interviewed; and the interview process and method of interpretation and analysis of the data.

Point of View

Motivations for my interest and pursuit of the topic of special education integration stem from a history of personal and professional experiences. As the parent of two sons who have learning disabilities and had attended school in the county of this study, I have worked through many issues and dilemmas in regular/special education integration. I have shared with my husband and sons the daily struggle to achieve an appropriate learning environment for them while focusing on the long range goal of healthy, educated adults.

My professional background has included various experiences in both regular and special education. I have been

a member of teams making decisions for the service configuration of students which have included varying degrees of mainstreaming. I have also been responsible for the delivery of education to students in a range of placements. Through these experiences I have become aware of issues in the realm of integration which require decisions to be made by members of a school.

The above experiences gave me a wide perspective on the topic of integration, but I do not believe it implied a threat to the study. Several researchers in the field point out the rationale for recognition of the researcher's point of view. First, all research has some form of researcher bias (e.g., the very act of selection of the topic for study). Second, prior researcher experiences served to ease access to the setting as well as establish rapport and maintain sensitivity to potential participants expanding the study. Finally, recognition of the potential for my bias in the study acted to alert me to guard against such a threat to the results (Ball, 1984, Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989, Locke, Spirduso & Silverman, 1990). Therefore, I recognized my background as a motivation to study integration but conducted the research for the purpose of presenting the views of the participants, not as a forum for my own views.

Rationale for Qualitative Methods

My primary aim was to provide detailed understanding of the roles of the central office and school staffs in the experiences designed to implement integration of special education students into the existing regular education structure of elementary school cultures. I analyzed the framework and activities of supervision in the integration process as viewed from the perspectives of groups effecting the change and affected by it. Esland (1972) emphasized the importance of the study of group perspectives to change in stating that:

Innovation arises in, and acquires legitimacy through, group definitions and an appropriate structure of relationships. It is, therefore, a cultural phenomenon...Even if the innovation originated at a time and place far removed from a specific institution, its realization inside that institution will nevertheless be mediated through its patterns of social interaction.

The need to study integration from the perspective of people's self-understanding within the school culture was best elicited through the use of the qualitative methodologies of in-depth interviewing and observation (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, Marshall & Rossman, 1989). This afforded the benefit of multiple perspectives focused upon the topic of supervision in the implementation of integration in the school setting.

Qualitative methodologies of in-depth interviewing and observation were the most appropriate procedures for

collecting the information to respond to the research questions. I deemed these methods as most applicable to the process and the environment to be studied. This decision was in agreement with recommendations made by such researchers as Ball (1987) and Marshall & Rossman (1989) who support qualitative methods for the in-depth study of processes in complex organizations.

This design enabled an intensive, long term investigation from the perspectives and understandings of the participants. Additionally, informal observations of students, teachers and staff were made on three separate days for full school days, as well as random observations made before and after scheduled interviews. Finally, review of all documents dealing with integration was conducted by myself. In this manner supervision was examined from multiple perspectives focused on the integration process.

Focus of the Study

The focus of the study was the county's overall planning process through a LRE Task Force and the interpretation of their recommendations in one elementary school which had begun implementation of integration in the current academic year. The planning and recommendation work of the LRE Task Force had been completed, although they continued to have quarterly meetings for inservice or continued work on

specific topics which were relevant to the members. The initial stage of implementation of the integration program had been in place long enough for individuals to have experience in the integration changes and to be able to assess the impact of the program on their roles, their responsibilities, other students and other staff in the school.

County Setting

Population

The setting of the study was a large mixed suburban/rural county in West Virginia. This county has been described as "a traditionally rural county, although rapid growth, due mainly to its location (between two urban areas), is changing the county into a suburban area" (Chamber of Commerce, 1991). The county has a population of 42,835 according to the 1990 census (Chamber of Commerce, 1991). This number represents an increase of 12.8% in the last ten years. The county's population is of two types: families in densely clustered housing developments threading along an interstate which roughly bisects the county along a large valley and lightly populated rural areas, both north and south of this central densely populated area. Rural areas are typically composed of forested land with small family owned farms.

Employment

The chief employers located in the county are public education, one major electrical power plant, service industries, small retail businesses and family run farms. Because the county is located between two large cities, residents are also employed in businesses/industries located outside of the county. Since one of those cities is the state capitol, government is also an employer outside the county boundaries.

Education

The public school system serves 8,270 students (206 students in self-contained special education classes). These students attend 13 elementary schools, four middle schools, four high schools and one vocational school. Students are educated by 512.5 teachers (67.5 teachers of self-contained special education classes). The school system also has 13 county administrators, 31 principals, 34 support personnel (including counselors, diagnosticians, and librarians) and 280 service personnel (i.e. aides, bus drivers, cooks, secretaries, and custodians).

Self-contained special education classes are located in three elementary schools, one middle school and two high schools. Students are not generally served in their "home" school which is closest to their home and the one which they

would attend if they were not disabled. They are most often placed in classes located in centralized locations to which the students are bused. This type of school has been termed "cluster school" by Lou Brown and his associates (Brown, Long, Udvari-Solner, Davis, Vandeventer, Ahlgren, Johnson Gruenewald & Jorgensen, 1989, pg 262) because the special education services are clustered in "a regular school attended by an unnaturally large proportion of students with intellectual disabilities, but it is not the one any or most would attend if they were not labeled disabled" (page 262).

Six such cluster schools have been formed within regular education schools to serve students placed in self-contained classroom settings in this county. In three of these cluster schools (School A, N and R) centralizing locations of self-contained classrooms has resulted in an overrepresentation of students in special education in proportion to students in regular education according to the county ratios. This results in one such "cluster" school at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Table 1 illustrates the distribution and ratios of the students in self-contained special education classes in the county.

Table 1. Students in Self-contained Classes.

School	Total No. Students	No. of Students in Self-Contained Classes	Ratio of Students in Self-contained Classes to Total Student Population in	
			School	County
Elementary			1:57	
School A	429	55*	1:8	
School B	464	8	1:56	
School C	281	5	1:58	
School D	222	0		
School E	135	0		
School F	335	0		
School G	261	0		
School H	199	0		
School I	132	0		
School J	353	0		
School K	302	0		
School L	275	0		
School M	503	0		
Middle School			1:103	
School N	767	19 *	1:40	
School O	350	0		
School P	376	0		
School Q	466	0		
High School			1:20	
School R	916	92 *	1:10	
School S	589	27	1:22	
School T	293	0		
School U	628	0		

* Denotes a cluster school.

School Setting

The study was conducted in Bradford Elementary School (School A of Table 1) located near the geographical center of the county. Bradford Elementary (See Note 1) has a total enrollment of 429 students, with two administrative principals. The student population is comprised of 374 regular education students (kindergarten through fifth grades) taught by 19 teachers and two kindergarten aides, and 55 special education students (preschool through middle school ages), taught by 14 teachers and 9 aides. Students in the regular education classes attended their home school while students in special education classes were bused from locations throughout the county to this centrally located school. The school's special education students represent the majority of the county's moderately, severely and profoundly disabled students in the county who have been placed in self-contained classroom environments.

The school has four separate buildings (See Appendix A for diagrams of the school complex and each building). The main building, which was the original elementary school, contained all of the regular education classes, except kindergarten and the commonly used facilities--administrative offices, library, cafeteria/gym and teacher's lounge. Three other buildings, joined by ramps and covered walkways,

house the music, kindergarten and all special education classes.

Historical Background

Bradford Elementary School opened in 1952 for students in the first through fifth grades, serving only regular education populations. During the late 1960s, the county consummated an agreement with the state's training facility for the mentally and physically disabled to serve the county's disabled student population. The agreement resulted in the establishment of a center as a separate facility beside the elementary school. The two schools shared only the administrative principal, although the center had a head teacher who performed some of the functions of a principal. The center maintained its own student population, staff, schedule, busing, playground and facilities, including a separate kitchen.

In 1974 a change in the administrative principalship brought about changes in the divisions between the two schools. King, who is still principal, explained the reasoning behind his efforts to bring the two schools together by saying, "...it just made sense to me". He eliminated the duplication of facilities, such as the two kitchens and two separate play areas, as well as absorbed the kitchen staff into the elementary school.

He also re-evaluated students served by the center. As he put it:

Well the Russian army couldn't take care of that place. There's just too many kids. It was ridiculous. It really was...I looked them over-first the kids-half of them were in wheelchairs and all that but they could read and write and all that so I put them in the regular classroom full-time... about seven of them, the only thing wrong with them was their body; they were intelligent kids. I just brought them into the regular class room.

Following this initial review of the center, the placement of students in or out of the classes of both schools was made on the basis of appropriateness for the child as determined by himself and the teachers. King related that:

Oh, 94...whatever it was...42-92...That hadn't come out. In fact, I put kids in and I didn't even test them. I come up there and I'd talk to them about an hour, give them things, talk to them...Which there wasn't any guidelines or anything. So we just did it. I bet you we didn't miss by far. I'll bet you a dollar we didn't miss by far.

Several teachers and aides who had worked at the elementary school for 16-18 years recalled instances in which their team taught a subject with a teacher from the center or when individual students were brought into their classes because they "were more or less physically handicapped, much more than any mental incapacity" (Carter).

Interestingly enough, these teachers and aides also noted a withdrawal of the special education students from activities in special education. One teacher reminisced:

Gee, in all my years here-this is my eighteenth year-there was a period of time where students were integrated. Very physically handicapped, wheelchairs-many times into the classroom and then it seemed to-there was a swing that they went back into the classroom and were housed within themselves. Then I see these beginning to be integrated to some degree with the other students (Arthur).

When I probed for the exact times these changes occurred, it became clear that the times were correlated with the development of historical events impacting on special education. The creation of center and inclusion of students under King, whose philosophy encouraged participation of students from the center in regular education, coincides with the period of time prior to special education legislation. The absence of these students, or as one teacher put it the "withdrawal" (Miller), coincides with the enactment of PL 94-142 when apparently the more severely impaired students were tested, placed and served exclusively in self-contained classrooms, resulting in a diminished contact with regular ed. students. Finally, the recent integration of special education students coincides with the current influences in special education cited earlier in this document (Braaten, et al, 1988, Davis, 1989, Gartner & Lipsky, 1987, Gerber, 1988, Hallahan, et al, 1988, Heller, Holtzman & Messick, 1982, Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, Will, 1986).

Recent Changes

From the passage of PL 94-142, the beginning of special education, the numbers of students in self-contained special education placements transported from other areas of the county steadily increased. The county administration had a need to house students in self-contained special education programs and this elementary was seen as an appropriate place to centralize instruction for these students. The principal recalls that:

...they (county administration) started creating some other classes and then what was happening was they were getting too dispersed and then ----- (the special education director) called me up one day and said that they could get some money. That they could centralize an effective centralized place for the handicapped kids (King).

As a result of county centralization of services, the number of special education students taught at the school increased. At the same time the county responded to federal mandates recognizing the need to identify unserved disabled students and increased the school's classes in special education. Bob King recalled these events that led to the addition of two buildings--one during the 1970s and a second during the 1980s:

And then when all these different categories came out for kids and then they had that Search and Find. I mean, they came out of the woodwork. Next thing we knew all these other classes started evolving.

The three buildings behind the main elementary building are presently used primarily for special education programs. The majority of these programs are for the severely and profoundly disabled students placed in twelve self-contained classrooms, serving students from four through fifteen years of age. Seven classrooms are devoted to special education pull-out programs for students with specific needs (two speech and five gifted classrooms).

The two kindergartens (one in the second building and one in the third building) and the music classroom are the only regular education programs operating within the special education buildings. Also located in the second special education building is the Chapter I reading and math program which serves regular education students primarily.

Access

Initial requests for permission to gain entry to a school were made to key personnel or gatekeepers (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989) who can grant access and give sanctioned approval to the study. Entry into the school district was attained through contact with the Director of Special Education and approval of the Superintendent of Schools. My written proposal and oral presentations were made to the Director of Special Education. Following my presentations she conveyed the proposal with her recommendation for

approval to the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and the Director of Elementary Education. The approval of all above named administrators was given for the study to proceed as outlined in my dissertation proposal.

Approval to make direct contact with members of the LRE Task Force and to gain entry into the elementary schools was attained through the recommendation of the director of special education and agreement of the principal and assistant principal. These contacts not only obtained access to the LRE Task Force and entry to the school but served to give official sanctioned approval to the study (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989).

I believe that I had a degree of advantage with regard to my acceptance by participants in the study. As stated earlier, my professional and personal history established a rapport based on the commonality of experiences with teachers and staff of both regular and special education. This rapport was helpful in easing the access to members of the study groups in an integration process.

Researcher's Role

My sensitivity to issues concerning integration and the need to establish a rapport with the participants in the study brought about the need to define my role in the study setting (Denscombe, 1984, Lofland & Lofland, 1984). My

background and purpose was disclosed to the group members from the beginning of the study. This knowledge helped promote rapport and generate a feeling of openness (Lofland & Lofland, 1984).

However, I took precautions to minimize any unnecessary attention to my presence in the school. I attempted to be as unobtrusive as possible to diminish any temptation I may have had to interact with participants regarding the study. If such exchanges had been allowed they had the potential to threaten interview or observation results (Easterday, Papademas, Schorr, & Valentine, 1982). I adopted the role of a learner (Lofland & Lofland, 1984) who was asking to be taught or informed about the integration process in this school. In this role I hoped to balance my sensitivity to the concerns of the participants and my need to be objective in the investigation of the integration process.

Selection of Participants

My intention was to obtain the participation of all members in the critical study groups--the Special Education Director, LRE Task Force, principals, ancillary staff and teachers of special and regular education. I did recognize, however, that the ultimate decision to participate was an individual one which was voluntary (Honigmann, 1982). Recognizing the dangers of self-selection for possible bias

in the data collection, I monitored group representation and made all attempts to obtain total member participation.

Description of Participants

Special Education Director

Ms. James previously served as a special education administrator in an adjoining county. She had served as the special education director in the county for the past four years. In the following excerpts Ms. James described her first two years as special education director in the county:

So, really I just kind of listened to what was going on and did not make a lot of changes when I first came because nobody knew me. I was from another county and philosophically I don't believe it is a good idea to go in and make a lot of changes.

During my first two years, I had time to kind of listen to what was going on, try to get a feel for what was and wasn't happening and a number of things came to my attention.

In the following two years, Ms. James had been the instrumental force in encouraging others in the county to look at the status of least restrictive environment for special education students and to consider making changes for planned integration.

LRE Task Force

The Task Force was composed of the Special Education Director, two parents who work at the county's Parent

Education Resource Center and every teacher of special education who worked with students in a self-contained classroom. Personnel changes in the county, such as teacher transfers to positions that were not in self-contained classrooms, resulted in membership changes during the two years of the LRE Task Force. This Task Force was composed of 18 members during the first year when the plans for integration were developed. During the second year, while the integration was being implemented, the Task Force contained 19 members. Seven members were teachers in the elementary school where I conducted the study. Table 2 depicts the membership and the year(s) members served on the Task Force:

Table 2. Membership of the LRE Task Force.

Membership	Year(s) Served		
	First Only	Second Only	Both Years
Special Education Director			XX
Parent Education Resource Center			
1 Member			XX
1 Member	XX		
1 Member		XX	
Special Education Teachers			
2 Members	XX		
3 Members		XX	
13 Members			XX

With membership changes during this two-year period, a total of 22 individuals were involved in Task Force activities. These individuals comprised the membership contacted for interviews. Nineteen members agreed to participate in the study.

None of the remaining three individuals, who were teachers of self-contained special education classes, responded to any of seven attempts to illicit their participation in the study even though the follow-up response forms included additional options for more information and declining to participate. One of these three teachers had been a member of the Task Force during its first year and was on maternity leave during the data collection phase. Interview requests were sent to her home with no response. The other two, who were also teachers at Bradford Elementary, failed to respond to stamped return envelopes by mail for the LRE Task Force or letter drop at the faculty mailboxes.

Bradford Elementary School

The study targeted specific groups within the school for interviews: principals, teachers of regular and special education, classroom aides and ancillary staff. Table 3 presents the results by group of the requests to participate in the study:

Table 3. Study Participation of Bradford Elementary School Staff.

Group	Total Number	Participation Status		
		Consented	Declined	No Response
Principals	2	2	--	--
Teachers of Special Ed.	14	9	2	3
Teachers of Regular Ed.	20	15	3	2
Aides	11	4	5	2
Ancillary Staff	6	2	1	3
Totals	53	32	11	10

Thirty-two (60%) of the total number of individuals agreed to be interviewed. The eleven individuals who declined to be interviewed and the ten who failed to respond to the initial or follow-up requests were distributed among the groups with aides and ancillary staff having the highest proportion of non-participation.

Definitive reasons for their reluctance to be interviewed were not attainable from all those refusing to participate; however, several of the individuals did talk with me informally about their decisions. Two of the aides related that they felt very apprehensive about being interviewed and were concerned that "they did not know enough" or

that "they did not know the right answers". Although I tried to put these individuals at ease, their anxiety was too great to overcome during the course of the study. The three ancillary staff members who were employed by another agency and were contracted by the county school board to deliver specific services to any student in the county felt they did not know enough about the integration at Bradford Elementary School to participate in the study. Encouraging them to be interviewed was likewise unsuccessful.

Methods/Data Collection

Information was collected from intensive interviewing, informal observation and document review. The descriptions that follow detail the data collection procedures.

Document review

Written documents supplied by the Special Education Director relevant to the county's planned integration efforts were reviewed to further understand the process used in planning for implementation of special education integration. Two types of documents were examined: 1) materials used by the LRE Task Force to develop the planned integration program and 2) materials developed by the Task Force and/or the Special Education Director to implement the planned integration.

The following is a bibliographic list of materials used by the LRE Task Force in planning their integration recommendations:

Fox, W., Thousand, J., Williams, W., Fox, T., Towne, P., Reid, R., Conn-Powers, C., & Calcagni, L. (1988). Best Educational Practices '88: Educating Learners with Severe Handicaps. Center for Developmental Disabilities, University of Vermont.

Kentucky Systems Change Project: Technical Assistance Systems for Local Districts. (1989-1990 School Year).

Statewide Project at the Center for Developmental Disabilities (Fall, 1987). Best Practice Guidelines for Students with Intensive Educational Needs. University of Vermont.

Van Horn, G. (Unable to determine year). Substantial Disabilities. CASE: Indiana University.

These documents were examples of programs implemented in other states and were used as guides in developing the county's program. As the Special Education Director put it

I got any information I could so that we would have something to go by. Then the Task Force sort of put together what they felt was the best from everything. That way we made it our own, adopted it to our own situation (Ms. James).

The following annotated bibliographic list represents documents developed by the LRE Task Force and/or the Special Education Director relevant to the planned integration:

IEPs: Integrated Education Programs (1990).

An application made to the West Virginia Department of Education for federally assisted discretionary grant funding. The request contained three parts: 1) community-based instructional field trips for the county's

12 self-contained special education classes; 2) a one week curriculum development workshop for functional programming with 12 special education teachers; and 3) construction of two classrooms and one functional living area at Bradford High School needed to move students from Bradford Elementary School to place them in an age appropriate setting. Funding was approved for the field trip portion of the grant. Implementation of the remaining two aspects of the proposal was achieved through county general educational funding.

Least Restrictive Environment Task Force Report (1991).

This document was a product of the workshop meetings of the LRE Task Force. The report was available to all teachers of special education self-contained classes and was intended to be a guide to implementation of the county's planned integration. The report contained the county's definition of integration, LRE long term goals, mainstreaming guidelines, strategy ideas for supporting students in the mainstream, benefits and challenges of social integration, goals for community living skills curriculum, community based instruction suggestions, and evaluation forms for planned integration.

Best Practice Guidelines for Students with Intensive Educational Needs (1991).

These guidelines were adapted from the Best Practice Guidelines (1987) established by the Center for Developmental Disabilities, 499C Waterman Building, UVM, Burlington, VT 05405. Twenty-six statements reflect what the Task Force considered to be the ideal practices for planned integration of special education students from self-contained classes.

Transportation Reinforcement Incentive Program (TRIP) (1991).

This document outlines the guidelines, rules, rewards, consequences, and contract for special education students riding on handicapped or regular buses. The program incorporates behavior modification procedures to be used by the bus driver and/or aide.

Five Year Plan (1991).

This document is the county's educational master plan for the next five years. It is a comprehensive description of the county school system and includes all of the short and long range goals for educational program planning. A segment of the special education

section of the document is devoted to the future of planned integration in the county. This segment will guide the continued implementation of special education integration over the next five years.

These documents were designed to guide the planned integration by providing long range goals (e.g. components of the county's Five Year Plan) as well as provide suggestions for the teachers of special education who were implementing the goals in their schools (e.g. LRE Task Force Report). Examination of the documents provided insights into the short term and long range plans developed by the LRE Task Force and the Special Education Director. These documents served as indicators of the intended program of the Task Force. When compared to the actual implementation in one elementary school, a perspective of the components of the planned integration can be gained.

Observations

Document reviews and interviews were triangulated with participant observation in an attempt to obtain a systematic description of events, behaviors, and meanings attached to those behaviors in a natural setting (Lofland & Lofland, 1984, Marshall & Rossman, 1989). This type of observation involved the looking, listening, and note taking during various opportunities available during the study. Data collection from observations extended over a long enough

time to incorporate several differing activities related to integration.

On two occasions I had the opportunity to observe presentations by LRE Task Force members on the planned integration activities. One such occasion was during the county's teacher in-service meetings at the beginning of the 1991-92 school year. Several members discussed various programs of the planned integration (e.g. Community Based Instruction), the progress made last year, and introduced new programs (e.g. "Kids on the Block").

The second observation was made during the West Virginia Council for Exceptional Children Conference in October 1992. One session of the conference was presented by LRE Task Force members on the use of learning strategies to enhance the achievement of special education students. Inclusive in this presentation were references to the integration changes in the county and the activities used to implement those changes.

During the six months of this study I made informal observations each day that I had an interview scheduled. I spent a minimum of two hours observing interactions among and between groups within the school: teachers of regular and special education, ancillary staff, students of regular and special education, school staff, and principals. Since interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the

participant, the times of these informal observations ranged across the length of the school day during the course of the study. Observations were made in various areas throughout the four buildings of the school.

In conjunction with these informal observations, I conducted three, full day, intensive observations. These observations were spaced at intervals of three weeks throughout the study. For each observation I attempted to duplicate a special education student's entire day in the school, including riding the school buses with them.

The day began about 6:30 when I met the bus driver and/or bus aide, continued at Bradford Elementary School, and concluded with the completion of a bus route at approximately 5:00. I traveled on different bus routes, observing on both regular and special education buses. During the day I moved throughout the school observing activity in hallways, cafeteria (observing breakfast and lunch), classes, administrative and secretarial offices, teacher's lounges, library and playground.

