

PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' KNOWLEDGE
OF AND ATTITUDE TOWARD P.L. 94-142 AND THEIR
RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL
EDUCATION SERVICES AT THE BUILDING LEVEL,

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Challenges to public education policy and practice are common from within and from without the public education system. One major successful challenge that continues to impact on public educators and public education practice was mounted by parents and advocates of handicapped children over twenty years ago. Their efforts were spurred on in large part by the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) decision. This civil rights case declared separate educational systems by race to be unequal and sought to put an end to that practice.

Similar arguments were raised by handicapped persons before legislative fruition of their efforts came in 1975 with the passage of Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975). Educational policy change from the national level had been preceded by litigation in many of the states and was soon followed by the others with state laws designed to prevent the exclusion of handicapped children from public school programs and to provide them with a free, appropriate public education.

Although the developers of the law will be known as its architects and the State Departments of Education personnel as its interpreters and evaluators, "it is undoubtedly the local school administrator who will be remembered as the key to its success or failure (Zettel & Weintraub, 1978, p. 12)." At the building level, public school principals are responsible for implementing national, state, and local education policy. Assistance may, and often should, be sought from the central office, specialists,

or others when questions arise. However, at the building level, the principal traditionally has been vested with the authority and responsibility for policy implementation (Nevin, 1977, p. 19). All programs, personnel, and students and their parents are subject, in varying degrees, to the principal's interests, expertise, and leadership. His impact is perhaps felt most in the implementation of new programs or in the reorganization of existing practices (such as in special education) which no longer correspond to official policy (Herda, 1980, p. 9).

Statement of the problem

In response to the changing face of special education brought about by Public Law 94-142 and the reported lag in special education programs at the secondary level, behaviors of the secondary school principal as the educational leader and gatekeeper will be explored. Herda (1980) pointed out the challenges general education administrators face as they attempt to carry out policy decisions (such as those implied in P.L. 94-142) at the building level. She noted that the general education administrator:

....is responsible for implementing a mandate that yields a multitude of interpretations and ambiguities while governing a 'declining' industry in a country facing social, economic, and political unrest. This feat is to be accomplished in collaboration with special (or exceptional) education administrators, many of whom are holding onto longtime 'turfs' and established empires and at the same time struggling to come to terms with the new faces of exceptional education (p. 1).

This study will investigate the relationship between public second-

dary school principals' knowledge of and attitude toward P.L. 94-142 and the provision of special education services at the building level.

Purpose of the study

Proponents of special education suggest that if handicapped students are to receive optimum benefits from recent legislation, the local school administrator must have a supportive understanding of the needs, characteristics, and programs appropriate for handicapped children (Buscaglia & Williams, 1979). Sivage (1979) noted that little research emphasis has been placed on such organizational factors as administrative support regarding the implementation of P.L. 94-142. While the literature contains considerable evidence suggesting the importance of the principal in the mainstreaming of handicapped students, "this particular group of professionals has received relatively little attention in regard to their specific attitudes towards the process (Davis, 1980, p. 174)".

Melcher (1972) noted the importance of the building principal in relation to special education programs.

We often say the climate of the school is determined by the principal. Certainly the educational leadership and spokesmanship is initiated there; the acceptance of handicapped children stems from the principal's attitude toward these boys and girls. Yet here we find no academic background in the area of special education. How can school systems expect to serve children with special needs if the most immediate educational leader is uninformed about the needs and possibilities of these youngsters (p. 549)?

Programming for handicapped students at the secondary school level

has long been neglected and P.L. 94-142 has yet to stimulate more than a minimal effort at this level (Heller, 1981). Kokaska and Drye (1981) observed that most of the efforts related to the education of the handicapped have focused on the elementary-aged child. They noted that many of those students will grow up and require services in secondary school settings. Arbuckle's study (1976) of 73 principals in a metropolitan system found that as the level of school increased--from elementary to senior high, the handicapped child and the special education teacher were perceived to generate more problems for the principal. Noted for being subject, rather than child-oriented, the secondary schools are soon to be faced with large numbers of handicapped children already being served in elementary schools. To meet the challenge of increased role expectations, Robson (1981) stated that principals must either consider sharing their authority and responsibilities at the building level or "they must ultimately equip themselves to assume them (p. 378)."

A review of the literature, including Dissertation Abstracts for the past five years, yielded little research on public secondary school principals and the provision of special education services at the building level. Knowledge and attitude studies have included secondary principals in samples but generally related one to the other or compared elementary with secondary principals or other groups.

The dearth of information on secondary principals in relation to special education services poses problems for the efficient development and implementation of programs at the secondary level. If the importance of the principal and the locale is as the literature suggests, special education and policy makers need to venture into the realm of regular

education and the general building administrator. While serious deficits in secondary special education programs are noted in the literature, "renegotiation" with regular education can hardly be expected if the building principal is not included, nay, even emphasized. Knowledge and attitudes, as well as other variables, need to be identified and examined to assess their relationship to the provision of special education services. Often accepted as a general maxim that knowledge and attitudes affect behavior, the degree of the relationship in many areas, special education included, is frequently left unexamined. Growth in elementary special education programs is beginning to impact upon secondary schools. Budget constraints face education at a time when the need to expand secondary special education programs poses problems, or challenges, for all educators. An increased awareness of the effect of the building administrator with special education programs is essential if resources are to be used wisely.

Lawmakers and policy makers have committed considerable amounts of money to implement the mandate and promise of P.L. 94-142, along with funding in Part D of the Education of the Handicapped Act (1971) for personnel preparation. State departments of education and local education agencies require information and knowledgeable support in order to efficiently assist in the development and implementation of free appropriate public education for handicapped students at the secondary school level. In addition to the above needs for practical information, university programs for regular and special education would be in a better position to focus their efforts more directly on educating present and future secondary principals. Special educators would benefit from

increased knowledge of personnel with whom they are charged to "renegotiate" their roles. With the passage of P.L. 94-142 and complementary state laws, the question became no longer whether, but how, educational leaders would proceed with the delivery of appropriate educational services to all handicapped children--including those presently in and those who will enter secondary schools in the future.

Research Questions

The study investigated the following basic questions:

1. What knowledge about P.L. 94-142 exists among public secondary school principals in Virginia?
2. What attitude toward P.L. 94-142 exists among public secondary school principals in Virginia?
3. What is the relationship of knowledge, attitude, and personal background among public secondary school principals in Virginia to the provision of special education services within the building?

Limitations of the Study

A number of factors limit this study. The study was limited to public secondary school principals with responsibility for combinations of grades 8-12, 9-12, or 10-12. No distinction was made among the three groups nor were other combinations that may be found in secondary schools included in the study. The population was drawn only from Virginia. As state laws and regulations that augment P.L. 94-142 vary, caution should be used in generalizing conclusions or implications to other states.

Definitions

Attitude. The total score obtained on the instrument, What is Your Opinion? (Underwood, 1981), designed to elicit attitudes toward various aspects of P.L. 94-142. This instrument is found in Appendix B.

Knowledge. The total score obtained on the instrument, Knowledge of P.L. 94-142 (Olson, 1982), designed to assess knowledge of various aspects of P.L. 94-142 that may confront a principal with special education programs within the building. This instrument is found in Appendix A.

Principal's influence and support. A special educator's perception of the principal's influence on new or additional special education programs, daily operations, and support assessed through a rating scale completed by the individual in the principal's school division administratively responsible for special education programs. This was determined by the combined score on items 34, 35, and 36. This rating instrument is found in Appendix C.

Provision of special education services. Three facets of provision of services served as dependent variables in this study. They included: 1) the proportion of students served in special education as reported by the principal; 2) the number of students served in self-contained special education programs (1980-81) as reported by Department of Education reimbursement figures; and 3) a special educator's rating of the principal's influence and support regarding special education programs in the building.

Overview

The remaining chapters of this dissertation were organized as follows. Chapter II consists of a review of literature related to the study. This includes a review of the principal and special education, P.L. 94-142 and secondary special education, and principals' knowledge and attitudes toward special education. Chapter III consists of the methodology of the study, including sample selection, instrumentation, data collection, and analysis procedures. Chapter IV consists of the tabulations and summary of the findings. Chapter V consists of a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and implications for future use.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The importance of the local school and the leadership of its principal consistently emerge in research studies as key factors in educational improvement. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142) once again posed a new challenge to the leadership skills of the building principal. Previous special education practices often resulted in the segregation of the handicapped, if any services were provided, whereas P.L. 94-142 calls for the integrated provision of special education services with regular education whenever appropriate. This review of literature focuses on P.L. 94-142 and secondary special education, the principal and special education, and principals' knowledge of and attitudes towards special education.

P.L. 94-142 and Secondary Special Education

When the Education for All Handicapped Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142) was passed, Congress found that there were more than eight million handicapped children in the United States and that of this group less than half were receiving appropriate educational services and that of the remainder, one million handicapped children were excluded entirely from the public school system. Once again, America's public schools were called upon to be the great equalizer of the nation's diversity. Such had not previously been the case for handicapped children, who for the most part had been blocked from entering the schoolhouse door. Strategies used by school officials to deter the handicapped included "postponement,

exclusion, suspension, and outright denial. Such incidents continue to occur, although most state constitutions require the state to provide all children with an education (Weintraub & Abeson, 1976, p. 7)."

The purpose of P.L. 94-142 was stated in section 3c:

It is the purpose of this Act to assure that all handicapped children have available to them, within the time periods specified in section 612(2) (B), a free appropriate public education which emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs, to assure that the rights of handicapped children and their parents or guardians are protected, to assist States and localities to provide for the education of all handicapped children, and to assess and assure the effectiveness of efforts to educate handicapped children (p. 775).

P.L. 94-142 regulations, in combination with Virginia law, require that as of September 1, 1980, all handicapped children, ages 2-21, were to have available to them a free appropriate public education. P.L. 94-142 also established priorities for the expenditure of Federal funds under Part B of the Act. First priority was to provide for those handicapped children not receiving any special education. Ongoing efforts were to be made by the state to continue to find new first priority children through ongoing child find efforts.

Congress based their funding formula on the generally accepted 12% estimated prevalence of handicaps used by the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped (Jones, 1981, p. 32). In the 1977-78 school year Virginia served 6.92% of the total state school population (ages 5-17). This left an estimated 59,792 unserved handicapped children in the state (p.33). The December 1, 1979, count showed all states averaged 7.78% served

(range: 4.54 - 10.79) with Virginia serving 7.79% (p. 33).

