THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TO INCARCERATED HANDICAPPED YOUTH OF VIRGINIA

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of DOCTOR OF EDUCATION in Administration and Supervision of Special Education

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The 1970s brought many changes in public education, one of which was the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. In mandating the provision of free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all handicapped children, this far-reaching legislation charges all public agencies which provide educational services within states with extensive responsibilities specified by the law.

Reports have indicated that education agencies are progressing toward the goal of full service. The same reports, however, identify subpopulations of handicapped children where the provision of services, and in some cases identification of eligible clients, have been minimal (Joint Testimony of Chief State School Officers and National Association of State Directors of Special Education, October 16, 1979). The testimony of the Council for Exceptional Children given at the Public Law 94-142 Oversight Hearings conducted by the House Select Education Subcommittee on October 9, 1979, expressed the following concern:

We believe yet another area which will require the strict scrutiny of the Congress is the extension of a free, appropriate public education to many children within a number of specific sub-populations of
exceptional children, who, for one reason or another, are not presently receiving such an education. More specifically, we would draw your attention to the following groups of children: (1) minority children; (2) inner-city children; (3) children overseas; (4) adjudicated youth; (5) children enrolled in Section 6 schools; (6) American Indian children; and (8) bilingual children. (Public Law 94-142 Oversight Hearings, 1979, p. 3)

Each subpopulation presents problems specific to its unique characteristics. One particular subpopulation, adjudicated handicapped youth, presents a montage of situation specific problems and needs.

Adjudicated youth are those minors who have been convicted of an offense (Cavan, 1975) including status offenses, misdemeanors or felonies. Following conviction, the adjudicated youth is generally committed to a juvenile facility or placed on probation. Those youth committed to a juvenile facility are considered incarcerated. Therefore, incarcerated youth are a subpopulation of adjudicated youth with all the situation specific problems and needs of adjudicated youth compounded by incarceration.

The mentally retarded offender has been a source of concern for justice and corrections professionals as well as advocates for some time (Allen, 1966; Allen, 1978; Brelje, 1976; Brown, Courtless and Silber, 1970; Forget, 1980; Fox, 1976, Rockoff, 1979; Santamour and West, 1977).
A link between learning disabilities and delinquency has become a subject of increasing scrutiny by diverse organizations and individuals (Association for Children with Learning Disabilities, 1979; General Accounting Office, 1977; Murray, 1976). In addition to the documented existence of mentally retarded and learning disabled adjudicated and incarcerated individuals, recent studies are reporting that incarcerated youth are a population consisting largely of delinquent children handicapped in some way as defined by Public Law 94-142.

Johnson (1979) reported that many incarcerated youth could be classified as mentally retarded, 32 percent were thought to display serious learning disabilities, and that emotional disturbance was perhaps a primary contributor to this population's delinquency. The nationwide study conducted by Morgan (1979) revealed large numbers of incarcerated youth to have some type of handicapping condition (42.4 percent) as compared to the national average incidence of 12.3 percent.

In a 1976 study of Virginia incarcerated youth ages 17 and under, Mesinger found 14 percent of his sample classifiable as educable or trainable mentally retarded. He found smaller numbers of physically handicapped, hearing impaired and speech impaired. Virginia Department of Corrections' data indicate that of those children ages 10 to 18 committed to correctional facilities in 1979,
12.7 percent displayed intelligence quotients of 79 or below, 13.4 percent had vision disorders, 6 percent hearing disorders, 12 percent had experienced previous psychiatric hospitalization, 9 percent previous neurological evaluation, 27 percent had been previously placed for behavior problems, and 17 percent displayed other medical disorders (Rehabilitative School Authority, 1979).

Although precise incidence rates vary, those researchers investigating numbers of incarcerated handicapped youth agree resoundingly that this population does exist in sufficient numbers to make it an educational concern.

The requirements of Public Law 94-142 are binding on any state agency or political subdivision within a state receiving Public Law 94-142 Part B funds, including all correctional facilities in which handicapped children reside (Federal Register, Tuesday, August 23, 1977, Part II). Furthermore, regulations of Public Law 94-142 (§121a.134) and Education Division General Administrative Regulations (§1006.101) (April 3, 1980) require that the State Education Agency (SEA) be responsible for ensuring that such subdivisions be in compliance with the law. Therefore, it is necessary that correctional facilities housing handicapped youth meet federal regulations and be monitored, evaluated and reported as doing so by the State Education Agency.

Echoing the concerns of the Council for Exceptional Children as presented in the Public Law 94-142 Oversight
Hearings, educators are expressing doubt as to the appropriate delivery of services to the population of incarcerated handicapped youth (Brown and Robbins, 1979; Hagerty and Israelski, 1981; Johnson, 1979; Mesinger, 1976; Schilit, 1979). Brown and Robbins (1979) suggest that the delivery of services to this population may be inhibited by constraints inherent in the correctional and juvenile justice systems. However, there may be factors inherent in correctional institutions which could facilitate the provision of education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth. The inmate is in a controlled environment twenty-four hours a day, many of which may be allocated to educational as well as rehabilitative and custodial activities which would facilitate the inmates' reintegration into the public schools and society upon release. The incarcerated youth may be more motivated to achieve educationally if release is contingent upon educational progress. A twenty-four hour a day program may provide an intensity of services which could not be provided in a public school setting due to limited accessibility of the student. Unfortunately, the limited research available seems to indicate that incarcerated handicapped youth are not receiving appropriate services as mandated (Council for Exceptional Children, 1981; Smith, 1978).

The network of governance resulting from mandated interagency cooperation between state education and
correctional agencies with an overlay of federal and state regulations has been suggested as an inhibiting factor in the full delivery of required services (Brown and Robbins, 1979; Hagerty and Israelski, 1980; Schilit, 1979). A primary factor affecting the delivery of mandated services may be the relationship between the State Education Agency and the agency or agencies responsible for corrections and corrections education. Correctional facility educators are faced with several layers of policy and regulation emanating from education sources (federal and state education agencies), correctional sources (federal and state correctional agencies and individual facility regulations), and correctional education sources (e.g., Virginia's Rehabilitative School Authority). If policies and regulations are consistent across agencies, procedures may be fairly easily established and implemented. If inconsistencies exist, conflict may result in the development and implementation of procedures which would meet the mandates of Public Law 94-142.

The Office of Special Education reports that interagency agreements have been made in every state between state education and correction agencies (Three-fourths of Handicapped Children Served, 1979). However, the Joint Testimony of the Chief State School Officers and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education of October 16, 1979, revealed that these agreements have been hindered by
state governance structures, federal regulations which limit and complicate interagency action, and the wide range of services for which these agencies are responsible. Therefore, variability in programming for handicapped youth in correctional facilities may be influenced by variability among regulations and policies. Federal regulations serve as the basic minimum for state regulations, and state regulations serve as the minimum for policy and procedures at lower administrative levels. If practice does not meet the requirements established by upper level (i.e., federal) regulations, the state may be found in noncompliance and, theoretically, lose all federal entitlements to the state in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112).

Concern has been expressed that incarcerated handicapped youth are not being served in accordance with regulations governing the education of handicapped children. Specific service inadequacies have not, however, been delineated. Therefore, the first area to be addressed must be: What are the specific services and procedures for provision of such services as perceived by those persons responsible for the education of incarcerated handicapped youth?

Literature has indicated that factors such as facility governance and administration; number and quality of staff; and educational, behavioral and social characteristics of clients have an affect on the type and quality of services
provided to institutionalized populations. The second area to be examined thus must be: What are the factors within juvenile correctional facilities which are perceived to have an impact on the provision of special education services to incarcerated handicapped youth?

Overlapping jurisdictions and confusion in responsibilities and authority for the provision of educational services to incarcerated handicapped youth have been one factor suggested by literature to have an affect on the provision of educational services to incarcerated handicapped youth. If such confusion exists, it may influence the adequacy of service delivery. The third area to be addressed, therefore, is: If service inadequacies are found to exist, are they the result of absent or poorly designed policy? If specific service inadequacies and forces permitting these inadequacies are identified, suggestions for remediation may be made.

**Statement of Problem**

Federal and state legislation mandate the education of all handicapped children including incarcerated handicapped youth. Questions as to the adequacy of mandated services delivered to this population have been indicated in the literature. The problem is a lack of a research base for the assumed inadequacies in the provision of such services to incarcerated handicapped youth.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe actual processes used to implement state special education requirements within juvenile correctional facilities and to identify the factors which affect the implementation of such processes.

Research Questions

1. What are the processes used by the Virginia Rehabilitative School Authority (RSA) to implement Virginia Department of Education (SEA) Office of Special and Compensatory Education regulations governing the education of handicapped children?

2. What are the factors which affect the implementation of delivery of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth as perceived by Rehabilitative School Authority Youth School personnel?

3. Are absent, unclear or conflicting policies of agencies (State Education Agency, Department of Corrections, Rehabilitative School Authority) related to the provision of mandated special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth?

Significance of Study

All correctional facilities housing handicapped youth are required by federal law to meet mandated requirements
relating to the education of handicapped children ages 6 through 18 years. If found in noncompliance, the state could lose all federal entitlements. It has been suggested that due to the complex interagency cooperation necessary to meet these mandates, service delivery is inadequate. Identification of processes and factors affecting the same facilitates assistance to those state agencies responsible for the education of incarcerated handicapped children.

Definitions

Compliance. To adhere to regulations and policies related to the education of handicapped children promulgated by federal and state agencies.

Incarcerated handicapped youth/children. Those children age 18 and under who have been adjudicated and committed to a correctional institution and who are handicapped in some way as defined by Public Law 94-142.

Juvenile correctional institutions/facilities. State-operated facilities housing adjudicated committed juveniles, administered by the Department of Corrections.

Policy. General and specific agency approved statements which serve to regulate agency functions and procedures.

Regulations. Specific rules promulgated by agencies' boards for the purpose of enactment of and representative of agency policy.
Rehabilitative School Authority (RSA). The legislatively created agency composed of all educational facilities of all institutions operated by the Department of Corrections but operated independently of the Department of Corrections for the purpose of the conduct of all educational programs within the Department of Corrections penal institutions.

Limitations

For the purpose of this study, it was assumed that Virginia regulations relating to the education of handicapped children are in compliance with federal regulations of Public Law 94-142. In fact, the regulations promulgated by the Virginia Department of Education Office of Special and Compensatory Education go beyond federal regulations in some areas. Since subdivisions within states (i.e., correctional facilities, school divisions, etc.) are required to comply with state regulations regardless of the minimum established by federal regulations, state regulations served as the base for comparative purposes within the study.

Juvenile correctional institutions house the majority of committed juveniles. There are, however, a small number of juveniles committed to adult facilities. These youth, when handicapped, also are eligible for special education and related services under the requirements of state and
federal legislation relating to the education of handicapped children. The increased complexity of delivery of services to juveniles within adult facilities would require examination of the dynamics of adult correctional institutions and the policies under which they are operated: an entirely different set of factors than those operating in the juvenile correctional institutions. Juveniles may also be committed to foster homes, group homes, mental health/mental retardation facilities, and a variety of other placements. Each of these placements provides a diversity of potentially impacting variables. Therefore, this study was limited to those programs operated within juvenile correctional facilities in Virginia.

The purpose of this study was not, unfortunately, to determine the quality of services provided to incarcerated handicapped youth. The assumption was made, as it has been made by governmental agencies, that compliance with program regulations ensures a higher quality of services than a nonregulated program.
Chapter 2

Review of Literature

In order to fully examine the policies, procedures and practices affecting the special education of incarcerated handicapped youth, several bodies of related literature and research were reviewed. These areas included: (a) institutions and the factors at work within institutions which make them uniquely different from other types of social and service agencies; (b) correctional education; (c) federal and state regulations governing the education of handicapped children; (d) incarcerated handicapped youth; and (e) problems related to the delivery of services to incarcerated handicapped youth.

Institutions

The residential institution is a society unto itself within society. Each institution has its own unique systems of governance, control, social order, provision of services and criteria for entrance and exit. The methods and procedures established to provide the above are contingent on the purpose of the institution. Because the institution is a society unto itself, there are operational factors at work which do not have identical counterparts in the "outside world." Literature relating to these types of factors operating within institutions was examined in order
to provide a fuller understanding of possible effects on handicapped youth housed in correctional institutions.

The examination of institutions was approached through the study of literature related to deinstitutionalization. Studies concerning deinstitutionalization were found to compare services provided within institutions and factors affecting the same with similar services potentially provided by less restrictive community resources. Rationale supporting deinstitutionalization defines the parameters of institutional models and potentials. Deinstitutionalization literature addresses mental health/mental retardation facilities and correctional facilities. Common to both types of facilities are the factors of social control relating to purpose of the facility and within facility governance, administration, staffing, population characteristics and size of facility.

The issue of purpose of institutions has been approached through two primary foci: the institution serving society to control deviance and protect social order and the institution as a rehabilitative community with its own social order within which deviance exists. Coughlin (1977) addressed the control of deviance through the use of power--defining crime and delinquency, mental retardation and developmental disabilities as social deviance. When the goals of a social organization are control, conformity and protection of society from threatening deviant elements,
power is exercised to segregate or eliminate the deviant. There is little concern for the deviant as the focus is society rather than the needs of the deviant individual. The artificial environment of the institution, by virtue of its segregative purpose, tends to increase the discrepancy between socially acceptable and socially unacceptable behavior, therefore promoting increased deviance. Coughlin's thesis was that since the purpose of institutionalization, segregation, is not easily modified, the community must actively provide for the reintegration of deviant individuals with society for the purpose of resocialization. Resocialization, he contended, cannot take place within the artificial setting of the institution.

Authors have not completely condemned institutional programs as serving solely a separatist purpose. The functions of institutionalization, specifically juvenile correctional institutions, are two: protection for the community from potentially harmful youth and rehabilitation of potentially harmful youth.

Wagner (1978), Vinter, Downs and Hall (1975) and Goffman (1961) commented on these two functions rather critically. Wagner found the protection function to be faulty as most juvenile institutions are not maximum security, provide home visitation, and off-grounds and community activities. Vinter et al. found that communities were not any more effectively protected from youth in large
institutions than those committed to community-based agencies and that the cost factor of maintaining youth in large institutions was extraordinarily higher than that of smaller facilities. The depersonalization assumed by Wagner and Vinter et al. to be inherent in large institutions would be eliminated by smaller community-based units with no sacrifice of present security levels and would decrease cost of maintaining committed youth. The rehabilitation function of large institutions was seen by Wagner and Goffman to be largely nonexistent due to impediments inherent to rehabilitation in facilities where custody control and conformity are the primary purposes. Educational programs were cited by Wagner as the primary example of this failure. Academic and vocational programs are provided in the artificial setting of the institution. Small classes and tailor-made curricula demand a minimum from the student and are not commensurate with the demands of the community education programs to which students are discharged. It was generally maintained by authors that rehabilitation, preparation for reentrance to the community with resocialized behaviors and reworked skills could not take place in the institutional setting due to (a) the artificiality of the setting, (b) the demand for conformity in order to maintain order and custody, (c) depersonalization arising from conformity, and (d) the need for the institutionalized youth to align themselves with the inmate
subculture which intensifies commitment to antisocial behavior.