Two of the days consisted of "usual" school day routines; however, I was able to observe one day in which a school-wide Health Fair was held in the cafeteria. I observed students as they moved through the exhibits with their class and participated in the group and individual activities of the fair.

All of these opportunities allowed me to gather impressions of the school culture, to observe incidence of informal interactions between its members, and to triangulate information given through in-depth interviews.

Interviews

Intensive interviewing entailed "a guided conversation whose goal was to elicit from the interviewee rich detailed materials that could be used in qualitative analysis" (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). Interviews were conducted from a predetermined list of questions derived from the research questions (See page 5) with language which was adapted to each groups perspective without changing the meaning of the questions.

The questions were field tested with six individuals meeting the same group characteristics but who were not part of the study. Only minor modifications in wording were made following the suggestions of those participants in the field test. The resulting lists of interview questions follows:

LRE TASK FORCE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think the Task Force was formed and the integration changes begun in the county?
2. How did the Task Force arrive at its recommendations?
3. What was your role in the Task Force's efforts?
4. What was the greatest success of the Task Force?

5. What was the major difficulty in developing the integration plan? How did the Task Force overcome it?
6. What do you see as the future of integration in this county?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS

1. What are the integration changes that have been made in your school?
2. Why do you think changes were made in the special education program?
3. What activities were used to implement the integration plan? Who initiated these activities? Who supervised these activities?
4. Has your role (job) changed with the implementation of integration? How were you assisted in making these changes? Who assisted you in implementing these changes?
5. What problems have you encountered thus far in this integration?
6. How were you assisted to resolve these problems?
7. What have been the positive outcomes resulting from the integration of special education students?
8. What do you see as the future for continued implementation of the increased integration?
9. What do you think is the most important (critical factor) to the success of the integration program? (What, in your opinion, is needed to make integration work?)

These lists of questions acted as a guide and was "not a tightly structured set of questions to be asked verbatim as written...Rather, it was a list of things to be sure to ask about when talking to the person being interviewed" (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). With the use of this list, the

emphasis was on what the participant said while minimizing my influence upon the interview (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989).

Individuals were contacted via memos which briefly described the study, requested their participation and included a response form. Return of the forms was through stamped, self-addressed mail for LRE Task Force members or through the school's mail drop in the main faculty lounge at Bradford Elementary School. Up to six subsequent memos were sent in an effort to elicit as many interviews as possible.

I made every possible effort to make the interview as convenient and comfortable as possible for the participants. Interviews were conducted at the time and place designated by the interviewee and lasted an average of forty five minutes. I chose to tape record the interviews so that I could maintain eye contact and focus on the responses of the participant.

Data Analysis

The taped interviews were transcribed verbatim by myself (33 interviews) and two secretaries (10 interviews) using dictaphone equipment and word processing (Word Perfect 5.1 software package). The resultant transcripts were checked for accuracy by myself. I read each of the transcripts as soon as they were typed which checked the

transcription against my recollections as the interviewer. I also verified two random selections from each tape by comparing taped excerpts to the transcriptions. No instance of variance in the transcriptions from the taped interviews.

The transcripts were then imported into Ethnograph, which is an analysis software designed to be used with data from qualitative research studies. Ethnograph was of assistance in the coding, sorting and organizing the vast amount of data collected from interviews and observations.

Data were analyzed in five modes: organizing the data; generating categories, themes and patterns; testing the emergent hypotheses against the data; searching for alternative explanations of the data; and writing the conclusions (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Each phase of data analysis entailed data reduction as the means of obtaining manageable chunks and interpretation as decisions were made about the meaning of the words and acts of the participants in the study. The steps involved in data reduction were:

1. **Organizing the data required several readings of the transcripts and field notes to acquire familiarity with the data. Initial familiarity was gained through my intense personal involvement with the data collection and transcription of most of the tapes. Additionally, checks for accuracy of the transcriptions was made.**
2. **Generating categories, themes and patterns through continued reading of the data to identify recurring idea or language patterns and identify salient themes. These themes became tentative codes which were used to eliminate unrelated data and identify data under related categories for each research question. A**

preliminary list of possible codes was generated to use as I read the transcripts line-by-line (Appendix C).

Code words were added to the printed, numbered lines of the transcribed interviews by hand. Appropriate code notations were made in the margin with brackets to mark the start and end of the numbered line segments.

Modifications were made to the original code word list to reflect more accurately the categories, themes and patterns which emerged as the transcripts were coded. The final code word list found in Appendix D reflects the additions and deletions of code words from the original code word list.

3. **Comparing/contrasting of data to fit the research questions posed at the outset of the study to identify and test the emerging hypotheses against the collected data.** Coded information was input into Ethnograph and searches were then made to identify segments from all interviews which were relevant to each code resulting in segments grouped by code.
4. **Searching for alternative explanations of the data to critically look at the emerging patterns and explanations.** Searches were then read for verification of the appropriateness of posed explanations achieved through rejection of all feasible alternatives. Perceptions relevant to each of the study's research questions were examined through re-reading of the code word searches. Modifications were made to these perceptions based on the re-examination of these code word searches.
5. **Writing the findings.** A draft of the results was written based upon my perceptions to each of the research questions and the code word searches. This draft was reviewed twice and modified where necessary to reflect accurately the original interview responses.

Finally, a complete final draft (chapters 1-5) was submitted to each interviewee for review and comment prior to its completion. Information acquired was incorporated in final results of the study.

Using this methodology I followed a descriptive case study approach to analyze the changes brought about by integration.

CHAPTER IV RESEARCH FINDINGS

Least Restrictive Environment Task Force

Background

Special Education Director's Perspective Impetus for the integration of special education students into the regular education mainstream in the school district actually began two years ago. Several sources were credited by Ms. James, Director of Special Education, as contributing factors leading to the implementation of the increased integration of students in self-contained special education classes this school year.

The following excerpts from my interview with Ms. James relate her perspective on the details of the influences which led to the changes in the district's special education program:

A lot of things happened that led us to that (integration changes): one was, I think, concerns on the part of parents where they voiced to me about a lack of integration opportunities for their students.

So, really I just kind of listened to what was going on and did not make a lot of changes when I first came because nobody knew me. I was from another county and philosophically I don't believe it is a good idea to go in and make a lot of changes.

I guess my second year here parents felt more comfortable with me. Two parents who were staff members at our Parent Resource Center beginning in November of 1988 had voiced concerns to me during that year of 88-89, 89-90 and some parents who had moved from other places had voiced some concerns to me about the lack of integration opportunities for their children and how things were different in other places and why were we not doing some of these things. So I guess those two years I had time to kind of listen to what was going on, try to get a feel for what was and wasn't happening and a number of things came to my attention. Of course, the first year there are a lot of different issues to deal with so I wasn't even aware of some of these things. But from parents' expressions and then the teachers expressed to me and then the state department brought it to our attention, also: that we had students that were over age at our Bradford Elementary School that should have been at the high school program but were at Bradford Elementary; that some of the students got shortened instructional days; that there was a lack of integration opportunities at some schools; that some of the transportation was excessive; that we had a program at the high school level in our mildly handicapped mentally impaired students were served rather well through the vocational program, but our program at the high school level wasn't fully fleshed out in the way of community based instruction.

It [the state department action] was through a complaint that was filed by the--on behalf of the student by the West Virginia Advocates and their complaint stated that the students were not in age appropriate facilities and that the age spans within classrooms were not appropriate. And they're correct on both allegations and part of the complaint process of the State Department of Education is that you have to draw up some sort of plan on how you are going to address some of these things. How you are going to make the age ranges correct? How you are going to correct the lack of integration opportunities for students? So because of that--and everyone pretty much knows it, I mean, people at Bradford Elementary, we refer to it as the state department brought it to our attention [Laughter]. Which is kind of a more

positive way than stating that a complaint was filed-- a matter of semantics.

Of course, I am always able to say we have to do this. We just have to do this. Of course, I can always say the state department is aware of this and we have to do this [Laughter]. For that one reason that was a positive thing. I could always say the state department did file a complaint about this and so we have to do our best to make this work...It was an impetus for making things happen although we were already doing things. But it definitely gave a push to what we have to do.

In summary, issues of increased integration were raised primarily by parents of students in self-contained classes in special education. The parents' sentiments on increased integration were supported by the opinions of teachers of special education students. Ms. James related her openness to these expressions of concern as well as her awareness that researchers and "experts" in the field of special education were in favor of implementation of increased integration "from reviewing all the literature". However, the State Department of Education was the catalyst for action when it required the county to develop a plan to implement increased integration opportunities for students as a result of an advocacy group action.

Perspective of LRE Task Force Members The other eighteen responding members had several sources to which they attributed the forces responsible for the formation of the LRE

Task Force and the integration changes in the county. Table 4 lists the categories of their responses.

Table 4. LRE Task Force Member Attribution of Source.

Attributed Source	Number of Responses
County School Board	8
Following Mandates from State/Federal Gov. (3)	
Desire of Admin. to be Innovative/Proactive (3)	
Admin. Realized Programs were not working (1)	
Changes Appeared at the Beginning of Year (1)	
Federal Government	7
Parents/Advocates of Special Ed. Students	6
State Legislature	4
Teachers of Special Education Classes	3
Recent Trends/Research in Educational Practice	2
Director of Special Education	1

The varied sources cited by the members of the Task Force are almost identical to those related by Ms. James, Director of Special Education. The only exceptions are the naming of the county school board and Ms. James as sources of the forces moving to increase integration in the county. One Task Force member cited the efforts of Ms. James as one of the contributing influences toward implementation of integration changes:

I think we need to add Ms. James in there. She's been a catalyst for some of those changes...And so I think she's been one of the biggest ones to push for this integration along with us realizing the need and the parents wanting integration (Martin).

The County School Board was not named by Ms. James but was cited by eight of the Task Force members. However, a breakdown of these eight responses indicates a strong belief that mandates from the federal and state governments flowed through the local school board to enforce a change in the schools. In fact, the combined responses for sources originating outside of the local school system was by far the major cited source (16). As several members stated:

Primarily, as a result of the mandate from the board of education and from the state regulations coming down to the board of educations and the board of educations then going into school saying we need to have this done (Panell).

I think it is coming probably from a federal level on down, you know, higher up level then to the state and the county (Mayes).

I guess there's new laws being passed for more mainstream integration. I know I'm not positive on all the rules and regulations, but they (federal government) wanted kids mainstreamed as much as possible (Carter).

Interestingly, a relatively small number of the members, six, (6) related the source of the formation of the Task Force and the integration changes to parents of students in special education, as previously noted by Ms. James. Only one of the Task Force members mentioned the complaint filed by the advocacy group and only two made a reference to the advocacy group in any manner:

Probably because somebody dictated it had to be done. That is the first thing. Probably a bunch of advocates and parents got onto the state

department and federal people, and they came down and said, 'This has not been done.' Some suits, class action suits, and stuff like this and I'm sure a lot of places it wasn't being done (Lowry).

I think parent advocates and a lot of things have come about (Carter).

I think the West Virginia advocates had a lot to do in pushing the county to a-to make this-to help the student be more like every other student. And telling them that they need to be doing activities just like the regular education... (Jackson).

In conclusion, the Task Force members believed that the initiative or the "push" as some referred to it came from sources outside the local school system. Therefore, from their perspective, the changes toward integration of special education students emanated from external policy decisions, but "came down" to the local school system as mandates to be implemented.

Formation of the LRE Task Force

Ms. James related the directions which were taken following the mandates from the state department:

These issues had come up to me--had come to my attention. So in making all these discussions I could see--and from reviewing all the literature...There was a lack of integration opportunities at the schools, a curriculum that needed to be a little bit more fleshed out that targeted planned integration opportunities [and] community based instruction kinds of activities needed to be developed. We needed to get some sort of task force together that would meet periodically to discuss these issues. So I wrote a discretionary grant through the department of education. In fact, I wrote three that year.

So part of that was to have the LRE Task Force and even though we didn't get funded for that part we were able to have those things. So we had that in the summer [1990]. It was about a week and we invited all the MI [Mentally Impaired] teachers.

Task Force Process

The LRE Task Force met to develop plans and guidelines for the increased integration opportunities of students in self-contained classes. An intensive work session in the summer produced the framework for the implementation of planned integration.

As Special Education Director, Ms. James, was the individual who set the manner in which the Task Force worked and was responsible for the supervision of its activities. She shared insights into her background that influenced her rationale for the conduct of the Task Force meetings:

...coming from another place we tried some collaborative things and we were accused, and rightfully so, of it having been a very top down kind of deal where the people were chosen and they really didn't want to be chosen. They didn't have any input on being chosen and they were told that your school is going to be the pilot and some of them didn't want to be a pilot [Chuckles]. And so I got to stand up in front of everyone and explain how we were going to do this and a lot of people weren't too happy. So I thought that was not a really good way to go about doing it. So we tried to do it where people have chosen to be a part of it.

Ms. James relied on a bottom-up method of supervision to allow the Task Force to plan for the integration of students. She provided the resources, guidance and funding

to pay members for their work while they collaborated to produce the framework for integration plans. She recalled the manner in which the members worked:

I think it was that way, I mean, that was the intent. And not to be like any kind of a top down thing that I could see. We used the grant as a format of five things that we need to accomplish. Well, we used that, but how to accomplish them was up for grabs--anyway that everyone felt that we should accomplish them.

I'll say what do you think about this or what do you think about this. That isn't what may happen. It's just that I want people's input about what they think.

You know all this research and data and articles and all that. They [Task Force members] went through and found the parts that they could use...we had a lot of brainstorming...

Members of the Task Force echoed the perceptions of Ms. James as they described the work on the planned integration:

I think Ms. James allowed us a lot of freedom...a lot of us were interested in how we were going to do it, as a particular teacher, you know, and it was a lot of brainstorming as to how our different classes could do different things (Bain).

We had a 'jam session', or whatever it is called when you all get together and throw in everything you could think of and then we took the possibilities of what we could do and formulated a five-year plan... (Camden).

And that's what Ms. James encouraged us to do through the whole thing. She encouraged us to think of 'what if'. What if this could happen? (Powell).

Ms. James' style of leadership allowed for mutual gains

of understanding. She related the knowledge she acquired from collaboration with the Task Force members:

You see the teachers made me aware of many things that I did not know...I assumed too much. I did not realize the days were quite that short...They made me aware of the lack of PE for some of their students. So all of these things they made me aware of...

Two of the Task Force members expressed the group's perspective on the benefits of Ms. James' style of leadership:

Because it's like--it seems like every five to seven years we say, 'We must mainstream'. And then five to seven years later they say, 'No, that's not working. Let's pull everybody.' I just was like, 'Oh, we're in the vicious cycle again.' But by the time the week was over, because we worked together, because there was a core of people there, I felt like we can do this. You know it will work (Bain).

One of the things that she said she wanted us to do--one of her goals for the committee was to develop a five year plan. So that was kind of good cause that was a good framework to plug things in on. And I believe what we did from that was we divided into smaller working groups and attacked community based instruction and planned integration (Powell).

Throughout the week members worked in various ways to develop the five year integration plan. Three members comments represent the group's perceptions and serve to describe the techniques used:

Well, of course, we met as a large group at first and then we broke down into smaller groups and were assigned specific items to discuss. And then after that information was generated and it was brought back to the main group (Martin).

Okay, we worked in small groups. We had some things we worked on individually...But mostly doing small groups and then kind of coming together and talking about--you know, deciding...and then all agreed that this is what we wanted to say based on what everyone seemed to think (Gates).

We all had input in the form and we got to say what we thought and we put everything together and we all knew the special ed. law so we didn't have any trouble formulating the plan to operate under (Jackson).

Following the initial work session the Task Force continued to meet at least once quarterly to assess progress on the implementation of the planned integration and to continue to work on areas of difficulty related to that implementation. Ms. James spoke about the continued work of the Task Force as follows:

We wanted ten things per child per week of integration opportunities and that was the goal for last year.

So we could kind of get an idea of what we were trying to do. Well, anyway, out of that came some guidelines and it was a time for them to all talk, too. So we targeted some things and some things that I was supposed to work on and some things that they were supposed to work on. I was supposed to work on improving--and this happened in June--I was supposed to work on improving the transportation of the student, extending the school days, cutting down the time the students spent on the bus, trying to get some help for PE [physical education]--cause the students were not getting access to PE--finding money for the trips--which we did. I don't know--different things that we each had.

And then they were to go back and it was very individualized because everyone--we didn't say you had to do these things. It was you go back and

see what you can do within your school. We took it from the approach that I would be there but we wouldn't go in with the great big fan fare and say this is what we are doing and this is how we're doing it. Each person within their own school is going to do their own kind of thing.

Members agreed with Ms. James that the problem solving and collaborative nature of the Task Force continued throughout the following year of meetings:

We got back together and talked about what worked and what didn't work; and as a whole, I felt like we more or less agreed that we needed to give in order to get the kids accepted, because some of the [regular education] teachers had the opinion that we were just dropping the kids on them (Daily).

Then we have had various meetings since to see how we are getting along; talk about problems and things of that nature (Camden).

Difficulties Encountered

Task Force members recognize that the process of collaborating to develop integration plans was not without difficulties. One of these difficulties centered around the apprehensions felt by members as they approached the week long work session:

When we began there just seemed like there's no way we're going to come to any conclusions by the end of the week on this. It seems like much too big a task. But once we broke it down and thought in terms of the particular level we were working on, you know, it worked (Gates).

I think, you know, coming from the different perspectives and I think everybody, too, when they

get--you get in there, you naturally say, 'Well, what is it going to do for me?' And not that you're trying to be selfish or anything, but it's like, 'How is this going to work for me?' (Bain).

Questions, wondering can we do this? Are the kids capable of doing this? Are we pushing them too hard? Lots of questions (Daily).

Another area of difficulty indirectly affected the planning of the members and was resolved through the cooperation of the county administrators:

Ms. James and the county coordinator before her have worked on quite extensively and it's just that you only have so many buses and there is only so much you can do (Gates).

I think probably more along the lines of scheduling, and administrative bus schedules...Thanks to Ms. James and Mr. Carte, the transportation director, that problem was solved. Our kids come in at the same time as regular ed (Martin).

Finally, one Task Force member related the group's reactions to one member's objections to the integration plans and his expression of anticipated resistance from teachers of regular education at his school:

One teacher just sort of said, 'Oh well, they don't really need it. Oh well, it would just be a hassle. Oh well...' And we went, 'Just wait a minute.' You know, we had group support during this LRE thing...[I said] 'Now you're telling me that you're not going to be actively involved in getting these kids an opportunity to have the same experiences that their peers have. You're not going to do this because it might be a hassle!' (Powell).

He said, 'The gym teacher doesn't like these kids.' I said, 'Shoot. So what, there are other kids he doesn't like either but he's not allowed to exclude them. So, why doesn't he have these

kids--the ones who are able. Why aren't they in the regular phys. ed. class and music and art?' (Powell).

This example serves to depict the problem solving atmosphere of the work session as well as the cohesiveness of the group toward anything that threatened the basic premise of planned integration for the students.

Programs Developed

In addition to the Five Year Integration Plan, the Task Force generated programs that were facilitating and complementary to the implementation of planned integration activities in the schools. The following annotated list describes the programs that were developed by the Task Force and were implemented in the county:

SUMMER ACADEMY - A two-week program offered in July to all students in the county. Four tiers of academic courses in math and reading range from remedial to enrichment where students are placed according to academic needs by requests from teachers and parents. Additionally, students select a course in arts and one in science/technology in which all students are integrated and are placed by interest only. This program won the Special Education Leaders of Learning Award in the state.

TRIPS PROGRAM - A structured plan for the transportation, discipline and behavior of students in special education as they are being bused to and from school. The program gives the driver, student and parent clear guidelines, procedures and consequences for appropriate and inappropriate behaviors during transport.

COMMUNITY BASED INSTRUCTION - A grant funded program with two areas of focus: 1) expansion of the community work

study program at the secondary level; and 2) funding of six field trips per class of self-contained special education.

LEARNING STRATEGIES CURRICULUM - An adopted program to teach learning strategies and study skills to students. Ms. James describes the approach taken in training teachers:

We've allowed them to have substitutes to come to the classes and they're full cost contracts so it is half of what it would normally cost to get the hours...quite a few regular educators who have been through that. This is a special ed. approach that we may want to use with the regular ed. students and some teachers are using some of the strategies in regular ed. and our special ed. people are presenting to their faculty...I mean what you read in the literature when it says that the special ed. teacher should be looked upon as having some skills that they can share with regular ed. teachers that is really occurring in some of our schools.

The following annotated list describes the programs which were developed by the Task Force and are in the piloting stage of implementation. These programs are patterned after models such as Circle of Friends (Forest & Lusthaus, 1989), but may be modified to fit the needs of a particular group of students or school. Each program has been adopted by one teacher as a project for her students prior to its acceptance as a county wide program. As one Task Force member said, "...we just didn't want to drop a big bombshell on everybody" (Powell).

HOMEROOM PROGRAM - Students from the self-contained class at Madison Elementary were assigned to regular education homeroom classes. These students participated with their homeroom class for opening exercises [e.g.,

attendance, announcement], phys. ed., music, playtime, assemblies and lunch. The program eliminated the need for the students to 'congregate in an extra room by themselves' (Powell) until the bell rang and the aide would 'take them over to the classroom like little ducks in a row' (Powell).

An example of an unanticipated interaction that resulted from such a program was noted by Ms. Powell when a fourth grade student invited the student from special education to trick-or-treat with her:

And it ended up that this mother [of the fourth grade student] went--the mother and the buddy went and picked up the student and took her to their house. They dressed her up, got her ready and put a costume on her, took her to the skating party and took her home afterwards to her own house. And that's the first time she had ever been any place with anybody, you know, that wasn't a relative...after that she was just wild. The fact that somebody cared about her and that she had a friend (Powell).

The same teacher cited a problem with teachers of regular education having apprehensions over the behavior and discipline of students from special education who were placed in homerooms. From Ms. Powell's perspective the child was displaying behaviors which were to be expected of any boy his age. His actions were "just normal gross stuff...at the lunch table he would open his mouth and show people his food, make nasty noises and the typical things." He was a year older than the other students and Ms. Powell recognized that "he was twelve already and his hormones had

kicked in and she wasn't used to that...She thought he was perverted."

Ms. Powell persisted in stressing to the other teacher that the boy should be disciplined in the same ways as any other student who behaved inappropriately. Still the teacher had to be talked through her options for discipline with concrete specific examples of the actions she would take with other students in the same situations.

Although the teacher's level of comfort increased, she continued to inform Ms. Powell of incidents with the boy's behavior. One such incident was announced to Ms. Powell in the faculty lounge when the other teacher said, "Oh, you won't believe it. He said a four letter word!" Contrary to the teacher's expectation, Ms. Powell's reaction was to say, "Great! You know, that makes me feel better for him because now when he goes to middle school he isn't going to be out of place...He's going to survive." Ms. Powell exhibited a great deal of effort to assist the teacher of regular education understand and accept this boy but her overriding concern is for the progress of this child.