Reviewers of legislation for the handicapped often cite the Brown (1954) decision as giving the impetus to a broad civil rights movement and the broadening of the interpretation of the "due process" and "equal opportunity" clauses of the 14th Amendment. Reynolds (1978) notes that the practices of education have undergone radical changes in the past and perhaps face a watershed once again. He states that with P.L. 94-142 "Congress established an educational Magna Charta for all those children who have been kept out of the mainstream of education for whatever reason (p. xi)." Lortie (1978) points out that federal laws probably won't produce national uniformity as states and localities "interpret and fulfill their obligations in diverse ways. Legislation and allocation of funds end only one phase in the changes taking place. New complexities loom, however, with the shift to implementing programs throughout the nation (p. 235)."

Melcher (1972) pointed out that in the 1960s state and federal financial support of special education "caused general school administrators to seek the answer for the difficult child in special education rather than adapting the 'mainstream' to the unique learning of these children and youth (p. 547)." Lieberman (1980) acknowledged that special education has often been confused with being the answer to the problems of regular education. He noted that, "in fact, the intent of P.L. 94-142 is such that special education will only be as good as regular education allows it to be (p. 68)."

Most schools in this country have always maintained two separate systems for "normal" and for "other than normal", and special education

often became a dumping ground for the "other than normal." Buscaglia and Williams (1979) point out the detrimental effects of this dual system.

Perhaps the greatest deterrent to the successful implementation of P.L. 94-142 will be ignorance, disguised hostility, and prejudicial attitudes regarding the education of the physically and mentally impaired. This can be traced to past patterns wherein regular educators generally referred handicapped children to "special education" where they would be relegated to their "appropriate" special placements (p. 107).

Segregation by race was ruled out in the Brown decision and inappropriate segregation of the handicapped was legislated out by P.L. 94-142 and state laws. Sarason and Doris (1978) point out that segregation has pernicious effects on both the person who is segregated and the person who does the segregating. For the handicapped:

....aside from the special teacher, no one was concerned about what or at what rate the children learned because they were not expected to learn very much, and even that would take years. The school principal, either by tradition or administrative regulations, came from 'regular' education and considered himself incompetent to advise or guide the special teacher; not infrequently, the principal saw the special class as either an unmasked for burden or a blemish on the school's image (p. 9).

Programming for handicapped students at the secondary level has long been neglected in the educational continuum. P.L. 94-142 has spurred only a minimal effort to develop secondary programs to merge with primary and intermediate special education services. Heller (1981) cited three of a myriad of variables that led to past and current lack of secondary programming.

1. The secondary school has traditionally been, and still is, organized along departmental and subject matter lines.
2. The orientation of special education training programs toward the younger handicapped child often leaves special education teachers unprepared to meet the needs of handicapped adolescents.
3. The heavy emphasis on vocational education at the secondary level causes it to be viewed as the only alternative for the handicapped adolescent (p. 582).

Heller noted further that educators, including many in special education, did not view handicapped individuals as requiring much attention at the secondary level. Typically students were assigned to the so called "mainstream" with no particular adaptation or accommodation. The result was seen in high "dropout rates and a doubling of the disadvantages to the handicapped child (p. 582)." Heller notes the paradox of the integration movement at the secondary level:

It is true that at no level of regular education have we achieved greater integration of handicapped children than at the secondary level. Yet how unfortunate it is that at no other level of education has there been less support and systematic programming for handicapped people. The fact is undeniable--secondary education remains a vast wasteland for the potential that handicapped individuals hold (p. 583).

Miller, Sabatino, and Larsen (1980) suggest that the word "children" in the P.L. 94-142 legislation may tend to exclude youth to age 21 until 1981. They state that "perhaps the most populous category of underserved--frequently unserved--handicapped youth in response to P.L. 94-142 are the mildly handicapped adolescents found in today's

secondary schools (p. 344)." They also noted that considerable evidence has been found supporting the argument that fewer high school aged handicapped students are served in special education because they are excluded from general school activities or encouraged to drop out. Kokoska and Drye (1981) note that secondary students have been in the mainstream by default as a result of a lack of programming. They point out that high school is for many, the last opportunity they will have for a systematic education.

The Principal and Special Education Programs

In a survey of secondary school principals on promising practices in mainstreaming handicapped students, the principals reported, first, that leadership must begin in the principal's office within the individual school building, and, second, that the principal should inform all school faculty of the process as it is to be implemented in his particular building. They were convinced that an "outside" person is not to do this (Davis, 1977, p. 9).

Smith, Flexer, and Sigelman (1979) state that "the key person in all public school programs is the principal (p. 247)." They view the principal as a key figure in the implementation of educational programs, including programs for the handicapped. Sivage (1979) used the term "gate-keeper of change" (p. 2) through resource allocation, interest, and advocacy and described the principal as a "vital link" (p. 3) to successful change. Payne and Murray (1974) said

...if the principal is supportive of the integration of the handicapped child, then as the educational leader

he can help insure the success of an integrative program. On the other hand, if the principal is not supportive, the chances of developing an integrated program are diminished correspondingly (p. 123).

In the past, regular and special educators have respected each others expertise but made little attempt to understand their respective disciplines. P.L. 94-142 now requires that both categories of educators work together far more closely and, consequently, share their expertise. Rebores (1979) points out that this process "places a tremendous responsibility on the principal (p. 28)" who must ensure that the goals of the institution are not lost but rather integrated with the goals of the staff.

Reynolds spoke of the problems of role changes and the need to renegotiate the relationships between regular and special education. He pointed to the emergence of a new governance system in which school principals will be much more involved in planning programs for handicapped students as movement is made toward decentralized or building level programming (Jordan, 1978). The individual school, together with its sponsoring district, is the accountable unit in the new designs for serving handicapped children (Schieffelbusch & Hoyt, 1978; Bourexis, 1979).

Herda (1980) states that administrators, particularly at the building level, are most often caught between emerging participatory governance demands and fragmentation of total school programs.

This situation places the principal in a position that demands strong coordinative skills--offset by administrative formats of the various (building) programs that often prohibit decision making powers, participatory and otherwise, from resting with the principal (p. 9).

Reynolds and Birch (1982) note that one outcome of the effort towards in-

tegration of regular and special education has been the shifting of the responsibility of the education of the handicapped from special education personnel back to regular teachers under the authority of individual school principals. Morse (1971) said that the importance of the principal comes from his standing at the "interface" (p. 38) between regular education, special education, and special services. Birch suggests that a team approach is necessary at the secondary level in order to successfully meet the challenges of the changing relationship between special and regular education. The principal, as the administrative and instructional leader of the school, is seen as the key to getting the program on the way (Jordan, 1977).

To complicate the changing relationship between regular and special education for the building principal, concepts promoted by the new legislation such as "right to an education", "due process", and "least restrictive environment" never "substantially appeared in the lexicon of the profession nor were operationalized prior to 1970 (Weintraub & McCaffrey, 1976, p. 333)." They add that failure to assume responsibility will only lead the principal to the role of participant in whatever injustice may befall the handicapped and assumption of any corresponding liability.

Principals' Attitudes and Knowledge of P.L. 94-142

While P.L. 94-142 mandates change, it does not establish a climate of willingness or acceptance to support the changes. "On the contrary, such laws often produce an initial backlash of rejection to 'keep things just as they are' (Fasteau, 1979, p. 98)." Deeply rooted and reinforced by tradition, institutions, and practices, attitudes are not changed in

short periods of time or by mandate. Resistance to change that may develop as a result of P.L. 94-142 is natural and normal. It requires changes in long-standing attitudes, beliefs, and practices regarding handicapped children (Sivage, 1979, p. 12).

Nonhandicapped persons having no experience or direct relationship with handicapped persons "generally lack both the basic knowledge of the disabling condition and the awareness of the basic needs or problems of the handicapped (Fasteau, 1979, p. 100)." The dilemma for the principal is clearly stated by Majid (1978) who lost his sight at age 15 but desired to remain in the familiar surroundings of his previous school.

I began with a dream and a deep commitment, but I had no clear, objective understanding of how I would manage the school work. The administrators, on the other hand, began with practical questions to which they needed answers, but there were no easy answers (p. 269).

For public schools to benefit optimally from recent legislation and to develop adequate programs, school administrators must have an "understanding of the characteristics, needs, and educational provisions appropriate for each exceptional child (Bullock, 1970, p. 770)." However, his study of elementary school administrators in a large midwestern city found that 65% had no coursework in special education and an additional 23% had taken only one college course in this area.

More recently, Haisley and Gilberts (1980) observe that "it appears that the movement towards increased knowledge and skills about P.L. 94-142 and its implications (p. 24)" for regular educators at preservice institutions is lagging behind. They note that "perhaps the area in which education personnel are least knowledgeable and skilled is the legal provisions established by P.L. 94-142 (p. 20)." Saunders and

Sultana (1980) point out that

...since realization of appropriate education is dependent upon due process rights, the importance of these rights cannot be over-emphasized. Therefore it is critical that all individuals involved with handicapped children be aware of these due process rights and procedures (p. 559).

In their study of regular educators, special educators, and other professionals involved with the handicapped, they found that none of the three groups had a thorough understanding of due process rights. While special educators showed a higher level of awareness, their mastery was not evident. In summarizing his study, Cline (1981) stated that "of major importance is the lack of knowledge on the part of principals concerning handicapped students (p. 174)." He cited segregated special day schools as possibly accounting for the lack of knowledge as well as for the more positive attitudes found in earlier studies of principals. This view was also held by Stearner (1978) who pointed out that misconceptions, prejudices, and stereotyped ideas of abilities stem in large part from the segregation to which the handicapped have been subjected.

In a comparative study of groups of educators, Davis (1979) found that elementary school administrators were the most knowledgeable about the law while secondary non-special education teachers were least knowledgeable. She concluded that educators were not as knowledgeable about the law as one might expect. Two other studies (Kurzberg, 1978; D'Antoni, 1979) found no significant differences in knowledge between various levels of administrators. Kurzberg found that special education experts scored significantly higher on knowledge of programming for the handicapped. Administrators with more experience showed a trend towards higher knowledge

levels. Collins (1979) found that special education directors had significantly higher knowledge levels of P.L. 94-142 than did Texas high school principals. Sivage (1979) found almost no correlation between the amount of special education training elementary principals had and the perceived effectiveness of mainstreaming in their building.