Johnson (1980) held that an improved quality of life in the correctional setting would optimize opportunities for educational and behavioral control programming. In citing a 1979 Vinter and Saari national study, Johnson concurred with their identification of a series of organizational variables which influence the differential outcomes for incarcerated youth. Each variable is affected by those subsequent to it: "(A) the environment of the correctional program, (B) its executive leadership, (C) organizational goals, (D) program technologies, (E) organizational structure and staffing, (F) staff-youth interactions and relations, and (G) the youth's social system" (p. 87, citing Vinter and Saari, 1979, p. 5).

Institutional climate was suggested as the key factor in successful programming. Johnson presented three background considerations upon which his intervention model was predicated. First, the organizational development itself must be known, including "the basic nature of organization, its primary task, its management model, its values, and its authority system" (p. 88). If task, organization and a positive climate for group (staff and residents) relations are established, the group can work together more effectively toward established goals. Second, the issue of custody versus treatment must cease
to be an issue. The reality of custody and necessity of treatment must be acknowledged and accepted by the group to permit construction of an interdependent and integrated viewpoint. The third background consideration was that of the students themselves, specifically, "the psychological and organizational resources, and the liabilities they import into the institutions" (p. 88). Students' knowledges and experiences impact on their role in the inmate social system which in turn has a substantial impact on the climate of the institution. Johnson was particularly concerned with the negative self-concept resulting from loss of freedom, physical and emotional reactions to daily incarceration and the coping mechanisms developed reactionary to the above. Johnson concluded that improvement in the quality of life provided by juvenile correctional facilities can be achieved through addressing organizational and group relations concepts based on "increased awareness of covert factors which impede task performance" (p. 94). The covert factors to which Johnson referred are those contributing to his three background considerations.

Resident variables were discussed by Skok and Trukenmiller (1979) in their advocacy for an alternative intellectual assessment for delinquents. They identified characteristics which differentiate the delinquent population from the nondelinquent population. Characteristics included normlessness; powerlessness; societal estrangement;
negative labeling by teachers, parents, and peers; poor self-esteem; limited access to educational and occupational roles; parental rejection; and normative peer group pressure. They contended that an alternative system of assessment is necessary to facilitate the delivery of appropriate services to delinquents based on the specific characteristics of the population.

Staff characteristics and dynamics have been addressed as contributing to differential service provision in the institutional setting. Adequate and appropriate educational level and/or human service experience (Baroff, 1980) and commitment to and genuine interest in clients (Felsenthal and Scheerenberger, 1978) were cited as factors which strengthen services while stress (Johnson, 1980) and union involvement (Wagner, 1978) have been cited as factors which may impede the delivery of services within the institutional setting.

Short-term correctional settings were examined by Schneider (1979). Rapid turnover of the inmate population, wide variety of offense categories, acute emotional stress suffered by inmates, need for a rapid classification system and placement, and frequency of recidivism discouraging to staff are a few of the problems examined by Schneider which were felt to contribute to difficulties in providing adequate services.
Size of institution has been examined for its differential impact on residents. Baroff (1980) reviewed eight studies relating size of mental health/mental retardation institutions to resident-oriented versus institution-oriented care practices or actual resident adjustment. Seven of the eight studies showed an advantage to the smaller setting; the eighth showed no difference. Additional factors suggested by Baroff which may contribute to more resident-oriented care include small living unit size within the facility, the absolute number of residents to whom institutional aides are assigned as opposed to an overall staff-child ratio, the genuine commitment of caretakers to residents, the educational levels and experience of service providers, and the integration of institutional services with community services. Baroff concluded that more of the above-stated factors are inherent in the smaller institutional setting than in larger settings and that, therefore, size of facility in itself may not be an adequate sole indicator of institution potential.

Factors indicated by literature to affect the institutional milieu are many and varied. When education is a service to be provided within the institutional milieu, it has been suggested to be particularly sensitive to such influences. Correctional education is a profession and
field of study that has evolved to meet the educational needs of individuals within the institutional setting.

**Correctional Education**

Correctional programs and institutions have their unique social ecology and organizational dynamics, both of which play important roles in the quality of life on inmates, residents, or students. (Johnson, 1980, p. 86)

Juvenile correctional facilities are generally closed and extremely complex social systems. The educational system within the correctional facility cannot be equated, however tangentially, with that of the public schools. There are two primary differences: the closed setting with its incumbent pressures and the students themselves (Kendall, 1973). The setting is 24 hours rather than the school day; bars instead of windows; uniformed guards rather than study hall monitors. The learning environment and experiences are provided within the larger complex and purposefully contrived milieu of the institution.

The needs of the inmates are vastly different from those of the student in the public school setting. The interaction of the inmates' needs and the setting are best described by Valletutti and Mopsik (1973):

That the educational needs of an inmate population consist of some very special, atypical ones is readily
apparent. Incarceration itself provides an environment which places unique demands on the inmate and his educator. The sequela of society's rejection are omni-present conditions which modify and shape the nature and scope of the teaching-learning situation. The needs of the inmates reflect not only the usual needs of those in the macrocosm, but those peculiarly different needs of this deviant population. These peculiar needs arise in part from the inmate's special history with its frequent deprivations, deviations, frustrations, and failures and, in part, from the peculiar problems which arise from life in an alien, impersonal and dehumanizing world. (p. 116)

Of primary importance to the issue at hand are the often conflicting values of custody versus treatment. The basic function of the correctional institution is custody attained through control and discipline. Treatment, in the form of education and rehabilitation, is secondary to the central purpose of custody. Working within this dichotomy, correctional educators have striven to develop education programs that serve the needs of their clients.

Traditionally, basic academic programs (e.g., GED, ABE) and vocational education have been the focus of correctional education. These types of programs have usefulness but are hindered by the short amount of time the juvenile is generally incarcerated in addition to the
lack of the very basic skills evidenced by most inmates. In addressing the ideal principles to be followed in the establishment of any correctional education program, Eckenrode (1973) suggested the following:

1. Educational activity must be meaningful to the learner.
2. Correctional education must be offered in short, attainable, and measurable segments.
3. There must be reinforcement of learning.
4. There must be balance in the total correctional program in which education is but a part - a meaningful part.
5. The institutional education program must be an accredited one, perhaps even provided by the state education agency.
6. Above all, there must be a substantial relationship established between the teacher and the student.

(pp. 78-82)

The preceding six principles should be common to any well-planned and implemented education program. The crux of the difference is in the implementation of the principles: application in a public school setting is vastly different than application within the correctional setting.

Public schools are becoming increasingly regulated by state and federal legislation: regulations which in many cases directly or tangentially affect the procedures
utilized to apply the aforementioned six principles by restricting or mandating specific actions. One area in which legislation has had a profound impact is education of the handicapped.

Regulations Governing the Education of Handicapped Children

The federal government has assumed increasing authority over education through the passage of laws regulating certain aspects of education and educational services. Authority for such legislation is found under the "general welfare" clause of the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution. The power of federal laws relating to education is generally based in either acceptance of federal funding or civil rights issues. Public Law 94-142 finds authority in the former issue: If states accept funding under this law, they must comply with its regulations. Related civil rights legislation, i.e., the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and, specifically, Section 504 of the Act, require that there be no discrimination against the handicapped in the provision of services available to nonhandicapped persons. Section 504 applies to all agencies or programs which receive federal assistance. Noncompliance may result in removal of all federal funds accruing to the offending state. Therefore, the education of handicapped children is mandated to the states by strong federal legislation.
The regulations of Public Law 94-142 delineate very specifically those procedures to which programs must adhere in order to be eligible for federal funding. Turnbull and Turnbull (1978) identified six principles addressing the procedures required by Public Law 94-142 and supported by related legislation and case law:

1. Zero reject, or the right to be included in an free appropriate publicly supported educational system;
2. Nondiscriminatory classification, or the right to be fairly evaluated so that correct educational programs and placement can be achieved;
3. Individualized and appropriate education, so that an education can be meaningful;
4. "Least restrictive" educational placement, or the right to normalization;
5. Procedural due process, or the right to protest;
6. Participatory democracy, or the right to participate in the educational process. (p. 4)

In mandating the education for all handicapped children, Public Law 94-142 regulations specify a single line of authority to ensure compliance by all agencies within the state. This responsibility must be assumed by the State Education Agency (SEA). The single line of authority mandate was maintained by the Education Division General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) §100b.101
Public Law 94-142 and EDGAR provisions require that the SEA provide technical assistance; assist in project evaluation; develop and use procedures to monitor each project; and develop procedures, issue rules and take necessary action to administer programs. "Programs" refer to all such programs and projects that are involved in the education of handicapped children.

The annual program plan is submitted by the State educational agency on behalf of the State as a whole. Therefore, the provisions of this part apply to all political subdivisions of the State that are involved in the education of handicapped children. These would include . . . (4) State correctional facilities. (Federal Register, Tuesday, August 23, 1977 §121a.2 (b).

Upon approval of the required Annual Program Plan (covering a three-year period) submitted by each state to the Office of Special Education, the state's regulations and policies, which subsequently delineate procedures, have been found to be in compliance with federal regulations. State education agencies in some cases have added further requirements to the federal minimally required regulations. The Virginia State Department of Education is one SEA that has done so. State promulgated regulations serve as the minimum requirements for agencies within states.
As indicated, regulations governing the education of handicapped children specify the provision of mandated services to all handicapped children. Handicapped youth as a subpopulation of delinquent and incarcerated youth have come under the scrutiny of various professional fields of study in an attempt to define the population.

**Incarcerated Handicapped Youth**

The etiology of juvenile delinquency has been studied for decades in an attempt to address the needs of potentially delinquent youth and in serving the needs of adjudicated youth. Studies have shown that adjudicated youth have generally experienced school-related problems, e.g., truancy, failure, and low academic achievement (Clarizio and McCoy, 1970; Glueck and Glueck, 1950; Virginia State Crime Commission, 1979). More recently, researchers began to identify specific learning problems with greater incidence among adjudicated youth than in the nonadjudicated population. Mental retardation and learning disabilities were two primary problems investigated.

Mental retardation among offenders (juveniles and adults) has been a concern of justice, corrections and education personnel (Forget, 1980; Plamondon and Soskin, 1979; Rockoff, 1979; Santamour and West, 1977, 1979a, 1979b). It has been found that mentally retarded offenders are more likely to plead guilty to charges, confess or
make incriminating statements and serve longer sentences than nonmentally retarded offenders (New England Seminar on Retarded Youth and the Law Enforcement Process, 1971; Reichard, Spencer and Spooner, 1980; Santamour and West, 1977; Santamour and West, 1979b).

The incidence of mentally retarded offenders has been estimated to be between 9 percent and 27 percent by various studies (Atlanta Association for Retarded Citizens, 1975; Brown and Courtless, 1971; Haskins and Friel, 1973; Santamour and West, 1979a). Incidence rates may vary due to the criteria used in determination of mental retardation (IQ cutoff), sampling procedures, and the method of data collection (i.e., test used, record review versus actual test administration, self-report versus test administration). There is general consensus that the incidence of mental retardation among juvenile and adult offenders is much higher than the estimated incidence in the general population. Haskins and Friel (1973) concluded that the disproportionate number of retarded offenders was more likely a result of legal and administrative artifact than of a direct casual relationship between mental retardation and criminal behavior.

The most comprehensive work to date on a possible link between learning disabilities and juvenile delinquency was that of Murray (1976) for the National Institute for Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Law
Enforcement Assistance Administration. A number of studies had purported to establish a link between learning disabilities and juvenile delinquency. Murray critically examined studies in three categories suggested by a "school failure" model: (a) Do delinquents and nondelinquents show significant differences on tests for learning disabilities? (b) How great is the difference in incidence of learning disabilities, comparing delinquents with nondelinquents? (c) How commonly do delinquents suffer from learning disabilities? Murray found insufficient evidence to support category one because no standardized test for specific learning disabilities was used in any study. No research in category two was found. Despite the large number of published research studies using "learning disabled" in the title and relating such learning disabilities to juvenile delinquency, Murray found that the term "learning disability" was generally used to reference any learning problem, not specific learning disabilities as later defined by Public Law 94-142 and the subsequent learning disability regulations. He concluded that quantitative research had been poorly designed and presented; that the evidence of a causal link was feeble; and that, in fact, the purported link had scarcely been studied at all.

A General Accounting Office study (1977) of Connecticut and Virginia institutionalized juvenile delinquents
reported that 57 percent of youths referred by the juvenile court to the Norfolk Youth and Family Clinic were found to have general learning disabilities. This figure may suffer from the definitional problem Murray spoke to in his earlier meta-analysis.

The National Center for State Courts, funded through the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, found in a preliminary study that 32 percent of juvenile delinquents in selected sites were learning disabled. Their results also indicated that although learning disabled youth do not engage in more delinquent behavior than non-learning disabled youth, those with learning disabilities are more likely to be found delinquent than nonlearning disabled youth (ACLD, 1979).

Although mental retardation and learning disabilities have been emphasized through research as particular handicaps which occur in the juvenile delinquent population with a higher incidence than in the general population, lesser numbers of studies have identified handicapping conditions present in the population of adjudicated and incarcerated youth.

Two nationwide studies of juvenile incarcerated handicapped youth have been reported. Karcz and Eggertson (Education Unlimited, 1976; NASDSE report, September 1979) surveyed 572 adult and juvenile correctional institutions in 55 state, federal, territorial and metropolitan
jurisdictions. They found over 25 percent of incarcerated youth handicapped and in need of special education as defined by Public Law 94-142.

Morgan's 1979 national survey revealed a higher overall incidence of 42.4 percent of incarcerated youth displaying some handicapping condition under the Public Law 94-142 definitions. With 42 of 50 states reporting, Morgan found 7.69 percent educable mentally retarded, 1.84 percent trainable mentally retarded, 1.36 percent hearing impaired, .03 percent deaf, 1.59 percent visually impaired, 1.66 percent speech impaired, 16.23 percent emotionally disturbed, 10.59 percent severely learning disabled, .27 percent orthopedically handicapped, and .78 percent other health impaired. Suggesting that 42.4 percent total handicapped may be inflated, Morgan proposed the following reasons:

(a) The broad interpretations given some definitions by the respondents, especially the seriously emotionally disturbed and learning disabled categories;

(b) The qualifications and resources of those conducting the evaluations;

(c) The methods and types of tests employed in screening and diagnosis;

(d) The internal or external administrative policies;
(e) The several instances of educated guesses, instead of individual evaluations;

(f) Hasty evaluations in order to comply with Public Law 94-142 deadlines;

(g) The possibility of 'overlabeling' in order to secure extra subsidies or funding . . . ;

(h) Attempt to conceal raw data in order to support conclusions favoring the researcher's biases and predilections. (p. 292)

Smith (1978) investigated the incidence of handicapping conditions displayed by a modified random sample of thirty children ages 10 to 17 committed to the North Carolina Division of Youth Services' institutions through examination of subjects' cumulative files. Ten data categories were developed. If a cumulative file failed to contain any one category of information, it was rejected and replaced by the next random number assigned. Eleven percent of the sample showed IQs from 55 to 70. The IQs of 4 percent were below 55. In lieu of identifying those children with specific learning disabilities, Smith analyzed data categories to determine potential learning disabilities. Achievement scores of those children with IQs of 90 and above were analyzed in terms of grade equivalents from standardized tests. Children 10 to 12 years of age with two or more years lag in achievement and children 13 to 16 years old with three or more years
lag in achievement were classified as "potential learning disabled." Additionally, Smith found 5 percent of the sample to display communication disorders and 15 percent to display "other" exceptionalities (medical problems, abuse, neglect, hyperactivity, perceptual/motor or vision problems).