Another difficulty remained a problem in the program and is yet to be resolved. The transportation of a few of the students prohibited getting them to school in time to participate in the morning exercises. Therefore, a few of the students are not able to participate as fully in the

Homeroom Program because they are not at the school in time and miss the opportunity to be involved.

BUDDY CLUB - Program patterned after the Circle of Friends concept (Forest & Lusthaus, 1989). Students in regular education classes at the high school were partnered with students from an elementary self-contained class. During the entire school year the high school buddies would participate in activities designed to express friendship and acceptance of their partners. These activities included Special Olympics Spring Games, Halloween party, Christmas party, and spontaneous phone calls.

One teacher cited an example that demonstrates the benefits of the Buddy Club:

That was the best Run-Dribble-Shoot we ever did cause the ----- High kids. That Buddies Club had some of these great big ole strapping football boys in it, you know, and my goodness they just took over...It was some of the best stuff I ever saw happen (Powell).

Positive Outcomes of Task Force

In addition to the planned integration guidelines and programs which were developed and piloted by the Task Force, members recognized several other benefits which came out of their collaboration. Ms. James gave insights into her perceptions of the positive outcomes of the Task Force's accomplishments:

The integration of students. The full school days. I'm very practical. Full school days; lessen transportation time, integration of students, the fact that their parents are pleased--the consumers seemed to be pleased--the parents of the children--the children themselves.

The teachers [Task Force members] did many more things than I would have anticipated. And like I say they took the ideas and it was very rewarding to see them go back and then do these things...I sat there [in a follow-up meeting] like this [expression of mouth open in surprise and awe] when they went around and shared their integration activities...I mean, it's not every place in the county but it is very rewarding when they come up and they say we tried this and it is really working. It is very positive, you know.

We have more participation in Special Olympics and a lot more volunteers through the Partner's Club...a lot more enthusiasm on everyone's part.

Task Force members agreed with Ms. James' recognition of a sense of accomplishment following the work sessions over the past year:

This is my thirteenth year of teaching, and a lot of times you'll talk and talk and talk, but nothing ever gets off the ground. And I actually think that the program we put together--we put it together to start right then, and we all came out of the week very excited about what was going to happen (Bain).

We found out we could be advocates for our kids which we really didn't think was a part of our role as teachers but that's what we became. Also, we found out that we could make it a real grass roots system because it wasn't something that--we weren't waiting for something to happen to us (Powell).

Probably, also, the chance for us to sit down and actually work together. Here again, we don't get that very often... (Gates).

Uh, just the idea of we were going to work for something positive. Just the idea that we were finally doing something along those lines. That we should have been doing for several years (Martin).

I think maybe that the Task Force had something to do with showing that ----- County was concerned about special ed. and that we needed to do something different to help our students be able to have a life. And to show people, we needed to also show ourselves (Jackson).

The above quotes illustrate the perception that the Task Force collaboration was a positively supportive experience for the members. They valued the work that they had done and the contributions they had made toward implementing changes in the special education system in the county.

Implementation in the Schools

The work of the Task Force was disseminated unceremoniously throughout the county school system by the Director of Special Education. Ms. James describes the way in which she handled the disclosure of the implementation of planned integration changes to the school principals of the county:

I made a general announcement and handed out a couple of papers at the first principal's meeting or second one of last year, 1990-91, [telling them that] this is what we are trying to do and the teachers in your building will be coming to you...It was like five minutes. No formal thing. Now, that was just the way I did it. Because I didn't think we needed a big, huge fan fare nor did we need to alarm anyone because I wasn't sure what the teachers were going to choose to do.

Once the work of the Task Force had developed the five year plan and refined the guidelines for planned integration activities, efforts were focused on implementation within

the individual schools. The philosophy of unobtrusive implementation continued to guide the efforts of the Task Force members as they worked to gain acceptance of integrated activities with their principal and regular education faculty. Ms. James related her rationale for reliance on a school-based approach to implementation and her support of the Task Force members in their continued work within the school:

Again the big stick approach we just didn't try to use because the principal has to be in the building every day for all of the teachers and I certainly do not, you know--well, it was just kind of a collaborative thing with them where we would talk about it and work it out. I would run things by them. I would say how is it going and it's kind of taken off so that in different schools a lot of things are going on and we don't even know about it. We hear about it. Well, that's really nice.

And part of this had to be a change on the attitudes of everyone...we did take the approach again that we weren't going to use the big stick with it. That we were going to go in on a one-to-one basis.

And it's gradually evolved to look the same way kind-of but people have got there different ways and started off in one thing and then it mushroomed into something else. So maybe, it didn't have to look the exact same way in the beginning.

Future Needs

The Task Force's work continues. As Ms. James put it, "There's no easy answer on any of it--just a long process of

change." Quarterly meetings are held for inservice, updates on planned integration efforts and collaboration on unresolved issues.

Meanwhile the Task Force members continue to work through issues related to their implementation efforts at the school sites. While progress has been made toward the integration of students from self-contained classes concerns are acknowledged. Ms. James related the areas where future efforts needed to be focused:

How much to mainstream and how do the regular classroom teachers have enough input, which I don't think we've addressed that too well. I think that is a primary concern at Bradford Elementary. That they are not invited to the PAC/IEP meeting and that they-well, sometimes they are but I mean that they don't have enough input into whether the student will come into the classroom or not. And I think that they have a real valid point.

...time to confer with each other. These are basic things that you hear over and over--the time to collaborate...communicate--you believe that you have communicated something to people but indeed you have not. The other thing is the philosophical differences in people. Can you get people to cooperate with you even though they really disagree with what you are trying to do? Some people don't believe that this is the thing to do. Some of the professionals, some of the aides feel real strongly that this is not the right thing to do. How do you get that cooperation even though that isn't what they believe to do? Sometimes it's hard for us all to get past the philosophical position that you have to be the child advocate as opposed to the collaborator...I'm certainly still working on it--try to get a relationship developed with the teachers and the people that were all working for the same thing.

Other Task Force members agreed with Ms. James' perceptions of the collaboration difficulties as issues of concern in the future of integration in the county:

It's going to take the teachers working together and I think that is probably going to be the biggest problem. Probably that will be the biggest problem. I think maybe the regular class teachers have problems with special ed. teachers. They think we have gotten all the money...The regular class [teachers] would be saying, 'They've taken these kids from our class and now they're trying to put them back in. Why is this?' And I sit in Faculty Senate meeting with these teacher and I hear about, 'We have too many kids in our class and we don't like this and we don't like that'...I'm not too sure how that's going to be worked out in the future. Uh, that is going to be a big, big, big problem to overcome, I think, with teachers. It will take a lot of training on their part and our part, I'm sure. How to work together (Gates).

...how we were going to present it to other people. You know there was some of that, because that's--I think right now that's the big thing everybody's facing, is how the other [regular education] teachers are dealing with it (Bain).

...to try to work on those little bugs and to show them that we're not dumping our kids. That we are available as another resource for them to, you know, to help them. And I just see that as being beneficial to both groups... (Martin).

I think that one thing that kind of hinders me is not having the time, I mean, to even know what is even going on in other classes (Gates).

The above quotes illustrate the agreement of Task Force members in their concerns over collaboration with teachers of regular education. Additionally, one member expressed

her apprehensions about releasing her students into integrated regular education activities:

But then I have fears about it, too. Uh, how the kids [in regular education] would react...I want it to be a successful experience and I think that this comes in it, too. In a lot of ways I'm selfish, because I have these kids working well, doing well; they feel good about themselves. Why do I want to send them out there to face failure or ridicule or be laughed at? So that personally is something I need to work out (Gates).

Task Force members are at a vantage point in the process of implementing the integration changes. They may examine the progress made thus far toward goals set in their initial work session. They can identify benefits related to the collaborative style of supervision used by Ms. James, Director of Special Education. They can recognize changes beginning to be in evidence from pilot projects and individually initiated implementation efforts.

Concurrently, Task Force members can assess the impact of their efforts on their schools. They can recognize the potential problems planned integration can have on their individual interactions with teachers in regular education. They can examine their concerns for the students in special education as they are integrated into regular education activities. They can identify their own discomforts and concerns about the proposed changes in special education.

All of these considerations serve to point to the complexity of planned integration and the stage at which the

Task Force members find themselves during this first year of implementation. Again, I would refer to Ms. James' summation of the county's planned integration efforts when she said, "There's no easy answer on any of it--just a long process of change."

Planned Integration Within Bradford Elementary

In keeping with her supervisory philosophy, Ms. James encouraged planned integration changes to be made by the individual Task Force members within their school. She offered support for teacher's efforts and intervened as necessary upon the request of the teachers and/or principals. She described her support in the following excerpt:

Now, what happened was in that first year I had to visit two faculty senates [Madison and Bradford Elementary Schools]...because they had some real concerns about exactly why they were doing--why we were doing this...But I would only come at their invitation and so like when they felt they needed a little someone to say why we are doing it and no one is being singled out...kind of hear people's complaints about why this had to happen...Just kind of listened to what they had to say. And a lot of times people just had to have a say.

See the teacher may have done a teacher-to-teacher but then when it got to a point where maybe there was an impasse or the teacher didn't think this was a good idea the principal would say, "Well, let's try this." And they would call me, you know, and we would brainstorm over the telephone or I would go to Bradford and meet with Bob King or we would meet with Dan Wilson and teachers and aides and different groups of people where we would all meet to talk out some of these issues. And I would think that it would be important that

they feel that the person at the central office was supportive and then other people were supportive also.

Although Ms. James' support was available, the planned integration activities developed by the county LRE Task Force had to be implemented by individual members at the each school site. Also the specific definition of integration had to be arrived at within the context of the school and its staff.

I would broadly define integration within the Bradford Elementary School as the intentionally planned opportunities for students of regular and special education to work, play and interact together in the same setting. This definition is surmised from my interviews and observations of what happens within the school, for nowhere is it written or at no time was an exact definition actually verbalized by the staff at Bradford Elementary School. In fact, the principal viewed integration as something that had been a part of a natural evolution since he had been at the school. "We've always integrated, we just have always done it...When I first came, there were two separate schools. It just didn't make sense so I began to change things" (King).

This view of integration (or mainstreaming as was used interchangeably by some of the persons interviewed, Note 3) was shared by the teachers and aide interviewed who have taught at the school as long as the principal had been at

Bradford Elementary School. One teacher from regular education indicated that "At Bradford we've always mainstreamed in the classroom. Things that I'm aware of is that when I first started teaching about 19 years ago and we had some mainstreaming going on then" (Post). An aide recalled that "They dissolved the center the year after I came here, per se; but even when I was here and the center was an entity, there was still mainstreaming..." (Marsh). They shared the view that "...the kids here have always been kind of integrated with the handicapped children and the mentally disabled children" (Miller) except for the period of time as described above when they seemed to have been withdrawn to self-contained classrooms following passage of PL 94-142.

The principal, teachers, and aides who had taught at the school since the special education center had been established (more than fifteen years) could name examples of integration throughout their long history at the school. For example, most of the students from special education have always eaten lunch in the cafeteria and attended assemblies. The principal, Bob King, was always the decision maker in this process and placed students in regular education classes when he felt it was appropriate. In his words:

...we mainstreamed seventeen years ago...I just did it on my own and then 42--whatever came and we already had it done. So we had already been mainstreaming for years before it came out.

However, the difference since the county's review of LRE placements and the planned integration emphasis has been in the number of activities in which students were engaged, the number of students engaged in regular education activities. Most significantly, the heightened awareness among all of the faculty that planning for integration opportunities is continually being made throughout the school. The heightened awareness has largely come about by the knowledge that all activities of the school have the potential for special education student participation. Teachers from regular education capsulized this heightened awareness in the faculty as follows:

It's happening more often. I think they used to integrate them into subjects like music and phys. ed. and I see more academics. I see the kids being integrated into more academics. The so-called easier classes like handwriting or something like that. It's just not that. I see them coming into math, spelling and reading class (Mann).

In the last two years we have gotten more and more [students integrated into the classroom]. I usually always have kids maybe a half-hour a day when it was a non-instructional time or maybe to lunch; but I'm getting more and more kids for longer periods of time in my classroom (Phillips).

Source of Change

Since the impetus for planned integration changes emanated from outside Bradford Elementary School, I became interested in how the individuals in the school viewed the

source of the change. Specifically, I asked each person interviewed to name the source to which they would attribute responsibility for initiating integration changes. In other words, why were the integration changes made? Their responses ranked in order of frequency are listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Bradford Elementary Staff Attribution of Source.

Attributed Source	Number of Responses		
	Regular Teachers	Special	Aides
Needs of Special Education Students	7	1	2
Parents/Advocates of Special Ed. Students	4	4	
Governmental laws and regulations	4	3	
Recent Trends/Research in Ed. Practice	2	1	
County School Board		3	1
Teachers of Special Education		2	1
Economics--To Cut Spending	1		
LRE Task Force	1		

Differences in the amount of emphasis the above groups placed on sources of the integration changes in their school was interesting. Teachers of special education (half of whom were on the LRE Task Force) recognized pressure from parents of special education students, governmental laws and regulations, and desires of teachers of special education as the main reasons for the changes. Only two responses identified their own group as a source of integration change. As with the Task Force, they attributed the sources of

integration to reside in pressures exerted from outside of their local educational system.

Needs of Special Education Students

Teachers of regular education showed a strong agreement with teachers of special education in naming parents and their advocacy organizations as well as governmental laws and regulations as important sources of pressure to make integration changes in their school. However, they did not see either of these factors as the main source of influence toward changes to more fully integrate students from special education. Seven teachers of regular education, one teacher of special education and one aide in special education attributed the source of integration to be a recognition of the needs of students in special education to relate to non-handicapped peers. The following quotes from teachers in regular education indicate their recognition of the intent of the changes to be best practices for the benefit of students in special education, but they also point to an underlying questioning by some teachers as to the degree to which these changes should extend into the whole school structure:

So the kids don't feel isolated, I think. So the other kids [special education students] feel like a part of the school (Newhouse).

Uh, these students need to be [pause] more with their peer group age-wise. I think it gives them the opportunity to see how quote, unquote regular children behave or misbehave as the matter might be...I think modeling would be a good word for that (Wood).

I think it's meant to make them feel like they're a part of the world. I mean, they were being sealed off for a long time. It was like, 'We're different. We can't be with them other people' (Thomas).

As to why it is occurring more often I don't know really. I suppose in the long run it is supposed to be better for those special ed. kids to feel more a part of the mainstream (Mann).

Changes were started because they needed to be started. Why leave children at home in closets when we can help them? You know, it was a wonderful thing that children started to be pulled out of closets and were sent to school. Wonderful. It needed to be. It should have been done years before that. But it's been carried in some instances to extremes (West).

Parents

Teachers of both regular and special education stated that a significant amount of pressure had been exerted by the parents of special education students to include their children into regular education. One regular education teacher expressed the belief that parents may have been more in tune to unaddressed needs of special education students, "There have been some children that have been inappropriately served. I'm sure that's largely something that parents realized before the school system possibly" (Foster).

Teachers were aware of the advocacy attitude that had been increasingly assumed by the parents of special education students. As a result of this attitude, some parents had become very involved with the education of their child(ren) and had made requests for changes in their child's educational program. As one teacher of special education put it, "I think there are some parents who have-- have become empowered and are expressing some needs for their kids to be involved" (Martin).

Teachers believed that requests from parents were more significantly addressed by school and county administrators than requests from teachers. In two teachers' words:

I think parent input had a lot to do with it. Things weren't going their way and usually parents get what they want. More so, I think that had a lot to do with it [integration activities] being developed (Glenn).

Parents have more rights nowadays. Sometimes I think the pendulum has almost swung too much the other way. I think they might have too many rights sometimes (Carter).

Additionally, teachers pointed to instances in which parents had acquired what they wanted for their child in spite of a teacher's judgement to the contrary. One such instance involved a special education student who had been fully integrated into regular education when the teacher of regular education objected to the placement on the basis that the student had not fit appropriately into the regular

education class and did not make adequate progress. The teacher firmly believed that he had been placed in regular education classes because of parental pressure.

That was what the mother was pushing--age appropriate. He was five and she wanted him in kindergarten. When he was six she wanted him in first grade...And then, too, his mom kind of pushed him a lot and she wanted him to be on task with the rest of the kids and he just could not keep up...she was just trying to make him be like a normal kid and he wasn't. I mean we tried as much as we could but he wasn't normal and he couldn't do everything that the other kids could do. She just--she put a lot of pressure on me. It was a hard year...I wanted to retain him in kindergarten but she said no...And I said there were other kids in here that I retain. You know that immaturity is everything in those early years. But he was promoted anyway (Newhouse).

Government Intervention

Another portion of the persons interviewed felt that changes had resulted from governmental interventions into education through federal and state legislation and regulations requiring the integration of special education students. After all, special education had been created through these governmental measures and education in general continued to be regulated and monitored by these measures. Consequently, it was not unreasonable for these individuals to conclude that governmental measures were responsible for the recent changes in integration. Although the teachers of both regular and special education were often vague concerning the details of the laws and regulations they expressed

their belief that it was the source of much of the pressure to make integration changes.

I guess there's new laws being passed for more mainstream integration. I know I'm not positive on all the rules and regulations, but they wanted kids mainstreamed as much as possible (Carter).

Well, I think the first thing was because of public law and because there's such a big emphasis on integration and stuff, just federally and all, you know, just nationally now (Carr).

Well, it's not really tough [to find the source] if you will look at government controls. Any time the government steps into anything you have problems. I feel like our problems came when we got governmental controls. When the legislature started making--passing laws that governed what we as educators were supposed to do (West).

But with this new law--I'm not even sure what the law is--what the number is...but I know that it's, you know, changed and it gives, I guess, more rights for them [students in special education] (Phillips).

Primarily, as a result of the mandate...I don't think it would be done otherwise cause there's--people were against change and it's no different here than in any school. By having it as a regulation that must be met in a requirement that must be met that is the reason why it is done like that. I think there's resistance in terms of having these students integrated. I don't think it would occur if it wasn't a mandate like that. That's my personal opinion (Panell).

Other Sources

Lower frequencies were noted for other sources of pressure to make changes in the way in which students were integrated. While these sources were cited by fewer numbers

of respondents, their attributions were no less adamant. Recent trends and research in education practice was cited by two of the teachers in regular education and one teacher in special education. Cited by two teachers in special education and one aide was the county school board and teachers of special education as a source of influence to make integration changes. Finally, only members of the regular education group cited economics (1) and the LRE Task Force (1) as sources of the changes.

Recent Trends/Research in Education

Two teachers of regular and one teacher of special education described an awareness of the recent emphasis on increased integration in educational trends and research literature which they felt had influenced the changes toward integration changes being implemented in their school. They related that:

Generally, I just think that's the consensus nationally--is to try to integrate the students back into the mainstream. And I just think that's the basic philosophy right now (Post).

I know some of the theories behind it but I don't know if I agree with it in all cases (Mann).

I think for a long time we were pulling all of these kids out and thinking that we were doing the right thing and I think the research over the last couple of years has shown us that we weren't exactly doing right by these kids (Martin).

County Board of Education

Two teachers of special education attributed the changes to an innovation adopted by the county school board.

They indicated their beliefs as:

...it's coming from--it's being told to them [the Task Force] from the board of education. I think that's what's happening (Howard).

I think --- County tries to be leaders in a lot of that kind of thing, and especially at this school, because there are so many handicapped kids (Carr).

Another teacher of special education and one aide saw the board of education as an implementor of change which actually could be attributed to government regulations "coming down to the board of educations and the board of educations then going into the school saying we need to have this done" (Panell).

Teachers of Special Education

Although it was not mentioned by teachers of regular education, two teachers of special education and one aide felt that a portion of the influence to initiate change had come from within special education. They felt they had worked with parents to bring attention to the needs of special education students to become more a part of the mainstream. Their statements reveal their feeling of collaboration:

So I think it is two-fold, you know, teachers and parents--pressure...along with us [teachers in special education] realizing the need and the parents wanting integration (Martin).

The teachers, as a whole, were asking for the kids to be with normal peers. The parents were pushing, saying, "We want our kids to be normal." So, as a whole, it was like we were all pushing, but we needed to get together, we needed some type of form to keep us in line with what we were going to do (Daily).

Economics

Saving money expenditures for special education was cited by only one teacher of regular education. She commented on her perceptions and rationale for this belief:

Money. I think money is a large portion of it and that frustrates me. I'm sure it's not the only reason [but] when they start talking about just putting all LD kids and just having the resource teachers monitor--I think that's money. I don't think that's anything but money. That upsets me...economics--making decisions on economics. It's pure economics and it's opening up bigger problems than we have now in my opinion (Foster).

In summary, teachers of regular and special education at Bradford Elementary school agreed that parents/advocates and governmental laws and regulations had exerted a great deal of pressure upon the county school board to implement changes. These teachers are in agreement with the LRE Task Force in attributing the source of change to come from outside of their school staff. In fact, when all sources are considered only two teachers of special education and

one aide indicated the belief that a source of influence had occurred within the school.

A significant number (seven of the fifteen respondents) of the teachers of regular education related the source of planned integration to be a recognition of the belief in the best practices for education of students of special education. They identified the benefits believed to result from increased inclusion of students of special education into regular education activities.

Group Integration Activities

The integration activities fall into two categories: group or individual participation. Group integration activities are those that include the interactions between a category or class of special education students and a class or all of the classes of regular education students. Group activities are the major integration efforts for the severely/profoundly impaired students and occur outside of the classroom in a non-academic environment. All of their integrations are of a group type under the direction of the special education teachers and aides who work with the students daily in their self-contained classrooms.

The principal group activities are:

- Eating breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria.
- Outside playtime.

- Attending school programs and assemblies.
- Participating in school-wide special emphasis programs, such as the School Health Fair and the American Education Week's Countries of the World Project.
- Receiving music and physical instruction.

Group activities such as these may or may not have student interaction between special and regular education students but demonstrate an effort to provide settings for increased contact. Two teachers of special education recognized the difference in group integration and totally mixed group interactions as they related that:

Okay, at this school, just about all the special ed. kids eat in the cafeteria--breakfast and lunch. And it's our choice on whether we sit mixed with group or as our own little group, but some of us mix, because we want to (Daily).

We don't sit with other kids, per se. We're still with--we all, all my six kids and my aide and I sit together on the corner, but they can talk to the other kids...At first I was just bringing the trays to them, and now I'm integrating them more in the line with other kids, for a couple of them are able to carry their own tray. See, I always think of new things, just keeping up things to integrate with (Carter).