D'Antoni's study (1979) found no significant relationship between principals' knowledge of and composite attitude towards five special education concepts. Davis (1979) generally found no correlation between knowledge and attitudes for the groups in her study. Shelton's study (1979) with regular and special education teachers found a small positive correlation between knowledge and attitudes.

Results of studies of principals' attitudes towards various aspects of special education have been mixed. Morrison (1980), in a study of a city school system in Texas, found administrators and regular teachers more indifferent to the nature and necessity of P.L. 94-142 than did special education teachers or central office personnel. Smith (1977) found only a limited relationship between principals' background variables and attitudes. Principals held more positive attitudes towards normal persons in work study programs. They were less positive for the learning disabled and the least positive towards the mentally retarded in work study programs.

Collins (1980) found principals significantly less supportive of the mentally retarded and learning disabled's participation in extracurricular activities than were special education directors. It was suggested that the principals' attitudes may be indicative of intolerance and a lack of understanding of the law (P.L. 94-142) or possible philo-

sophical differences in regard to mandated programs.

Davis (1980) found that elementary and secondary principals differed very little in their perceived success predictions for mainstreamed mentally retarded pupils. Their lack of positive perceptions was cited as a major problem for integration of the mentally retarded. Kurzberg (1978) found no significant differences between levels of administrators and experts on attitudes towards programming in the least restricted environment. Administrators with elementary teaching experience were found to have more positive attitudes in programming for the handicapped than those without. D'Antoni (1979) found no differences between levels of administrators and attitudes towards special education concepts. He did find a significant negative relationship between composite attitude and years of experience as a principal. Semmel (1979) found principals and regular teachers to hold more positive attitudes towards the individualized education program (IEP) than special education teachers. The opposite held when mainstreaming was considered. O'Rourke (1979) found a significant relationship between principal and staff attitudes towards the handicapped in a study of junior high settings in Nebraska.

Summary

Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, has been referred to as the "Magna Charta" for handicapped children and their parents. Along with these increased opportunities for the handicapped, new challenges and roles face those charged with providing this education. Contrary to previous thought and practice which segregated the handicapped, P.L. 94-142 calls for increased normalization in

the delivery of special education services. This effort, part of the concept of education in the "least restrictive environment", demands a renegotiation of the relationship between regular and special educators.

At the interface between regular and special education stands the building principal. Numerous studies (Tanner, 1976; Lipham, 1981) have pointed to the importance of the principal to all building programs, including special education. Governance structures as a result of P.L. 94-142 (Bourexis, 1979; Herda, 1980) pose new challenges and importance to the building level administrator where services are to be implemented. Development at the secondary level has been particularly slow and Heller (1981) described it as a "vast wasteland" in serving handicapped youngsters. Obstacles to service are said to be found in the lack of training, knowledge, and supportive attitudes on the part of principals towards special education. While literature has examined the principal's knowledge of and attitudes toward the handicapped, Betz (1977) noted that it has ignored principals' behaviors as they relate to special education services at the building level. This research was designed to examine the relationship of the secondary school principal's knowledge and attitudes to the provision of special education services at the building level.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Selection of subjects and instrumentation were issues of concern in this study. This chapter describes the selection of the sample and instruments. Procedures for the collection and analysis of data are also included.

Subjects

A thirty percent stratified systematic sample (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1979) from the population of public secondary school principals (grades 8-12, 9-12, or 10-12) in Virginia (Department of Education, 1981) was used in this study. The sample was drawn from the population of 250 Virginia principals meeting the parameters set for the study. The sample pool consisted of 76 secondary principals, stratified by county divisions (57) and city divisions (19). Ratings of the principal's influence and support were requested from the individual in the respective division assigned administrative responsibility (director or supervisor, assistant superintendent, and others) for special education programs.

Fifty-two principals (68%) returned completed surveys. Special education administrator ratings were received for 59 (78%) of the principals. Matched data were returned for 46 (61%) of the principals and these cases were used in the analyses. Of the usable responses, 32 (70%) principals were from county divisions and 14 (30%) from city divisions. One large county school division refused to permit their

principals (six) to have the opportunity to participate in the study.

Demographic data on the 46 principals (see Appendix G) showed that 45 (97.8%) were males. Twenty-three (50%) were between the ages of 35 and 44 with another 14 (30.4%) between the ages of 45 and 54. The sample averaged 18.8 years in education, 11.2 years in administration, and 5.3 years in their current position as principal. Thirty-three (71.7%) held masters degrees, four (8.7%) had specialist degrees, and nine (19.6%) held the doctorate degree.

Geographic distribution was identified through division assignment to one of the seven regional study groups of the State Superintendent (Department of Education, 1981). Distribution ranged from three (6.5%) from region four to eleven (23.9%) from region two.

Thirty-three (71.7%) reported no special education college credit hours. Ten (21.7%) reported taking from three to six hours, with the remaining reporting 8, 12, and 16 hours. Ten principals (21.7%) reported acquaintance of a handicapped child in their family or in the family of close friends. Seventeen principals (37%) reported serving handicapped children from outside their normal attendance area.

Instruments

A review of the literature revealed no instruments emphasizing P.L. 94-142 building administrator responsibilities standardized on a population of secondary school principals. Numerous instruments, at various stages of development, were found to assess particular aspects such as "mainstreaming" (it should be noted that the word is not in P.L. 94-142), placement, and "least restrictive environment." As a

result, a pilot study using school principals and college classes with varying levels of expertise relating to special education was carried out in January and February, 1982. Data were gathered to obtain additional information on the instruments using school principals as the sample.

Knowledge of P.L. 94-142. Twenty-nine multiple choice and true-false items derived from P.L. 94-142 and interpretations of its implementation were used to assess secondary principals' knowledge (Olson, 1982). Areas in which a building administrator would likely be involved were used to prepare the initial 36 item instrument. A pilot study of the instrument was conducted with two graduate classes in special education administration, a graduate and undergraduate special education survey class, along with 28 secondary school principals. Seven items that did not discriminate among the 28 administrators in the field test were omitted in the final instrument. Scores for the five groups were as follows:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Standard Deviation</u>
Doctoral-SE Adm.	9	20.22	2.97
Masters-SE Adm.	21	15.14	2.34
Secondary Principals	28	13.75	2.87
Graduate-SE Survey	13	12.46	1.99
Undergraduate-SE Survey	16	11.00	2.15

Test-retest reliability for 24 elementary and secondary public school principals over a month long period was .68.

What is Your Opinion? Attitude toward P.L. 94-142 was assessed by responses to twenty-five attitude statements (Underwood, 1981) regarding free appropriate education, least restrictive environment, and financing special education. A response range of four (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree) was used. Statements were presented in both a positive and a negative format.

For analysis purposes, all attitude statements were adjusted with the most favorable position to special education assigned a value of four and the most negative position a value of one. A neutral value of 2.5 was assigned where no choice or both agree-disagree were chosen.

The instrument was developed for use in a nationwide study of school board members knowledge of and attitudes towards, P.L. 94-142. The selection of most favorable to least favorable response to special education was determined by total consensus of nine special education administration doctoral students. With a sample of 589 board members Underwood found a mean of 62.66. A reliability coefficient (Alpha) of .83 was reported.

Special Education Administrators' Rating. A special educator's perception on various aspects of the principal's relationship with special education in their buildings was used to develop one of the dependent variables for the study. This involved a six item survey sent to the individual in the principal's division administratively responsible for special education programs. A combination of three items of the special education administrators' perceptions: (34) principal's influence on developing new or additional special education programs; (35) principal's

influence on the daily operations of the special education programs in the building; and (36) principal's support for the special education programs in the building, were added together to form one of the dependent variables. Correlations between the three perceptions combined into the dependent variable ranged from .59 to .71.

Procedure for the Collection of Data.

The survey, along with a cover letter, was mailed to each subject in the sample at the end of February, 1982, (see Appendix D). A stamped return envelope was included. If the coded survey was not returned within two weeks, a second survey and stamped return envelope was sent. Subjects not responding to the followup letter were then contacted by phone. The same procedure was used to obtain the special educator's perception from the person responsible for administration of special education programs in the principal's division. (see Appendix E). Confidentiality of response was assured for each of the members in the sample.

Figures for total building population for the principal's school were obtained from the Department of Education publication Fall Membership in Virginia's Public Schools, 1981-82 (1981). Figures for the number of special education students served in self-contained special education programs were obtained from the spring 1981 reimbursement data from the Division of Special Education Administration and Finance at the Department of Education.

Data Analysis

The Frequencies, Pearson Correlation, and Regression programs of the

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2nd edition (1975) were used for the data analyses.

The Frequencies program was used to identify demographic characteristics of the principals and organize the data for further analysis. The compilation of P values for the 29 items on the knowledge instrument was used to identify the percent of respondents correctly answering each item. The Pearson Correlation program was used to investigate the relationship between the participants and to introduce the presentation of the Regression program. The Regression program was used to measure and evaluate the overall dependence of the three forms of provision of services on the set of the independent variables which focused on knowledge and attitude characteristics of the principal. Demographic variables and total scores on the knowledge and attitude instruments were designated as independent variables. Separate analyses were run for each of the following dependent variables: 1) The proportion of students in the building served in special education programs; 2) the number of students served in self-contained special education programs; and 3) a special educator's perception rating of the building principal's influence and support for special education within the building.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to examine public secondary school principals' knowledge of and attitude toward P.L. 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975; personal background; and the relationship of these variables to the provision of special education services at the building level. This chapter tabulates and summarizes the data with respect to the three research questions underlying this study.

Research Question 1: What knowledge about P.L. 94-142 exists among public secondary school principals?