As early as 1976, a group of incarcerated handicapped children was identified in Virginia (Mesinger, 1976). Utilizing data provided to the State Computer System by the Commonwealth's Reception and Diagnostic Center for 1974 through 1975, Mesinger reported 14.1 percent of the ages 12 to 17 population qualifiable as educable or trainable mentally retarded on the basis of IQ tests using the Otis Beta 1. One child had a hearing handicap, and 1.5 percent had moderate speech disorders. Mesinger did not address severe learning disabilities per se but reported that over 15 percent of the population showed moderate to severe distortions of perceptual motor performance on the Bender Gestalt assessment. It was not reported if all students passing through the Reception and Diagnostic Center received the same test battery.

The most specific and recent information relative to handicapping conditions within the Virginia Department of Corrections was found in the Department of Corrections' document Characteristics of Children Committed to the Virginia Department of Corrections which is published for
each fiscal year. These data were collected by personnel at the Commonwealth's Reception and Diagnostic Center through which all committed youth must pass prior to assignment to an institutional facility. A standard battery of educational, psychological and medical tests are administered to each youth. In addition, available data concerning past education, psychological and medical treatments are entered. Noted characteristics of those children ages 11 through 18 committed in 1979, 1980 and 1981 are found in Table 1. Data were not available relative to incidence of specific handicapping conditions as defined by Public Law 94-142 or Virginia state regulations.

All studies addressing the incidence of incarcerated handicapped youth suffer from those factors suggested by Morgan (1979). Self-report national studies are hindered by unclear or inconsistent definitions of exceptionalities; variability in tests, testing procedures, and reporting of scores; and records that are unclear or incomplete. Single state studies such as those of Smith (1978) and Mesinger (1976) are affected primarily by quality and type of data recorded by correctional or other agencies and variability in types of tests administered to children prior to or during commitment. Source of information is apparently a primary problem as exhibited by a comparison of the data obtained by Morgan (1979) for Virginia with the data reported by the Virginia Department of Corrections
Table 1


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>1979&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>1980&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>1981&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence quotient of 79 or below</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vision disorders</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing disorders</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous psychiatric hospitalization</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous neurological evaluation</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous placement for behavior problem</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other medical disorders</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Corrections, 1979

<sup>b</sup>Department of Corrections, 1980

<sup>c</sup>Department of Corrections, 1981
for the same year. Morgan's data indicated no EMR or TMR students, whereas the DOC reported 12.7 percent of the incarcerated juvenile population to have an IQ of 79 or below. Similar inconsistencies are noted in data for the visually handicapped (Morgan reported 84, DOC data reported 162) and the hearing impaired (Morgan reported 4, DOC data reported 72).

Regardless of these specific problems, the data reporting incidence of handicapping conditions among the population of incarcerated children supports the premise that there are large numbers of handicapped children within this population equal to or higher in prevalence than in the nonincarcerated population. By virtue of their handicaps, the above-described population qualifies for services mandated by regulations governing the education of handicapped children. Provision of such services to this population within the confines of the correctional institution has been questioned on compliance and efficacy issues.

Problems Related to the Mandated Delivery of Services

Although a population of incarcerated handicapped youth has been identified and regulations state that this population is eligible to receive mandated services, concern has been expressed that incarcerated handicapped youth are
not being served as mandated. Further, it has been suggested that factors heretofore unencountered in the implementation of such services may be affecting the compliance of correctional institutions with federal and state regulations.

Discussing the responsibilities that SEAs must assume under Public Law 94-142 in monitoring the programs of other state agencies, Jones (1979) suggested that state correctional facilities were the most deficient of all state-operated agencies in the provision of special education and related services to their handicapped clients. Johnson (1979) also indicated that the compliance of correctional institutions with special education regulations was "... one of the most serious problems of the future" (p. 566). The provision of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth involves the serious problem of attempting "... to bring new groups of unserved youngsters into the present educational, fiscal and social system" (Johnson, 1979, p. 566).

Attempts thus far have apparently not been particularly successful. During the Public Law 94-142 Oversight Hearings, the Council for Exceptional Children (Public Law 94-142 Oversight Hearings, 1979) expressed its concern regarding the lack of service delivery to incarcerated handicapped youth. One year later in Congressional testimony
on the amendment of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, CEC reiterated the presence of handicapped youth in correctional institutions and the paucity of adequate special education programs for these youth. CEC identified the following inadequacies in special education programming for incarcerated handicapped youth:

A serious lack of trained special education and related services personnel.

Inappropriate or insufficient educational evaluation and identification procedures of determining special education needs.

Failure to meet even the minimum federally mandated special education requirements.

Failure to plan cooperatively with education agencies for the transmission of relevant educational information both when the student leaves the public school arena and upon return. (CEC Testifies on Behalf of Exceptional Delinquent Youth, 1980, p. 1)

Similar inadequacies were noted by Hagerty and Israeliski (1980) in an attempt to identify causes for noncompliance and in suggesting potential responses which would alleviate some of the glaring deficiencies present in the delivery of services to incarcerated handicapped youth.
Assuming that handicapped persons are sequestered within correctional facilities, Brown and Robbins (1979) examined correctional programs to identify interfaces between corrections and the delivery of special programs, constraints on program implementation, and suggested courses of action to facilitate appropriate delivery of services within federal mandates. Among the constraints identified, the authors include: the role of the natural parent and/or guardian, the identification of the handicapped population within the correctional system, the relationship of the institution to the special education agency on reentry of the student, and the interrelationship of two or more state agencies.

A common factor in all literature related to non-compliance of juvenile correctional facilities is that of inadequate interagency cooperation. Jones (1979) implied that this lack of cooperation, or conflict, may be a "turf" issue in many state programs. The Council for Exceptional Children cited "... failure to plan cooperatively with education agencies ..." (CEC Testifies on Behalf of Exceptional Delinquent Youth, 1980, p. 1) as a source of inadequacies. Hagerty and Israelski (1981) listed "... an historic inability at the state and local levels for judicial, correctional and education agencies to establish cooperative agreements ..." (p. 18). "The interrelationship of two or more state
agencies . . . " (p. 578) was foreseen as a constraint to delivery of services by Brown and Robbins (1979).

Johnson (1979) indicated that the first issue to be resolved in achieving mandated delivery of services to the incarcerated handicapped population was " . . . the confused and overlapping authority for the education of the incarcerated" (p. 568).

Different state agencies are charged legislatively with the provision of differing services to their respective clients. Therefore, they each have policies and procedures in accordance with their mandated responsibilities. When clients are shared in the absence of cooperative agreements clearly delineating responsibilities and lines of authority of each agency, jurisdictional problems emerge, increasing the probability that eligible handicapped youth will not be served appropriately. Hockenberry (1980) identified specific points of convergence between state education and state correctional agencies that may produce conflict as a direct or indirect result of the specific legislative mandate. State education agencies and correctional agencies have a differing policy focus, the SEA ensuring that educational services are provided in accordance with state regulations and the correctional agency fulfilling rehabilitative and custodial functions. The transitional process from the local education agency (LEA) to the correctional facility may be constrained:
LEA-developed IEPs may not be applicable or feasibly transferrable to the correctional setting, and thus decrease in value, unless it is used cooperatively by LEAs, correctional agencies, and the courts as a communication mechanism. Ensuring the residual rights of parents or guardians may have been historically outside of the correctional agency's experience. This responsibility is ultimately that of the SEA; or if parents are unavailable, the SEA must ensure that surrogate parents are appointed in accordance with state regulations. Placement options to fulfill the least restrictive environment charge are limited within the correctional setting: There are few program options outside of the correctional facility, and generally placement options within the facility may be limited.

The Office of Special Education (OSE) is not unaware of the problems which have arisen relative to this issue. In response to jurisdictional confusion, OSE issued the following statement which exemplifies the complexity of interagency involvement in serving incarcerated handicapped youth.

The SEA, through its written policies or agreements, must pinpoint who is responsible for writing and implementing IEPs under each interagency situation that is applicable in the State, including any of the following: ... (4) placements by the courts in corrections facilities. (NOTE: Each of the above
interagency situations applies to placements that are made for both educational and noneducational purposes.)

There is often more than one agency involved in writing or implementing a handicapped child's IEP (e.g., when the LEA remains responsible for the child, even though another public agency provides the special education and related services; or when there are shared cost arrangements). It is important that SEA policies or agreements define the role of each agency that is involved in the above situations, in order to offset any jurisdictional problems which might occur that could result in delaying the provision of a free appropriate public education to a handicapped child.

Therefore, for each of the above interagency situations, the SEA must insure (1) that its policies or agreements define the role of any agency that is involved in writing or implementing a handicapped child's IEP (e.g., the child's LEA, the SEA, another State agency, an institution or school under that agency, and the LEA where the institution is located), and (2) that it is clear which agency is responsible for the child's education and for providing (or paying for) the special education and related services to the child. (Office of Special Education, April 30, 1980, p. 5)
The Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Education Policy
Regarding Handicapped Children before Juvenile Court or
Court of Competent Jurisdiction or Committed to the State
Board of Corrections (September 28, 1980) addressed some
of the issues emerging in the appropriate delivery of
services to adjudicated and incarcerated handicapped
juveniles. When a juvenile is suspected of being handi-
capped, the compiling of information is required to be a
cooperative effort between the LEA having legal responsi-
bility for the person's education and probation unit which
provides services to the court. If a juvenile has been
found to be handicapped and the court orders a residential
placement, the LEA has legal responsibility for the
educational cost of the placement. If a juvenile has been
found to be handicapped and the Department of Corrections
certifies that appropriate programs are not available in a
state facility, the LEA has legal responsibility for the
educational cost of the placement. These summarized board
policies clarify certain placement and assumption of cost
issues but do not address, specifically, the issue of
delivery of services within the correctional setting.
This should not be outside the purview of the Board of
Education as the SEA has ultimate responsibility for
compliance with Public Law 94-142 mandates.

Several factors perceived to affect or potentially
affect the appropriate delivery of special education and
related services to incarcerated handicapped youth have been presented: paucity of adequately trained, endorsed service providers; evaluation and identification of the population of incarcerated handicapped youth; the role of parents and guardians and, in their absence, appointment of surrogate parents; relationships of LEAs, correctional institutions and the courts in the transfer of students and their records (e.g., IEPs); financial responsibility for education programs of incarcerated handicapped children; limited placement and program options within correctional institutions; differing policy focus of SEAs and correctional agencies and the interrelationship influenced by policy which may facilitate or impede satisfactory implementation of special education regulations within the correctional institution.

A number of the aforementioned factors may be described as agency conflicts which support the need for the structured interagency agreements which have been reported to be restrained by state governance structures and federal regulations. However, the problem does not appear to stop at the state level. Basic philosophies of diverse groups within the correctional institution, correctional administrators and correctional educators are in conflict. Johnson (1979) best addressed this dichotomy:
Quite often the host profession for "education and treatment" is one where corrections or training are primary thrusts and other professional groups are required to work under policies and philosophies that are competitive rather than collaborative . . . schooling is often a secondary aspect. (p. 568)

Summary

Literature has indicated that there are handicapped youth within the population of incarcerated juveniles equal to or greater than the incidence in the nonincarcerated population. Further, federal and state regulations require that incarcerated handicapped youth be afforded an education as mandated. It has been suggested that the delivery of educational and rehabilitative services to the incarcerated population is unique due to factors inherent in the environment of the correctional institution and that the implementation of special education as mandated to incarcerated handicapped youth is a compound problem.
Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of the study was to describe the processes used by the Virginia Rehabilitative School Authority youth schools to implement state regulations governing the education of handicapped children and the specific factors affecting the implementation of described processes. An examination of relevant policies of the Department of Corrections Rehabilitative School Authority and State Education Agency permitted delineation of relationships between existing policies and subsequent procedures that impact on the delivery of mandated services to incarcerated handicapped youth.

Through consultation with the researcher's dissertation committee and Rehabilitative School Authority administrators, it was determined that the use of a formally structured method of data collection would prove counterproductive in that it might limit responses to such a degree that accurate descriptions of facility-specific procedures would be unattainable and that it might intimidate personnel if questions were interpreted as requiring a "correct" response. Therefore, an open-ended format was determined to be the best method of eliciting descriptions of procedures and perceptions of factors affecting the implementation of procedures.
Personal interviews were conducted with RSA personnel. The interview format and use of the open-ended instrument permitted recovery of respondents' perspectives, thoughts, experiences and personalized descriptions of processes within the focused direction of key topics. Several steps were taken to ensure the quality of the selected method of data collection. Questions were designed using familiar vocabulary rather than professional special education jargon to increase clarity of questions and to avoid potential misunderstandings or intimidation of interviewees. A list of potential topics accompanied each question to permit the researcher to discreetly monitor topics which had or had not been addressed by interviewees during the course of their responses to general questions. Interviews were planned to commence with a brief explanation of the purpose of interviews and with noncontroversial questions designed to create a comfortable, nontthreatening atmosphere conducive to honest and accurate responses. The researcher took care to develop rapport with interviewees and, during the course of the interview, to maintain an inquiring, nonjudgmental attitude. Interviews were designed to be conversational in nature: presupposing interviewees' knowledge of subject matter and utilizing probes of a general how, why and who nature to encourage expansion of responses.
Setting and Population

The Rehabilitative School Authority (RSA) operates youth school programs within each of the six Department of Corrections' (DOC) learning centers housing committed youth. The principal of each learning center youth school serves in a capacity similar to that of public school principals but with additional flexibility: "Matters such as the extent of individualization, other methodological and classroom management strategies, scheduling patterns, curriculum materials and organization arise from the principal's decisions" (Rehabilitative School Authority, 1979, p. 51). The principals have been given the responsibility by RSA central for the implementation of specified special education procedures within their schools.

Principals were designated as one group to be interviewed to obtain descriptions of the implementation of procedures within their schools. Being responsible for the implementation of all educational policy within the school, the principals also had knowledge of what factors drive or restrain the full implementation of special education procedures.

Teachers within the youth schools are responsible to a large degree for the implementation of special education procedures as well as instruction of special education eligible youth. Teachers' awareness of implementation
procedures and knowledge of factors facilitating or inhibiting actions in the attainment of such procedures made them a second group designated to be interviewed.

All adjudicated youth committed to the Department of Corrections must pass through the Reception and Diagnostic Center (R&DC) for evaluation and determination of placement. RSA personnel assigned to the R&DC include a principal, special education coordinator, and seven educational evaluators. The principal is responsible for the supervision of RSA personnel in their conduct of the educational component of the R&DC evaluation process and is integral in the supervision of special education procedures. The special education coordinator, temporarily assigned to the R&DC from RSA central, is responsible for coordinating referral and individual evaluation processes for all students suspected of being handicapped at the R&DC and in all youth schools. She also has conducted on-site technical assistance and individual educational evaluations of students in the youth schools. The educational evaluators of the R&DC are instrumental in the evaluation process and make recommendations for placement and programming.