However, the concerns expressed by a special education teacher about group integration raises the issue of whether such settings constitute true integration or if it is really continued segregation but with a closer physical proximity. As she put it:

Everybody wants all this integration--we're not integrated. We sit at the same table, separate from everybody else, with everyone staring at us...I don't think a lot of it is true integration for my kids. It may be in some of the other higher level classes, but a lot of times when we're considered integrated--for instance, if we go to an assembly where the whole school is attending, we still sit in the very back row; or if we go to the cafeteria for breakfast, we still sit at a separate table... (Carr).

During my visits to the school I observed this separation between the groups in the cafeteria since they did sit in classes. But the need for continual adult supervision of the special education students during these activities make it difficult to envision a truly integrated cafeteria or assembly. I believe the dissonance between theoretically proposed integrated interactions and the reality of integration by group proximity indicates that the definition of integration at Bradford Elementary continue to need clarification.

While these activities are not intentionally planned to be interactive between individual members of the two groups, there may occur incidentally spontaneous interaction. Teachers related incidents of students from the two groups making positive comments to each other or smiling at each other during these activities.

...if these kids [in special education] see somebody and they remember their name or even if they can't talk they will point at them. If it's somebody they recognize they will point at them and try to pull their shirt or say their name (Rowe).

They [students in special education] watch them [students from regular education]. It's funny, they'll watch and smile and they'll try to play with them. They'll go up to other kids (Carter).

I know with one of the little boys that's in a wheelchair, now the children just absolutely love to get him on the playground so they can wheel him around. Of course, we let them to a point but we are standing there sort of [gasping sounds] going, 'Aw, please don't throw him out on the grass or anything.' And the child loves it. Now he will just holler and laugh (Post).

Not all of the incidental interactions, however, were positive. For example, assemblies could become difficult for students in wheelchairs when the program lasted longer than thirty to forty-five minutes. Occasionally one of the special education students would behave in an inappropriate, disruptive manner in the large group activity and would have to be removed. During these incidents the attention of the students would be drawn away from the program and would focus on the disruption at hand. In both of these examples, teachers and aides in special education intervened in an effort to withdraw the special education student(s) from a difficult situation and to prevent further disruption of the program for the regular education students.

Also, some of the teachers and aides expressed concern over the reaction of some of the regular education students to the inability of a few of the severely physically impaired students to chew and swallow their food. Feeding these students not only required a great deal of adult

assistance but could become an ordeal, including food being expelled from the mouth. An aide sympathized that, "You know, it messes up their eating. They can't eat their lunch because of all this. And that's not all the children, like I said, it's an individual thing" (Marsh).

A few of the regular education students, disturbed by this type of eating, would stare or point out that "Ooh, gross. Half his food is on the floor. Ooh" (Carter). In this instance teachers and aides for the special education students quietly explained that the student had physiological reasons for their difficulty with food. As one teacher put it, "And I'll say, 'You guys, my kids like to eat just as much as you. They just have a little bit harder trouble. Please stop staring.' It's just a couple times I had to do that" (Carter). This information seemed to help the regular education students understand and accept the incident.

In these situations I do not see negative reactions by regular education students to the integration activities; I see a learning situation in which children with differences are trying to understand and mediate those differences with the help of the adults in that environment. In these interactions, with the attitude of the adults being one of understanding and acceptance, the students can grow to appreciate each other without showing shock or distaste in the different capabilities of other students.

An important perception was the description by one teacher of the change in the attitude of regular education students after they began attending Bradford Elementary School:

I'm sure that when they came it was shocking to see kids in wheelchairs and to see kids who were not normal looking. The first few weeks of school they would say, 'Those children look different.' But now my kindergarten kids see them and they don't say anything to me (Newhouse).

Reverse Integration

A variation of the group integration programs which one teacher referred to as "...a reverse integration from what you usually have in the classroom" (Blake). The teachers of a fifth grade regular education and a special education physically impaired class received grants of federal discretionary funds and West Virginia Education funds to implement a Helping Hands Program. In this program students from a regular education fifth grade class enter two of the physically impaired classrooms to assist the students with activities to stimulate physical movement, art and play.

"And the main goal with the Helping Hands is to see how children are alike, not to associate with the differences. It's to associate that kids are kids and we all have feelings. We all have a lot more in common than we have differences, to overlook the handicap, get past the handicap and get down to the kid" (Blake).

The teachers of the classes have worked together to organize student volunteers. Five groups were set up so that each group works with the special education students

once a week for thirty minutes. An important part of the organization of the program was the orientation and information session conducted by one of the teachers of special education. The purpose of the orientation was "...to make them (the fifth graders) feel comfortable; and I don't think that's done a lot on a regular basis with kids who just see the kids..." (Carr). She brought the fifth graders into the special education classroom and discussed each of her student's disabling condition, explained all of the equipment used with her students, told the fifth graders of her expectations for the Helping Hands Program and then answered questions for the remainder of the two hours.

Teachers in the program have related how experiences benefitted both regular and special education students. A teacher in one of the special education classes viewed it as:

...they're [fifth graders] trying to teach them [special education students]. And then the regular ed. kids love to learn from their--they think they're so cute and they want to see them. And they're learning to be around special ed. So, that's an excellent program. And now, even some of those fifth grade kids will come in early in the morning in the cafeteria and sit and talk with them. They like them. On their own free time, they'll do it now, not just from ten to ten-thirty; and they say hi to them in the halls. And my kids recognize them, their faces just light up. Now, they wouldn't know their names, really, but they recognize the kids that have come in our room, and they smile and wave and it's really great (Carter).

In a separate interview the teacher of the fifth grade class described the change in the attitude of her students:

...especially like the beginning of the semester when we started. You know, they are very apprehensive, are afraid of the kids; and you give them about two weeks in that classroom and they're wiping noses...and they are not afraid of anything at all. I've heard parents say that the kids will walk right up to other kids that they--strangers, you know, that kids will be in a wheelchair or whatever, and just squat right down to them and start talking to them. And it's kind of like--the parent will be a little bit apprehensive, but the kid just doesn't even see it. It's kind of--it's made these kids gravitate toward special ed kids, rather than away from special kids (Blake).

A second instance of this type of reverse program integration was related by one of the teachers in special education and the aide who works with him:

Last year, when we started this integration we had a third grade classroom and the teacher wanted her kids to have some involvement [with students in special education]. So her kids came down and worked with mine one-on-one in a tutoring situation. And they started playing together on the playground and they knew each other's birthday and there were a lot of positive things as far as the kids were concerned. And I think that will follow those kids (Martin).

Individual Integration Activities

Individual integration activities are those that include an individual special education student in a regular education class setting. The student is placed in a regular education class with his age appropriate peers for specific

academic subject(s) and/or non-academic activity(ies). The teacher(s) of the regular education class to which the student is assigned is responsible for the student and his educational program during the time that he is participating in her regular education class. The period of time corresponds to the daily subjects/activities to which he is assigned for regular education integration. The number of subjects/activities can range from one class, such as physical education, to nearly a full daily placement in the regular education class.

The placement decisions were based on the recommendation of the student's teacher of special education with the collaboration of the school principal. During the past school year there were 16 individual special education students (29% of the school's total special education population) integrated into 11 classrooms throughout the school. All grade levels except second grade had special education students integrated into a regular education class.

Table 6 details the grade levels, numbers of students, and the special education categories represented by the planned integration of individual students. Sixteen special education students who had previously been educated in self-contained classes were integrated for portions of the school day. The majority of the students were behavior disordered (9) followed by pre-school disabled (3), learning disabled

(1), cerebral palsy (1), hearing impaired (1) and muscular dystrophy (1). The amount of integration time varied from 20 minutes to the full school day with music and physical education (PE) the most frequent subjects.

Integration Within Special Education Programs

Another of the integration activities implemented at Bradford Elementary School entailed the integration of different levels of special education students together for a specific activity. These activities were occurrences coordinated by teachers of special education in areas of academic readiness skills, music, and adaptive physical education.

Two instances of academic integration combined higher functioning students from one category (classroom) with students in another category for instruction. In one case three students from a pre-school disabled class were taught with students in a mildly/moderately impaired class for reading readiness and beginning reading activities. The teacher who conducted the instruction stated that:

We do some integration ourselves. I bring kids in from the lower levels into my classroom. We do language development, language circle, that kind of stuff. So that type of integration is going on (Martin).

TABLE 6. Distribution of integrated students.

GRADE LEVEL	NUMBER	SP. ED. CATEGORIES	INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES
Kindergarten			
Class A	1	Pre-school Handicapped (PH)	Lang. Dev., Play, Lunch, Recess
Class B	3	PH	Lunch
		PH	Fully Integrated
		Behavior Disordered (BD)	Music, PE, Reading, Language Development
First Grade			
Class A	3	Cerebral Palsy	Fully Integrated
		Hearing Impaired	Lunch, Play, PE, Music
		Muscular Dystrophy	Lunch, Recess, Music
Class B	None		
Class C	None		
Second Grade			
3 Classes	None		
Third Grade			
Class A	1	BD	Music, PE
Class B	1	BD	Music, Spelling, PE, Gifted Art
Class C	2	BD	Music, PE, Math *, Chapter 1 Reading
Fourth Grade			
Class A	1	BD	Music, PE
Class B	1	BD	Fully Integrated
Class C	1	Self-Contained LD	Music, PE, Lunch, Break
Fifth Grade			
Class A	1	BD	Music, PE, Break, Guidance
Class B	1	BD	Music, PE, Lang.Arts*
Class C	None		

* Indicates subjects for which a student was integrated but was taken out of the regular education class by the end of the school year.

In the second case two mildly/moderately impaired (MMI) students were taught math, language and reading using "Distar" computer programs in another special education class. These moves to another MMI classroom allowed students to work at a higher academic level than would have been afforded in their home-based class.

The special education students who were integrated were selected by their teacher for their readiness and potential to benefit from academic instruction. These students were then combined with another class for the period of the day in which the academic instruction was given by a teacher of special education and an aide.

In the case of music and physical education, classes of special education are combined for instruction. One teacher of special education described her appreciation for this opportunity for her students:

We have a part-time Adapted PE teacher this year. That's new, but the thought really--that's integrating with other handicapped kids, but it's not integrating with regular. But still, she's great, and they didn't used to have gym. This is the first year they've had gym. We have gym three times a week now. It's great. Music, it's two or three of our classes together. It's all special ed., too; but I still feel good that we have music (Carter).

The teachers of special education recognized that combining these groups does not constitute integration into a regular education environment. However, they pointed out

that they do encompass the same type of goals and the same outcomes as in regular education integration. Special education students of one category were integrated into activities where they interacted with special education students who were on different functioning levels than students from their placement class. In identifying activities in which her students participated one teacher said:

I try to go to music, because that, to me, too, is integration. Because even if those were special ed. kids we're integrating with other kids that aren't in our classroom all day long.

Therefore, the same opportunities exist for accepting similarities and differences in other students while learning from one another.

The LRE Task Force's meetings, evaluation of LRE and emphasis on securing a minimum number of integrated activities for all special education students has had an impact on the integration of special education students at Bradford Elementary School. Changes have been made to include special education students into regular education school-wide activities and into regular education classes when it is appropriate for students to be integrated with their age appropriate peers.

The integration concept and guidelines have been sanctioned by the county and school level administrations, but no formal procedures have been written that would guide the

interpretation of the integration plan in the school setting. In keeping with the Special Education Director's policy of allowing the teachers to have control of the interpretation of policy, the only formal meeting concerning planned integration was a question and answer faculty senate meeting at the school in the spring. Teachers recalled that:

...we had a meeting prior to the beginning of the school year telling us about these things that needed to be implemented. So everybody had exposure to that first that it would be coming (Panell).

At the beginning of the new school year, interpretation of the integration policy at the school level was left to the principal and teachers of special education to determine the appropriate initiation and implementation procedures and activities to follow within the school structure. The policy guidelines for a minimum of ten integration activities per week for each child were given in the manual developed by the LRE Task Force. Suggestions of appropriate activities also were given. However, the initiation, implementation and supervision of these activities were left to the interpretation of the principal and the teachers of special education.

The direct supervision of these procedures, as with all activities and procedures in the school, falls under the duties of the principal. He has maintained an atmosphere of

acceptance of special education students within the school during the 18 years he has been principal at the school. He encourages teachers to take the initiative to pursue their ideas and develop them into proposed plans. He did, however, require that he collaborate with teachers in the final decision-making stage prior to implementation of any proposed changes. As the person ultimately responsible for the school, he wants to be kept apprised of plans to implement new programs or any program changes. This is particularly true when such a proposed change would affect other teachers or other programs in the school.

In summary, the integration changes that occurred at the school were initiated by the teacher(s) of special education with the collaboration of the school principal. There were no formally planned activities to introduce or implement the changes. Only the individual teachers directly affected by the changes were consulted. All contacts for consultation was made on a one to one (teacher to teacher or principal to teacher) basis.

Group Integration Process

The principal and teachers of special education have developed, initiated, and implemented the group integration activities to comply with the LRE Task Force's recommended first year target of ten integration activities per week for

each special education student. For many of the students the achievement of this target was within the boundaries of the existing programs of the school. The target could be accomplished by two integration activities per day, with teachers of special education able to use existing group integration activities for many of the special education students. For example, most special education students were already going to lunch in the cafeteria daily with regular education students, which accomplished half of their needed integration activities. The addition of breakfast in the cafeteria completed this year's integration requirements for the majority of the special education students.

For one class of five severely/profoundly disabled students, lunch in the school cafeteria was not used as an integration activity. Their teacher did have these students eat in the cafeteria at the beginning of the school year. However, she and the classroom aide found several problems with this situation. Transport of five wheel chaired students through two buildings separated by ramped walkways was overcome by assistance from several regular education students in the Helping Hands program. But the greatest problems centered around the eating needs of these students; i.e. special diets, blended food, spoon feeding, assisted swallowing, and constant cleaning. School cooks were too busy with their routine duties to handle special foods so

the aide and teacher had to prepare food in the classroom and transport it to the cafeteria with the class.

Even though the teacher and aide assisted the students in the cafeteria, they found the process too difficult and too time consuming to manage in a large cafeteria where their students were distractible and had to sit in their wheelchairs for the entire time.

At the beginning of the year a lot of people were really onto this thing about us going to the cafeteria to eat. And I said, you know, that is fine. I am all for integration and you have to understand, too, that it takes us a full hour to feed these kids. Feeding time is instructional time in here. That's two lunch periods in the cafeteria because these kids just get 30 minutes. Our kids would be over there for two lunch periods. We'd have kids going in and out. I've got one child who's sometimes upset by crowds. I just think that you don't do integration for integration's sake. You do it because it's good for the kid... (Carr).

The teacher and aide concluded that the difficulties of the procedure were greater than the benefits for their students during lunch, but continued attending breakfast as one of the daily integration activities. The students were taken directly to the cafeteria from the bus. With an easier transport, a shorter time required for eating and simpler foods consumed, breakfast was a manageable integration activity.

...all of my kids don't eat breakfast here at school, they may just get juice or something like that. Everybody takes part in the breakfast activity, but they don't necessarily eat a breakfast (Carr).

The other of the two daily integration activities used was the Helping Hands program described earlier.

During this implementation year of the integration changes at the school, teachers were able to use existing programs for the required integration activities for most of their special education students. Only one program (Helping Hands) was initiated by teachers to complete the integration requirements for the students. It remains to be seen how some of the teachers are going to add another daily integration activity for their students if they have exhausted all of the existing available programs.

Individual Integration Process

Initial Decision

All individuals interviewed agreed that the decision to initiate the integration process rested with the teacher of special education. She decided which student had progressed to a level where integration into regular education had a high probability for success. She also determined the appropriate activity or subject for which the student was "ready". She based her decisions on experiences with the student in the self-contained setting and the progress that student had made in his individual educational program.

Part of the progress a student had to make to be considered "ready" for integration was the successful completion of tasks that simulated activities in the regular education environment. These activities were selected and directed by the teacher of his special education program to elicit the same types of behaviors and responses that were appropriate in a regular education setting. "If you are going to mainstream this type of student into the regular class you need to keep the cohesion with what's going on there and what's going on here. Down to page, skill, everything" (Panell).

This preparation was done in the hope that transference would occur once the student was placed in the regular education activity. The transference of appropriate responses and behaviors was viewed as a means to increase the probability of student success in the integration attempt. Without this transference and maintenance of appropriate responses and behaviors, the integration was doomed to failure from the beginning. One teacher attributed students' experiences with difficulties in the integration process to their inability to conform to the accepted norm of the regular education setting.

A lot of the complaints in regular ed. when they get some of our kids is that they don't know how to sit still; they don't know how to raise their hands; they don't know how to walk in a line...But, you know those

were things that we had to work on in order for them to fit in (Daily).

Additionally, if the student was to participate in an integration activity involving academic requirements, the same considerations had to be given to the readiness of the student to participate in the regular education classroom. The preparation of the student included the simulation of appropriate lessons using the same materials and methods used in the regular education setting.

Although plans have been made to adopt the same academic materials for both regular and special education classes (Note 4), the two areas have used different textbooks. This difference in materials caused some difficulties in the planned integration of students into academic subjects. Most teachers of special education used their adopted series and then switched a student to the regular education series as part of their readiness plan. A few teachers, however, took another approach. They shelved the adopted special education series and used the regular education series for all of their students from the beginning. As one teacher admitted:

When I first started here, in ----- County they had special education textbooks. I just came in and there they were--boxes of them on the thing. And I was required to teach from these textbooks, but yet, I'm to get them back in the regular class. But we have totally different materials...It doesn't even make sense. If you are going to mainstream this type of student into the regular class you need to keep the cohesion

with what's going on there and what's going on here--
down to page, skill, everything (Panell).

The preparation of the student may also include the simulation of the same methods that were used in the regular education classroom. The teacher of special education had to elicit this information from the teachers of regular education and then adapt her classroom methods and management to replicate the regular education classroom. The goal of this stage of the preparation was to help the student understand the expectations, to practice in the appropriate behaviors and responses, and to feel comfortable when he moved into the regular education environment.

Contact with the Administration

When the teacher of special education believed that the student had made sufficient progress in his special education program and was prepared enough to have a high probability of success in a regular education activity, she proceeded by making her recommendation known to the school principal. She presented information on the student's current level of ability in the area being considered for regular education placement to support her recommendation.

The teacher and principal then met to discuss the student's progress in his special education program, his progress in preparation for integration and appropriate

activities and/or subject area(s) for which the student integration may be initiated. The teacher of special education presented a case for her recommendation. As the principal put it "...she has to be able to convince me that that is the right thing to do."

When agreement had been reached between the teacher of special education and the principal, the student's placement and his Individual Educational Plan (IEP) was changed through the agreement of the Placement Advisory Committee (PAC). This committee was comprised of the teacher of special education, the principal, the diagnostician and the parent(s) of the student. Although every effort was made to encourage the participation of the parent(s), they were often not in attendance, but received written information which had to be signed before the student's placement was changed.

The principal then determined who would be the most appropriate teacher of regular education to accept the special education student into her class.

...if any kid was to be placed in the regular classroom I would be the one to go to the teacher and talk to them and that teacher would bite for it after a while...Cause I'm the boss and I told her. For some reason they take it better when they hear it from me.

Since there were two classes in kindergarten and three in all other grade levels, the principal had the option of

choosing among teachers at any grade level for the integration placement. The basis for his selection was the teacher's acceptability of special education students and her cooperation in the past.

Contact with the Teacher of Regular Education

At this point the principal contacted the teacher of regular education to propose the placement of a student in her class. The principal gave the teacher a general description of the student's abilities, needs and the subject(s) and/or activity(ies) which he and the teacher of special education had discussed. Sometimes the teacher of special education was included in this meeting but often the principal conducted the meeting then conveyed the results of the meeting back to the teacher of special education.

At this point of the procedure, modifications to the proposal for integration may take place. Factors extraneous to the student's abilities, needs and subject(s) and/or activity(ies) recommended by the teacher of special education may be brought to bear upon the student's placement.

- Regular education class size may be at the legal maximum and placement of the special education student would result in a problem with compliance to a law.
- The teacher of regular education may reject the placement for recommended subject(s) and/or activity(ies) due to needs within the regular classroom. She may believe that this was an

inappropriate time to bring in a special education student due to problems which she was working to overcome in her class.

- The teacher of regular education may feel that the needs of the special education student would place too great a demand upon her while teaching a class with a range of needs of their own.

Resolution of the above described factors of conflict had to be reached before placement of special education student was achieved. Resolution of conflicts necessitated the collaboration and cooperation of both the teachers of regular and special education involved in the student's integration proposal. The two teachers had to communicate their expectations for the special education student and negotiate what each was willing to contribute to maximize his successful integration. During all of this give and take the teacher of special education attempted to maintain a delicate balance between what she felt was the best situation for the future of the student and what was seen by the teacher of regular education as unreasonable demands. Either the process was begun anew with another teacher of regular education or other subject(s) and/or activity(ies) were accepted for the student's integration. Once modifications were approved by the principal, parent(s) and teachers of regular and special education the process proceeded to the placement of the student.

Placement of the Student

At this point, the teacher of regular education assumed the major responsibility for the special education student in the integration process. Her initial concern was the preparation of the regular education class for the acceptance of the special education student. She talked with the students in her class prior to the special education student's arrival. Their discussion centered around the announcement of a new student coming into their class, the specifics of subjects and/or activities involved and the teacher's expectation that the new student would be accepted as a member of their class even though they may have some behaviors that were hard to understand or were different from the students in the class.

Teachers of regular education repeatedly emphasized how naturally special education students were accepted by students in regular education. They recalled instances such as the following in which students demonstrated concern and friendship toward special education students:

They [regular education students] all want to push the wheelchair around on the playground. They all enjoy it so much (Post).

The students speak to each other in the hall or on the playground (Carter).

Regular ed. kids enjoy being able to help the special ed. students. They feel like they are the teacher. It makes them feel important (Carr).

Teachers attributed the high acceptance to the fact that the regular education students had been in a school where a relatively large representation of special education students were present. Even if they were not in classes with the special education students they saw special education students in the halls, cafeteria, assemblies, buses and playground. The students at Bradford Elementary were accustomed to seeing children who displayed a range of disabling conditions around them all during the school day.

No one here thinks anything about seeing kids in wheelchairs or kids who look different than they do. To these kids it's just normal--the way things are (Glenn).

They are around disabled kids from day one. If you get a new kid from another school, at first they will say something but then after a while they are as used to it as any of the other kids (Newhouse).

Teachers of regular education felt the visibility of the special education students led to regular education students ease in interacting with and accepting the disabled. "That is the good thing about this school. The students see so many handicapped" (Franklin). "These students have learned to be comfortable around the handicapped by seeing them daily here at school so that it is not unusual when they are out in the public" (Blake).

Follow-up

Once the special education student was integrated into a regular education class, his teacher of special education continued to monitor his progress through contact with the teacher of regular education.

So there's a bunch of regression and my whole purpose of the continual daily checking a lot of the times when they first get started it's daily. Maybe, sometimes twice a day. This kind of thing. Checking to see how they're doing... (Panell).