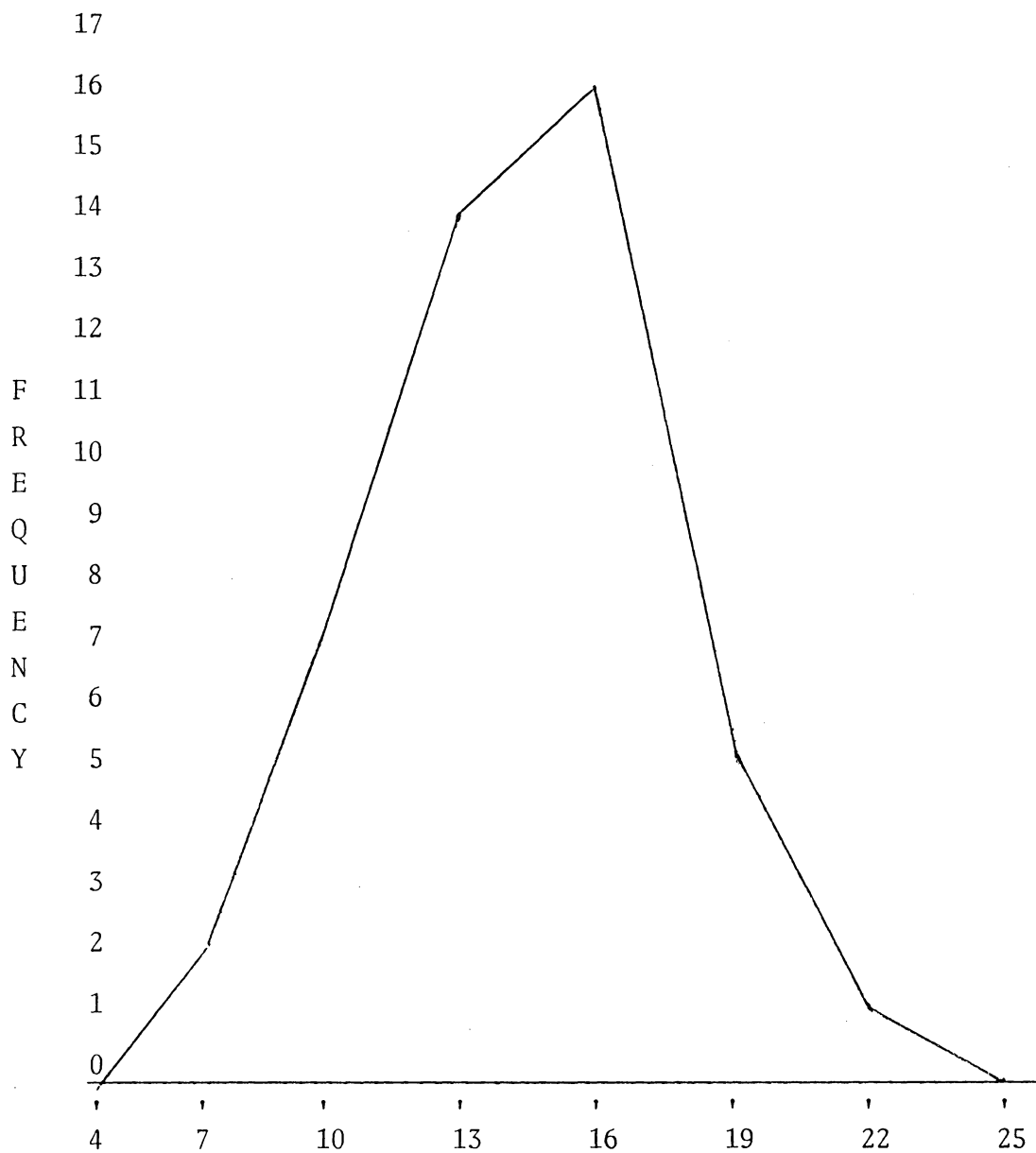
Principals' knowledge was assessed through responses to eleven multiple choice and eighteen true-false questions related to various administrative aspects of P.L. 94-142. Total scores for 45 principals appeared normally distributed and ranged from seven to 22 on the 29 item instrument. One respondent stated that he "didn't take tests" and left only the knowledge section blank. The mean for the knowledge instrument was 14.18 with a standard deviation of 3.14. An internal reliability coefficient (Alpha) of .62 was found.

Figure 1 shows the distribution, by three point intervals, of the total scores on the instrument, Knowledge of P.L. 94-142 (Olson, 1982).

Success on the individual items ranged from 2 percent correct to 93 percent correct. Table 1 shows the frequency of correct responses and P values for each item. Eight items (2, 12, 13, 23, 25, 26, 27, and 29) were answered correctly by more than 75 percent of the principals. These

items covered the following topics: least restrictive environment, medical examinations, where services are to be received, IEP obligations, due process hearings, enrollment in non-public schools, responsibility in light of lack of state and federal funding, and non-discriminatory assessment.

Eight other items were responded to successfully less than 25 percent of the time. These items were 5, 6, 8, 9, 16, 17, 19, and 24. They covered the following topics: identification of "another representative of the school" at an IEP meeting, physical education in IEP's, the concept of "least restrictive environment", identification of "related services", who must receive special education, IEP review schedules, and the derivation of "appropriate" education under P.L. 94-142.



KNOWLEDGE SCORES

Figure 1: Total score distribution, by three point intervals, of the KNOWLEDGE OF P.L. 94-142 instrument for 45 public secondary school principals.

Table 1

Frequency of Correct Responses and P
Values for the 29 items of KNOWLEDGE
OF P.L. 94-142 for 45 Public Secondary
School Principals

ITEM	CORRECT RESPONSES	P VALUE
1	14	31
2	34	76
3	29	64
4	20	44
5	1	2
6	5	11
7	25	56
8	1	2
9	7	16
10	23	51
11	12	27
12	36	80
13	36	80
14	28	62
15	31	69
16	3	7
17	5	11
18	25	56
19	8	18
20	15	33
21	15	33
22	33	73
23	39	87
24	9	20
25	34	76
26	38	84
27	38	84
28	32	71
29	42	93

Research Question 2: What attitude toward P.L. 94-142 exists among public secondary school principals?

Principals' attitude was assessed through responses of four levels of agreement to each of 25 statements relating to various aspects of P.L. 94-142. Total adjusted scores (100 possible) for the 46 principals ranged from 54 to 89 (the higher the score the more positive the attitude). The mean for the principals was 70.82 with a standard deviation of 7.55. An internal reliability coefficient (Alpha) of .83 was found with the sample of principals. Figure 2 shows the distribution, by five point intervals, of the total adjusted attitude scores on What is Your Opinion? (Underwood, 1981).

Most favorable responses were found on statements 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 15, and 19. Principals' most favorable attitudes were in the area of educating the handicapped in the least restrictive environment. Least favorable attitude responses were found on statements 10, 17, 20, 21, and 23. The least favorable attitudes were found on statements suggesting local responsibility for the funding of programs for handicapped students.

The range of responses to each of the 25 attitude statements varied considerably. Table 2 shows the frequency, percent, and mean score for each statement.

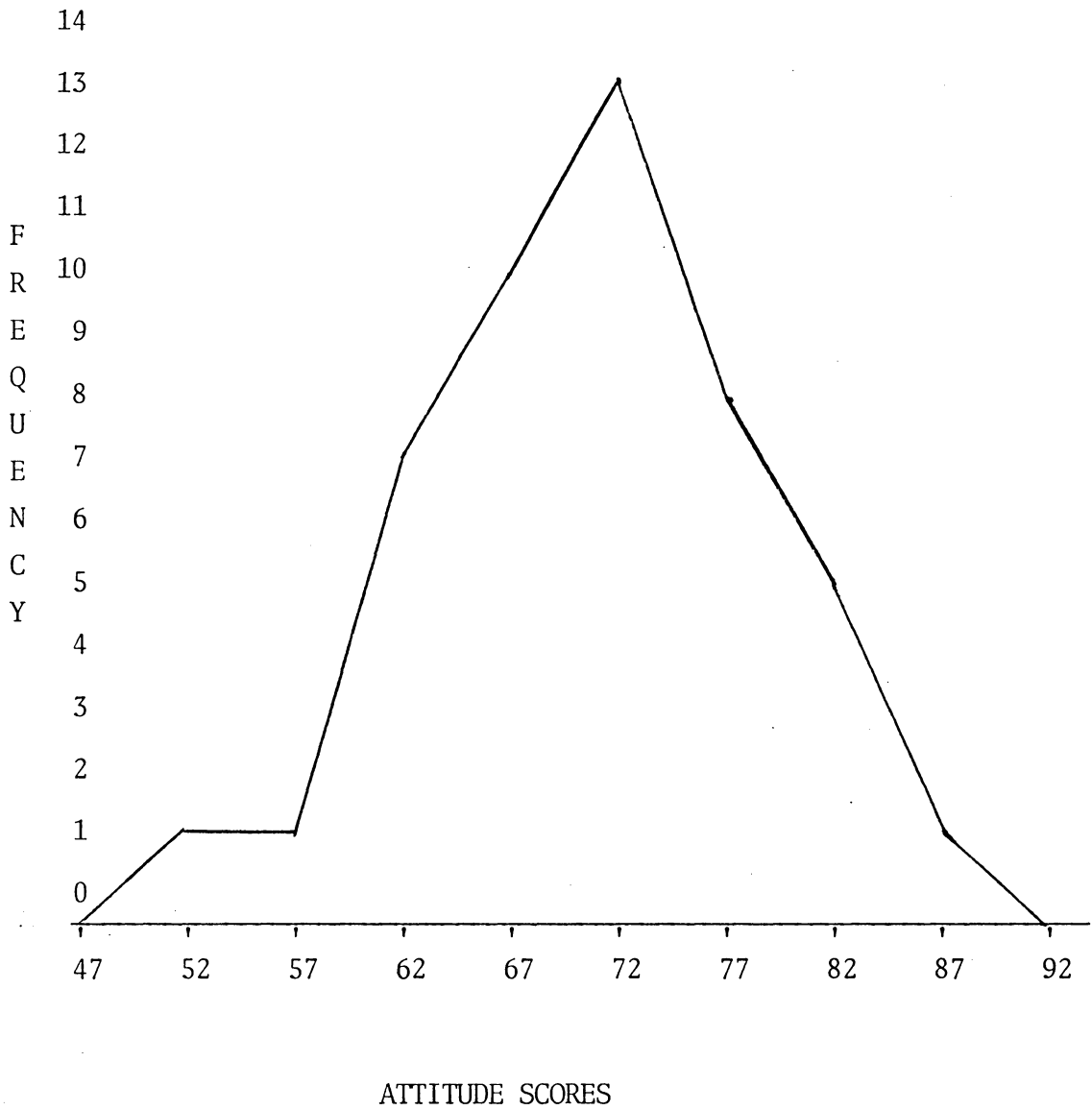


Figure 2: Total adjusted score distribution, by five point intervals, of the WHAT IS YOUR OPINION? instrument for 46 public secondary school principals.