All seven RSA principals were interviewed. A purposive sample of regular academic, vocational education, health and physical education teachers and educational evaluators was selected by principals and the researcher on the basis of length of service within the facility,
participation in the special education process, and potential openness and honesty displayed by personnel in past similar endeavors. All but one of the youth school special education teachers were interviewed. Two assistant principals were interviewed on the suggestion of their principals. The special education coordinator and two RSA central staff, the superintendent and the director of academic programs and special education completed the interviewed personnel. Positions and numbers of personnel interviewed are displayed in Table 2.

**Instrumentation**

The interview schedule set forth in Appendix A was designed to maximize interviewee response. It consisted of five general content areas: interviewee background data, the referral process, the individual evaluation or identification process, the IEP or planning process, and processes utilized in determination of placement.

Background data requested included professional experience, special education training and experience, and length of employment by the RSA. Each of the four remaining areas were characterized by two questions: the first, a general question concerning the functions entailed in each process (referral, identification, IEP/planning, and placement). The question was designed to elicit a narrative response from interviewees describing
Table 2
Rehabilitative School Authority Personnel Interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Educational Evaluators</th>
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<td>Reception and Diagnostic Center</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> Superintendent and Director of Academic Programs and Special Education  
<sup>b</sup> Principal and Special Education Coordinator  
<sup>c</sup> Principal and Assistant Principal
the procedures utilized, their particular role and function in procedures described, the role and function of significant other personnel and interactions of personnel, time requirements and format. The second question of each process area requested interviewees' perceptions of factors which had affected the previously described process, positively or negatively. Each question was accompanied by a set of probes which could be used by the interviewer to elicit a more fully descriptive response.

The interview schedule was developed in conjunction with and approved by the superintendent of the Rehabilitative School Authority. It was the consensus of the superintendent and the researcher that the flexibility of the interview format would lend itself to the developmental stage at which the RSA found itself in the implementation of special education procedures.

Data Collection

Following the approval of the instrumentation and proposed data collection methodology, the RSA superintendent notified the seven RSA principals of the study. Telephone contact was made with each principal by the researcher to schedule the on-site visit and to arrange for the selection of teachers to be interviewed. The on-site visits were conducted from February through April 1982. Interviews were conducted in a variety of settings: principals'
offices, teachers' lounge, classrooms, dining halls, teachers' offices and gymnasiums. In addition to coded learning center names, interviewees were assured that their individual responses would be confidential. Length of interviews ranged from approximately 20 to 45 minutes with teachers and educational evaluators and from 45 minutes to three hours with administrators. Follow-up contact was made with interviewees by telephone and/or in person to clarify information when necessary.

Interviewees' responses were recorded by the researcher on individual interview schedules. Immediately following each on-site visit, interview responses were collated and analyzed.

When information was unclear or incomplete, follow-up telephone contact was made. Two principals and the special education coordinator were contacted for this purpose.

Documents relating to relevant Department of Corrections, Rehabilitative School Authority and State Education Agency policies and procedures were obtained in a variety of forms and from a number of sources. Documents obtained and sources of information are listed in Table 3.

Background information concerning the RSA was obtained through personal and telephone communication with the superintendent of the Rehabilitative School Authority. The final interview of the study was conducted with the director of academic programs who reviewed the collected
Table 3

Documents Reviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Topic of Document</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Identification and Screening Procedures Manual</td>
<td>RSA Central</td>
<td>Descriptions of procedures to be implemented July 1, 1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSA Superintendent's Memo No. 339, January 25, 1982</td>
<td>RSA Central</td>
<td>Revision of manual procedures to permit challenge of community identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Corrections Inter-Staff Memo, March 30, 1982. To all counselors, Pending Review and Special Placement Review Committee</td>
<td>RSA Central</td>
<td>Considerations and priority of needs concerning special placement recommendations due to decreased DOC appropriations for special placements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Corrections, Division of Youth Services, Face Sheet</td>
<td>Local Court Service Unit</td>
<td>Cover sheet listing data compiled by local court service units for youth committed to the DOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Corrections Memo, March 17, 1982, to Directors of Court Service Units</td>
<td>Local Court Service Unit</td>
<td>Request that all school records, specifically transcripts and Category II records, be promptly provided to R&amp;DC for all youth</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Topic of Document</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education Superintendent's Memo No. 49, March 24, 1982, to all division superintendents</td>
<td>Local School Division</td>
<td>Notice that RSA should be considered as any other Virginia school division regarding record transfers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulations and Administrative Requirements for the Operation of Special Education Programs in Virginia, effective September 1, 1978</td>
<td>State Department of Education</td>
<td>State special education regulations and requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interagency Cooperative Services Agreement between Department of Corrections - Rehabilitative School Authority and Department of Education</td>
<td>State Department of Education</td>
<td>Services to be provided by each agency relative to compliance with Revised Identification of Handicapped Children, December, 1977</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
data with the researcher for the purpose of substantiating information, clarifying historical issues and verifying the researcher's perceptions.

**Analysis of Data**

The Reception and Diagnostic Center and each of the RSA youth schools were examined as individual case studies. The case study method was used to collect, organize and analyze data. Interview data and documents (raw case data) collected at each facility were reviewed following each on-site visit. Data were compiled to develop individual facility case records. Each case record contained all major information edited to cross-validate information from each source, eliminate redundancies and topically organize data. Case study narratives developed from each case record provided a descriptive holistic portrayal of individual facilities.

Individual facility narratives provided a description of process models used to implement special education procedures in each facility and served as the basis for comparison with the processes required by state special education regulations. Individual facility factors affecting the described processes as perceived by interviewees were examined by their impact on each facility's processes and how they contributed to a convergence or divergence with state regulations. An examination of
narratives across facilities considered similarities and dissimilarities of processes and factors affecting described processes. The case study narratives and comparison of case studies provided the basis for examination of typical cases and varied cases across facilities.

Differing policies of agencies serving incarcerated youth were suggested by literature to be one factor affecting the provision of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth. Policies and procedures as represented by the content of interviews, and RSA, DOC and SEA documents provided data for an analysis of convergent or divergent directives to agencies concerned with incarcerated handicapped youth.
Chapter 4

Results

Interviews conducted with Rehabilitative School Authority personnel assigned to the central administrative office, the Reception and Diagnostic Center, and each of the six learning center youth schools yielded great depth and breadth of information. Case study narratives of the Rehabilitative School Authority, the Reception and Diagnostic Center and the Calhoun, Davis, Bates, Harmon, Garden and Adams learning center youth schools were compiled using interview data and documents. At the request of the superintendent of the RSA, the names of the learning center youth schools are fictional.

The case study narratives describing the RSA and each of the seven sites are set forth in Appendixes B through I. The case study narrative of the RSA (Appendix B) provides an historical overview of the RSA and the development of special education within the RSA and describes the special education procedures designed for RSA-wide implementation. The case study narratives of the R&DC and the six youth schools (Appendixes C, D, E, F, G, H, and I) are presented in the order in which the sites were visited. Each narrative first describes the center; second, describes the processes in procedural order; and third, provides a compilation of
staff perceptions. Each youth school case study narrative is presented using a common format to facilitate comparison: (a) the researcher's perceptions of the facility and interview conditions, (b) description of the facility and students, (c) description of the staff including professional preparation and experience, (d) description of the educational program of the youth school, (e) description of the referral and evaluation processes and their application in the youth school, (f) the IEP and placement processes utilized, and (g) staff perceptions of students, programs, processes and themselves in relation to special education processes and regulations. Summaries of the narratives were developed and are presented in this chapter. Following the summaries, each research question is addressed.

Rehabilitative School Authority

The procedures set forth by the Special Education Identification and Screening Procedures Manual and subsequent systemwide revisions serve as the model for all youth schools and as a point of reference for comparative purposes. These procedures indicate what direction youth schools were given to comply with special education regulations. Examination of procedures described reveals those areas which were not procedurally defined for the youth schools. Design of mechanisms and procedures not defined by the manual and formal systemwide revisions thus required discretionary
development by individual youth schools.

Screening of all students takes place at the Reception and Diagnostic Center. It consists of the regular intake evaluation conducted by the multidisciplinary Evaluation Services Plan (ESP) team and includes assessment in the areas of historical and present social, psychological, educational, medical and daily cottage living situation functioning.

Any student may be referred for special education evaluation by a member of the ESP team if previously unidentified but suspected of having an educationally handicapping condition or if there is a challenge of either the eligibility or category of exceptionality of a community identification. The referral form is submitted to the special education coordinator who informally confers with members of the ESP team to determine the legitimacy of the referral and to recommend any additional testing. If the referral is accepted as legitimate, surrogate parent permission is obtained by the special education coordinator from the DOC caseworker/counselor assigned to the youth.

The formal assessment phase, the RSA equivalent to individual evaluation, commences with the receipt of copies of the referral by the ESP team members with additional evaluation recommendations noted. All additional evaluation is targeted to be completed by the date of the staffing/eligibility meetings (three weeks after the student's arrival at the Reception and Diagnostic Center).
Staffing and eligibility are dual processes. Staffing is the decision-making process for placement of the youth which is followed by determination of special education eligibility. For a student referred for special education, the staffing and eligibility committees consist of the ESP team with the casework supervisor chairing the staffing portion and the special education coordinator or RSA principal chairing the eligibility portion. Evaluation results are presented by members of the ESP team from their written reports during the staffing meeting. The staffing committee then recommends placement based primarily on the age and appropriate security level of the student. The eligibility committee discusses categorical characteristics based on evaluation data and determines eligibility or ineligibility for special education and, if appropriate, category of exceptionality. Program recommendations may be made. The minutes of the eligibility meeting, summary of the minutes, evaluation reports, and permission forms are transmitted to the receiving youth school.

Responsibility for the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) is delegated to the youth school and is to be supervised by the youth school principal. The standing IEP committee, composed of the principal, a vocational education teacher, an academic teacher, the surrogate parent and the child, if appropriate, is charged with the completion of the standard IEP document. The IEP is to be
completed within 30 days of the eligibility committee's determination of the student's eligibility for special education services. A copy of the completed IEP is to be sent to RSA central.

Annual review of the IEP is to be conducted at the youth school for the purpose of deleting, adding, and/or modifying goals and objectives. The participants in the annual review are to be the standing IEP committee.

Provision is made for triennial review of special education eligibility when a student has been in a special education program continuously for three years. Representatives from casework, psychology, medical services, education, cottage and appropriate related services are to conduct the evaluations.

Perceptions

Interviews with RSA central administrators were related primarily to the development of procedures and administrative requirements. Most frequently reported by interviewees was the struggle experienced in first defining the responsibility of the RSA relative to special education regulations and then in developing procedures capable of being implemented within the correctional setting. Interviewees' perceptions of factors contributing to the problems encountered included little technical assistance from the State Education Agency, the lack of a single person within
the RSA central administration assigned total responsibility for the special education program, and paucity of funds for adequate instructional and related service personnel for youth school programs.

Regarding the youth school special education programs and implementation of procedures, interviewees were aware of differential levels of quality. They attributed this to personalities and relationships of RSA youth school and Department of Corrections personnel, staff professional preparation and experience, facilities and materials available, and the administrative style of principals. Youth schools in which principals had encouraged cooperative development and ongoing implementation of procedures with DOC personnel and innovative instruction and use of available resources (personnel and materials) were perceived to have instituted programs of a higher quality and more stability than youth schools which did not utilize such methods.

Special education procedures were perceived to have had a positive effect on youth schools by virtue of the necessity of more highly developed formal procedures which increased accountability. This was not perceived as necessarily providing a better program for students. Additionally, the role of caseworkers/counselors as surrogate parents was viewed as affecting the total school program positively as it encouraged DOC personnel involvement in the youth schools. Surrogate parents were believed to have gained
respect for the field of education and educational professionals through increased exposure to school programs and personnel.

Interviewees were critical of support offered by the SEA in defining responsibilities of the RSA, assisting in the development of procedures, and in ongoing advisement relative to reporting responsibilities and compliance issues. Two problems were frequently cited: timely responses to inquiries and conflicting responses to inquiries. Interviewees qualified their criticisms of SEA cooperation with the understanding that SEA personnel were as unfamiliar with the correctional setting and its constraints as RSA personnel were with special education regulations.

In summary, RSA central administrators believed that the formal procedures designed and implemented in concert with historical individualization of instruction approached compliance with state special education regulations. The absence of technical assistance from the SEA, limitations imposed by DOC policy and procedures, inadequate material and personnel resources, and lack of personnel experience in special education procedures hindered development and implementation of processes.

Reception and Diagnostic Center

Located on the fringe of a major metropolitan area, the Reception and Diagnostic Center staff receive, evaluate
and determine placement for over 1,200 youth committed to the Department of Corrections each year. There are generally 130 to 140 youth, ages 11 through 18 years, undergoing the intensive evaluation process of the R&DC at any one time. During their three-week residency, students are served by DOC personnel assigned to the R&DC (administrators, counselors/caseworkers and cottage personnel); the Behavioral Services Unit (psychologists, group test technicians, psychiatrists, occupational therapists and speech therapists); and the Davis Learning Center-Central Infirmary (physicians and nursing staff). Rehabilitative School Authority personnel include the principal, a special education coordinator temporarily assigned to the R&DC, and seven educational evaluators.

Each youth undergoes the regular intake evaluation, a fairly standard battery of sociocultural, psychological, educational and medical assessments, administered by assigned personnel (the Evaluation Services Planning or ESP team), prior to a staffing meeting during which the ESP team determines placement with the DOC learning centers based on evaluation data. There are two opportunities for deviation in the regular intake process: (a) potential special placement recommendation by the ESP team and (b) the referral of a student suspected of being educationally handicapped.
Special placements are made for treatment purposes and have included assignments to psychiatric hospitals, state mental health and mental retardation facilities, military and private schools. Special placements are made independently of special education eligibility.

The flow of R&DC procedures for screening, referral, evaluation and eligibility is depicted by Figure 1. A student enters the special education process for one of three reasons: (a) challenge of community-determined eligibility of a student, (b) challenge of the category of handicap as determined by a community identification, and (c) the referral of a previously unidentified student who may be educationally handicapped. A previously identified student whose eligibility or category of handicap is not challenged is "red-flagged" and no evaluation other than the regular intake is administered. In the case of the previously mentioned three situations, a member of the ESP team completes a referral form and submits it to the special education coordinator who, through informal discussion with members of the ESP team, determines the referral to be legitimate or not. In the latter case, the process ceases. In the former case, copies of the referral with noted additional evaluation requested by the ESP are distributed to ESP team members who administer testing prior to the date of the staffing meeting. The eligibility committee convenes immediately following the staffing meeting. The
Regular Intake Evaluation

community-identified students are "red-flagged"

not accepted

Staffing Meeting

Transfer to Receiving Placement

Special Education Screening

Referral (previously unidentified or challenge of community identification)

Informal Screening Committee

accepted

Surrogate Parent Permission

Additional Evaluation

Eligibility Meeting

Figure 1
Reception and Diagnostic Center Procedures for Screening, Referral, Evaluation, Eligibility
eligibility committee, composed of the same personnel as the staffing committee (the ESP team) plus the special education coordinator or RSA principal serving as chairperson, determines eligibility or ineligibility for special education and, if the decision has been one of eligibility, the category or categories of handicap. Eligible students' files are "red-flagged" and transferred to the learning center placement previously determined by the staffing committee.

Perceptions

R&DC staff reported that special education procedures interfaced well with regular intake procedures and that there was actually very little deviation from former practice other than increased paperwork and the eligibility meeting requirement.