Although at least one teacher of special education tried to routinize the communication through the use of daily progress forms the majority of these communications was done in a "catch as catch can" manner. By this term I mean that individuals tried to grab a few minutes to confer with other teachers whenever busy schedules permitted.

If students began to have difficulty in the regular education integration, his teacher of special education tried to mediate his problems with reinforcement in the special education class. Assisting him often meant dropping planned instruction in favor of the regular education needs of the student.

...the mainstreaming extremely affects my teaching here in the classroom. I might have something planned to do that particular day. They could come back from their mainstreamed class and they've failed a paper. Well, that just about blew whatever lesson it is that I had planned on teaching at that particular time. It's remediation. I spend a lot of time remediating many of the instructional difficulties they are having in the classroom. So all my lesson plans are correlated with

what it is that I can do to help them succeed in the regular class (Panell).

Critical Factors

All persons interviewed agreed unanimously that integration required the consideration to be on an individual student basis for placement in regular education subjects and/or activities. This agreement was one of the strongest commonly expressed responses across all of the groups interviewed.

Excerpts from individual interviews representing each group convey the consistency of this perception as a belief for best practice and as a critical factor in the success of integration efforts. Ms. James, Director of Special Education, explains the change in her support of the consideration of integration on the basis of an individual case-by-case decision:

I have gone down and met with regular ed. teachers and we've talked about this and they've said to me what they've thought and it's an individual decision and the more I read, at first I didn't agree with that. And that's in the literature that you have to look at each child individually when you talk about all these things, but the more we go through it--I agree totally.

Both administrators at Bradford Elementary agreed with Ms. James' conclusions:

See that is what I say, if you don't do it on an individual basis--take that time, you will spend time in the long run (King).

Oh yeah, it (integration decisions) had to be done on an individual basis (Wilson).

Special education aides voiced the same belief concerning the individuality of integration decisions. As one aide stated:

Yeah, it's totally individual. Yeah, you just take each student and she (the special education teacher) just--when she feels like they may be able to make it she just tries one class. Then if he makes it in that one class after a few weeks then he's introduced to another class (Lowe).

Teachers in both regular and special education could not conceive of an acceptable situation in which all students of any category could be successfully educated in the regular education setting. A few examples serves to illustrate their perceptions:

I don't think it should be a blanket policy. That's what I'm afraid it's going to be. So, what would I like for it to be? I would like for it to stay individualized. I'd like for it to stay on an individual, 'This child can handle it. This child can't.' basis (Mann).

I like that idea [individualized decisions] because I think each one of them are individuals and I can never see the day when we won't need those special educators--special education educators (Post).

During the course of the interviews it occurred to me that special education had always had an emphasis on the individuality of educating these students. Decisions were made on the basis of the individual student's characteristics, strengths and needs. Then students were educated in

separated special classes that emphasized individuality of instruction. Therefore, a pattern seems to be established to expect future decisions about integration to continue to remain in the realm of individuality.

Role Changes

School Principal

The principal at Bradford Elementary School did not feel his role had changed with the implementation of special education integration. He believed he had maintained an atmosphere supportive of "mainstreaming" (Note 5) during his career at the school and did not feel it had changed just because the county school administration called it something else. In his words: "Hell, girl, I invented mainstreaming! We've been doing that for 18 years here" (King).

In respect to the supervision of teachers, as integration of special education students was implemented, the principal viewed his role remaining the same as it was in any other daily school situation. He saw himself as the person in charge of the school, which meant that he was "the boss" and he supervised all that happened in the school. He wanted to be involved in the integration process in the same way he was involved in all areas of the school.

As the principal in the school, he made the initial contact between teachers of regular and special education to propose integrating a student. He believed his mediation in the process worked best for all parties concerned.

The only thing I ask is that any time you have one of these [IEP meetings for placement into a regular education setting] is that I be here because we are going to have these special ed. kids strung all over the rooms for no reason at all and teachers are going to get a bad taste of it (King).

The assistant principal agreed that administrators' roles had not really changed with the implementation of integration. The principal's role continued to be "just getting them (staff members) to work together, and sometimes, being an assistant principal or principal you can enlist the cooperation of everybody..." (Wilson).

Bob King agreed that he was willing to conference and collaborate with teachers as well as listen to teachers relate problems that might arise. However, when the time came for a decision or an action, he saw himself as the one person ultimately responsible for decision-making in the school. Referring to himself as "the boss" seemed to embody his perception of the supervisory role he fulfilled in implementing integration changes at school.

Teachers of Special Education

According to the teachers of special education their

roles were affected by implementing integration changes for their students. From their perspective the results had positive outcomes for the student, but the successful implementation of the integration process resulted in significantly more work. These teachers were unanimous in their description of increased demands resulting from the need to supervise every aspect of the integration, whether the type was group or individual.

...there is a real demand on my time in terms of checking to see how they are performing in that class...I can see it being a real demand on time. It has been. It will continue to be. Checking, checking. When I say checking, follow up, follow up. Once I place a student in there the work's only begun. It's much easier actually to have the student here in the classroom. It's much easier (Panell).

...you have to be a diplomat almost. To get them to accept this child back in you just do a sell job on them basically (Glenn).

So I guess I see myself as more of a facilitator. You know, someone who could do a little more trouble shooting and make sure that if there are problems we can get to them quickly (Martin).

You have to be a real diplomat... (Orson).

Teachers of Regular Education

Unchanged Role

Teachers of regular education were divided on whether there had been a role change as a result of the implementation of integration in their school. One set of responses (n=6) held that the role of the teacher of regular education

did not change at all during or following the implementation of the integration of special education students into their classes. The "script" of teacher was expressed as responsibility for teaching all students no matter what the range of strengths and needs. Therefore, they would teach all students in their classes to the best of their ability.

I work with children as individuals anyway. So it is the same considerations, the same activities, the same (Wood).

So my role as a regular ed. teacher I don't see it changing any just another paper to grade or something like that. I don't really see it as changing what I do (Mann).

...that's just another student on my roll. But that could happen if a new person moved in. And he has a right to be here, and as his right to be here, then I have responsibility for him (Ross).

Changed role

Another group of teachers of regular education (n=9) expressed the belief that their role had changed with the integration of special education students into regular education classes. They believed they had to make accommodations for students' physical limitations, behavioral problems and instructional needs outside of the range of the typical regular education class.

The role of the teacher has changed drastically and if mainstreaming continues at the rate that it is now it is going to change even more...I'm constantly aware of trying to take care of their needs...So my job compared to ten years ago when I thought I had it hard [long, loud laughter]. Ten years ago we did pretty much take the middle of

the road...So, I mean, [sigh of exhaustion] your brain has so many more pockets now. That's the way I perceive it. All of my pockets stay full [chuckles] and busy. I think I have about two hundred more pockets than I did twenty years ago. I think I have a bee hive now (West).

You have to meet their needs in a different way. You always have to remember that you may have to change the requirements. You may have to change your mode (Arthur).

Very much so, very much so. Sometimes it takes a lot away from the rest of the class...it pulls from the learning of everyone involved. You have to be real careful that you don't let that happen (Blake).

Moreover, some of the teachers of regular education contended that the implementation of integration was forcing them to fulfill roles which did not adhere to their "script" of a teacher. They concluded they were being required to assume responsibilities outside of the role of a teacher of regular education; further they were not prepared to fulfill some of the duties as teacher of integrated special education students. The following reactions to a dilemma in "script" serve to demonstrate the reasoning of these teachers:

I have to start being another kind of teacher which I don't want to be. I had that choice when I was in college and I made my choice to be regular, straight, regular education. And so, I feel like I'm being forced into something that is not in my job description and something that I never intended to apply for...if they're special then they need special attention (Williams).

I never anticipated or was never told this in college. Hey, you might not have a classroom of normal kids.

You might have this and this and this...if I wanted to be a nurse I would have gone into nursing. If I wanted to catheterize someone I wouldn't have gone into teaching...I am not a medical person and things like that frighten me...That does not seem to be under my job description (Newhouse).

Both of these statements were infused with emotion as they described the difficulty they had in coping with the changes in their teaching roles. Tension underscored the stress these teachers felt as a result of integration changes in their school for which they did not feel prepared.

Aides of Special Education

Three of the four aides in special education felt their role remained the same as it was prior to the implementation of integration. The aides "script" was based in the special education classroom to which they were assigned for the school year. Their job had been the assistance of a teacher of special education and that role remained unchanged by the implementation of integration. They continued to work with the special education students of one classroom in whatever capacity the teacher of that class needed.

My job would pretty much stay the same totally as would just mean that I am helping check with those teachers on their [student's] behavior (Lowe).

It hasn't really changed. It's a little different. I guess, cause we are trying to mix and mingle with the other kids (Rowe).

Not mine, because I've always done it this way (Marsh).

The only role variation imposed by integration changes was the occasional move of the group of students to other locations in the school, such as to the cafeteria for lunch. Location changes were not interpreted by the persons interviewed as altering an aide's role. The activities they engaged in with the students remained basically the same; therefore, they accepted moves with the class for integration activities as fitting their existing "script" of their role as special education aide.

One of the aides interviewed, however, held a different perspective:

It definitely has. I have to be more flexible, more willing to go into the classroom, more willing to take PE with the kids. You have to do what is best for the kid. You've got to be ready for change. You've got to change with the times or you're stuck (Abbott).

I do not conclude that the opinions expressed by the aides in special education represent differing perspectives on their roles. I believe all of the aides have an awareness that their job entails differing activities which they described in their interviews. I attribute the differences in their responses to this question to a basic belief that their role encompasses any action related to students in their special education class. Altering the location of those activities or adding duties related to these students has not, in their opinion, altered their role.

The aides may, however, respond differently if the proposal of the Director of Special Education were further implemented in the school. Her view was that:

...the aides role has changed and some of the medical requirements that they are required to do now...we have worked through the aides feeling that they were just responsible for their own little class...from now on whenever we employ aides they will be assigned to a school as opposed to a particular class (James).

The role she described would be a drastic change for these individuals and may cause discord in their job identity when they must leave one class to be an aide to the general school population.

Integration Problems

As would be expected, the implementation of integration changes has had some difficulties which have caused significant concerns among the groups of staff within the school. The school personnel's recognition of those concerns and the resolution of those difficulties were important not only to the implementation but for the continuance of the integration.

Integration Procedures

Contact of Regular Education Teachers

In the previously described process of integration, the principal is described as the initial contact by the teacher

of special education. This step evolved during the first year of implementation as the appropriate first contact by the teacher of special education. Early in the school year during the first attempts to integrate, some contacts were made directly by the teacher of special education to a teacher of regular education. This direct action by the teacher of special education caused difficulties by a disruption of the established protocol for handling change within the school.

The established protocol scenario described earlier included contact with the principal in all matters of change within the school, particularly when another teacher would be affected by a proposed change. However, when one teacher initiates change without going through the established channels, there is a danger that the reaction to the change may not be positive. Comments of a few individuals serve to illustrate this point:

At first it was difficult to place a student. I guess teachers resented another teacher asking them to take a special ed. student. But then when the principal asked them they will do it (Panell).

You just don't tell someone they are going to have to do something. Teachers don't take it well from another teacher but they will go along with it when it comes from the principal (Wilson).

I learned from experience that I do all the mainstreaming because somehow teachers want to hear it from me, they don't want to hear it from another teacher, which I don't blame them. I have had them come in here before. We are in good

shape now, but I have had teachers in the past, walk around and say you're going to have so and so, and the other teachers, they resent that, and I don't blame them up to a point (King).

The difficulty arising from direct teacher contact was soon overcome by adhering to the practice of always contacting the principal to make requests for integration of any special education student(s). This accommodation to school protocol appears to have helped keep the principal informed and involved in the process, as well as eases the contact with the teacher of regular education.

Concerns of Teachers of Regular Education

Lack of Input

An extremely interesting dichotomy of perspective was disclosed during interviews with teachers of regular education. These teachers expressed opposing perceptions of their ability to make decisions about the initial placement of a student or his continued participation in the regular education class. I find it intriguing that two such opposing views can be held by members of one faculty who teach in the same school under the supervision of the same principal and assistant principal.

Part of the group felt completely confident that these decisions were within their sphere of judgement. "I have

always been asked first. 'Would I accept?' I have always been asked if that was okay with me..." (Arthur). If they were not comfortable with a proposed placement they were definite that the student would be placed in another class.

And then Mr. King would also come and say, 'So and so is going to come to your room. Is that okay? Let's give it a try.' And I said sure. Mr. King would say, 'If it doesn't work out, you just tell me and he's out' (Ross).

Likewise, if they concluded that there were too many problems with the special education student in the regular education classroom, they were definite that the student would be removed based on that teacher's judgement.

...it's really our decision. They really take our decision. It has a lot of weight to it...at this point in time if it doesn't work out we can just say, a regular classroom teachers, 'It's not working out.' And they go back to their special ed. classroom (Post).

It's not a formal procedure with papers and forms or anything. It's just that I have been allowed that freedom to say, 'Hey, this is working. [or] Hey, it's not working.' I haven't been pushed into a corner where you have to keep this child the rest of the year (Mann).

Further, these perceptions were maintained by teachers who had never refused a placement or had a student removed from their class and by those teachers who had made these judgements.

A different perspective was described by other regular education teachers in the school. Their belief was that they had no choice in the placement of a special education

student in their classroom. They just had to accept it.

"In those (placement) situations you have no say-so"

(Thomas). They pointed out that they were not included in the decision-making process prior to the recommendation to place a special education student. Additionally, they were sometimes not consulted as to the subject(s) and/or activity(ies) for which the special education student would be integrated.

...it wouldn't surprise me if they held a meeting and then, just after the meeting was over, you know, just stop by and tell me this child's coming to your room for social studies and science...That wouldn't surprise me at all (Lake).

In fact, at the beginning of the school year they did not know they were going to be a part of a student's integration program until they were told that a student would be attending their class.

And so far, I must confess, I think that's the way it's being presented to regular educators, is that, you know, this special education person will come in your room and tell you what you should be doing (Ross).

Although the communication had improved with the mediation of the principal, these teachers still felt that they were not given a choice in the student's integration.

I resent not having the say so...But I don't have that right...It's not my prerogative in my own classroom. It is not...I don't feel that I have the freedom to make judgements (West).

They accepted it because they felt they had no other alternatives. "I'm stuck for a whole year trying to deal with this kid and the problems, plus all my regular students..." (Phillips). These feelings were strongly expressed and were apparently disturbing to the individual teachers as they conveyed their experiences.

Needs of the Special Education Student

Teachers of regular education voiced the concern that the needs of the integrated special education student may have adverse affects upon the delivery of instruction to the regular education students already in the class. When the special education student's performance, academically, behaviorally and/or physically, were within the range exhibited by the regular education students of the class instruction proceeded as usual. These teachers felt the integration was appropriate with no conflict with their "scripted" role as a teacher. They were able to teach the group of regular education students assigned to their class and integrate the special education student also. "I feel like it is fine if they are able to be in there--in the regular classroom but I--I don't want disruptions" (Post).

The vice-principal summed up the teacher's of regular education perspective by saying that:

It is a challenge and the regular ed. teacher will be thinking of the group so much more than the individual child that is several levels behind (Wilson).

Conversely, when the special education student's needs were outside of the range typically found in a regular education class the teacher felt the integration was inappropriate. She felt forced into a position where the demands were too great. She believed the needs of the special education student would detract from the limited amount of time and resources available to the regular education students.

Because if they hold back the class--like if I have to spend time with them or we have to wait on them or something like that...the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few (Williams).

Under these conditions she felt obligated to adhere to her "scripted" role of teacher of regular education as the basis for decision-making concerning integration. Given the dilemma of increased demands upon the teacher of regular education, she felt obligated to advocate for the needs of the many (regular education students) who were her responsibility over the needs of one (the special education student) who was the responsibility of the teacher of special education.

We have these special ed. teachers for these special ed. kids and a lot of times--sometimes I feel they are putting them over on us when I can't give the attention I need to that child plus 20 other

kids that need that other attention. You know it's double pressure on me (Newhouse).

You know, the kid that is not functioning basically the way the other kids are, and that pulls so much from the teacher that it's really not fair to the rest of the kids, to the majority of the class (Blake).

Increased Demands

Teachers of both regular and special education felt that communication was critical to the success of the special education student; however, they felt strained by the dilemma of working out time and ways to communicate with other teachers who were equally constricted by inflexible schedules and work loads.

Once you place--once I place a student in there the work's only begun. It would be much easier for me to keep the student in my classroom. Really (Panell).

All teachers felt the need to conduct one to one communication and teacher of special education had the added responsibility of initiation and implementation of the integration changes at the school. Communication with other teachers and the management of the entire integration process were responsibilities that were added to a teacher's existing duties.

Teachers felt stressed by the increased responsibilities to a their workload. They were being asked to do more for which they did not feel compensated. The tension that the increased responsibilities placed upon at least two

teachers caused them to express a consideration of transfer to another school where they would encounter very few integration changes. As one teacher put it:

This school really gets hit, I get hit hard here; and I have even considered transferring for that very fact. Because I know that at other schools, you might find-- you might come across one child in every five years that's mainstreamed in (Phillips).

Positive Outcomes

The positive outcomes for both the special education and the regular education students were quickly and easily stated by participants from all groups. For both sets of students these benefits were believed to emanate exclusively from within the confines of social benefits. Responses were very focused on the social benefits to individual students from their participation in the planned integration activities.

Benefits to Special Education Students

For the special education students, those interviewed cited improved self concept, wider range of age appropriate socialization opportunities, and exposure to appropriate behaviors modeled by regular education students.

A little guy that I have that's in a wheelchair. When I first got him he was a little--a little standoffish as far as social things. Now, he is Mr. Social Event of the Season' and there is nothing in that room he can't do. He was so

dependent. Now he is an equal and when you see the expression on his face that's all you need (West).

They point to the pleasure these students took in receiving attention from regular education students and how this attention encouraged them to strive to fit into a group of age appropriate peers during social activities, such as play, lunch times and passing in the hallways. These exchanges were a positive influence on the behaviors of the special education students and were sometimes cited as an incentive for them to achieve goals set in their IEPs. For example, one teacher knew from experience that students wanted to increase the time they spent in their regular classroom and she used this as an incentive to help them modify their inappropriate behaviors. The aide related that:

As a matter of fact the kids look forward to going to those classes. Getting out of here and getting to go. And, I mean they are really excited about it. They grab their books and tell me it's time to go...If it [their behavior] would get too bad she might pull him out for two or three days just to say, 'You need to shape up if you want to stay down there' (Lowe).

Teachers related their belief that the special education students viewed themselves as a part of the school community when they were integrated into regular education classes. "Their social skills increase. They can get along better...They have friends. They're not loners" (Wood).

When the integration was viewed as successful, regular education teachers referred to these individuals as just another student in their class. The student had integrated into the class to the point that they demonstrated appropriate responses and behaviors which fit the profile of a typical student in the class.

Benefits to Regular Education Students

When interviewees spoke of benefits for regular education students, they likewise cited improved aspects of social relations. The benefits named by teachers in both regular and special education were an appreciation for the differences in others and the ability to interact with individuals who are disabled in a comfortable, accepting manner. "...regular children realize that they're people too and they have feelings and they're just like them" (Howard). Teachers cited instances in which regular education students demonstrated their acceptance of special education students at the school and even transferred that acceptance to out of school settings.

...the beginning of the semester the regular ed. kids were apprehensive--afraid of the kids...[but now] I've heard parents say that the kids will walk right up to other kids that they--strangers, you know, that kids will be in a wheelchair or whatever, and just squat right down to them and start talking to them...it's made these kids gravitate toward special ed. kids, rather than away from special kids (Carr).

Teachers did not cite any instances of students expressing the sentiment "There, but for the grace of God go I." Or, in other words, voicing the realization that they are fortunate that they were not disabled. However, they did state that they felt regular education students "should" realize that they were extremely fortunate not to have any disabilities such as those witnessed around them. "Might let some of these very privileged children count their lucky stars or their blessings a little more" (Foster).

There was somewhat of an implication that regular education students should be motivated to work harder and fully use the talents that they have after seeing the difficulty of the lives of the disabled.

It's made me thankful for my normal kids and I think it helps other children see that not everybody can walk and not everybody has these same gifts that I have. A lot of the times the kids would say, 'Oh, I can't do this.' and I would say, 'Oh, yes, you can do that. Let's give it a shot. You have two hands and you've got a mind that works and some kids don't have that.' And they could see that and they could see that here. When sometimes they would say I can't. Well, they know they can't say can't in my room (Newhouse).

Related Observation

It was interesting to note that academic or instructional benefits which could result from contact among individuals or groups were never alluded to by any of the persons interviewed. Even though teachers from both groups had

students who were integrated for academic classes, they believed the positive benefits were social not academic for the special education student as well as the regular education students.

Continued Integration

Continued integration efforts at Bradford Elementary School are affected by external influences. The external influence brought to bear on the school's future plans continues to be the state department of education's compliance requirements resulting from the advocacy complaint in 1989. Integration changes are documented in the county's long range plans filed to satisfy state department of education's compliance requirements. This plan must be followed in order to remedy the 1989 findings that not enough integration opportunities were available to students and that not all students were placed in age appropriate settings (see pg 61 for a full discussion). Therefore, Bradford Elementary School will need to continue to make changes in it's educational programs until the compliance plan is fully implemented.

Integration Opportunities

The LRE Task Force has outlined goals which are also incorporated into the county's five year educational plan

that continue the planned integration begun this year. These goals will impact upon the integration of special education students at Bradford Elementary School by increasing the required integration activities from 10 to 15 per week next year and to 20 the following year.

To date the teachers of special education have found that it is relatively easy to meet the goal of 10 integration activities per week. As one teacher put it: "If we go to breakfast and lunch in the cafeteria each day, that's the ten right there" (Carr). Since the teachers have been able to count any of the group integration activities discussed earlier, it is likely that this will continue to be the major source drawn upon by the teachers of the more severely disabled students. It is likely that none of these students will be academically integrated into regular education classrooms, but will continue to participate in group integration activities.

Integration of the special education students for whom individual integration activities in the regular education setting have been initiated could continue on the same basis as begun this year. A student who participates in even one regular class activity, such as playtime, can already count it as five per week. Accordingly, one regular education activity and two group integration activities per day would satisfy next year's increased requirement.

As the above examples illustrate, it is probable that meeting future compliance requirements for integration is within the existing planned integration efforts. However, the task of ensuring that an adequate number is in place and documenting the integration activities for each student remains the responsibility of each teacher of special education. This task appears to be one which is conducted on a case by case needs basis, with an overall review in the fall when integration documentation has to be filed.

Age Appropriate Placements

A second result of the compliance plan filed by the county will have a direct effect on Bradford Elementary School next fall. Special education students must be placed in an educational setting that includes regular education students who are of the same age. Bradford Elementary School's regular education population ranges from kindergarten through fifth grade which dictates the age range for special education students.