Table 2

Adjusted Response Frequency, Percent, and Mean Score of Attitude Statements

ITEM	MEAN	RANGE OF RESPONSES							
		1		2		3		4	
		(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
1	2.52	9	(20)	11	(24)	16	(35)	8	(17)
2*	3.61	0	(0)	0	(0)	18	(39)	28	(61)
3*	3.41	0	(0)	3	(7)	21	(46)	22	(48)
4	3.11	0	(0)	3	(7)	32	(70)	9	(20)
5	3.26	0	(0)	2	(4)	30	(65)	14	(30)
6*	3.17	0	(0)	10	(22)	18	(39)	18	(39)
7*	2.70	4	(9)	13	(28)	19	(41)	8	(17)
8	2.99	3	(7)	8	(17)	22	(48)	13	(28)
9*	2.39	7	(15)	17	(37)	19	(41)	3	(7)
10	1.98	11	(24)	26	(57)	5	(11)	2	(4)
11*	2.63	7	(15)	12	(26)	18	(39)	9	(20)
12*	3.39	2	(4)	0	(0)	22	(48)	22	(48)
13	2.67	1	(2)	18	(39)	22	(48)	5	(11)
14	2.98	0	(0)	6	(13)	32	(70)	6	(13)
15*	3.44	0	(0)	0	(0)	26	(57)	20	(44)
16*	2.98	2	(4)	7	(15)	27	(59)	10	(22)
17*	2.36	3	(7)	25	(54)	15	(33)	2	(4)
18*	2.62	1	(2)	19	(41)	21	(46)	4	(9)
19*	3.11	0	(0)	3	(7)	35	(76)	8	(17)
20*	2.30	4	(9)	25	(54)	16	(35)	1	(2)
21	2.20	8	(17)	23	(50)	13	(28)	2	(4)
22*	2.94	1	(2)	9	(20)	28	(61)	8	(17)
23*	2.33	3	(7)	25	(54)	18	(39)	0	(0)
24*	2.98	0	(0)	7	(15)	33	(72)	6	(13)
25	2.73	1	(2)	15	(33)	24	(52)	5	(11)

*statements reversed for scoring

Research Question 3: What is the relationship of knowledge, attitude, and personal background among public secondary school principals to the provision of special education services within the building?

Three separate stepwise multiple regression analyses were carried out to examine the relationship between the principals' knowledge and attitude towards P.L. 94-142 and the provision of special education services within the building. Provision of special education services, the dependent variable, was defined in three ways, each with a separate source of documentation. One dependent variable, the proportion of students served in special education (SEPROP) was determined mathematically by dividing the number of students reported by the principal as receiving special education services by the total building population. A second dependent variable, the number of students served in self-contained special education programs (SELFCONT), was ascertained by Department of Education reimbursement figures for the particular school for the 1980-81 school year. The third dependent variable was obtained by special educators' ratings of the principals' influence and support regarding special education programs in the building (PRINFSUP). This involved an external rating of the perception of the principals' influence and support for special education in their building by the individual in the principal's division responsible for administration of the total special education program. This perception generated additional data which will be reported in this section.

Independent variables entered into the stepwise multiple regression program included the principals' level of education (EDULEVEL), the num-

ber of special education college credit hours taken (SPEDHRS), personal acquaintance with a handicapped child in the family or family of close friends (ACQUAINT), principals' perception of influence in developing new or additional special education programs in the building (PINEW), and in influencing the daily operation of special education programs within the building (PINOP), principals' knowledge of P.L. 94-142 requirements (PKNOWX), and principals' attitude towards P.L. 94-142 (PATTX). Table 3 shows the intercorrelations of all variables used in the regression program.

The order and amount of the variance controlled for differed for each of the three forms of the dependent variable. Using the proportion of students served in special education programs as the dependent measure of provision of services, 11 percent of the variance could be accounted for by six variables. The education level of the principal entered first into the equation. The principals' perceived influence over new or additional special education programs and principals' attitude were positive contributors while principals' influence over daily operations, number of special education hours, and knowledge were negative contributors to the controlled variance. One variable, ACQUAINT, did not contribute sufficiently and was not entered into the equation. Table 4 shows the multiple R, R square, R square change, and Beta values for the contributing independent variables.

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Independent and Dependent Variables

	EDULEVEL	SPEDHRS	ACQUAINT	PINEW	PINOP	PKNOWX	PATTX	SEPROP	SELFCONT	PRINFSUP
EDULEVEL	1.00	.02	.18	.08	.00	-.03	-.26	.22	-.02	.27*
SPEDHRS		1.00	-.35*	.15	.18	-.05	.13	-.07	-.16	-.05
ACQUAINT			1.00	.05	-.09	-.08	-.19	.09	.11	-.10
PINEW				1.00	.71*	.23	-.07	.18	-.08	.12
PINOP					1.00	.08	-.14	.03	-.00	.22
PKNOWX						1.00	.25	-.02	.16	-.14
PATTX							1.00	.02	.24	-.22
SEPROP								1.00	.06	.20
SELFCONT									1.00	.25*
PRINFSUP										1.00

*p < .10

Table 4

Multiple Regression Summary for the Dependent Variable - Proportion
of Students Served in Special Education Programs (SEPROP)

VARIABLE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	RSQ CHANGE	BETA
Principals' level of education (EDULEVEL)	.223	.049	.049	.223
Principals' perceived influence over new or additional special education programs (PINEW)	.275	.076	.026	.315
Principals' perceived influence over the daily operation of special education programs within the building (PINOP)	.301	.091	.015	-.149
Number of special education college credit and hours taken (SPEDHRS)	.311	.097	.006	-.106
Principals' attitude score (PATTX)	.323	.104	.008	.123
Principals' knowledge score (PKNOWX)	.339	.115	.010	-.110
(CONSTANT)			-.7374	

Of the three forms of the dependent variable the least amount of variance could be accounted for using the proportion of the total building population served in special education programs.

Using the number of handicapped students served in a self-contained special education program as the dependent measure of provision of services, 15 percent of the variance was accounted for. Principals' attitude entered first into this equation and accounted for nearly six percent of the variance. In contrast to the other two dependent variables where education level of the principal was entered first, it entered the equation last for this dependent variable. Table 5 shows the multiple R, R square, R square change, and Beta values for the contributing independent variables.

Using the special education administrators' rating of the perception of the principals' influence and support as the dependent measure of provision of services (PRINFSUP), nearly 20 percent of the variance was accounted for. This dependent variable was constructed from special education administrators' perceptions of the principals' influence on special education at the building level. One independent variable, the principals' rating of their influence on new or additional special education programs, did not contribute to the equation. Table 6 shows the multiple regression values for the contributing independent variables.

Table 5

Multiple Regression Summary for the Dependent Variable - Number of Students
Served in Self-contained Special Education Programs (SELFCONT)

VARIABLE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	RSQ CHANGE	BETA
Principals' attitude score (PATTX)	.245	.060	.060	.290
Number of special education college credit hours taken (SPEDHRS)	.313	.098	.038	-.142
Principals' personal acquaintance with a handicapped child (ACQUAINT)	.330	.109	.011	.157
Principals' knowledge score (PKNOWX)	.344	.119	.010	.138
Principals' perceived influence over new or additional special education programs (PINEW)	.352	.124	.005	-.259
Principals' perceived influence over the daily operation of special education programs within the building (PINOP)	.389	.151	.027	.248
Principals' level of education (EDULEVEL)	.391	.153	.002	.046
(CONSTANT)			-42.21	

Table 6

Multiple Regression Summary for the Dependent Variable - Special Educators' Perception
of Principals' Influence and Support for Special Education within the Building
(PRINFSUP)

VARIABLE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	RSQ CHANGE	BETA
Principals' level of education (EDULEVEL)	.272	.074	.074	.277
Principals' perceived influence over the daily operation of special education programs within the building (PINOP)	.351	.123	.049	.230
Principals' knowledge score (PKNOWX)	.383	.147	.024	-.154
Principals' personal acquaintance with a handicapped child (ACQUAINT)	.407	.166	.019	-.212
Number of special education college credit hours taken (SPEDHRS)	.437	.191	.025	-.159
Principals' attitude score (PATTX)	.446	.199	.008	-.097
(CONSTANT)			16.48	

Special Education Administrator Perceptions

The special education administrators' perceptions of the principals' influence and support were compared with the principals' rating of their influence on developing new or additional programs, influence on the daily operation of special education in the building, and with obtained total scores on the knowledge and attitude instruments. Special education administrators consistently reported their belief that a principals' knowledge of and attitude toward P.L. 94-142 strongly influences the provision of special education services within the building. The perception of influence ranged from 1 (low) to 6 (high). A mean score of 5.20 was obtained on this item. Twenty-one (51%) gave their influence a rating of 6; eleven (27%) a rating of 5; five (12%) rated it a 4; and four (10%) rated it a 3.

Two identical questions, rating influence of the principal on developing new or additional special education programs and on principal's influence on the daily operation of special education programs at the building level, were asked of the special education administrator and principal. In both instances the special education administrator perceived greater influence by the principal than the principals' perceived. Principals' mean scores on the two items were 3.435 and 4.043 respectively while the special educators' assigned mean scores of 3.848 and 4.239 to the principal.

Pearson correlation coefficients consistently yielded little relationship between special education administrator perceptions and those of the principal. For the two identical questions the correlation coefficient

for influence on new or additional programs was .2412 ($p = .106$) and for influence on the daily operation of the special education program in the building, .1084 ($p = .473$). Minimal, but never-the-less negative, correlation coefficients were obtained in the special educators' perception of the principals' knowledge ($-.3124$, $p = .035$) and attitude ($-.1694$, $p = .260$). Minimal negative correlation coefficients were also found between the reported number of special education college credit hours and principals' knowledge ($-.0525$, $p = .729$) and between close acquaintance with a handicapped child and principals' knowledge ($-.0756$, $p = .618$) and principals' attitude ($-.1941$, $p = .196$).

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

A mean of 14.18 and a standard deviation of 3.14 were found on the 29 item instrument (Olson, 1982) used to assess principals' knowledge. Distribution of the knowledge scores appears normal. On eight items (2, 12, 13, 23, 25, 26, 27, and 29) more than 75 percent of the principals responded correctly. All except item 2 were posed in the true-false format. Successful responses by less than 25 percent of the principals were made on eight of the items. Four of the least successful items were of the multiple choice format (5, 6, 8, 9) and the remainder (16, 17, 19, and 24) of the true-false format.