Problems encountered by staff in fulfilling their responsibilities included the number of students making up their caseload compounded by the number of cases deferred eligibility pending additional evaluation components; unavailability of local school division Category II (confidential) records; the questionable quality of evaluation results due to the emotional condition of students; acquisition of individual intelligence, speech, and occupational therapy assessments; and differing interpretations of handicapping conditions. These problems were attributed to staff shortages, professional dogmatism, no single line of authority over all
evaluation personnel, and the constraints inherent in the correctional system (e.g., rapid classification system necessary, security considerations). It was felt that each of these factors contributed, singly or multiply, to the problems cited.

Regardless of limitations, staff reported that procedures provided mechanisms for an effective system of identifying educationally handicapped youth. The centralized location of the majority of services and personnel was cited as the primary influence on the success of procedures. Intact services and extensive informal staff consultation were felt to be the basis for the success of the special education identification process.

Calhoun Learning Center Youth School

Calhoun Learning Center is the largest of the Department of Corrections' learning centers serving male youth. It provides fairly high security and houses approximately 220 youth averaging 17 years of age. The average length of stay is four and one-half months ranging from two months to three years. Youth were described as verbally abusive, manipulative, street-wise and somewhat aggressive. Educational achievement was indicated to range from kindergarten through college level skills. The percentage of special education eligible students was reported to fluctuate greatly at various nonspecified times, ranging from 25 percent to
40 percent of the CLC population. The majority of identified handicapped students are emotionally disturbed with lower incidences of educable mentally retarded and learning disabled and few cases of trainable mentally retarded, visually impaired, speech impaired, hearing impaired, deaf and orthopedically impaired.

The large youth school staff includes three special education teachers (resource math, resource language arts, and self-contained special education) and one assistant principal to whom responsibility for the special education program has been assigned. These staff are remarkably well-prepared in the area of special education.

No formal referrals requesting additional evaluation for potential special education eligibility have been made by CLC staff, and there was some confusion as to the availability of such a mechanism. There have been requests for evaluation to dismiss students from special education eligibility. Inquiries to R&DC staff have been made by CLC personnel regarding findings of ineligibility, but staff have not initiated referrals for these students.

The IEP and placement processes of the CLC Youth School are displayed in Figure 2. Students are initially placed in classes by a staffing committee on the basis of cottage assignment and R&DC evaluation data. Red-flagged students are generally scheduled for resource math and resource language arts along with regular social skills, health/
Staffing Committee

Placement

Formulation of goals and objectives by teachers serving student

IEP Meeting (teachers serving student, assistant principal, surrogate parent)

Placement

Request for Placement Modification

Figure 2

Calhoun Learning Center Youth School IEP and Placement Processes
physical education, and vocational classes. Within one week of staffing placement, the IEP committee convenes. The IEP committee is composed of those teachers to whom red-flagged students have been assigned by the staffing committee, the surrogate parent and the assistant principal. The committee reviews the goals and objectives which have been submitted to the assistant principal the day prior to the meeting. Modifications in goals, objectives and placement may be made by the committee. If there is a potentiality that a student may be recommended for the self-contained class which serves only handicapped students, the self-contained class teacher may be asked to attend the meeting for her instructional recommendations. Handicapped students have been placed in regular, remedial, resource and self-contained academic programs. Teacher-requested reviews of IEPs and placement have been conducted utilizing the IEP committee and a revision of the document when necessary.

Perceptions

The extensive and formal system of provision of special education services, the qualified staff and administrative support were cited as factors instrumental in the successes of the special education program. Several factors were indicated by interviewees to have inhibiting effects on the program.
Concerns relating to students' receipt of appropriate services included perceived misidentification of category of handicap, discrepancies between R&DC evaluation results and student performance in the youth school setting, negative effects of medication on classroom functioning, and inability to address students' social immaturity due to constraints of the correctional setting.

Experience of special education staff in a variety of education and treatment settings was perceived as a contributing factor to the quality of the program. Teachers reported that increased quality of instruction would result if a wider variety of materials were available, more flexibility in scheduling were possible, and categorical self-contained special education classes were added to program options. The assignment of the assistant principal to the special education program was viewed as a very positive factor contributing to the successful operation of the program. Some discomfort was indicated by staff relative to the "teaching versus accountability" dilemma due to security responsibilities teachers must assume and the levels of bureaucracy with they must deal in securing permission for educational activities. The required accountability, high pressure daily routine and twelve-month school year were cited as primary factors contributing to teacher stress and potential burn-out.
Staff had not pursued the development of a referral system for youth suspected of having educationally handicapping conditions. They attributed this to time and special education program limitations. In the former case, it was believed that the student in question would be released prior to the completion of the referral, evaluation, eligibility and programming procedures. In the latter case, staff could perceive no instructional differences between special education and non-special education classes due to the high degree of individualization in both. In the opinion of interviewees, there was little, therefore, to be gained programmatically by a special education identification. It was indicated that if a student were perceived to require instruction in the self-contained class, a referral mechanism would be sought.

Having experienced the processes and results of both the standing IEP committee and an IEP committee consisting of those teachers serving the student, staff unanimously agreed that the latter was the most effective in developing an accurate and useful IEP. The assistant principal was concerned that a member of the evaluation team did not participate in the development of students' initial IEPs. Students do not attend the IEP meeting although teachers believed that students would be more committed to educational programs if their participation were solicited. Caseworkers serving as surrogate parents were described as
cooperative, some having made attempts to become more knowledgeable in the area of special education. One teacher preferred the use of caseworkers over natural parents or guardians in that surrogate parents/caseworkers were generally more knowledgeable, interested and committed to the development of educational programs that would meet students' needs.

The proximity of the CLC to the R&DC and Davis Learning Center-Central Infirmary facilitates compliance with the 30-day limit between eligibility determination and IEP development as students are not delayed at the R&DC pending medical or dental treatment. The IEP meeting is held within one week of staffing; therefore, there is little lapse in time between transfer, staffing-determined placement, IEP and IEP-determined placement. Although the sequence facilitates compliance with time lines, teachers reported insufficient time to adequately assess students' abilities and needs prior to submission of goals and objectives. Also due to this condensed time period, local school division IEPs have not been received until after RSA staff have completed the youth school IEP. This has made the community-developed IEP after-the-fact data.

Teachers reported that students are frequently recommended to be removed from resource classes to regular classes shortly after placement. This was attributed to the use of R&DC evaluation data, perceived by staff to be
deflated, for students' initial placement. Some reluctance on the part of administrative and regular academic staff had been perceived by special education teachers in moving students from special education classes to less restrictive classes.

The interpretation and enactment of least restrictive environment regulations was the source of some consternation among interviewed staff. The inappropriate placement of handicapped students in regular classes and the absence of a vocational class serving only low-functioning handicapped students were attributed to an extremely strict interpretation of LRE requirements. Conversely, it was reported that many handicapped students were assigned to special classes solely on the basis of their eligibility rather than on their level of functioning or ability to achieve in a regular class, particularly if the teacher of a potential regular class placement has had limited or no special education experience. Teachers' perceptions of administrators' preoccupation with LRE regulations were reflected by teachers' overwhelming concern of the same.

Specific program concerns related by interviewees included the lack of consistent special education instruction for students confined to the personal control cottage; inappropriate and/or delayed services for visually impaired, orthopedically impaired, hearing impaired, deaf and speech impaired students; and lack of a vocational program
specifically designed to meet the needs of low-functioning handicapped students. The primary reason for program limitations was reported to be limited personnel.

Davis Learning Center Youth School

Davis Learning Center (DLC) is the sole state correctional institution serving juvenile females. There are generally 135 to 150 girls from ages 11 through 18 years housed in the learning center for four to twelve months. Students display a full continuum of educational, emotional and social abilities, thus the learning center offers a variety of treatment modalities and security provisions. DLC is also the site of a special program for emotionally disturbed girls. Davis Learning Center has received red-flagged students: Approximately 30 percent of the population was reported to be special education eligible.

Figure 3 portrays the DLC youth school IEP and placement processes. Students are scheduled for classes by the staffing committee. If the student has been identified as handicapped, the staffing committee develops a program on the basis of what is anticipated to be recommended by the IEP committee. Handicapped students may be placed in the three special education classes (language arts, math and social skills), a vocational class, arts and crafts, music and physical education. Special physical education classes are available for those students, special education eligible
Staffing Committee

Placement

IEP Meeting
(standing committee, formulates goals and objectives)

Placement

Request for placement modification

Staffing Committee approves or denies

Figure 3
Davis Learning Center Youth School
IEP and Placement Processes
and ineligible, who exhibit difficulties in perceptual motor functioning as indicated by R&DC reports. Two to three weeks later, the standing IEP committee meets and, using R&DC evaluation data, selects goals and objectives from master sets previously prepared by teachers for each subject area. The committee formalizes placement and signs the IEP document. To date, the IEP placement had always conformed to the staffing committee's initial placement decision.

A change in placement after the completion of the initial IEP may be made through a teacher request to the staffing committee. The committee may approve or reject the request. Regardless of the staffing committee's decision, approval or denial of the request, the IEP is not reviewed or modified. Once developed and formalized through the initial IEP meeting, an IEP is not modified during a student's tenure at the learning center.

Perceptions

Procedures utilized by the DLC Youth School adhere strictly to those delineated by the RSA manual and are largely limited to the same. Processes were reported to be smoothly implemented due primarily to continued adherence to DOC staffing and youth school scheduling procedures, the involvement of few staff members (i.e., two members of the staffing committee serving on the standing IEP committee), and the use of master sets of goals and objectives for IEP
development rather than requiring teachers to develop this information for each student. The mutual respect of DOC and RSA personnel was reported to contribute to a noninterference attitude. Thus, IEP decisions, due to their educational nature, are left to RSA personnel.

Staff have not been in total agreement with R&DC determinations of eligibility or ineligibility but were not aware of procedures through which students could be referred for additional evaluation.

The special program for emotionally disturbed girls was not designed to serve students identified as emotionally disturbed through special education processes but to contain in a separate cottage students who displayed severe behavioral and/or adjustment problems which precluded their treatment in any of the other treatment cottages. There have been special education eligible students placed by the DOC in this program. This may be interpreted as a substantially separate facility although students are permitted to be gradually integrated with other RSA educational programs. There may be some regulatory difficulty in the labeling of some students as emotionally disturbed by virtue of their placement in this special program without benefit of a formal determination of eligibility and category of handicap through special education procedures.

There were mixed reactions to the instructional program and the processes through which students receive instruction.
Students were reported to be placed in special education classes on the basis of their eligibility rather than on their instructional needs. The IEP was viewed as a process rather than an instructional guide. Class structure, assignments, and methodologies were reported to be no different for handicapped students than for nonhandicapped students placed in special classes. It was unclear whether this was a function of the identification process; actual instructional needs of eligible and ineligible students placed in special classes; or the ability, desire or opportunity of teachers to differentiate instruction. The principal reported that the opportunity to differentiate instruction would be greater given an expanded continuum of services, providing those students in need of more individualized or intense instruction with a wider variety of placement and program options. The extreme range of student ability was believed to justify this observation.

It was reported that many handicapped students could be appropriately served in regular classes but were often limited to special classes due to the absence of special education endorsed regular class teachers. Teachers believed that a preoccupation with special education endorsement on the part of the school administration limited the placement options. The recent addition of resource class services under the instruction of the special education math teacher was anticipated to be a valuable asset to the program and represents the youth school's sole departure from its
traditional organization. Unfortunately, teachers had not utilized this option sufficiently to permit a judgment of its effectiveness. The teacher of this class suspected that students had not been referred for the class due largely to lack of awareness on the part of teachers regarding the class itself and the procedure by which students could be enrolled.

The flow of student information was a frequent concern of staff. R&DC evaluation data were believed to be somewhat inaccurate due to students' emotional condition at the time of the evaluation. Since handicapped students' IEPs are developed using R&DC data as the primary source of information, teachers reported that many strategies developed for the IEP to address R&DC identified problems became unnecessary as students became accustomed to the learning center environment. They indicated that local school division IEPs, received without exception after the development of the youth school IEP, more accurately reflected actual student behaviors and needs. Acquisition of the community IEP prior to evaluation and programming and use of this information in lieu of R&DC evaluation and learning center IEPs were anticipated to be preferable to the present method.

The absence of a community-to-RSA flow of information upon students' entrance to the DLC Learning Center was believed to emphasize the need for an effective learning center-to-community flow of information. It was anticipated
that this would facilitate the continuity of released students' educational programs. The expectations for implementation of such a flow of information were not encouraging. The number of agencies and persons through which information must be relayed was perceived by the principal to be detrimental to an effective exchange of information prior to and following students' commitment to the Department of Corrections.

**Harmon Learning Center Youth School**

Harmon Learning Center (HLC) is a medium security facility housing thirteen to fifteen and one-half year old males. The learning center is budgeted for 100 students but averages 130, having gone as high as 160. The average length of commitment is five and one-half months. A special program for the mentally retarded serves approximately ten youth ages 13 through 18 years ranging from educable through trainable mentally retarded. Students are assigned to this program by the R&DC staffing committee and are committed indefinitely, remaining in the program for up to two years as a general rule.

With the onset of the special education identification process, students categorized as emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, mentally retarded, speech impaired and multiply handicapped have been assigned to HLC. Ineligible students have been referred by staff for additional evaluation
by R&DC personnel. Although teachers were aware that eligible students could be referred for dismissal from special education, they had not done so, feeling that those identified were in need of continuing special education services. Staff also have communicated with R&DC personnel to clarify evaluation results and have found such informal contact to be effective for their purpose. Triennial reevaluations have been conducted for students in the special mental retardation program through referral by the program instructor.

Figure 4 depicts the IEP and placement processes of the HLC Youth School. All students, with the exception of those assigned by the DOC to the special mental retardation (MR) program, are assigned to classes on the basis of their cottage placement. Those students noted to be low functioning on the basis of R&DC evaluation data are referred to special education teachers of mathematics, language arts and social skills courses. These teachers review student data and determine if the student is in need of their specific course offerings. Those students determined by special education teachers to receive instruction are removed from regular classes by the special teachers within two to three days of their initial placement in regular classes by the staffing committee. Nonhandicapped as well as red-flagged (handicapped) students are placed as indicated above. The teachers with whom the student has been placed
Figure 4
Harmon Learning Center Youth School
IEP and Placement Processes
develop goals and objectives and submit them to the principal's office. Goals and objectives are reviewed by the principal and may be returned to teachers for revision. Within five days of students' entry to the school program, the IEP meeting is held. The standing IEP committee reviews teacher recommendations, eligibility minutes, and submitted goals and objectives; determines percentage of time special services are to be received; and signs the IEP. Since placement in special classes has been determined previously by special education teachers, no change in placement on the basis of the IEP is made by the IEP committee. No annual reviews of IEPs have been conducted since none have been in effect for a year.

Changes in placement have been made subsequent to student progress in special classes. The change is proposed by teachers to the principal who may approve or deny the modification. If approved, the placement is effected with modification of goals and objectives if deemed appropriate by teachers and the principal. The surrogate parent is informed of modifications but is not consulted prior to the action.

The special MR program is designed to provide all instruction within the cottage. Some students, however, have been placed in specific classes of the central education program when a 2.0 grade equivalent in a subject is attained. The program is teacher-oriented: A single
teacher provides all instruction (academic, vocational and physical education) and prepares IEPs for her students. She has received public school IEPs and has continued unmet objectives in the development of learning center-based IEPs.