To achieve age appropriate placements, two classes of students were moved to the high school this year to place them in an age appropriate setting. Two classes of special education students, who are aged 12 to 15, remained at Bradford Elementary School throughout the current school

year. These two classes are scheduled to be moved to the middle school in the fall.

For the students in the two classes, the move will mean the opportunity to go to a middle school setting with all the benefits of an age appropriate environment. For Bradford Elementary School the move will mean available space for the growing preschool disability program which next year will include three year old children.

The Future of Integration

When interviewees were asked about the future plans for integration at their school, their responses also incorporated their perspectives on the theory itself and/or the future influence its acceptance would have on the school. Their views expressed their doubts, concerns and frustrations surrounding the future directions they foresee for integration changes in their school. Further, their perspectives were revealing of these teachers' attitudes toward and beliefs about educational change.

Passing Phase

About half of the teachers of regular education felt that integration changes made at the school represented the most recent "fad" to come down to the school. They voiced their doubts about the sincerity or the permanence of the

commitment behind the school systems support of integration. They based their conclusions on previous experiences with other educational reforms. Prior experiences in the educational system had convinced these individuals that innovations come and go in almost predictable cycles. Each school year brings another program that is claimed to be THE solution to the problems in education. Then, by the end of the year, the program has run it's course and fades into the background until another year and another program arrives. Disillusioned teachers tend to adopt an attitude that is passively suspicious of all new programs. They concluded that they were better off to reserve their energy and remain passive toward proposed changes, including integration of special education students. The following excerpts serve to illustrate their skepticism:

I think we are kind of headed back to the self-contained classroom. You know that will be the next trend. It seems like we are going in one complete circle now. It's just like it's all starting again just back to step one (Howard).

Well, I think that they will always be mainstreamed, but I think it's just like, you know, the pendulum will swing so far out, then it'll start coming back (Phillips).

I predict that later on we will be back to about where we are...there will be financial constraints, and if we don't have those then the pendulum will swing back real fast... (Wilson).

They want to take them all into the regular classroom, and they have gone from one extreme to the other. There are a lot of times that an awful lot

of things would work in this world if somebody would just stay in the middle of the road...somewhere down the middle of the road is the right way. I feel like that they have gone from that extreme and they're headed for the other one, hell bent for leather, so to speak (Marsh).

Teachers who do not trust or believe in the validity of the integration changes do not feel vested in its implementation. There is really no reason to dedicate themselves to a "passing fad". It is in their best interest to passively wait out the course of the current "fad" and save themselves the wasted energy and effort of participating in a program that they "know" will not last.

Teacher's concerns and frustrations may best be summed by the following:

I work seven and one half hours a day--like a dog...In my next life I will not be a regular ed. [teacher]. I will be something else because I'm telling you the old pendulum is swinging and it's not swinging for the good of the regular ed. teacher (West).

STATUS QUO

Participants of both regular and special education saw the future of integration holding at the status quo of the present. They felt that integration of special education students would not go beyond the changes that had been made thus far. They could not envision a school system in which special education classes would not be necessary. "There are always going to be students that have to have that

resource room, I feel" (Glenn). They could not envision integration with increased regular education placements beyond the limits already achieved.

Predictors of the status quo scenario hold that the current integration activities have brought about the appropriate types of placements into regular education. "I think the days of the separation are definitely over as they should have been" (Franklin). They are convinced that integration changes have gone far enough. "As long as we have a BD classroom it is going to pretty much remain the same. I don't see any way or a better way to do it right now myself" (Lowe).

In other words, they find it acceptable to integrate groups or entire classes of severely/profoundly disabled into non-academic activities and to integrate individuals of milder disabilities who are "ready" into regular education classes. But, to initiate any further changes would not be appropriate or beneficial to students, teachers or the school. "And so, to integrate them into regular class, I would not see that. Maybe they would move up to a milder class, but they are so severe there's no way" (Carter).

FULL INTEGRATION

The final scenario of the future of special education integration is expressed in the term "full integration" as

proposed by Regular Education Initiative proponents. Under this proposal all students are educated in a fully integrated, age appropriate regular education setting. Special and regular education would be merged into one system without teacher specializations or categories of students.

Interestingly, none of the teachers of special education voiced a belief that full integration was a possibility in this school. Full integration was predicted exclusively by a majority of the teachers of regular education. Nine of the fifteen teachers of regular education believe the current integration changes may be the beginning of continued pushes by the county administration and/or state/federal governments to achieve full integration and thereby eliminate special education.

Well, not that I'm in favor of it, but I see total integration and the special educator being a resource person to the regular educator (Ross).

I fear that it will become a mandatory total mainstreaming of--eventual mainstreaming of all special ed. students in some way, shape or form (Mann).

Teachers of regular education not only believe full integration is probable they are definite in their belief that it would have a negative effect on their school.

I feel eventually that there will be no such thing as special ed. classes...I really and truly am afraid that they are going to do away with special ed. And I hate to see it because it's needed (Lake).

Teachers are quite concerned over the prospect of integrating all special education students into regular education. They can not imagine conditions which are adequate to compensate for the loss of specialized teachers, individualized instruction and support for the educational needs of the disabled.

...we're going to end up with more behavior problems with kids who are trying to do the same thing everybody else is doing, and they are already frustrated (Lake).

Teachers of regular education tend to envision full integration as the worst case scenario. Discussion of this view of the future allows their suspicions about the reason for the change to surface.

More demands are going to be put on the regular ed. teacher--Uh--less demands--[voice lowers to a whisper] on the special ed. teacher. You know? (West).

Predictions also express concern over the reaction of parents:

I see problems with regular ed. parents being resentful of the fact that--I see regular ed. people, the more and more that we get coming in, kind of being resentful of the kids that pull so much from their classroom teacher (Blake).

Finally, teachers of regular education expressed concerns and fears surrounding their role in the education of disabled students.

Well, there's must a whole can of worms that go with that. you know, you're going to have to have--the resource person is going to have to have

some real interpersonal relationship skills; because I think most regular educators are going to have their feathers rustled, you know. 'Who are you to tell me?' (Ross).

These teachers cannot understand how a special education system that is founded on teachers with specialized skills teaching limited numbers of students in highly individualized methods could be transplanted into their regular education classrooms.

CHAPTER V DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Multiple voices could be heard as this integration study was approached, conducted and analyzed. Therefore, I have examined the findings of this study from several perspectives. Initially I will discuss the voice of the participants and their recommendations derived from experience and reflection during the first year of implementation. Next, I will voice the findings and recommendations of previous research studies in the professional literature as they compare and contrast to the participant recommendations. Finally, I will speak as a researcher to my perceptions of the findings and implications of those findings to this study.

Participant Recommendations

The completion of the first year of the integration changes affords the participants a perspective from which they can assess the implementation. They are in a position to make recommendations which they believe will improve the integration process, mediate its impact upon the staff members, and elicit the best educational practices for students. Therefore, I will use the perspectives of participants as the basis for recommendations for

modifications in the integration process at Bradford Elementary.

During the course of interviews participants were free to relate their suggestions for improvement of the integration process. They based their suggestions upon personal experiences with the process as well as information gathered from experiences of others. The recommendations of the teachers interviewed repeat in another way the concerns they have about the integration process. Their suggestions are reflections on the problems they have encountered during the first year of integration. These suggestions were not a result of a direct interview question. They were volunteered during the course of discussions relating concerns about the process or about critical factors for the success of integration. Although these unsolicited recommendations may not be fully representative of every interviewee's perception, I find it significant that 19 individuals felt strongly enough about their reflections that they were motivated to volunteer their suggestions.

None of the participants rejected outright the integration changes made at the school. Some offered one or more suggestions for modifications which they felt would improve the process in the future. Their suggestions fall into two broad categories: 1) systematic structure to guide the integration process and 2) resources to assist staff

members. Specific items under each of these categories are listed by type and number of responses in Table 7.

Table 7. Bradford Elementary Staff Recommendations.

Recommendation	Number of Responses			
	Teachers		Aides	Admin.
	Regular	Special		
Systematic structure				
Teacher input	4	1	1	
Training/experience in spec. ed.	3	4	1	
Formalize the procedure	3			
Advance information on student	3			
Communication/collaboration	3			
Participation choice	2	1		
Appropriate placement	1	1	1	
Supervisory assistance	1			
Physical integration of classrooms	1			
Ability grouping	1			
Resources				
Additional aides	3		1	1
Smaller class size	2			
Increased financial support	2			

SYSTEMATIC STRUCTURE

The majority of the participant suggestions were in the category of recommendations which would formalize the integration process. Interviews from many participants conveyed a need for a systematic and predictable order to the process of integration of students from special education. These participants desired modifications which would improve the

ability of teachers to integrate a student as well as modifications which would ease the tensions felt between teachers of regular and special education.

Teacher Input

One of the recommendations which received strong emphasis from participants was the systematic inclusion of regular education teachers in the integration process from the beginning. At the point when initial considerations may be made in a placement meeting throughout the student's educational experience at Bradford Elementary, the consensus was that the appropriate teacher in regular education should be given an equal opportunity to express opinions, concerns, and recommendations for integration activities.

Ms. James recognized the concern expressed by teachers of regular education and the need to address their concern:

...I met with all kinds of groups as these different little problems have come up. How much to mainstream and how do the regular classroom teachers have enough input, which I don't think we've addressed that too well. See, I think that is a primary concern at Bradford Elementary. That they are not invited to the PAC, IEP meetings and that they--well, sometimes they are but I mean that they don't have enough input into the classroom or not. And I think that they have a valid point.

Ms. James' impressions were confirmed in the following excerpts from a teacher of special education and an aide:

I mean the regular ed. teacher should be in on the meetings when we discuss what we're going to do with the special child (Martin).

A lot of times we are told that we are going to get a child and he has CP; he has reading problems; he has a tach in and I'm like--Ugh [long gasping sound]. I'm scared to death! But when I get the kid it's not anything like I think it was going to be. So I think that the regular teachers really need to be more involved in our placement meetings and get to know the kids a little bit before they're just brought in on them (Abbott).

The recommendation that teachers of regular education should have input into integration decisions from inception was strongly proposed by the teachers of regular education. This single suggestion was the most prominent of their proposals as indicated by their statements:

So, I would like to see teachers being given more input into it--regular ed. teachers. And I would like to have placements changed a little bit easier than having to have an act of congress (West).

I'm sure they have meetings...and I should be able to sit in on those meetings. I should have a say on whether or not I feel that child could handle what goes on in a kindergarten classroom. But nine times out of ten, I'm not. I am not--I have no idea (Phillips).

To make it be successful with the regular ed. teacher being involved, you know, from the PAC [Placement Advisory Committee] all the way down. And if there is a problem, that the regular ed. teacher have some say in, 'Hey, this isn't working', or either, 'Hey, this is great'. You know one way or the other; because we as regular ed. people, don't really have a lot of say in it (Blake).

Training/Experience in Special Education

A second recommendation, matching teacher input in frequency, was that teachers of regular education should have training and/or experiences specific to the needs of the prospective students which they may be instructing. Teachers of special education and an aide pointed to the needs evidenced from experiences during the current year of implementation of the integration process.

As to our biggest problems were with putting a kid in a classroom and that teacher not being properly trained or advised...And, you know, I think that there is a need for--whether it's inservice training before school starts--You take all the teachers and say, 'Somewhere down the road you may have a special kid and here are the things we need to work on to prepare you for that.' And like I said I think that is the biggest weakness right now (Martin).

The real problem with regular education teachers who are receiving these mainstreamed students...there needs to be an eye opener to say maybe I should look at this child differently. I think there needs to be some requirements at the regular education level for special education. I'm not sure classes are going to be the sole thing (Panell).

Ms. Panell further suggested that "There's a real problem with special education knowledge at the administration level. A lot of the principals don't have any background on special education needs." Her impressions were not restricted to one school but generalized to other states in which she had previously taught. She believed that this perceived lack of knowledge needs to be addressed by site

visits "into a setting in which there are students heavily mainstreamed in all aspects where they can go and observe" and by seminars given by "people coming from these exemplary schools". Ms. Panell recommended this training begin with the "administrators at the upper level board office and then at the principals--at the school site level, too".

Teachers of regular education voiced their perceptions of the need for and benefit from specialized training. Their recommendation emanated from an appreciation for their own past experiences in special education settings or from a concern for clarification of the role they were expected to perform in the integration of students with needs outside of the "norm" for the regular education classroom.

I've told a lot of people I know--a lot of them don't like hearing it--but with me teaching for so long in a resource room, I think everybody ought to do--I don't care if it's just the nine weeks--I think every teacher should teach some form of special ed.--resource room, whatever. And it gives you a different outlook on the classes. I know I have more--I feel like I have more patience with some kids than maybe that's never taught, you know, low or very low level children (Lake).

I think that a regular classroom teacher that is--particularly someone that has a severe handicap, I think they need to have a little bit of some kind of training. Even if it's just a couple of hours. Sit down and give explanations but don't just put them in there cold and say these are yours now--because I don't know how to handle a lot of these with handicapped children. Because I haven't had experience with it and nobody has told me about it...instead of some of these [excuse the word] stupid things that they make us sit through... (Miller).

There's a lot of medical risks there and I think we need teacher training for physically impaired students...but I want the training before he arrives...we always put the horse before the cart too many times (Foster).

In order of response, the next level of recommendations includes suggestions to formalize the procedure, provide advance information on the student to be integrated, scheduled time for communication/collaboration between teachers of special and regular education, and the right to choose to participate or not to participate in the integration process. These suggestions were made solely by teachers of regular education and related their perceived need to gain a greater sense of certainty and structure in the process.

Formalize the Procedure.

Teachers of regular education expressed a desire for a standardization to the integration process. They suggested that the over-all process should be given exact procedures that would be followed each time the process is initiated.

As one teacher stated:

I think if there was a formal structure here, you know, procedures that you go through with every kid, you know, it would be a lot easier (Blake).

The second perceived area where structure was desired was in the follow-up after placement. The difficulty of

finding time to discuss progress or to work on problems as they arose exacerbated the stress teachers felt in accommodating the adjustments and needs of a student from special education. The suggestion was proposed by one teacher as:

...more of a check system some way. Even though you know you can always go and talk with the person; I don't know it just seems that if there were a better checking system--I don't know (Arthur).

These recommendations may have stemmed from the lack of inclusion of this group in the integration process or a basic need by individuals to make "sense" of a process in which they do not feel knowledgeable.

Advance Information on Student

The recommendation that the teacher of regular education be given information prior to the student's entrance to the classroom was coupled with the recommendation that the teacher not be expected to observe the child or acquire the information without release time. This suggestion, too, was a request for more structure and routine established in the integration process with scheduled release time for information gathering and preparation.

I should be informed, what's expected, what I can expect out of this child (Phillips).

If we could observe the kid in that [special education] classroom, you know, it would be great. It's like with my BD kid, if I could have release time from my room to go down and just observe him in his BD classroom to see, you know just what

his tricks are. And then kind of decide how I'm going to incorporate him in my room. But it's very informal integration now (Blake).

Communication/Collaboration

Teachers of regular education emphasized two aspects of communication and collaboration between teachers of special and regular education for the integration of a student. These teachers stressed the importance of respect and trust in collaboration efforts and the need for release time for follow-up and communication. An excerpt representing each of these recommendations illustrates the perspectives of these teachers:

And I just think that there has to be that good feeling about two people working together. And feeling trust. There has to be some trust built there, that you're not going to come in and criticize the way that my teaching style or my teaching techniques--and vice versa (Ross).

If I've got a special ed. kid that's integrated in my classroom, give me time to meet with the special needs teacher that I have their kid. Give me the time, so it's not me at break running down and saying, 'I've got a problem' (Blake).

As with the above two recommendations (formalize the procedure and advance information on the student) teachers of regular education on one hand recognize an improvement to the existing procedure; however, they also feel compliance with the recommendation on their own time would overburden their already strained schedules.

Participation Choice

Teachers of regular education expressed an attitude that participation in the integration process should be a voluntary selection. They related that it is important to have individual choice in the decision to accept a student to be integrated. One teacher expressed this recommendation along with the suggestion that the administration approach only those teachers who agree to work with integration.

I think that as administrator they should touch on the people that generate toward the special need kids in regular education...They need to touch base with those that are willing to do it (Blake).

Additionally, one of the teachers of special education recognized the critical importance of the rapport between special and regular education teachers in the integration process.

The mainstreaming will not, I'm firmly convinced, will not be successful if there's not the rapport established and a good working relationship with that particular teacher before, prior to that student going and continual maintenance of that. It comes from the teacher and the teacher first. And that teacher's perception of you trickles down to the student (Panell).

The final level of recommendation under systematic structure represented a lowest number of responses from teachers of regular education with each representing one individual's recommendation. Appropriate placement was the only recommendation receiving support from a teacher and an

aide of special education. The remaining suggestions were each proposed by one individual.

Appropriate Placement

The teacher of regular education making this recommendation was concerned that the student to be integrated is "ready" for the regular education classroom. She wanted an assurance that the student was prepared for the instruction that would take place in the regular classroom.

I think they [teachers of special education] need to know very thoroughly what it is they are suggesting for the child. They need to know what level their child is working on before they come to me...And armed with that information then I can take it from there (Mann).

The suggestion may be linked with the teachers of regular education's concern expressed earlier that the range of instructional needs of students in the classroom not exceed limits which would strain the capabilities of the teacher. Integration of students in special education was perceived by some teachers to exceed these limits. A teacher of special education needs to certify that the student fits the educational demands of the setting in regular education.

A teacher and aide of special education agreed that the placements must be appropriate but expressed her suggestion from the view of a student. She recommended that any

integration activity under consideration be appropriate for the student.

I think that would be a big part of it and, too, to make sure that wherever we're going to integrate is appropriate for my students, because I think there's a lot of phases of integration that just aren't appropriate (Carr).

That's about the biggest drawback--putting a kid where they can't compete (Marsh).

Supervisory Assistance

The recommendation for assistance from an individual who could work between regular and special education was made by one teacher of regular education. She recognized a need for an individual who could fill the integration needs for supervision, problem solving, decision-making, and collaboration. A need for the problems and difficulties to be solved more immediately as they arose is depicted by the teachers's comments.

Somebody that can assist. I even think that there should be like Ms. James is over all the special ed. in the county--It kind of makes sense to me if there were somebody like that in every school. Especially, this school is so huge. So to express problems to because sometimes you can't even get through to her for express questions and such (Newhouse).

Physical Integration of Classrooms

One teacher of regular education felt that physical proximity of classes would assist in the contact between

regular and special education students and teachers that would enhance integration efforts.

Maybe physically we need to move some of the classrooms or that kind of thing. And then that would mix teachers, it would mix rooms, it would mix students more. So it would just have more contact and more visibility among each other (Franklin).

Instead of the traditional grouping of rooms by regular education grade level and then finding room for special education somewhere "out back", classes would be randomly assigned to blend special education classes into regular education.

The physical placement of special education has been the focus of a recent law suit in the state resulting in schools being required to move special education classes into the main building of the school. However, Ms. Franklin's suggestion implies a full integration of classes within the entire number of available rooms--not just moved inside at the end of the hall.

Also of note was the indication by the principal, Mr. King, that he had intentionally allowed and/or forced situations in which the teachers had to be in contact with each other during the day. He described two situations as follows:

In turn, I want all the teachers and aides in there [cafeteria], too. Sometimes in the mornings there are more adults in there than there are kids. But it's worked out fine and the kids get

to see the other kids and the one thing I like about it, too, all those teachers are over in this building for that first half-hour of the morning. They get to know each other. See that just came about and that's helped.

That's why we only have the mailboxes over here [main building]. They wanted their mailboxes over there [in the fourth building]. No way! That's the only way they get to see each other and say 'Hi' to somebody. And I said I'll come over here all the time. If you want something I'll come walking over.

Measures such as these and other forced choice situations may be inclusive with Ms. Franklin's recommendation that "teachers mix more". Although artificially devised, these measures could provide the beginnings of an integrated faculty who may be able to communicate better and promote an integrated school.

Ability Grouping

A return to homogeneous grouping within classrooms was proposed by one teacher of regular education. Again, this appears to be an effort to manage the range of diversity and instructional needs when a student from special education is integrated into a regular education class.

I think that the grouping is another thing they are going to have to consider. Don't--now I know we don't ability group and we haven't for a long time, but you might have to go back toward that a little bit...I find that the larger the ability range I have within one group the harder it is to keep everyone going...But this thing of everybody thrown in here together in this melting pot we are

creating creates problems for me as a teacher. I find it to be a stumbling block (Foster).

Resources

The second category of interviewee recommendations involves the commitment of financial support in order to comply with the suggestions. The category consists of three recommendations: obtaining additional aides, allowing smaller class size, and an increase in financial support. These suggestions were made in regard to any class in which a special education student was being integrated. Again, these recommendations appear to be a way to ease the strain of increased demands placed upon the teacher of regular education when a student is integrated.

Additional Aides

Three teachers of regular education, an aide, and one principal agreed that assistance from classroom aides would ease the strain for the teacher of regular education even if that aide were to assist in several classes or be available part-time.

...everyone wants the quality of education to improve but where I sit it seems like each year they put more and more on us as regular educators...To spend so much time in each room or as needed or something. If you want to do a lot of integration then I think you are going to have to have some aides for regular teachers (Foster).

And if you have a real handicapped child that's going to need bathroom and things like that then the regular classroom teacher is going to need an aide (Miller).

Smaller Class Size

Two teachers of regular education recommended reduction in class size for any teacher who had a student from special education integrated into their classroom. This type of consideration would make integration more equitable in the opinion of these teachers. This consideration may even make the option to accept a student more attractive to a teacher of regular education instead of a perceived burden of increased demands and more work to be done without any compensation.

And really, I think if we'd set up a system where those that would want to be a part of integrating special needs kids then maybe lower our class size so that there'll be some compensation there. Because you can't carry the world or the school on your own shoulders...I think regular parents would say, 'Hey, that's great', you know, 'My kid'll benefit from a lower class number and benefit from the help from that aide, too' (Blake).

Increased Financial Support. Teachers of regular education making this recommendation questioned whether the funding, which is greater for a student in special education, could be used for the increased financial demands placed on regular education when that student is integrated. The needs of special education students were recognized as

being greater than those of students in regular education; therefore, extra funding should be made available to teachers accepting these students in regular education.

If they mainstream all these kids, is that money going to filter down into the classrooms or is that money going to find a new area to be applied to? (Miller).

It [funding] should be carried because if he is three to one in special ed. he is three to one or more in regular ed. Because there is not the time to do one-on-one so that ratio should carry regardless (West).