Attitude scores, like knowledge scores for the secondary school principals, appear normally distributed. The mean score (100 possible) was 70.82 with a standard deviation of 7.55. Principals' most favorable attitudes were toward education of the handicapped in the least restrictive environment. Their most negative attitudes were found to relate to

local funding of mandated programs for the handicapped.

Principals' knowledge and attitude variables were found to account for from 11 to 20 percent of the variance in the provision of special education services at the building level. Eleven percent of the variance was accounted for using the proportion of students receiving special education as the dependent variable; 15 percent when the number of students in self-contained special education programs was used; and 20 percent when the individual responsible for administering special education in the division rated the principal's influence and support as a third dependent variable depicting provision of services at the building level. The education level of the principal entered first into the step-wise multiple regression equation for the proportion and rating of principals' influence variables. Principals' attitude, as measured by the attitude instrument, entered into the equation first when the dependent variable was the number of self-contained special education students while education level was the last independent variable entered for this form of provision of services.

Special education administrators attributed more influence on new or additional special education programs and on the daily operation of special education in the building than the principals attributed to themselves. Correlations between the administrators and the principals consistently yielded small relationships. Negative correlations between the administrators' perceptions and principals' knowledge ($-.3124$, $p = .035$) and attitude ($-.1694$, $p = .260$) scores were found. Minimal, but negative correlations, were also found between the principals' reported number of special education hours and knowledge score as well as between principals'

acquaintance with a handicapped child and his scores on the knowledge and attitude instruments.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a discussion of the results, draws conclusions from the data, and suggests implications for special education and the public secondary school principal. Considerations for future research will also be presented.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate public secondary school principals' knowledge of and attitude toward P.L. 94-142, personal background, and the relationship of these variables to the provision of special education services at the building level. Special education administrators in this study were consistent in their belief that a principal's knowledge of and attitude toward P.L. 94-142 strongly influences the provision of special education services within the building. It was the investigation of this assumption held by many, including myself, that stimulated this research effort.

Principal's knowledge was assessed with the instrument Knowledge of P.L. 94-142 (Olson, 1982). A mean score of 14.18 with a standard deviation of 3.14 were obtained on the 29 item instrument. These results are consistent with the instrument derivation population. Dispersion of the study sample's knowledge scores appears normal. Eight of the test items were answered correctly by more than 75 percent of the principals while eight others were answered correctly by less than 25 percent. The sufficiency of this level of knowledge was not addressed in this study.

Aspects of P.L. 94-142 in which secondary principals showed the most knowledge included the differentiation between "mainstreaming" and "least restrictive environment" and the awareness that a given building does not necessarily have to serve all types of handicaps within its attendance area. Principals were aware of non-discriminatory assessment and that medical evaluations are a part of the diagnostic process with the division financially responsible, even in the absence of federal or state funding. They indicated a strong awareness that a P.L. 94-142 "due process" is not a judicial, but rather an administrative hearing. They recognize the division is obligated to provide all of the services listed in the individual education program (IEP) while the parent may send their handicapped child to a non-public school without necessarily obligating the division.

Aspects of P.L. 94-142 in which principals were least knowledgeable included two areas basic to the legislation. One is the confusion that all handicapped children must receive special education. The legislation is quite specific that only those children that are handicapped and, as a result, require special education, must receive it. The second area is "appropriateness", a well intentioned but ill defined term essential to P.L. 94-142. While assessment results form the basis, it is the IEP committee, comprised of the parent, teacher, and qualified representative of the school, following the determination of eligibility for special education that determines what is "appropriate". School administrators, special education supervisors, and special education teachers generally fill the role of "another representative of the school" in an IEP meeting. This item, as well as one other regarding a fine distinction of

"least restrictive environment" were answered correctly by only one principal. Secondary school reliance on the guidance department to handle "special" problems is thought responsible for the showing on this item. Results on the field test for secondary principals were similar. The coverage of physical education in at least some form in the IEP as well as "medical treatment" not being a related service under P.L. 94-142, and that an IEP need only be reviewed annually, but not necessarily at the beginning of the year, were also items responded to correctly less than 25 percent of the time.

Principal's attitude toward P.L. 94-142 was assessed with the instrument What is Your Opinion? (Underwood, 1981). The adjusted mean score (100 possible) was 70.82 with a standard deviation of 7.55 (the higher the score the more positive the attitude).

Principals expressed their most positive attitudes in statements involving the education of the handicapped with the non-handicapped. Having handicapped children in the school was not viewed as distracting to, or causing disruptive behavior among the non-handicapped. The inability to walk or talk was also not viewed by secondary school principals as prohibiting attendance in public schools. Participation of the handicapped in extracurricular activities was strongly supported. They did not feel that integration in classes with the non-handicapped would be embarrassing for the handicapped.

Principals expressed a high degree of awareness of P.L. 94-142 financial obligations for the division on the knowledge test. It was in this area that the principals reported their least positive attitudes towards special education. While aware of the legislative responsibility,

the local funding of special education programs was viewed with little enthusiasm. Responsible, as Herda (1980) noted, for "implementing a mandate that yields a multitude of interpretations and ambiguities while governing a 'declining' industry", and competing for "turf" long held by special education administrators it seems only logical that rising special education costs would trouble the building principal responsible for all programs in the school. They expressed the attitude that federal or state money, or a combination, should be used to finance special education programs.

Underwood's nationwide study (1981) of 439 school board members using the same attitude instrument had strikingly similar results for areas of the most and least positive attitudes. She found an adjusted mean score of 62.66. Board members were most positive towards education in the least restrictive environment and least positive when the locality was held financially responsible. While principals were strongly supportive of the handicapped learner's participation in extra curricular activities, board members were least favorable to this. This finding for principals contrasts with that found by Collins (1980) with Texas high school principals. Overall the secondary principals appear more positive to the requirements for special education from P.L. 94-142 than are school board members.

The low correlation found between knowledge and attitude in this study is consistent with earlier reports (D'Antoni, 1979; Davis, 1979; Shelton, 1979; and Underwood, 1981). Existing independently, knowledge and attitudes are of limited value to the individual, educational system, or society at large. It is when and where they enter the social milieu

that their impact gains meaning and significance. For this reason the study set out to investigate their relationship for secondary principals to the provision of special education services at the building level. Three separate definitions of provision of special education services were used, each with a different source of documentation.

The study found, with the given principals' knowledge, attitude, and background variables, that from 11 to 20 percent of the variance in the provision of special education services could be accounted for. Conversely, from 80 to 89 percent of the variance was unaccounted for in the study.

Using the rating of the principals' influence and support for special education, compiled from the perception of the individual in the principal's division responsible for administering special education, the greatest amount of variance, 20 percent, was accounted for. Data revealed that the level of education of the principal and his perception of influence on the daily operation of special education programs in his building had a positive relationship to the dependent variable. Principal's knowledge and attitude as measured by the instruments, his personal acquaintance with a handicapped child, and the number of college special education credit hours had a negative relationship. Sivage (1979) found similar results with special education credits for elementary principals related to effective mainstreaming in the building. It appears that a sense of control over programs in the building, as well as personal educational achievement, is a positive in the provision of special education services in one's building. The negative relationship of the knowledge and attitude variables raises questions as to the per-

ception of the special education administrator of their importance in provision of services at the building level. It also suggests that increased knowledge of the principal equates with the external impact of the mandate on his control over programs within his building. Sivage (1979), p. 28) suggested that increased knowledge of the handicapped may cause administrators to be more frustrated when dealing with special education programs. Small, but negative, correlations between this dependent variable and principals' knowledge and attitude scores may also account for their negative contribution. If special education hours were not taken by choice then its negative contribution may be better understood. The personal acquaintance of a handicapped child intimates an awareness of the increased time and needs for that child. This is a commodity of which the principal is perhaps all too aware is often in limited supply within the resources of his building.

Using the number of self-contained special education students served, compiled from March 1981 reimbursement figures from the State Department of Education, 15 percent of the variance was accounted for. Principals' attitude and knowledge scores, acquaintance with a handicapped child, perceived influence over the daily operations of the special education program, and their education level were positively related to the dependent variable. The number of special education hours was again negatively related as was the principals' perceived influence over the development of a new or additional special education programs in the building. Small negative correlations were found between these two variables and the dependent variable. Personal acquaintance, sense of control over daily operations, knowledge, and a positive attitude

suggest acceptance along with the knowledge capability to handle the demands of students requiring more than consultation or resource help to receive an appropriate education. The finding that principals' perceived influence over new or additional special education programs is negatively related to the dependent variable appears contradictory. Perhaps this felt influence carries to other programs as well and poses conflicting demands for the building principal. Assuming similar influence with other types of programs the dilemma for setting program priorities is even more real.

Using a straight mathematical computation to determine the proportion of students in the building receiving special education services as provision of services, 11 percent of the variance was accounted for. The education level of the principal, his perceived influence in developing new or additional special education programs, and his attitude showed a positive relationship to this dependent variable. His influence over the daily operation of the special education program, knowledge, and number of special education credit hours were negatively related.

A sense of control over new or additional special education programs and a positive attitude suggest an awareness and acceptance of the handicapped accounting for their higher proportion. Knowledge of P.L. 94-142 requirements, the number of special education college credit hours, and the perceived control over the daily operation of special education implies an awareness of the requirements and competing demands of special education programs and served to hinder increases in their proportion.

Additional information, relative to, and impacting on the study,

was found when the perceptions of the special education administrators and the perceptions and knowledge and attitude scores of the principals were compared. Special education administrators attributed greater influence to the principal both in the development of new or additional special education programs and in the influence on the daily operations of the special education services in the building than that perceived by the principals. It appears that while the special education administrator, for whatever reason, may be willing to share responsibility for special education programs at the building level this perception has not yet been accepted into the perceptual bank of the principal. This lack of clarity may serve to confuse the lines of responsibility when program needs or problems arise.

Of far greater concern is the consistently low relationship between special education administrator perceptions and those of the secondary school principal. In addition to the above mentioned differences, low, but negative, correlations were obtained between administrator perceptions of knowledge and attitude toward P.L. 94-142 and the knowledge and attitude scores of the principals. This low relationship may be a result of limited contact or interaction with the secondary principal or that the basis for their perception is something other than activities most directly related to special education. Regardless, the findings suggest an identified communication gap and has implications for the principal and the school division in the organizational pattern of its special education program. Misconceptions and false assumptions may abound if the level and direction of the relationship found in this study is consistent with practice elsewhere.