Perceptions

Descriptions and perceptions offered by interviewees were extremely varied, striking the researcher as being fragmented. Staff appeared to conduct instructional and procedural functions individually and independently, drawn together only by paperwork and formal procedures to form a cohesive process. A great deal of antipathy was displayed by staff toward DOC functions which affect the RSA program, particularly the impingement of DOC treatment programs on classroom instruction. With the notable exception of required treatment modality enactment within the school, teachers were fairly satisfied with their roles and professional responsibilities in the correctional setting. There were reports of staff shortages, specifically in the areas of learning disabilities and adapted physical education.

Teachers perceived no programmatic differences since the implementation of special education regulations other than the labeling of students and titling of the program. Processes utilized to place students in special classes have not been modified since commencement of special education procedures. The IEP process was viewed as a "bureaucratic
technicality," and placement decisions are made by special education teachers. Teachers were concerned with two apparent effects of procedures: labeling of students and mainstreaming. They exhibited a great deal of caution in the use of labels assigned to students, not in the utilization of categories of handicaps in instructional development but in their concern that, once determined, the label in all likelihood would never be changed if in error. This perceived inflexibility of the system was also inferred by teachers' concern with mainstreaming. Once a student has been selected for a special class, there is some reluctance on the part of regular class teachers to reintegrate the student. Regular class teachers' reluctance to accept students previously placed in special education classes was attributed to a lack of confidence and knowledge and hesitancy in increasing their class loads.

Bates Learning Center Youth School

The population of Bates Learning Center (BLC) is composed of boys ages 11 through 14 years who require a minimum security setting. BLC is budgeted for 90 youth but had been underpopulated for some time and, at the time of the on-site interviews, was anticipating a change in its population to include youth through age sixteen. There is an extreme range in length of commitment, from a few months to two and one-half years. The modal length of commitment is seven
months. The school was frequently described by staff as being the most similar to a regular school setting as compared to those of other learning centers. The principal estimated that 60 percent to 65 percent of the population was special education eligible and identified as such, the majority being EMR or ED.

The sole special education class is a resource model which serves handicapped and nonhandicapped students who are referred by regular class teachers for remediation or tutorial services in specific areas of instruction.

Staff have referred previously unidentified students and identified students whose category of exceptionality is questioned for additional evaluation. The principal has relayed teacher referrals to the R&DC special education coordinator who then orchestrates the evaluation process. Requested evaluations have generally supported BLC staff perceptions.

Upon arrival at BLC, all students are placed in classes on the basis of R&DC evaluation data by the staffing committee. Teachers to whom handicapped students have been assigned prepare goals and objectives for each student using R&DC data, pretests administered in the classroom, content area checklists and classroom performance. These are submitted to the principal's office. Within three weeks of staffing, the standing IEP committee meets to approve goals and objectives as submitted or with modifications and
to determine placement. Placement is rarely modified from that originally defined by the staffing committee as red-flagged students are usually initially placed in remedial courses. Students may receive resource services upon recommendation of the IEP committee or through a later recommendation by a regular class teacher. When a referral for resource services is made for a red-flagged student, the IEP committee convenes to review the proposal and formally approve or disapprove resource model services. To date, only one student was determined to be in need of a self-contained model encompassing all three academic subjects. The resource teacher provided instruction in these areas. The processes utilized for IEP development and placement are represented in Figure 5.

**Perceptions**

The high degree of individualization of instruction, use of specific curricula, quality of personnel and the flexibility of the instructional program through the use of resource services were reported to be the factors contributing to successful educational programming for handicapped students. Successes were attributed to within-school factors perceived to be effective in spite of staffs' poor preparation for responsibilities. Interviewees were very critical of the training, and lack of it, provided to them prior to implementation of special education procedures. They
Staffing Committee

Placement

Formulation of goals and objectives by teachers serving student

IEP Meeting (standing committee)

Placement

Request for placement modification

15 administrative days

Figure 5

Bates Learning Center Youth School
IEP and Placement Processes
believed that RSA central personnel had attempted to address staff needs but were ill-equipped to provide the depth and breadth of training and technical assistance necessary. Support by SEA personnel was not viewed as a viable alternative as they were perceived to be unable to "relate to our (youth school) setting."

A major problem encountered by staff was reported to be preparation for and instruction of low-incidence categories of handicapped youth. Teachers believed that they would be more capable of providing instruction to such students if given specific objectives, methods and materials.

Contrasts between the educational programs of the correctional and public school settings were primarily related to the inflexibility of correctional education requiring strict accountability of students and teachers to several layers of correctional and educational bureaucracies. Conversely, the flexibility of the youth school program, i.e., use of the resource program, was lauded as a major contributor to students' educational progress.

The recent addition and successes of the resource teacher had suggested to teachers that increased special education staff would further students' progress. They believed that the addition of a self-contained program and an expanded resource program would be beneficial. This suggestion was based on their concern regarding students who are placed at BLC pending availability of special
placements. Additional resource and self-contained placement options would more adequately accommodate the increased number and range of needs of these students.

Several factors were reported by interviewees to inhibit the acquisition and continued employment of teachers. These included the lack of qualified special education teachers and the reluctance of teachers to work in the correctional setting due to the twelve-month school year, security responsibilities, required treatment team participation and the relative isolation of the learning center.

**Garden Learning Center Youth School**

Garden Learning Center (GLC) is considered the "honor" learning center since students have more freedom of movement than those of other learning centers. Youth range in age from 15 to 18 years and, having been committed for first or less serious offenses, remain in the learning center for three and one-half to 28 months. The majority are below grade level in academic achievement but make more than average progress during their commitment. It was reported that, since students are believed more likely to successfully reenter a public high school program than students of other learning centers, extreme care is taken to provide them with instruction that will enable them to achieve at a rate commensurate with their nonincarcerated peers.
Special education eligible students are primarily educable mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed with fewer physically and sensory handicapped students. Approximately 40 percent of the population was identified as handicapped in contrast to the principal's estimate of the 80 percent that should be identified as such. With the exception of the special education resource teacher, staff have been employed at GLC for many years. Teachers have little or no formal coursework in special education and have had primarily learning center rather than public school experience.

Resource services are designed to support regular classroom instruction and are available to handicapped and nonhandicapped students.

Since the implementation of special education procedures, staff have received identified handicapped students and have referred students, unidentified and identified as handicapped, for additional evaluation suspecting an educationally handicapping condition or questioning the category of handicap respectively. Following consensus of those teachers involved with the student, the principal notifies the special education coordinator of the need for additional evaluation. The special education coordinator has conducted additional evaluation and eligibility meetings on-site. All additional evaluations have confirmed the initial R&DC assessment.
GLC Youth School IEP and placement processes are shown in Figure 6. During each student's first week at GLC, he is scheduled for classes by the staffing committee. Vocational assignments are made primarily on the basis of student preference and space while academic classes are assigned on the basis of availability of space. During the next two weeks, teachers with whom red-flagged students have been placed develop goals and objectives and submit them to the principal's office. The IEP committee, consisting of the principal or assistant principal, an academic teacher, a vocational teacher, the special education resource teacher and the caseworker serving as surrogate parent, reviews submitted goals and objectives, makes necessary modifications and formalizes placement. No major placement modifications had been made based on IEPs to date. The informal use of resource services accounts for the absence of placement modifications by the IEP committee. Resource services are indicated on IEPs on an "as needed" basis. The IEP meeting is conducted immediately prior to a treatment team meeting to ensure that relevant staff will be available for the IEP committee and to make the formalized IEP available to the treatment team.

Perceptions

GLC staff were the last to receive training in special education procedures and thus had less experience in the
Formulation of goals and objectives by teachers serving student

Goals and objectives submitted to principal's office

IEP Meeting (standing committee and special education resource teacher)

(no placement options)

Figure 6
Garden Learning Center Youth School IEP and Placement Processes
implementation of procedures. Interviewed personnel appeared confident in their ability to provide appropriate instruction but were uncomfortable and unsure of their responsibilities pertaining to special education procedures and somewhat confused with the concept of special education in general. Staff were aware of handicapping conditions among students and seemed relieved that newly devised procedures provided a mechanism for identification of such students. They were disappointed that their referrals had not been substantiated by further evaluation. One teacher felt that this was a function of lessened quality of additional evaluations conducted on-site as compared to those performed at the R&DC, while another believed that additional evaluations were substantially correct but that lack of knowledge on the part of the staff concerning handicapping conditions and special education eligibility contributed to such misunderstandings.

Although youth school personnel had been involved in procedures for only a short time, the principal was able to delineate a number of factors which had affected ease of implementation of procedures. More time prior to implementation of procedures would have permitted more adequate preparation of staff, and additional information was needed by staff to clarify the concept of special education and characteristics of handicapping conditions. Training in which staff had participated had been unsatisfactory due to
a lack of clear direction and limited follow-up. Technical assistance was targeted as the single most important need. Although services of the special education coordinator were reported to have been instrumental in the development of procedures to their current level, the necessity of on-site special education personnel for the direction and conduct of evaluation, eligibility, and programming was the foremost concern. Staff time was also a commonly reported concern. In addition to day-to-day planning and instruction, teachers must review newly committed students' records, evaluate and observe new students, prepare treatment team reports and attend treatment team meetings. The compounding of these responsibilities with anticipated requirements of special education procedures was met with some forboding by staff. There was conjecture that the time involved in IEP preparation would further dilute staff time without equal outcome to the students' benefit.

The IEP process was developed by GLC youth school personnel to coordinate with treatment teams. This had worked well to date but was the subject of some misgivings due to the perceived instability of the DOC treatment team program. If the treatment team should be replaced by an alternate method, the IEP process must be designed so that it could function effectively but independently of the treatment team or in concert with an alternative method.
Some difficulty was anticipated in meeting the 30-day limit between the eligibility and IEP meetings. Students who are eligible for special education services may be retained at the R&DC for medical or dental treatment and thus are not accessible for IEP development by learning center personnel. The principal was of the opinion that this delay would extend the eligibility to IEP time beyond the 30-day limit.

Adams Learning Center Youth School

Adams Learning Center is the maximum security juvenile correctional facility. The population is composed of 40 to 42 male youth ages 11 through 18 years whose average commitment is 13 months. Students are assigned to ALC due to the serious nature of the committing offense, their penchant for escape attempts, or their need for stringent behavioral controls. Academic abilities range from primary to secondary grade levels. Staff reported that the emotional and social characteristics were an immediate concern and the primary barrier to be overcome to enable educational progress. Due to student characteristics, teachers' primary goals are student attainment of survival skills and extinction of undesirable and abusive behaviors. The identified handicapped population was estimated to be between 30 percent and 50 percent. Due to the length of incarceration, there are ALC students who had been committed prior to the
implementation of July 1, 1981, special education procedures. Interviewees suspected that there were students within this group that were potentially eligible for special education but had not been evaluated for such determination. Estimates of the total handicapped population including unidentified students ranged from 60 percent to 100 percent.

Referral and evaluation processes have been utilized by ALC staff to request evaluation of students suspected of having an educationally handicapping condition. Requests by teachers are discussed informally by RSA staff and treatment team members and then routed by the principal to the R&DC special education coordinator. Additional educational and perceptual assessments are administered by the special education coordinator at the learning center. During the same on-site visit, the coordinator conducts the eligibility meeting, attended by teachers serving the student, the principal, surrogate parent and special education coordinator. Several previously unidentified handicapped students have been found eligible through this process.

Students identified as handicapped by R&DC evaluation are scheduled for classes in the same manner as ineligible students: The staffing committee assigns classes on a space available basis. They are not grouped by ability level due to a need for flexibility in class composition. Potential personality conflicts of students are avoided by prudent scheduling. There is no designated special education
teacher or class. There is a single teacher assigned to each subject; thus, teachers provide instruction to identified handicapped students within each regular class.

The IEP meeting is scheduled to take place 30 days from the staffing date. Using R&DC data, classroom observation and pretests, teachers select goals and objectives from master sets relevant to their respective subjects. Goals and objectives are submitted to the principal's office prior to the IEP meeting. The standing IEP committee meets to review submitted goals and objectives, making modifications when deemed appropriate by the committee. In the past, there have been occasions when goals and objectives were developed by the committee rather than the submitted goals and objectives method. These occasions were influenced by the encouragement of a former special education endorsed teacher. Since his resignation, the committee has reverted to exclusive use of the submitted goals and objectives. As there are no placement options in terms of model or teacher for academic programs, the single placement recommendation that can be made by the IEP committee is choice of vocational program. Figure 7 depicts the ALC Youth School IEP and placement processes.

Perceptions

The ALC special education program is typified by a cooperative working relationship of Department of Corrections
Staffing Committee

Placement

Formulation of goals and objectives by teachers serving student

IEP Meeting (standing committee)

Placement (vocational options only)

Figure 7
Adams Learning Center Youth School IEP and Placement Processes
and RSA personnel. The small number of staff of both agencies and small number of students were reported to facilitate coordination of procedures and active participation of staff. Involvement of DOC personnel in planning and implementation was viewed as the primary contributor to successful program operation. Caseworkers serving as surrogate parents were reported to be fulfilling the responsibilities of the position admirably. They have provided valuable input to IEP and eligibility meetings and have served as child advocates in critically questioning identification and instructional plans.

The lack of a special education professional on the RSA staff was severely criticized by interviewees. In the past, teachers depended a great deal on a former language arts teacher endorsed in special education for procedural and instructional assistance. In the absence of this type of support, teachers appeared somewhat bereft. There was disagreement as to the specific type of special education position needed but consensus that on-site technical assistance was necessary.

Perhaps related to teachers' dependency on a single special education professional for technical assistance was the relative lack of staff professional preparation in special education and the reported inadequacy of inservice training they received prior to implementation of procedures. Interviewees indicated a desire to receive instruction in
characteristics of handicapping conditions, relevant instructional methodologies and explanations of the "why" of required procedures. The on-site technical assistance provided by the R&DC special education coordinator was indicated to be instrumental in the development and ongoing operation of the program.
Research Question 1. What are the processes used by the 
Virginia Rehabilitative School Authority (RSA) to implement 
Virginia Department of Education (SEA) Office of Special 
and Compensatory Education regulations governing the educa­
tion of handicapped children?

Based on information obtained through interviews and 
document review, processes utilized to implement special 
education procedures can be fully described. Using state 
special education regulations as a point of reference, 
procedural differences between facilities and facility 
processes different from those delineated by the Special 
Education Identification and Screening Procedures Manual 
may be examined.

It should be noted that following the screening conducted 
at the R&DC, a dual system of referral, evaluation and 
eligibility exists: that initiated at the R&DC and that 
initiated within the learning center youth school setting. 
Since the most logical method presentation of processes is 
in the chronological order decreed by state special educa­
tion regulations, this dual system is described in the 
following sections as RSA procedures related to the 
procedural order: screening, referral, evaluation, IEP, 
and placement. Assignment and responsibilities of surrogate 
parents are reported separately due to the impact these 
issues were found to have on special education procedures.
Screening

State special education regulations require that there be written procedures for screening and that all children be screened within 60 days of enrollment in speech, language and voice, fine and gross motor function, and vision and hearing.