Research Support

Many of the recommendations emanating from participants this study are supported in the literature reviewed in earlier chapters. Specifically, previous research findings support the following:

1. Teacher input. (Bunish, 1985, Reynolds & Birch, 1988, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, Thousand & Villa, 1989, 1990, Vandercook & York, 1990).
2. Training/experience in special education. (Bunish, 1985, Reynolds & Birch, 1988, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, Thousand & Villa, 1989, 1990).
3. Advance information on student and communication/collaboration. (Bunish, 1985, Flynn & Kowalczyk-McPhee, 1989, Harris, 1990, Pugach & Johnson, 1990, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, Stainback, Stainback, & Slavin, 1989, Thousand & Villa, 1989, 1990, Weisenstein & Peiz, 1986).
4. Appropriate placement. (Bunish, 1985, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, Thousand & Villa, 1989, 1990, Vandercook & York, 1990).

5. Supervisory assistance. (Bunish, 1985, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, Thousand & Villa, 1989, 1990).
6. Additional aides and increased financial support. (Reynolds & Birch, 1988, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, Stainback, Stainback & Slavin, 1989, Thousand & Villa, 1989, 1990).

Three of the participant recommendations were not supported directly in the literature which I reviewed. However, certain research findings can be brought to bear which implies support for these recommendations:

1. Participation choice. The recommendation that teachers of regular education should have the choice in whether they accept students from special education into their classrooms is not stated directly in the literature reviewed. However, the literature suggests that success of integration efforts depend on the attitude and acceptance of the teacher of the regular education class (Stainback & Stainback, 1989b, Thousand & Villa, 1989, 1990). I suggest that the intent of both recommendations are the same, and I interpret participation choice as being indirectly supported by the reviewed literature.

2. Physical integration of classrooms. The intention of the participant suggestion to integrate classrooms in the buildings at Bradford Elementary School can be seen as an intermediary step between segregated classrooms in the traditional school setting and full inclusion of all

students with disabilities into age-appropriate classes within regular education.

3. Smaller class size. Reduced class size is not addressed directly as a compensation for participation in integrating students with disabilities. However, support was found in studies based on the Homecoming Model for "incentives, rewards and methods of recognition" to "encourage, support or identify excellent performance" (Villa & Thousand, 1990, pg 204) in integration efforts. The list of incentives from the study did not include smaller class size but fits within the parameters of the researchers' recommendation.

Additionally, one recommendation appears to be outside of findings from the literature reviewed. No support for formalizing the procedures within the integration process was found in the literature reviewed for this study. If my conclusion that teachers of regular education are expressing uncertainty and a lack of knowledge about the integration process is correct, then it follows that this recommendation is their attempt to gain understanding and knowledge as well as predictability in a confusing and uncertain situation. The best explanation that the findings of this study support that process formalization is directly related to participant suggestions to provide teachers of regular education input and training/experience in special education.

Finally, one recommendation was not only unsupported by the literature, it was the only suggestion which was deemed by researchers and experts in the field to be a barrier to successful integration efforts. The recommendation to return to ability grouping has been viewed as a practice not assistive to successful integration. It is specifically identified as a barrier to successful integration by several researchers (Stainback & Stainback, 1989b, Stainback, Stainback & Slavin, 1989, Thousand & Villa, 1989). As I noted earlier, I believe this suggestion stemmed from a desire to control the perceived demands of integration. Possibly, alternative strategies for instructional delivery in regular education classrooms presented through inservice and/or collaboration would alleviate the concerns of the participant while maintaining a fit with findings and recommendations drawn from the literature.

Summary

I interpret participant recommendations as reflecting thoughtful and professional attention to the importance of improving the integration process within the school studied. These recommendations must be addressed in a forum within which discussion, problem solving, cooperation, and collaboration can take place between regular and special education teachers, administrative personnel, and staff of the school.

Such forums can be extremely beneficial for eliciting further suggestions and for prioritizing before making recommendations to the county administration. In this manner discussion can be focused on collaboration to improve the process with a more positive focus for all members.

In assessing participant recommendations, I believe it is important that the majority (71%) of these recommendations came from teachers in regular education. My sense of the perceptions of the interviewees is that the teachers of special education had been able, through the LRE Task Force meetings, to express their concerns and propose their suggestions over the past year and would continue to do so through quarterly meetings of the Task Force. Teachers of regular education, however, were not included among the Task Force membership. I continually sensed that they felt outside of the integration planning and implementation process. They did not have a venue for expression and collaboration prior to experiencing the effects of the integration changes in their classrooms.

Therefore, the only additional recommendation concerning the integration process which I would make deals with the inclusion of teachers of regular education in both the LRE Task Force meetings and in all arenas of deliberations concerning integration planning, decision-making, and collaboration. Initially, collaborative efforts among

teachers may have to be forced and formally structured then progressively moved to unsupervised teacher leadership. The purpose of this planned collaboration would be to bridge the gap between the groups and to build mutual respect and understanding among members.

I can't overemphasize the intensity and depth of concern participants (teachers of regular education) had for the impact that integration has on their teaching. I believe it will be beneficial in the long-term perspective to include the voices of those affected by the integration changes. Bringing these individuals into the process is a vital step in acknowledging their importance to the process, as well as a major step in integration of the faculty at Bradford Elementary.

Researcher's Conclusions

The county and Bradford Elementary School are experiencing the early struggles of implementation of integration changes. This study provided a method of examination of the process and the perspective of the participants as they deal with and attempt to make sense of those struggles.

To provide a means for final examination of the findings of the study, I will return to my original research questions to frame the picture of implementation as it was translated within the county and the school site.

1. What constituted integration in the school setting (i.e., the site definition)?

The LRE Task Force developed definitions of integration in their "Least Restrictive Environment Task Force Report" (1991). The LRE Task Force definition of integration is defined as "the term used to describe the principle of placement in the Least Restrictive Environment" (pg 3). The statement goes on to consider the following four areas in which integration can take place:

1. Physical Integration refers to the placement of handicapped [disabled] students with non-handicapped [nondisabled] peers in regular public schools.
2. Social Integration aims to encourage normal social interactions and friendships between students with handicaps [disabilities] and their nonhandicapped [nondisabled] peers.
3. Academic Integration is the opportunity for handicapped [disabled] students to be education [educated] in the same classroom as their nonhandicapped [nondisabled] peers. In addition to structured academics, these students will be able to grow through incidental learning.
4. Community Integration offers students opportunities to learn practical social and community living skills in a variety of settings. Students will be able to practice skills and solve problems in their natural environments (pg 3).

LRE Task Force Definition

The above areas of integration are based upon Vermont's

Statewide Project at the Center for Developmental Disabilities 1987 publication of Best Practice Guidelines for Students with Intensive Educational Needs. With the exception of community integration, these areas are compatible with and supported by Reynolds & Birch's (1988) three forms of mainstreaming: physical space, social interaction, and instructional.

The LRE Task Force elected to concentrate its efforts on the areas of physical, social and community for its report and made recommendations for the process of first-year implementation. The Task Force focus was the compiling of lists of possible integration activities within the above named areas. Therefore, the Task Force framed a very broad definition of integration, but the actual picture of that definition was then painted by the school site.

School Definition

A precise written definition of integration does not exist at Bradford Elementary School. No staff member offered a formalized definition of integration. Statements made during interviews indicate that any time a student with disabilities is outside of the special education classroom integration exists. It may be that in the minds of the staff the intent to accept and include students with disabilities is integration. As long as they can point to

examples of actual inclusion (partial) it is real for all students with disabilities. It may be that the staff is still in an early phase of implementation and may be expressing their perspective to the extent of their understanding. If so, the definition will change as they implement the goals of increasing integration in the next two years. Nevertheless, there is no definition or exact criteria on the basis of which to examine the quality of a contact with non-disabled peers, especially when viewed from the perspective of teachers of regular education.

In order to gain a broader perspective on the definition of integration at Bradford Elementary School, I will juxtapose my summation of the participants' perspective on the site definition and the integration activities exhibited at the school against the merged definitions from Vermont's Statewide Project at the Center for Developmental Disabilities (1987), Reynolds and Birch (1988) and Deno's (1973) cascade of services. Figure 1 provides the context for a comparison of integration at Bradford Elementary School against these research findings from the literature.

Placement on this continuum was arrived at through interpretation of the study results and the degree to which integration practices at Bradford Elementary School were congruent with descriptions abstracted from reviewed literature. The following descriptive characteristics were used as

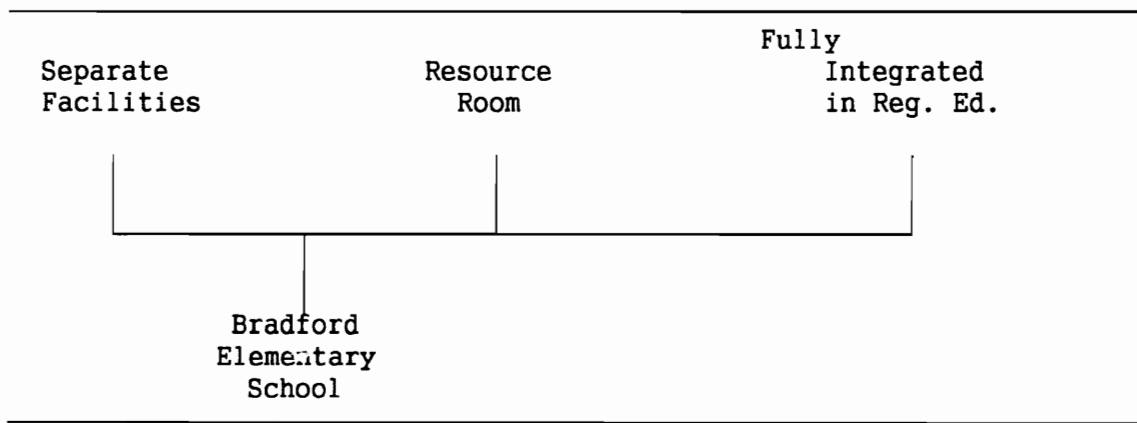


Figure 1. Continuum of integration options.

a basis for indentifying the location of Bradford Elementary School on the continuum:

1. Physical location in classes of with nondisabled peers.
2. Physical access to facilities which include non-disabled peers.
3. Social interactions with age-appropriate peers on an deliberately arranged basis.
4. Social interactions with age-appropriate peers on an incidental basis.
5. Instruction delivered in classes with nondisabled peers.

The above depictions are based on the study results and on the research literature. However, it must be recognized that these are my interpretations. I will be interested in the results of input from study participants in their placement of integration at Bradford Elementary School providing their perspective against descriptions from other nationally recognized models of full integration projects.

Additionally, I would be interested in viewing integration at Bradford Elementary School in the coming years to reassess its placement on the continuum as implementation of integration changes continue. Movement toward a more fully integrated school should be monitored if developments within the Task Force and the school are to provide direction to future integration activities.

2. What supervisory philosophy guided the implementation of the integration process?

Two distinctive supervisory styles were evident in the integration implementation in this study: traditional (top-down) and clinical supervision (bottom-up) approaches. The LRE Task Force was structured and guided by a philosophy of clinical supervision. The Special Education Director, Ms. James, functioned as the facilitator to the Task Force whose members were empowered to question, critically analyze, and explore alternatives. The essence of Ms. James' clinical supervision style is revealed through her statements that about the Task Force outcomes: "The teachers made me aware of many things that I did not know...I [had] assumed too much", and "...I wasn't sure what the teachers were going to choose to do".

The descriptions of the Task Force sessions by its members as "a jam session", "brainstorming", "group support", "a core of people" and "different perspectives" gives incites into the supervisory philosophy guiding the process. While not identifying Ms. James' leadership style as clinical supervision, Task Force members reflected through their descriptions of their work agreement with the premises and benefits of clinical supervision identified in my literature review (pg. 27) (Nolan, 1989, Smyth, 1984a, Tracy & MacNaughton, 1989, Trumbull, 1987):

1. A collegial relationship in which teachers feel safe, supported, and respected.
2. Teacher control over the supervisory agenda.
3. Problem reframing and reflection by both teachers and supervisors as the heart of the supervisory process.
4. Reliance on an inquiry-oriented collaborative search for ways of improving learning.
5. Wider range of options presented for the solution of dilemmas.

The only variance I can identify was that teachers of regular eduction were not included on the Task Force. Thus, their voice was not part of the collaborative efforts of the Task Force, and a potential opportunity to break down the barriers which separate regular and special educators on the issue of integration (Stainback & Stainback, 1990) passed.

In contrast, the supervisory philosophy at Bradford Elementary School can be described as traditional (top-down) approach. The school principal agrees with the premise that the administrative leader at the school site is in charge of the conduct of education at that site. His supervisory style was evident in examples of his statements about of the integration process: "...she has to be able to convince me that that is the right thing to do"; "...if any kid was to be placed in the regular classroom I would be the one to go to the teacher [of regular education]..." and "Cause I'm the boss and I told her".

Teachers at the school voiced an acknowledgement that it was best if the principal asked teachers of regular education to accept students from special education. "Teachers don't take it well from another teacher but they will go along with it when it comes from the principal". Interestingly, teachers of regular education had mixed opinions as to their autonomy in relation to the acceptance of a student. Teachers were about evenly divided on their perceptions of their control over the decision stating both that "...it's really our decision" and "I resent not having the say so...I don't feel that I have the freedom to make judgements".

Again, I believe that an opportunity is missed if a voice is not heard because they are not invited "to come to

the table" (Flynn and Kowalczyk-McPhee, 1989). Members are not heard if they are not part of the decision-making process in the integration implementation at Bradford Elementary School.

3. What activities were used to implement the integration plan? Who initiated these activities? Who supervised these activities?

I believe this question is also answered by the above descriptions of the supervisory styles evidenced in the integration process. The Task Force engaged in collaborative decision-making activities which were initiated and supervised by the director of special education but which were controlled and conducted by the Task Force members.

Conversely, the faculty at Bradford Elementary School were informed of the changes in the fall. The principal supervised all teacher initiated integration activities and retained decision-making control in all stages of the process. No inservice workshop or group planning and collaboration sessions were held prior to or during the implementation of the integration process.

As a result of the above stated method of implementation, I believe the Task Force members acquired ownership and a broad knowledge base of integration prior to its

translation into a process in the school. The remainder of the staff at Bradford Elementary School, however, were at a disadvantage since they experienced the "legislated" (Wise, 1987) mandate from the administration and were not given the opportunity to have input or to make informed decisions about the proposal in its planning stage.

4. What role changes have resulted from the integration process for the special education director, school principal, teachers, aides, and ancillary staff? How were these role changes facilitated? Who assisted individuals in implementing the role changes?

Both the special education director and the school principal perceived their roles as remaining unchanged by the implementation of integration plans. Their administrative/supervisory philosophies described above were seen to be applicable to all professional activities in which they were engaged. Each maintained their respective supervisory style throughout the implementation of the integration changes and predicted their role would remain unchanged as integration continued to be implemented.

Teachers of special education unanimously perceived changes in their roles. From their perspective successful

implementation of the integration process resulted in significantly more work for them. They felt encumbered by the need to supervise every aspect of the integration of their student(s). Each teacher saw their role increasing in responsibility, duties, and stress. They saw the integration as requiring more of them without sufficient support, time, and assistance to balance an already demanding job with the additional requirements of integration changes.

Teachers of regular education were divided on the effect the integration changes has had on their role. Approximately half of the teachers believed their roles had not changed with the implementation of integration. Their expressed attitude was one of responsibility for teaching all children no matter what the range of strengths and needs. Although they believed changes were necessary to improve their role in the integration process (i.e., additional resources, release time, and more information) they accepted the responsibility for classroom instruction for any child who was placed in their class.

The remaining half of the teachers of regular education emphatically expressed the belief that their role had changed. They indicated that they were being asked to make more sacrifices without support in the same areas as both teachers of regular and special education have identified. They perceived students with disabilities placed an unfair

burden on their role as a teacher of regular education. Not only were the integration changes increasing the numbers of students with special needs in the class, but integration was also increasing the probability of having to deal with medical, emotional and social needs, increased management of behavior problems, and increasing the different ability levels of instruction. These demands were all made without adequate knowledge, support, and assistance. After they accepted the student with disabilities, they were on their own to deliver instruction, maintain instruction for twenty-eight students of regular education, and meet the needs of a student outside of parameters envisioned as their role.

Further concern was expressed when teachers of regular education contrasted the existing conditions in regular and special education as they perceived them. The demands of integrating a student with disabilities was seen to be a depleting of finite resources which students in regular education must share, whereas special education could offer their students low teacher-pupil ratios, greater resources, increased funding, teacher aides, and better facilities. The teachers' conclusion could be paraphrased as: why should we be asked to do more than our fair share?

Aides in special education were also split on their perception of change in their role with integration implementation. Three of the interviewed aides perceived their

roles to have remained the same with only a variation in the location in which their duties were performed (moving more into the regular education arena).

Only one aide held the perspective that her role was significantly different with integration. She had to be more flexible and be willing to go anywhere needed by the students with disabilities.

Finally, only two of the nine ancillary personnel agreed to be interviewed; therefore, it is difficult to reach a confident conclusion concerning their perceptions of their role in integration. The two interviewed ancillary participants perceived no change in their role. They considered themselves to be outside of the arena where demands would be increased due to integration changes. Their jobs were the same with or without integration.

These differences are not only interesting findings, but warrant further investigation as the integration implementation progress into its second and third years. Anticipated changes in the requirements for integration change (e.g. increased number of required integration contacts and proposed assignment of aides to schools generally and not to classes specifically) may alter the perceptions of some participants toward their role as integration progressively changes.

5. What were the problems which have been encountered thus far in this integration? What have been the resolutions of these problems?

The conflicting forces which advocate and oppose integration in a politically charged, highly complex culture of the school system were evident from the inception of the integration changes in this study. The forces to change imposed by advocacy group pressures and State Department of Education mandates established the impetus for integration in the policy or public arena. This external pressure led to tensions between those who resisted integration and those who favored change.

At the school level the participants' perceptions of their role in relation to integration relates to the conflicting forces which both serve to oppose and support change described by Ball (1987). The micro-politics at Bradford Elementary School are evident in the attitudes of the advocacy (teachers and aides of special education) and opposition groups (teachers of regular education). The tensions of debate are undercurrents through which individuals must come to terms with self-perceptions of their roles, belief systems, self-concepts, and vested interests.

The first year of implementation has served to stir the currents of micro-political forces in the school.

Successive years of implementation and/or increased integration requirements in the future could serve to embroil the participants in the conflicting forces surrounding the proposed changes and the barriers to implementation compounded by the conflict with the need to establish new relationships and roles during the integration process (Weisenstein & Peiz, 1986).

6. What have been the positive outcomes resultant from this program change?

In the first year of the implementation stage of the integration process, participants from all groups quickly and easily identified social benefits to students of both regular and special education. All interviewees agreed that social benefits are the only positive outcome which they could consider as a possible benefit of planned integration. This perception may be a factor of the definition of integration at the school which focused on physical and social integration activities. It could be a factor of the views held by the participants that full integration is not possible in any way beyond those already implemented. While the social benefits named are valued as benefits of integration, this perspective is representative of the present attitude toward integration of the disabled, and it limits the

possibilities for future changes toward more inclusive integration.

7. What are the plans for continued implementation?

The question of future planned integration changes at the county level is within the environment of the LRE Task Force. Continued quarterly meetings will be held to develop future plans, to collaborate on new directions, and to focus on decision-making about planned changes. The specifics of these changes as stated earlier by Ms. James are unknown since members are empowered to arrive at these plans collaboratively. The five year implementation plan does, however, outline increases in the number of required contacts over the next three years to twenty per week.

The question of future planned integration changes at the school level did not elicit responses which were directed toward specifics at Bradford Elementary School. Instead, participants reacted to the prospect of the future of integration in a general, philosophical way. Responses tended to focus on perceptions of the recent integration changes as an educational reform which may be a factor of the high degree of external pressures which lead to the implementation of integration changes in the system.

About half of the teachers of regular education believed the integration changes to be another in a long line of "passing fads" which would run its course and soon be replaced by the next "fad". Their prediction of a coming pendulum swing has, for some, resulted in the adoption of a stance of passive resistance to the demands of integration until the fad passes.

A second group of participants of both regular and special teachers saw the future of integration holding at the status quo of the present level of integration. Instead of viewing the recent changes as a beginning, they believed these changes to be the maximum extent of integration possible. They could not envision integration with increased regular education placements beyond the limits already achieved.

Finally, the remainder of regular education teachers expressed concern and fear that the recent changes were only the beginning of a push to implement full integration with the elimination of special education altogether. These teachers envisioned full integration as the worst case scenario. They could not imagine conditions which would be adequate to compensate for the loss of specialized teachers, individualized instruction, and support for the educational needs of the disabled.

Clearly, a belief in integration as a best practice of education and an attitude of acceptance of students with disabilities are paramount to the success of integration efforts (Bunish, 1985, Stainback & Stainback, 1989a, 1989b, 1990, Thousand & Villa, 1989). Therefore, the above views of integration and its future are affecting the success of present implementation efforts and will continue to affect the future attempts for increased integration at Bradford Elementary School. These perceptions and beliefs will have to be recognized and mediated if more comprehensive integration is to become an established practice at the school.

Recommendation for Further Study

I recommend that continued study be pursued to examine the integration change process both in the county and at Bradford Elementary. Follow-up interviews should be conducted at Bradford Elementary to elicit perceptions of participants as the process concludes its second year of implementation. These perceptions could then be compared to the initial study results to obtain indications of change within the faculty.

Another type of follow-up study which may be useful to research interests and to the individuals of the school would be focus group interviews conducted to identify

improvements to the integration process, barriers to implementation of those improvements, and means to overcome the barriers. This type of "brainstorming" group interaction process can produce a wide range of participation and can serve to initiate discussion in an open forum or group problem solving activity. Focus groups may serve as a vehicle to produce numerous recommendations, prioritize these recommendations, and begin the collaboration between regular and special education.

Finally, I recognize that a need exists to continue to study integration at this site. One possibility would be to use the focus group interviews as a basis to develop a survey instrument which would address the concerns, barriers, and recommendations for improvement of the integration process at Bradford Elementary School and to further test these with individuals in schools throughout the county. This may be a pilot for the survey which could then be refined and utilized more widely within the State as it moves to implement national recommendations for integration.

Another possibility exists in the refinement of the model for integration that has been described in this study. The study description needs to be reviewed by participants until consensus is reached that it represents the "best practices" model with a diagrammed portrayal of the process.

Then this model can be proposed and tested at another site. Continual replication of this cycle may develop an integration process which can be a model for similar school sites.

NOTES

1. I recognize that PL 94-142 has been amended through PL 101-426 and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In later discussions I recognize the development of the legislation through its amendments. However, in this context of historical background I chose to use the original name in reference to the precedence set for the principle of inclusion of students with disabilities in regular education.
2. All identifying information has been changed to mask the identity of participants and locations in the study. Therefore, this and all other names used for location or attributed to quotes are pseudonyms which will be at the end of quotations enclosed by parentheses. Interview quotations will be distinguished from literature cites in that an identifying year will follow all literature citations.
3. Interviewees used the terms "mainstreaming" and "integration" interchangeably throughout their discussions. I was satisfied by their descriptions and examples that the individuals had the same understanding of the terms and were using them as synonyms for a common definition

of introducing special education students into regular education activities and/or subjects.