Minimal negative correlations were found between the number of special education college credit hours and the principals' knowledge. This implies that much of what is covered in a college course may not be related to the administrative responsibilities of a secondary principal with special education programs in the building. Many of the more technical aspects of P.L. 94-142 are perhaps just as well left with the specialists working for and in the principal's building. That the principal requires, at the minimum, a working knowledge of the law is enhanced even more by the low relationships found with special education administrator perceptions. Where the principal is to obtain this working knowledge is not addressed in this study. The data are strongly suspect of the value of present college level special education courses for secondary principals.

The finding in this study that 72 percent of the secondary principals reported taking no college special education credit hours is remarkably similar to the finding of Bullock (1970) in which 65 percent of the elementary administrators reported the same. Twelve years has seen little change during a time in which "renegotiation" is said to be essential between regular and special educators.

The refusal of a large school division to permit their principals to participate in this statewide study reduced the potential returns by eight percent. The result was to lessen the return rate from their geographical area (7% of the returned cases as opposed to 14% of the total sample) and raises questions as to the generalizability of the results of this study to the geographical area as well as to large divisions. No disparity in building population was found between returned cases and the

total sample.

CONCLUSIONS

Tentative conclusions, requiring additional investigation and verification, may be drawn from the present study. Public secondary school principals' knowledge of P.L. 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, appears normally distributed. While the adequacy of their level of knowledge was not addressed, room for growth is clearly present. Special education college credit hours had a small negative relationship with the principals' knowledge score. Changes in college course content as well as the need for division inservice programs of a practical nature for administrators is recommended.

Secondary principals' attitude toward educating the handicapped tends to be positive with the exception of the area of local financial responsibility. The strength of their support may be severely tested as public schools face the fiscal pressures of today. Local financial support may well be the key to success if the move to federalism persists. Results suggest that secondary principals may hold more positive attitudes toward the education of the handicapped than do public school board members.

The relationship between principals' knowledge and attitude scores was low, consistent with the findings of other studies. Knowledge and attitude variables for the principal account for from 11 to 20 percent of the variance in the provision of special education services at the building level. Conversely, from 80 to 89 percent of the variance in the provision of services is unaccounted for in the present study of the

secondary principal. Knowledge and attitude variables did not always contribute in a positive manner to the dependent variable--provision of services.

The relationship between special education administrators' perceptions and principals' perceptions and scores were consistently low and in some cases negatively correlated. Special education administrators attributed more influence to the principals in developing new or additional special education programs and in the daily operation of special education in the building than the principals perceived. This lack of congruency may be the result of limited contact, instrumentation used in the study, inaccurate assumptions, or possibly a form of passing the buck in terms of responsibility for special education programs. Improved communication, including renegotiation of the respective roles relative to special education at the building level, is necessary for not only the principal and the special education administrator, but the division itself which is ultimately responsible for all personnel and programs. Small negative correlations were found between the perceptions of the special education administrators and principals' knowledge and attitude scores. Sivage (1979) speculated that the appearance of, rather than actual knowledge or attitudes, was more important in the formation of others' perceptions of elementary principals and mainstreaming in their building. Special education administrators perceived that principals' knowledge of and attitude toward P.L. 94-142 strongly influence the provision of special education services in their buildings.

Implications of the Study

The results of this study have implications for the secondary principal, special education administrators, institutions of higher education, further research, and hopefully for children who may now or in the future require secondary special education and related services. The building principal is by no means solely responsible for the provision of special education services in the building. Allusions to the importance of the principal by many educational writers can be said to be substantiated by this study. The amount of variance in the provision of special education services unaccounted for suggests the interdependence of the principal with others in meeting the needs of the handicapped. The principal should be cautioned by the accuracy of the perception of the special education administrator as to the level of influence attributed to the principal and that felt by him over special education programs in the building. It would seem that much higher correlations between general and special education administrators would be found if open negotiation and the spirit of P.L. 94-142 were carried out. Control of "turf" remains as an obstacle to be bridged if P.L. 94-142 is to be successfully implemented. Considerable room for growth in knowledge and attitude toward P.L. 94-142 remains for the principal if he is to be an active leader for the handicapped at the building level. Special education college credit hours consistently showed a negative relationship to the dependent variable forms. This finding, similar to that of Sivage (1979), suggests at least a need to rethink course content, if not the need for the courses themselves. Requirements for increased

special education training for administrators, a move already underway, should be related to the provision of better services to the handicapped and non-handicapped alike.

The challenge for the special education administrator is to take the mandate and impetus of P.L. 94-142 and integrate it successfully into the overall education program. This change in direction, again lead by special education advocates, will be more difficult than the earlier movement to segregate the handicapped, nor is it likely to be met with as much receptivity or acquiescence on the part of building administrators.

A significant problem, that of awareness of the principal and principals' influence was found in this study. This seriously threatens the ability of the special education administrator to "renegotiate" the relationship with the secondary principal. Perhaps this is the result of the longstanding neglect of secondary special education on the part of both groups.

School divisions and universities must address this communication issue if secondary schools are to meet the increasing needs of the handicapped adolescent stimulated in large part by P.L. 94-142 efforts at the elementary level. The "renegotiation" between regular and special education must also include, if not begin with, administrators. Secondary principals will require better support and understanding from special education administrators if they are to assist in laying aside the "vast wasteland" label attributed to secondary special education (Heller, 1980).

The public secondary school principal is viewed as but one of the important potential assets contributing to the provision of special

education services at the building level. Further research is required to identify other significant personnel and variables and their relationship to the provision of special education services. Further studies designed solely to identify knowledge or attitude levels are viewed as contributing only minimally to the provision of services to the handicapped. Additional research on the knowledge and attitude instrumentation and the relationship of principals' knowledge and attitudes to the provision of special education services at the middle and elementary school is suggested. The investigation of additional principal variables, or redefinition of same, needs to be continued in an effort to account for increased amounts of variance in the provision of special education services at the building level. Alternative definitions of provision of special education services, perhaps using other sources at the building level and looking at qualitative aspects, should also be explored. Personal interviews and observations prior to and following the survey information would assist in clarifying and validating the pencil and paper instruments. The relationship between regular and special educators in the division, as well as at the building level, requires further investigation. Control for the sources of funding for the handicapped and the financial situation of the divisions need to be considered in future investigations. In the 1980's secondary special education programs and personnel required the same effort, support, and investigation as that stimulated by P.L. 94-142 at the preschool and elementary levels in the late 1970's. The principal may look to Jones (1981), Mayer (1982), and Reynolds and Birch (1982) to gain an initial understanding of the law and the integration of special with regular education programs.

The refusal of a large division to permit their professional employees from participating in a statewide study impacted on this study and serves as a potentially dangerous signal for future research efforts. It also raises questions as to the respect and judgment accorded to the professionals employed in our public school systems. Protection of subjects and confidentiality of responses must be guaranteed and followed if future research efforts are to be considered. The reported and experienced large number of research projects does not appear sufficient to preempt the professional judgment of the public school employee from contributing to relevant research projects. Should the practice of this division spread, survey research and the generalizability of results will be severely limited.

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Appendix A

Knowledge of P.L. 94-142 Instrument

KNOWLEDGE OF P.L. 94-142
Education for All Handicapped Children Act
Olson, 1982

CIRCLE the best response for each statement.

1. The "individual education program" (IEP) must contain all but the following:
 - a. present levels of educational performance
 - b. annual goals and short term instructional objectives
 - c. parent signature of acceptance
 - d. specific educational services to be provided
 - e. projected date of initiation of services
2. P.L. 94-142 mandated that the handicapped and non-handicapped be educated together unless the nature or severity of the handicapped is such that education in regular classrooms cannot be achieved satisfactorily. This is part of the
 - a. advocacy clause
 - b. least restrictive environment clause
 - c. mainstreaming clause
 - d. equal rights clause
 - e. parental rights clause
3. Evaluating a child using assessments not affected by deficits due to language, culture, or sensory disability is called
 - a. independent assessment
 - b. discriminatory assessment
 - c. standardized assessment
 - d. criterion referenced assessment
 - e. non-discriminatory assessment
4. Unique features of P.L. 94-142 include
 - a. based primarily on existing state and federal statutes
 - b. permanent legislation that does not require reauthorization
 - c. permits every state and school district to qualify for funds
 - d. all of the above
 - e. a and b
5. Which of the following is generally not appropriate as "another representative of the school" in an IEP meeting?
 - a. principal
 - b. assistant principal
 - c. guidance counselor
 - d. special education teacher of same disability group
 - e. special education supervisor

6. What curricular area must be covered in every IEP?
 - a. English
 - b. reading
 - c. physical education
 - d. social studies
 - e. vocational education

7. When a parental or school district disagreement exists regarding the appropriateness of the child's education, P.L. 94-142 provides the _____ to settle the differences.
 - a. IEP clause
 - b. advocacy clause
 - c. due process clause
 - d. grievance clause
 - e. parental rights clause

8. The concept of "least restrictive environment" comprises all of the following except:
 - a. zero reject
 - b. progressive inclusion
 - c. normalization
 - d. equal treatment
 - e. individualized plan

9. Related services may include all but the following:
 - a. audiology
 - b. transportation
 - c. medical treatment
 - d. psychological services
 - e. recreation

10. In the placement of handicapped children, the school must
 - a. draw upon information from a variety of sources
 - b. ensure that all information is documented and considered
 - c. ensure that services are available before they are recommended
 - d. all of the above
 - e. a and b

11. Re-evaluation of a child receiving special education must occur
 - a. every five years
 - b. if the parent or teacher request it
 - c. if evaluation personnel are available
 - d. a and b
 - e. all of the above

TRUE or FALSE

- T F 12. The local education agency (LEA) is liable to pay for medical examinations as part of the diagnostic process.
- T F 13. A handicapped child must receive services in the building serving his/her normal attendance area.
- T F 14. "Mainstreaming" is required by P.L. 94-142.
- T F 15. Following the "least restrictive environment" concept, a handicapped child may be moved from a full time special class to a residential school.
- T F 16. P.L. 94-142 assures that handicapped children have a constitutional right to an education.
- T F 17. Special education and related services must be provided to all handicapped children.
- T F 18. An IEP meeting is required before placing a handicapped student that has moved in from another LEA.
- T F 19. An IEP must be reviewed at the beginning of each year.
- T F 20. Goals and objectives from a handicapped child's regular teachers must be included in the IEP.
- T F 21. Written permission is required to re-evaluate a child receiving special education and related services.
- T F 22. An IEP meeting may be held without the parents in attendance.
- T F 23. An IEP is a 'contract' that obligates the LEA to provide all of the services listed in it.
- T F 24. "Appropriateness" of the individual education program is determined by the results of the assessment procedures.
- T F 25. A "due process" hearing under P.L. 94-142 is a judicial hearing.
- T F 26. Parents of a handicapped child have the right to enroll their child in a non-public school if they so choose.
- T F 27. The lack of federal or state funds is an appropriate LEA justification for placing handicapped children in existing alternatives.
- T F 28. The parents of handicapped children bear the burden of proof when educational placements involve partial or full removal of their children from their age mates.
- T F 29. Non-discriminatory assessment is a requirement under P.L. 94-142 due process safeguards.