There are written procedures for screening as evidenced by the Special Education Identification and Screening Procedures Manual. The regular intake evaluation of the Reception and Diagnostic Center is considered the screening process for all youth committed to the Department of Corrections. It is conducted by a multidisciplinary team and consists of historical and present social, psychological, educational, medical and daily living cottage living situation assessments. All students are screened in the areas of vision and hearing. Speech and gross and fine motor assessments are not routinely administered. Since screening is administered to students during their three-week stay at the R&DC, procedures are within the time frame established by state special education regulations with the possible exception of those students transferred to Adams Learning Center prior to the completion of the regular intake process.

Referral

State regulations relating to referral of students require that there be a screening committee in each school;
that there are written records of screening committee actions; that the screening committee act within ten days of receipt of referral; and that the referral process documents the student's name, date of referral and screening committee action, reason for referral, the agency or person making the referral and the action recommended by the screening committee.

Referral for special education evaluation may be made by any member of the multidisciplinary (Evaluation Services Plan or ESP) team by completing a referral form and submitting it to the special education coordinator. In addition to state required information on the referral form, the referrer is requested to indicate if the referral is for evaluation of an unidentified student or to challenge the eligibility or category of handicap of a previously identified student. The special education coordinator meets informally with members of the evaluation team to determine the legitimacy of the referral. This appears to take the place of the state required screening committee which decides if a referred student will be recommended to receive a full evaluation. The committee may also request specific assessments to be conducted in addition to previously or currently performed evaluations. The referral process, from receipt of the referral form by the special education coordinator to receipt of the approved referral form by the ESP team with additional evaluations noted, generally
requires two to three days, well within the ten days permitted by state regulations.

Four youth schools have referred ineligible students for additional evaluation suspecting an educationally handicapping condition. The fairly consistent procedures used in the youth schools are not formally described by any documentation, but they seem to have evolved to meet youth school staff and student needs. A teacher serving the student generally brings the question of potential special education eligibility of the student to the attention of the principal or other administrator responsible for special education. Generally this is preceded by informal discussion among teachers serving the student to clarify and confirm teachers' perceptions of the student's needs, characteristics and potential handicap. Upon informal investigation and verification of student characteristics, the administrator contacts the special education coordinator located at the R&DC. No documentation of this process, such as a referral form, was in evidence. The special education coordinator consults with the principal and assumes responsibility for subsequent actions.

There was variability among youth schools in staffs' knowledge of the availability of the youth school referral mechanism. Two youth schools were unaware that they could refer previously unidentified students for additional evaluation. One of the two facilities had recommended
students for dismissal from special education but were not aware of a referral mechanism. It is important to note that youth school referrals were not addressed by the manual and that subsequent development of referral mechanisms by youth schools was necessarily a facility-specific endeavor.

Both the R&DC and youth school referral systems are characterized by informal communications in lieu of a standard screening committee leading to the formal R&DC referral and informal youth school referral for special education evaluation. Additionally, youth school referral appears to be initiated on the basis of classroom functioning rather than on formal screening assessment data.

**Evaluation**

Evaluation encompasses both the procedural requirements of the state relating to evaluation and nondiscriminatory testing safeguards. Procedurally, state special education regulations require that the time from the recommendation by the screening committee for special education evaluation to eligibility determination not extend beyond 65 days, that prior notice be given and consent obtained of parents or guardians before the commencement of individual evaluation, and that all evaluation reports be available to the eligibility committee in writing. Youth must be assessed in all areas of the suspected disability including the minimum sociocultural, educational, medical and psychological
components. Evaluation must be conducted by a trained multidisciplinary team using materials validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and in the child's native language or other mode of communication. Accommodations must be made when testing children with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills. Additional evaluation requirements for students suspected of being learning disabled include a classroom observation.

The evaluation conducted for determination of special education eligibility by the RSA is best termed "additional evaluation" since assessments administered in response to a referral during the student's three-week residency at the R&DC or during the learning center placement are supplemental to regular intake evaluation and are considered in concert with the same for consideration of special education eligibility.

Following acquisition of surrogate parent permission, the R&DC special education evaluation commences upon evaluators' receipt of the referral form on which recommended additional evaluation is indicated. Those personnel responsible for the additional components proceed with testing which is to be completed by the staffing/eligibility date. Most commonly recommended additional evaluations are individual intelligence, speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy assessments. Educational evaluators generally conduct assessments they feel necessary to fully
examine student characteristics, abilities and needs prior to submission of a referral and, hence, prior to the formal special education evaluation.

There is a question as to the acceptability of components performed prior to the referral and consent of surrogate parents if state regulations are strictly interpreted. In the majority of cases, all components are completed during the three-week period, the bulk of educational psychological, medical and sociocultural components administered prior to formal commencement of the special education evaluation as signified by surrogate parent permission. Aside from this issue (i.e., consolidating the regular intake evaluation and special education evaluation assessments), evaluations are largely in compliance with state regulations: Evaluation is administered by trained multidisciplinary personnel using appropriate and adequate instruments in terms of students' language and mode of communication which are modified when necessary to accommodate students' abilities or disabilities. The special education evaluation of some students extends beyond the three-week R&DC evaluation period due to difficulty scheduling certain additional components (e.g., physical therapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy). Students suspected of being learning disabled are not evaluated or observed by a classroom teacher as there are no such positions at the R&DC. However, all educational evaluators
are certified teachers and may thus be loosely interpreted to fulfill state regulations requiring the participation of a teacher qualified to teach a student of the age of the referred student on the multidisciplinary team.

The evaluation of students referred by youth school personnel may be conducted through one of three methods: (a) the student may be tested at the learning center by the special education coordinator, (b) the student may be transferred to the R&DC for evaluation, or (c) an R&DC educational evaluator and/or related service providers may travel to the learning center for on-site evaluation. Students referred by youth schools located in close proximity to the R&DC are generally evaluated by R&DC educational evaluators while those students referred by youth schools some distance from the Reception and Diagnostic Center are evaluated by the special education coordinator. In the past, the sole additional evaluations recommended were speech, individual intelligence, and/or educational assessments. It was surmised by interviewees that other components (e.g., occupational or physical therapy) would be administered if requested. Educational evaluations have been composed of supplemental achievement and/or perceptual functioning assessments. In addition to formal individualized evaluation, youth school teachers' observations of students' classroom behavior and functioning and classroom-administered tests are available. Additional data are consolidated with
regular intake evaluation data to comprise the required assessments in all areas related to the suspected disability. The time span encompassing the evaluation components is variable depending on the amount of time a student has been in the learning center prior to the referral for special education evaluation. It was reported by teachers that the need for referral of a previously unidentified student is generally apparent within a few weeks of the learning center placement.

**Triennial reevaluation.** The sole triennial evaluations conducted after student placement in a learning center have been of those students assigned to the Harmon Learning Center special mental retardation program due to the duration of their commitment. The teacher has informed the RSA principal of students due for the triennial reevaluation which is then conducted at the Reception and Diagnostic Center with R&DC personnel assuming eligibility committee responsibilities. Triennial reevaluation of handicapped students in other facilities had not been necessary due to the release of students from the DOC prior to expiration of the three-year period.

**Eligibility**

Special education regulations promulgated by the state define the eligibility committee as those persons who collected assessment data and the administrator of special
education or designee. A written record of eligibility deliberations and decisions is required. Additional regulations relating to the identification of learning disabled youth require examination of relevant medical and socio-cultural information which may have a bearing on educational performance, analysis of discrepancies between achievement and ability, and opportunity for documentation of dissension by members of the eligibility committee.

The determination of eligibility of those students referred during the R&DC residency is scheduled to take place following the staffing meeting at the termination of students' three-week residence. The staffing committee recommends placement of the student in one of the DOC learning centers or special placement in facilities outside of the DOC (e.g., public or private mental health or mental retardation institutions, private schools, etc.). Special placement recommendations are made on the basis of the treatment needs of students and are made independently of RSA determination of special education eligibility. Placement within Department of Corrections' youth schools is based primarily on the age and required custody level of the student. Following the staffing meeting which is attended by all members of the ESP team (including the caseworker/counselor serving as surrogate parent), the eligibility meeting convenes and is attended by the same personnel but is chaired by the RSA principal or special
education coordinator.

All evaluation reports, those compiled during the regular intake evaluation and the additional evaluation requested by the referral, are available in writing to the eligibility committee. The committee reviews data and determines the eligibility or ineligibility of the student. If the student is declared eligible for special education services, the multidisciplinary team then determines the category of handicap affecting the student.

The eligibility committee has not strictly adhered to the learning disabilities identification regulations effective March 1, 1980 (e.g., The committee does not include a classroom observation nor discuss discrepancies, relevant medical or sociocultural data relating to the LD classification.). Committee members are afforded the opportunity to document their individual dissenting opinions.

After all information is discussed, recommendations and decisions made by the committee are documented in the form of minutes and a summary which are placed in the student's confidential file and transferred to the learning center designated by the staffing committee.

The R&DC special education processes, from referral to determination of eligibility, take place during students' three-week residency at the R&DC, well within the 65 days allotted by state special education regulations. However, in an estimated 10 percent of all special education
evaluations, the eligibility decision must be delayed due to incomplete components, most often in the areas of speech, occupational and physical therapy. Components are generally completed within two to eight weeks. The eligibility meeting is held by the eligibility/ESP team at the R&DC although the student has been transferred previously to a learning center on the basis of the staffing committee recommendation. Depending on the time necessary to complete the components for which the eligibility had been deferred, the special education process may extend beyond the 65-day limit.

The eligibility process utilized for students referred for special education evaluation by learning center youth school personnel is less defined than the process of the R&DC. The manual does not address the learning center referral-eligibility process, and it has thus evolved on an as needed basis, emerging in response to youth school requests and degree of personnel involvement. The eligibility meeting is held at the learning center or, less frequently, at the R&DC. When the special education coordinator has traveled to a learning center some distance from the R&DC (i.e., Garden or Adams learning centers) for administration of additional evaluation, she generally conducts the eligibility committee meeting during the same trip. These meetings have included relevant teachers, the designated RSA administrator, the surrogate parent and the
special education coordinator. Utilizing the R&DC regular intake data, current classroom observation and measures of ability and the additional assessment data, the eligibility committee determines the eligibility or ineligibility of the student and, in the former case, the category of handicap. Youth school-conducted eligibility meetings are documented in the same manner as R&DC meetings. The formality of the learning center-based eligibility process appeared to be a function of the number of eligibility meetings conducted and the involvement of the staff: The greater the experience of staff with procedures, the more intact and consistent with state special education regulations. Reports are available in writing; the meeting is conducted within 65 days of the referral; students have been assessed in all areas of the suspected disability, either during the R&DC evaluation or during the additional special education evaluation; minutes and a summary are formulated by the committee. Youth school eligibility committees have not included all persons who collected assessment data and do not utilize the March 1, 1980, LD regulations.

Less information was available regarding special education evaluations conducted by R&DC educational evaluators in response to youth school referrals. In these cases, the entire process reverts to the R&DC personnel, and youth school personnel have little involvement or contact with eligibility procedures. The youth school is simply informed
of the decision of the eligibility committee and receives their minutes and summary.

Special note must be made of the processes by which students are found eligible for the Davis Learning Center (DLC) program for the emotionally disturbed and the Harmon Learning Center (HLC) program for the mentally retarded. Students are not assigned to these programs by virtue of RSA determination of eligibility for special education or recommendation for placement. Students placed in the ED program are assigned by the DLC treatment team and have not necessarily been found to be emotionally disturbed by the RSA special education identification and placement process. The mentally retarded students of the HLC program generally have been identified as mentally retarded prior to DOC commitment but are recommended for placement by the staffing committee of the R&DC prior to the eligibility committee and prior to the IEP placement process.

**Individualized Education Program and Placement**

The Individualized Education Program is required by state special education regulations to be developed by a committee consisting of a representative of the school division qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education, teacher(s), parent(s), the child, if appropriate, and, in the development of the first IEP, members of the evaluation team. It must be developed
within 30 calendar days of the determination of eligibility for special education and related services and before such services are provided. Prior notice and consent of parents or guardians are required before placement may be effected.

Placement of handicapped students must observe least restrictive environment mandates: The removal of handicapped students from the regular environment may occur only when the nature or severity of the handicap precludes provision of services in regular classes with supplementary aids and services and that handicapped children participate with nonhandicapped peers in nonacademic and extracurricular services to the extent appropriate to their needs. A continuum of alternative placements is necessary; and where separate facilities exist, that all services available to children in regular facilities are available to those in separate facilities.

Personnel providing special education and related services to handicapped youth must be properly endorsed and certified.

The IEP process is unique in each facility of the RSA youth school system. Due to the transfer of the IEP responsibility from the R&DC to youth schools and minimum direction as to the fulfillment of responsibilities, each youth school developed its own procedures for enactment of processes not specified by formal procedures. Formulation of goals and objectives, timing of IEP meetings, and placement
of students based on IEPs were found to be facility-specific and are thus best addressed through a brief description of each facility's processes.

Adams Learning Center youth are scheduled for each class by the staffing committee. There is only one academic class of each subject area available thus simplifying class assignment. Academic and vocational teachers serving the student select appropriate goals and objectives from master sets of objectives for each red-flagged student and submit these to the principal's office. Thirty days after staffing committee placement, the standing IEP committee as described by the modification of the manual (principal or assistant principal, academic teacher, vocational teacher and surrogate parent) meets to review and approve the IEP. Placement must be maintained as indicated by the staffing committee due to absence of placement options.

Having a wider range of placement options, the staffing committee of Bates Learning Center Youth School may assign students to remedial or regular academic courses and to the rotating prevocational program. Teachers to whom handicapped students have been assigned select goals and objectives and submit them to the principal's office. Within three weeks, the standing IEP committee meets to review and approve the IEP. Students may be recommended to receive an alternate class level or special education resource instruction at this time. The special education resource
teacher provides instruction according to the goals and objectives documented by the IEP.

The Youth School of Calhoun Learning Center (CLC) has the most extensive placement options of the RSA youth schools. Red-flagged students are generally placed by the staffing committee in special education resource math and language arts classes, social studies, health/physical education and vocational courses. Goals and objectives are prepared by teachers serving the handicapped student and are submitted to the assistant principal. Within one week, the IEP committee, composed of all teachers serving the student, the assistant principal and the surrogate parent, meets to review submitted goals and objectives, recommend placement and formally approve the developed IEP. The IEP committee of CLC has greater latitude than that of other youth schools in placement determination due to its greater course and model offerings. Handicapped students may be recommended for regular, remedial, special education resource or special education self-contained instruction.

The procedures utilized for IEP formulation by the Davis Learning Center Youth School are the most similar to those defined by RSA central. The school staffing committee, which includes two persons who also serve on the standing IEP committee, assigns classes on the basis of what is anticipated to be recommended by the IEP committee. This generally includes placement in the three special education
classes (math, language arts and social skills) and possibly assignment to a special physical education class if perceptual-motor disabilities are indicated. In two to three weeks, the standing IEP committee convenes. Using R&DC data, the committee selects appropriate goals and objectives from master sets prepared by all staff for their respective courses in the fall of 1981. Although there are placement options available for special education students, the IEP committee recommendations for placement had always conformed to those of the staffing committee.