4. The Special Education Director has indicated that the merging of the two areas to adopt one series of textbooks to serve both special and regular education is a goal of the LRE Task Force for next year. "This may have to be phased in but it is one of the areas where there is a problem and we can work to make a change which will make the transition easier" (James).
5. Although there are two administrative principals at Bradford Elementary School, I will often refer to "the principal" throughout the text of this paper. I did interview both principals; however, both principals made it clear that Bob King had not only been principal of the school for an extensively longer period of time (18 years) as compared to Dan Wilson (2 years) but Bob King was the principal who dealt with anything related to special education at the school. For these reasons, I felt it simplified the writing to refer to the principal throughout the text which meant Bob King.

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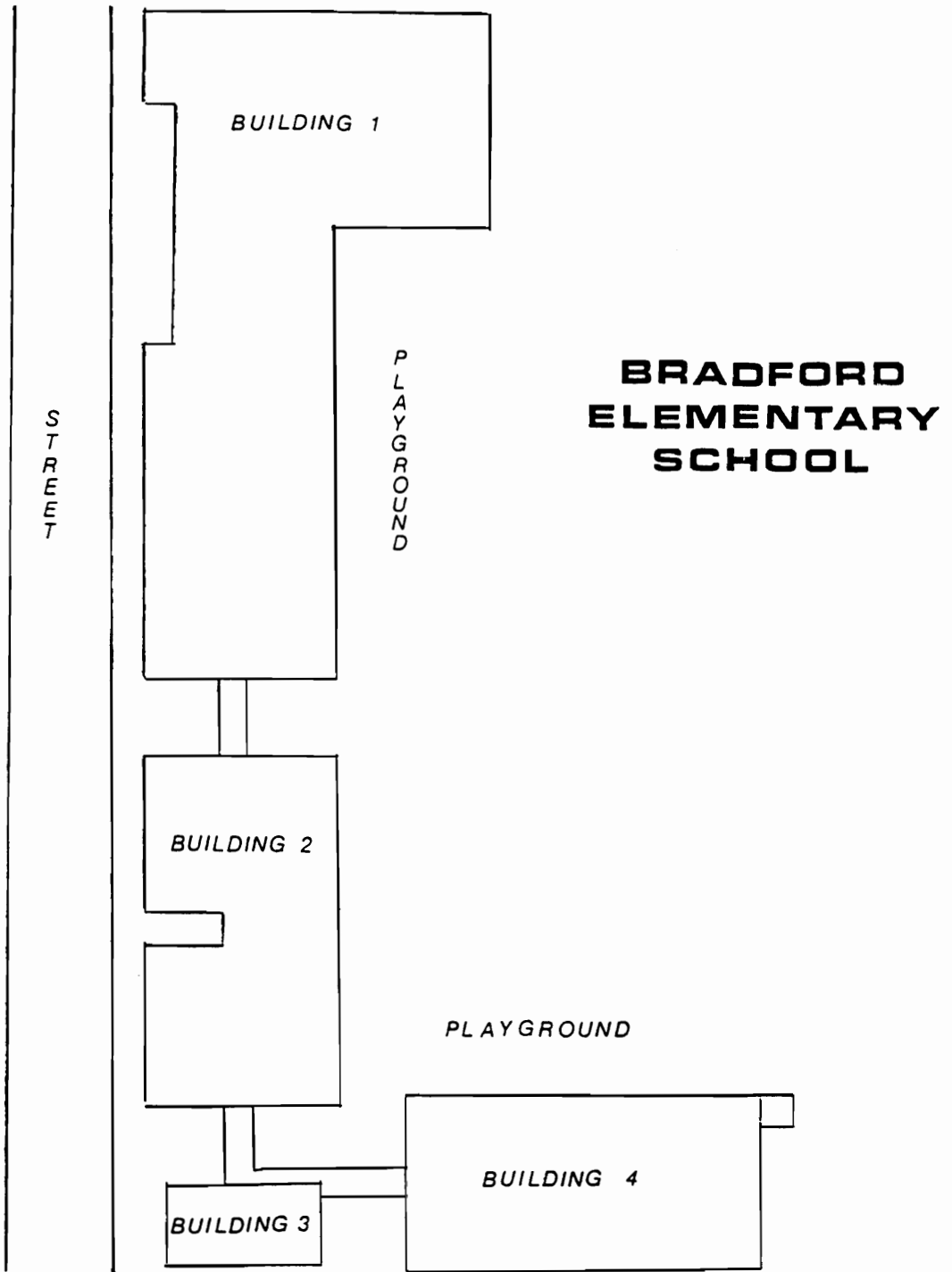
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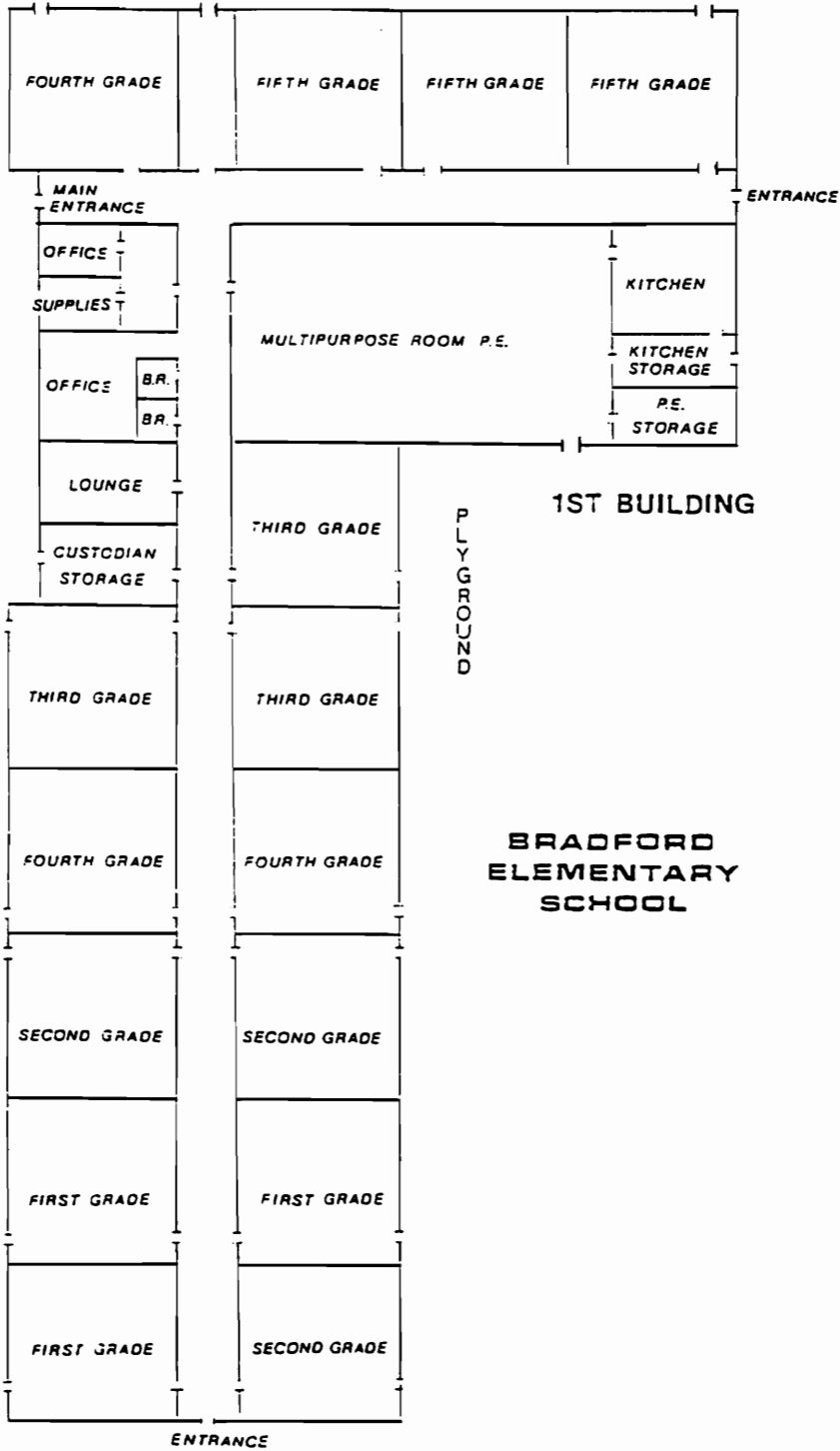
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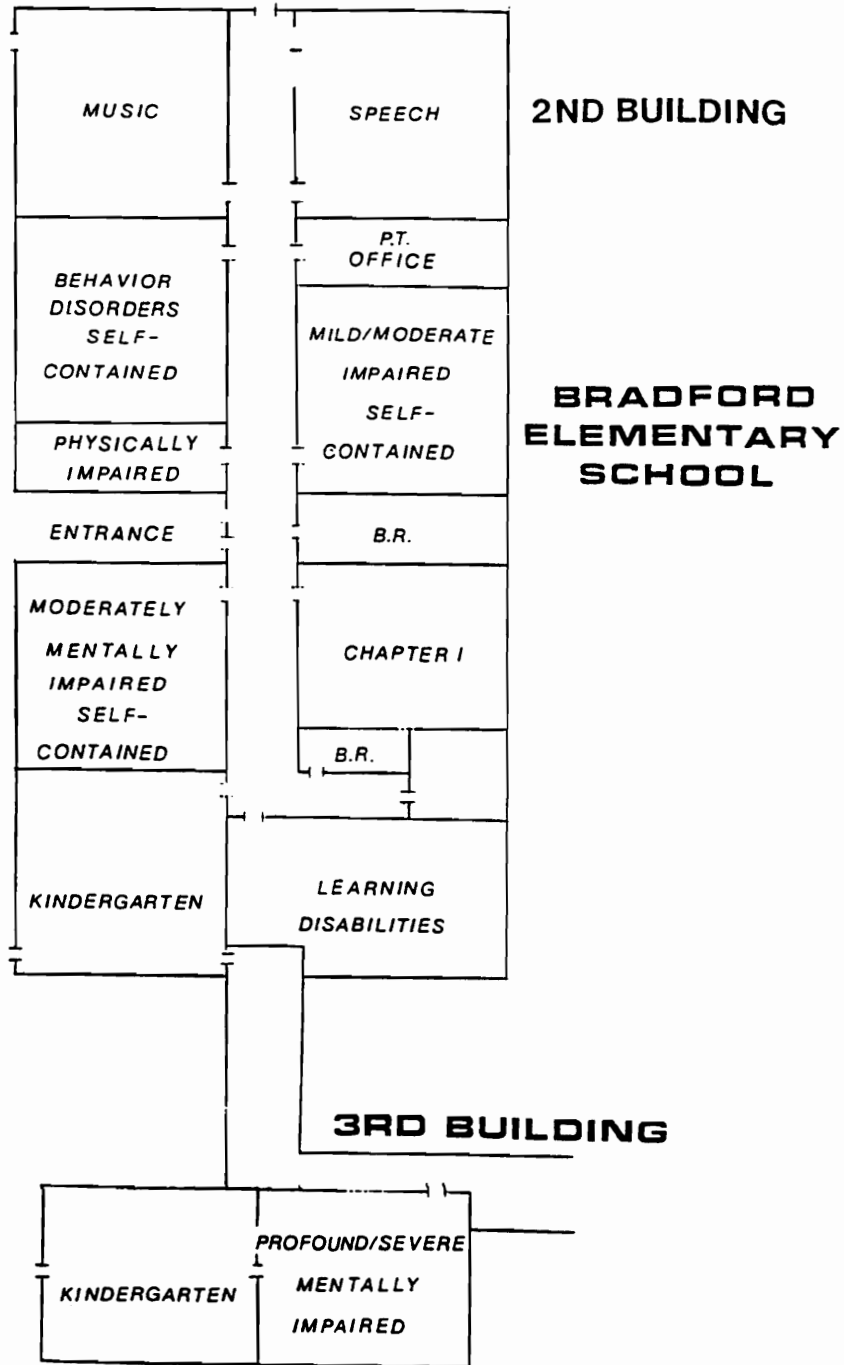
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APPENDIX A

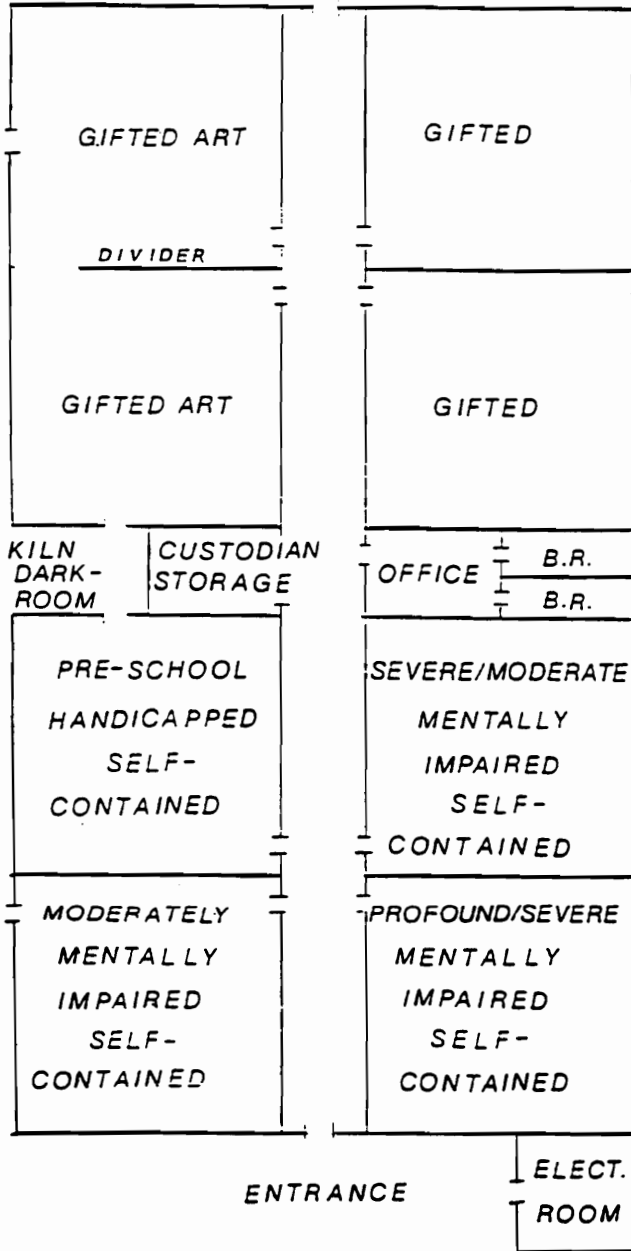
Diagrams of Bradford Elementary School Buildings







4TH BUILDING



BRADFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Appendix B

Data Code Lists

TENTATIVE CODE LIST

All sections of interviews will be codes for the teacher name and group (i.e. teacher of special education, teacher of regular education, principal or aide).

- Source of change
 - Parents
 - County administration
 - Government
 - Teachers of special education
- Group integration activities
- Reverse integration
- Individual integration activities
- Integration within special education
- Process of group integration
- Process of individual integration
 - Initial decision
 - Contact with the administration
 - Contact with the teacher of regular education
 - Placement of the student
 - Follow-up
 - Decision on an individual basis
- Role changes
 - School principal
 - Teachers of special education
 - Teachers of regular education
 - Aides of special education
- Problems and their resolution
 - Contact with regular education
 - Lack of input
 - Needs of special education students
 - Increased demands
- Positive outcomes
 - Benefits to special education students
 - Benefits to regular education students
- Continued integration
 - Integration opportunities
 - Age appropriate placements

- Future of integration
 - Passing phase
 - Status quo
 - Full integration

FINAL CODE LIST

• History	HISTORY
• Integrated activities	INT ACTIV
• Source of change	
• Parents	SOURCE PAR
• County administration	SOURCE ADM
• Federal Government	SOURCE FED
• State legislature	SOURCE LEG
• Teachers of special education	SOURCE TEA
• Student benefit	SOURCE STU
• Research	SOURCE REA
• Special ed. director	SOURCE DIR
• Implementation activities	IMPLEMENT
• Group integration activities	GR INT ACT
• Process of group integration	PROC GROUP
• Reverse integration	REVERSE
• Individual integration activities	INDIVIDUAL
• Integration within special education	INT WITHIN
• Process of individual integration	
• Initial decision	PROC DEC
• Contact with the administration	PROC ADM
• Contact with teacher of regular ed.	PROC REG
• Placement of the student	PLACEMENT
• Transitioning	TRANSIT
• Follow-up	FOLLOW-UP
• Decision on an individual basis	INDIV BAS
• Role changes	
• School principal	ROLE PRIN
• Teachers of special education	ROLE SPED
• Teachers of regular education	ROLE REG
• Aides of special education	ROLE AIDE
• Director's role	DIR ROLE

- Teacher
 - Initiated activities TEA IN ACT
 - Attitudes REG TEA AT
SPE TEA AT
AIDE AT
 - Teacher beliefs TEA BELIEF
 - Suggestions SUGGEST
 - Needs TEA NEEDS
 - Need for mutual concessions CONCESSION
 - Support SUPPORT
- Failed integration attempts FAILURE
- Problems and their resolution
 - No problems PROB NONE
 - Contact with regular education PROB CONTA
 - Lack of input PROB INPUT
 - Lack of cohesive groups (REG & SP ED) PROB COHES
 - Needs of special education students PROB-N-SPE
 - Needs of regular education students PROB-N-REG
 - Increased demands INC DEMAND
 - Negative adults PROB ADULT
 - Appropriate integration PROB APPRO
 - Transitioning PROB TRANS
 - Parent concerns PROB PAR
 - Over representation PROB REP
 - Implementing plans PROB IMPL
 - Schedule constraints PROB SC
- Positive outcomes
 - Benefits to special education students PO BEN SPE
 - Benefits to regular educations students PO BEN REG
 - Mutual benefit (gains) PO MUTUAL
 - Changed attitudes PO CHANGED
 - Support PO SUPPORT
- Critical factors
 - Appropriate integration CF APPRO
 - Mutual gain CF MUTUAL
 - Needs to insure success CF NEEDS
- Continued integration
 - Integration opportunities OPPORTUN
 - Age appropriate placements AGE APPROP
- Future of integration
 - Passing phase FUT PASS
 - Status quo FUT STATUS

- Full integration FUT FULL
- Improved integration FUT IMPROV
- Problems with integration FUT PROB

TASK FORCE CODES

- Process TF PROCESS
- Role of members TF ROLE
- Problems of Task Force TF PROBLEM
- Integration Plans TF PLANS
- Positive Outcomes TF PO
- Source TF SOURCE

VITA

SHIRLEY FORTNEY

Shirley Fortney

#9 Shawnee Terrace Apts.
Buckhannon, WV 26201
(304) 472-8409

Department of Education
West Virginia Wesleyan College
Buckhannon, WV 26201
(304) 473-8459

EDUCATION

Ed. D., Curriculum & Instruction
(Special Education and Educational Technologies)
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University,
Blacksburg, VA May, 1993

M. A., Special Education (Learning Disabilities)
University of West Virginia College of Graduate
Studies, Institute, West Virginia

M. A., Elementary Education
Marshall University
Huntington, West Virginia

B. A., Home Economics (Major)
Social Studies (Minor)
Fairmont State College
Fairmont, West Virginia

RELATED EXPERIENCES

Student Teacher Supervisor, Roanoke County
Model, Virginia Tech

- Liaison between university and public schools
- Supervised seventeen student teachers in both elementary and middle school placements during the entire academic year

Project Coordinator, Virginia Evaluation Technical
Assistance Center, Virginia Tech
(Project offered training to Virginia school
districts in the evaluation of their special
education programs)

- Organized and managed project workshops
- Developed program materials and workshop guide
- Coordinated project consultants and evaluation teams
- Managed the project budget
- Evaluated district evaluation proposals

Consultant, contracted to direct evaluation teams focused on areas of special education

- Grant County, West Virginia
- Webster County, West Virginia
- Pendleton County, West Virginia

Research Associate, Institute for the Study of Exceptionalities, Virginia Tech

- Assisted in preparation of proposals
- Conducted research of the literature on various topics in special education

Teacher, Putnam County Schools, West Virginia

- Elementary
- Referral Officer for Special Education
- Resource Room, Multi-categorical
- Middle School Alternative Center
- Substitute teacher
- Served on numerous county curriculum, planning and advisory committees at school, county and state levels

PUBLICATIONS

Fortney, S. & Nespor, J. "Changing Relationships of Teachers' Following a Strike" (in preparation)

REPORTS

_____. "The IEP as a Communication Tool" Grant County SEERS Evaluation Project Report, August, 1990

_____. "Project I GO" Webster County SEERS Evaluation Project Report, September, 1990

_____ & McBee, J. "Post Secondary Integration" Pendleton County SEERS Evaluation Project Report, October, 1990

PRESENTATIONS

Nespor, J. & Fortney, S. "Association and Identity in a Teachers' Strike", presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting in San Francisco, April, 1992

Nelson, B., Fortney, S. & Sharpe, B. "Educational Technologies in the Classroom" Montgomery County Schools Teacher Inservice, April, 1991

Fortney, S. "The Importance of Continuous Reporting in Special Education Evaluation", presented at the American Evaluation Association Conference in Washington, D. C., October, 1990

_____. "IEP Evaluation Results", teacher inservice, Grant County, WV, August, 1990

_____. "Preparing a Student with Learning Disabilities for Postsecondary Education" Parent, Student and Teacher Meeting, Roanoke City School System, October, 1989

_____. & Deal, S. "Reporting Evaluation Results", West Virginia Special Education Effectiveness Review System (SEERS) State Conference in Beckley, March, 1989

_____. "Evaluation Reporting", Virginia Evaluation Technical Assistance Center (ETAC) Workshops, 1989-1990

Topical lectures delivered at Virginia Tech

- Survey of Exceptionalities Course
- Learning Disabilities
- Parent communication
- Education Evaluation Course
- Evaluation reporting
- Remediation of Reading Difficulties
- Parent/student perspectives

AWARDS

Instructional Fee Scholarships, Virginia Tech, 1989 and 1990

Putnam County Mini-grants, 1988

- Computer lab development
- Science on Wheels

MEMBERSHIPS

Graduate Elected Member, Student Budget Board - Administering \$720,000 in University student activity fees, 1989-1991

Appointed Member, University Commencement Committee, 1989-1991

Member, Editorial Staff, Graduate Student Assembly Quarterly Magazine, 1989-1990

Member, Phi Delta Kappa

Member, Alpha Delta Kappa Educators Sorority

Member, American Evaluation Association

Member, American Educational Research Assoc.

Member, Council for Exceptional Children