SCORING KEY

for

KNOWLEDGE OF P.L. 94-142

Olson - 1982

1 - C	14 - F
2 - B	15 - T
3 - E	16 - F
4 - D	17 - F
5 - C	18 - T
6 - C	19 - F
7 - C	20 - F
8 - D	21 - F
9 - C	22 - T
10 - E	23 - T
11 - B	24 - F
	25 - F
	26 - T
	27 - F
12 - T	28 - F
13 - F	29 - T

Appendix B

What is Your Opinion? Instrument

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

Please rate the following to indicate how you feel about the statement. Your choices range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Put a CIRCLE around the answer that most agrees with how you feel about the statement. Remember the interest is in your opinion; answer on that basis, not whether or not you know the statement refers to something that has already been mandated.

(SD - Strongly Disagree, D - Disagree, A - Agree, and SA - Strongly Agree)

- | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 1. Local funds spent on the handicapped should equal those spent for the non-handicapped. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 2. Having handicapped children in their school building is distracting for normal children. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 3. Placing handicapped children in classes with non-handicapped will cause disruptive behavior among the non-handicapped. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 4. Non-handicapped children will benefit from having handicapped children in their classes. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 5. Regular classroom teachers will need additional training to teach handicapped children. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 6. Children who cannot talk should not attend public school. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 7. Handicapped children learn best in special self-contained classes designed for their special problems. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 8. The local school district should provide programs for the severely handicapped who need daily living and social skills. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 9. Children who are not toilet trained should not be admitted to public schools. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 10. The money from the federal government to subsidize education of the handicapped is not worth the paperwork for public schools. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 11. A deaf-blind child should not be in public schools. | SD | D | A | SA |
| 12. Children who cannot walk should not attend public schools. | SD | D | A | SA |

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| 13. Handicapped children will learn more if they are educated with non-handicapped children. | SD D A SA |
| 14. Handicapped children should be educated with non-handicapped children. | SD D A SA |
| 15. Handicapped children should not be allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities. | SD D A SA |
| 16. The local school district should provide educational programs only for handicapped children that can profit from an academic program. | SD D A SA |
| 17. Education of the handicapped should be paid through federal funds. | SD D A SA |
| 18. The public schools should not have to provide interpreters for deaf students. | SD D A SA |
| 19. Handicapped children will be self-conscious and embarrassed in classes with non-handicapped. | SD D A SA |
| 20. Public schools should not pay for physical therapy. | SD D A SA |
| 21. The public schools should pay the cost of tuition, room, and board for a handicapped student when the school does not have an appropriate program for the student. | SD D A SA |
| 22. Regular classroom teachers should be paid a differential salary for having handicapped children in their classes. | SD D A SA |
| 23. The state should pay the cost of educating handicapped children. | SD D A SA |
| 24. Normal children will make fun of handicapped children in their classes. | SD D A SA |
| 25. The public schools should provide Braille readers for blind students. | SD D A SA |

After completing all the attitude items, please feel free to comment on any item that was unclear or confusing to you (Olson, 1982).

SCORING KEY

for

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION?

Underwood - 1981

ITEM	Most Favorable Position (Assigned Value of 4)	ITEM	Most Favorable Position (Assigned Value of 4)
1	SA	14	SA
2	SD	15	SD
3	SD	16	SD
4	SA	17	SD
5	SA	18	SD
6	SD	19	SD
7	SD	20	SD
8	SA	21	SA
9	SD	22	SD
10	SA	23	SD
11	SD	24	SD
12	SD	25	SA
13	SA		

Appendix C

Special Education Administrators' Rating Instrument

Appendix D

Letter to Secondary Principals

February 27, 1982

I am requesting your assistance in the gathering of data on Virginia Secondary School Principals' knowledge and attitudes regarding Public Law 94-142, The Education For All Handicapped Children Act. The enclosed questionnaire has been prepared to investigate these issues as they relate to special education services in secondary schools.

Questionnaires are also being sent to a random sample of principals throughout the state. I will appreciate your cooperation in completing the form as soon as possible. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for returning your completed form. Questionnaires have been coded for follow-up purposes.

All replies will be held in strictest confidence. I would be glad to forward you a summary of the final results if you will mark the box on the demographic section. The voluntary investment of your time is very important to me and will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John A. Olson
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
and State University
Educational Administration

Appendix E

Letter to Special Education Administrators

February 27, 1982

Dear Special Education Administrator:

I am requesting your assistance in my study of secondary school principals' knowledge and attitudes regarding P.L. 94-142 and their relationship to the provision of services at the building level. This dissertation study is conducted under the direction of Dr. Philip Jones at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

A survey was sent to a random sample of secondary principals throughout the state. An important part of the dependent variable in this study is your expert opinion on various aspects of the principal's relationship with special education in his/her building and with the way special education operates overall in your division. I will appreciate your cooperation in completing and returning this form as soon as possible. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed.

All responses will be held in strictest confidence. Please discard the name of the principal and school after completing the form as it has been coded. The voluntary investment of your time is very important to this study and will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

John A. Olson
Doctoral Candidate
VPI & SU
Educational Administration

Would you like a summary of the study? Yes No

Appendix F

Principals' Demographic Questions

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Sex (5)

1 Male
2 Female

Education Level (6)

1 Bachelors
2 Masters
3 Specialist
4 Doctorate

Age (7)

1 25-29
2 30-34
3 35-39
4 40-44
5 45-49
6 50-54
7 55-59
8 60+Major-highest degree Total years in education
(8-9) Total years in administration
(10-11) Number of special edu-
(14-15) cation college credit hours Years in current position
(12-13)

Is there a handicapped child in your family or in a family of your close friends?

(16) 1 Yes 2 No Total number of handicapped students receiving special education
(21-23) services (IEP in force) in your building.

Do you serve handicapped students from outside your regular attendance area?

(24) 1 Yes 2 No # of regular education teachers in your building.
(25-27) # of special education teachers in your building.
(28-29)

Please rate your influence on the development of new or additional special education services in your building.

(30) Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 High

Please rate your influence on the daily operation of existing special education services in your building.

(31) Low 1 2 3 4 5 6 High

Would you like a summary of the study? Yes No

Appendix G

Principals' Demographic Information

Principals' Demographic Information

Geographic Regions

<u>Region</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
1	7	15.2
2	11	23.9
3	4	8.7
4	3	6.5
5	5	10.9
6	8	17.4
7	8	17.4
	<u>46</u>	<u>100</u>

<u>Range</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
60+	1	2.2
55-59	6	2.2
50-54	6	13.0
45-49	8	17.4
40-44	11	23.9
35-39	12	26.1
30-34	7	15.2
	<u>46</u>	<u>100</u>

Total years - education

<u>Range</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
31-35	3	7
26-30	4	9
21-25	11	24
16-20	13	28
11-15	9	19
6-10	6	13
1-5	0	0
	<u>46</u>	<u>100</u>

Years in Current Position

<u>Range</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
13-14	2	4
11-12	4	9
9-10	4	9
7-8	5	11
5-6	5	11
3-4	16	35
1-2	10	22
	<u>46</u>	<u>100</u>

Total years - administration

<u>Range</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
26-30	2	4
21-25	2	4
16-20	4	9
11-15	15	32
6-10	14	31
1-5	9	20
	<u>46</u>	<u>100</u>

Special Education Hours

<u>Hours</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
16	1	2.2
12	1	2.2
8	1	2.2
6	7	15.2
3	3	6.5
0	33	71.7
	<u>46</u>	<u>100</u>

Building Population

<u>Range</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
2101-2400	4	8.7
1801-2100	1	2.2
1501-1800	6	13.0
1201-1500	3	6.5
901-1200	9	19.6
601-900	15	32.6
301-600	8	17.4
1-300	0	0
		<u>100</u>

Special Education Students

<u>Range</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>%</u>
136-	1	2.2
121-135	2	4.3
106-120	0	0
91-105	1	2.2
76-90	2	4.3
61-75	5	10.9
46-60	6	13.0
31-45	10	21.7
16-30	15	32.6
0-15	4	8.7
		<u>100</u>

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the scanned document**

ABSTRACT

PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS' KNOWLEDGE OF AND ATTITUDE TOWARD P.L. 94-142 AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AT THE BUILDING LEVEL

by

John A. Olson III

The purpose of this study was to investigate Virginia public secondary school principals' knowledge of and attitude toward P.L. 94-142, personal background, and the relationship of these variables to the provision of special education services at the building level.

Provision of services was defined as the proportion of students receiving special education services, the number of students served in self-contained classes, and by a special educator's rating of the principals' influence and support for special education.

Knowledge and attitude scores were normally distributed for the 46 principals. A mean score of 14.18 was obtained on the 29 item instrument, Knowledge of P.L. 94-142. A mean of 70.82 (100 possible, the higher the score the more positive the attitude) was found on the instrument, What is Your Opinion?

Regression analysis using the three dependent variables accounted for 11 to 20 percent of the variance in the provision of services. Twenty percent was controlled when using the special educators' rating of the principals' influence and support for special education. Fifteen percent of the variance was controlled for using the number of students in self-contained programs. Eleven percent of the variance was controlled for using the proportion of students served in the building.

Special education administrators consistently reported their perception that principals' knowledge and attitudes strongly influence the provision of special education services in their buildings. They also attributed more influence over special education at the building level to the principals than the principals perceived. The relationship between special education administrators' perceptions and principals' perceptions and scores were consistently low and in some cases negatively correlated.