The students of the Garden Learning Center Youth School are scheduled for classes by the staffing committee. The academic and vocational teachers to whom handicapped students have been assigned prepare goals and objectives based on R&DC data, classroom observation and testing and submit them to the principal's office. Three weeks following the staffing placement, the IEP committee convenes. The IEP committee consists of the standing committee as defined by RSA central with the added participation of the special education resource teacher. The committee reviews available data and the submitted goals and objectives making modifications as necessary. Placement is maintained as originally designed by the staffing committee with the added potential of special education resource services recommended by the committee on an "as needed" basis.
Students of the Harmon Learning Center Youth School are assigned to classes by the staffing committee on the basis of cottage assignment. As teachers and the educational evaluator review the files of students, they may refer low-functioning and red-flagged students to special education teachers of specific subject areas (mathematics, language arts and social skills). The special education teachers review evaluation data and determine if students are in need of special education services. Selected students are removed from regular classes by the special education teachers within two to three days after the students' arrival. The teachers serving the student develop goals and objectives for red-flagged students and submit goals and objectives to the principal's office where they are reviewed and may be returned to teachers for modifications. The standing IEP committee meets within five days of the students' enrollment. Eligibility minutes; teacher recommendations, goals and objectives are reviewed; the percentage of time special services are to be received; and signatures complete the IEP. No modification in placement has been made by the IEP committee since the special education teachers determine placement prior to the meeting.

Summary. Commonalities among youth schools in the basic IEP process can be extracted. Each youth school utilizes a staffing committee which makes the initial placement of all students in classes on the basis of R&DC
evaluation data, cottage assignment, or on a space available basis. Five youth schools require the submission of goals and objectives by relevant teachers; one selects goals and objectives from preprepared lists during the IEP meeting. Five schools utilize the standing IEP committee or a simple modification of the standing committee. One school, upon approval of the RSA central, uses an IEP committee composed of teachers serving the student as assigned by the school staffing committee. Surrogate parents attend initial IEP meetings in all youth schools. There is no member of the evaluation team on the IEP committee which develops the first IEP for the student as required by state regulations. No youth school IEP committees include students.

Placement is totally dependent on the options within each youth school. The staffing committee generally recommends placement in available special education classes, but the IEP committee usually has few options beyond those determined by the staffing committee.

IEP review. Processes utilized for review of the IEP and/or change in placement are not clearly defined. Procedures appear to have developed to respond to specific situations rather than to anticipate procedural needs. Rarely is an IEP modified in response to achievement of objectives but rather as a preface to a placement change. In these cases, goals and objectives are generally kept intact as originally devised. Two youth schools hold a
formal IEP meeting to review the IEP and make any change in placement upon teacher recommendation for such action. The IEP is not modified in conjunction with a recommended placement change in two youth schools, and the remaining two facilities do not make placement modifications due to lack of placement options.

**Annual review of IEPs.** Annual review of IEPs had not been necessary as no IEPs had been in effect for a year at the time of interviews with the exception of the Harmon Learning Center MR program. The teacher of this program develops and modifies the IEPs independently of the central education program and processes and thus conducts ongoing review rather than a formal annual review. Placement of these students outside of the special MR program into the central education program is also the teacher's decision and is thus not preceded by an IEP review.

**Least restrictive environment.** As least restrictive environment (LRE) relates to procedures, there is a definitional issue to be clarified: All courses entitled "special education" serve both handicapped and nonhandicapped students with the sole exception of the Calhoun Learning Center Youth School self-contained class. The staffing committee has the authority to place students in these classes. Handicapped students, therefore, receive instruction with their nonhandicapped peers in all but one youth school class. While this appears to fulfill LRE mandates, two problems
emerge: the placement of nonhandicapped students in special education classes and the inappropriate placement of handicapped students in special education classes on the basis of eligibility rather than ability.

The paucity of placement options was a problem frequently cited by interviewees. The absence of a full continuum of services restricts students' placement to available classes which may not be the most appropriate setting. Conflict had developed among youth school staff regarding observation of LRE within available placements. It was reported that placement of handicapped students in regular classes in which they failed to progress was a problem in one youth school due to strict interpretation of LRE mandates. Conversely, other youth schools with a variety of special education and regular class options available often placed handicapped students in special education classes solely on the basis of their eligibility due to interpretations of special education programming requirements (i.e., instruction must be provided by special education endorsed personnel). It appeared that conflict among interviewees' interpretations of facilities' compliance or noncompliance with LRE mandates (i.e., placement of handicapped students in special education versus regular or remedial classes) was contributed to by the lack of clearly defined administration-developed procedures and a lack of knowledge on the part of personnel relating to
least restrictive environment regulations.

Educational placement outside of the learning center consists solely of community-based work programs in two facilities. The only academic programs, therefore, are those offered within the youth school setting. Due to the paucity of placement options, formal procedures to ensure observation of LRE mandates had not been developed.

**Surrogate Parents**

Although some youth committed to the Department of Corrections are wards of the state, the majority are not. Regardless of the guardianship of committed youth, a system was devised for the assignment of surrogate parents to all youth referred for special education evaluation. In order to provide advocacy for handicapped or potentially handicapped youth within state regulations pertaining to surrogate parents while deviating as little as possible from DOC processes, the RSA received approval from the SEA for caseworkers/counselors to serve as surrogate parents for youth of their caseloads. Counselors/caseworkers of the R&DC and of the learning centers serve in this capacity: learning center surrogate parents assuming the responsibility from R&DC when an R&DC identified student is transferred to the learning center. The responsibility for students who have had eligibility determination deferred at the R&DC is maintained by the R&DC surrogate parent until
the student is declared eligible by the R&DC eligibility committee.

Using this automatic assignment of the surrogate parent responsibility, the special education coordinator, following the legitimizing of a referral at the R&DC or the youth schools' principals' request for special education evaluation, immediately contacts the caseworker/counselor of the youth to secure permission to proceed with further evaluation. There is no formal prior notice relating to evaluation or change in program as defined by state special education regulations.

The involvement of surrogate parents with the development of the initial IEP was uniform at all learning centers. Due, however, to differing methods of review of IEP and/or change in placement, the role of the surrogate parent in these processes is more facility-specific. The manual does not delineate processes to be used when modifying the IEP or making a change in placement, thus development of procedures and responsibilities are delegated, by default, to the learning centers. Those learning centers which use a very informal method of change in placement (i.e., no change in the IEP) do not involve the surrogate parent. When there is a modification of the IEP, the surrogate parent is involved. One facility, when modifying the IEP does not notify the surrogate parent until the change has been made via approval by the principal.
Surrogate parents were reported to be variably active in learning centers: some serving simply as a formality, others actively involved in and challenging identification of the category of handicap and educational programs. The processes utilized by surrogate parents to challenge findings or committee decisions are informal, usually a statement of dissension and request for additional evaluation or review of committee findings. The occasion has not arisen for the conduct of a due process hearing; all differences in opinion between surrogate parents and RSA personnel have been resolved informally.
Research Question 2. What are the factors which affect the implementation of delivery of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth as perceived by Rehabilitative School Authority personnel?

There was more uniformity among interviewees' perceptions of factors affecting special education procedures than descriptions of procedures within and between youth schools. Analysis of factors reported by interviewees revealed that the majority of factors were congruent with many of the variables reported in the reviewed literature to have an effect on the provision of services within the correctional setting. For ease and clarity of presentation, the factors reported by interviewees to influence the implementation of special education and related services are grouped under major headings suggested by the review of literature. The factors reported by interviewees not addressed by the literature are discussed individually.

Students

Number of handicapped students. The great number of students referred for special education evaluation, the number identified as educationally handicapped through RSA procedures, and the number identified as handicapped prior to commitment were reported to have a restraining effect on efficient and adequate implementation of special education procedures. Procedures have increased the amount of testing
and paperwork required for this large number of students with few personnel added to offset the additional workload. The incidence of handicapped students in learning centers, estimated by youth school personnel to be from 25 percent to 100 percent and by R&DC and RSA central administrators to be approximately 45 percent, is greater than that of the nonincarcerated population.

The variety of handicapping conditions exhibited is similar to that of a public school. However, it appeared that there are differences in the relative numbers of students identified under some categories of exceptionalities. Interviewees were unable to estimate percentages of categories of handicap but were able to provide information concerning the relative incidences of handicapping conditions. The incidence of youth identified as emotionally disturbed is greater than that of the public school population. The discrepancy is less, but still apparent, in the area of educable mentally retarded. A comparison of the estimated incidence of other areas of exceptionalities is not as easily inferred due to less information provided by interviewees. Contributors to this relative lack of information may be the placement of low-incidence categories of exceptionality students (e.g., speech, orthopedic and hearing impaired) and learning disabled students in primarily regular rather than special education classes. They may also require less individual attention
in regular class placements than ED or EMR students. The actual low incidence of some handicaps within the incarcerated population or placements in special programs outside of central education programs reduces contact between staff and students of low-incidence handicapping conditions. That there may be small numbers of low-incidence categories of handicapped students identified may be a function of the definitions of categories of exceptionality used in the RSA eligibility process (i.e., identified handicaps must be proven to be strictly an educational handicap), confusion regarding the category of learning disabilities, and conflict regarding the differentiation of speech impairment as a related service or primary service area.

Characteristics of the student population. Interviewees reported that the incarcerated handicapped population exhibits more diverse and intensified needs as compared to their nonincarcerated counterparts and that overall the entire incarcerated population was more dissimilar than similar to public school populations of their experience. Social and behavioral aberrations and deflated educational levels of students were reported to have an effect on the special education program and the instructional program as a whole in that programs are designed to meet the unique and individual needs of students. More importantly, the correctional setting was reported to have an effect on what needs of students are met and the limitations imposed
on the educational program in meeting these needs. The needs of some handicapped students for a structured environment, security and routine are logically met through the correctional setting. However, these same factors prohibit the development of appropriate decision-making skills and personal-social growth, primary needs of all incarcerated youth. Additionally, there is pressure to conform to the inmate social system: Peer pressure exerted by nonhandicapped students on handicapped students was reported to be detrimental to handicapped students' educational progress and self-concept. The eligibility of some students and ineligibility of others were reported by teachers to increase handicapped students' negative perceptions of themselves in relationship to the student body. Conversely, the "street-wise" characteristics of incarcerated handicapped students were reported to contribute to their attempts to manipulate staff by using their labeled status. Teachers reported that it was necessary to penetrate students' unacceptable defense mechanisms and manipulative behaviors developed prior to and during incarceration before effective educational progress could be made.

The emotional condition of students was reported to be a problem primarily through its effect on the results of evaluation administered at the Reception and Diagnostic Center. Being taken from the community, committed to the
Department of Corrections, living with over 100 other juveniles and undergoing an intensive evaluation is undoubtedly a confusing and perhaps threatening experience which was believed to cause deflated evaluation results. The agitated emotional condition of youth during the R&DC residency is reduced once a student is transferred to the routine and security of the learning center setting. The primary problem arising from use of deflated evaluation data was the development of initial programs based on problems identified by R&DC data which were found later to be "nonproblems" in the youth school and learning center settings. Misclassification of students was reported to occur relative to category of handicap (e.g., EMR versus LD) rather than the determination of nonhandicapped students to be eligible for special education.

**Personnel**

Personnel was the most prevalent factor perceived by interviewees to affect the implementation of special education regulations. The primary areas relating to personnel were the number and assignment of staff, their characteristics, training, and stress.

*Number and assignment of evaluation, instructional and related service personnel.* The teacher-student ratio (approximately one teacher for every nine students) throughout the RSA appears to be adequate and enviable.
According to interviewees, however, this is not adequate. Considering the enormous range of student ability and level, the number of courses offered and the number of responsibilities and roles that instructional staff must fulfill, this appears to be a viable claim. The addition of special education procedures and titled special education classes was reported to have further diluted instructional time by requiring additional meetings and paperwork. Some youth schools have utilized flexible and innovative assignment of current personnel in order to capitalize on staff strengths in meeting the needs of handicapped and nonhandicapped students. Use of resource teachers for group instruction in specific areas of study, assignment of a self-contained teacher to one period a day of resource instruction, and development of a vocational class for special education students are methods which were designed to meet students' needs with current resources.

Reception and Diagnostic Center personnel reported the need for additional educational evaluators. Although the number of committed youth has not increased appreciably since the implementation of July 1, 1981, regulations, evaluators are assigned a large number of students, a problem which has been compounded by increased reporting and procedural requirements. The revision of reports to a narrative format, additional meeting requirements (i.e., informal screening and formal eligibility meetings), some
increase in testing, and delayed eligibility decisions necessitating evaluators to carry students on their case-loads longer than formerly have compounded the responsibilities of educational evaluators.

Interviewees of two youth schools expressed the need for an on-site educational evaluator. These schools were the most distant from the R&DC and, therefore, unable to return students to the R&DC for additional evaluation. They reported that an on-site educational evaluator would expedite youth schools' referral-evaluation-eligibility process.

The provision of appropriate services to students of low-incidence handicapping conditions (i.e., visually impaired, hearing impaired, deaf) is particularly difficult in the correctional setting. Since students are placed according to age and security level needed, low-incidence students cannot be grouped for instruction. There are no itinerant specialists to serve these students. This problem combines the issues of personnel and placement of students. The location of learning centers inhibits the consistent use of services offered by community and state agencies such as the Commission for the Visually Handicapped. The DOC-employed speech therapist and occupational therapist are responsible for evaluation as well as therapy. Due to increased evaluation responsibilities, their therapy time is very limited.
Number and assignment of administrators. Adequate on-site technical assistance to principals in their attempts to develop processes and implement procedures was frequently cited as a problem. The aid and assistance provided by the special education coordinator were reported to have been instrumental in the development and implementation of procedures but were acknowledged to be limited due to her extensive responsibilities.

Knowledgeable on-site supervision and aid in instructional and procedural areas were reported to be of the utmost importance. Public school and RSA-experienced teachers of the Calhoun Learning Center Youth School attributed the procedural and instructional successes of their program to the support shown by the youth school administration through the assignment of an assistant principal experienced in special education to the administrative responsibility for the special education program. The assistant principal provides on-site technical assistance in instructional areas and can make modifications in the program and processes to fit the needs of the facility, teachers, and students. The need for this type of position was expressed by interviewees of several facilities.

Staff characteristics. All youth school principals and assistant principals interviewed reported that the professional and personal characteristics of their staff have an impact on the functioning of the education programs overall
and specifically on the education of handicapped students. The ability of teachers to individualize instruction was the primary professional quality cited as necessary to fulfill instructional responsibilities. Teachers' past experiences with processes similar to those required by special education regulations were also reported to have an important effect on their abilities to fulfill special education responsibilities. For example, youth school teachers who had used instructional objectives in planning and providing instruction were much more at ease with the development and use of IEPs. Those persons who had not been required previously to utilize instructional objectives viewed the IEP as a bureaucratic technicality rather than an instructional tool.

Commitment and genuine concern for students were cited by several teachers as their reason for their youth school service. This was noted by interviewees to be a necessary quality of teachers ensuring their mental well-being in the youth school environment. Only two of the 24 teachers interviewed mentioned that the higher salary offered by the RSA as compared to public school employment influenced their decisions to join the RSA.

The attitudes of personnel, particularly those which affect the acceptance of innovation and flexibility, were reported to have a tremendous impact on special education programs. Some schools experience difficulty in moving
handicapped students from special education classes to regular classes due to a reluctance on the part of regular class teachers to accept labeled students. Since no youth school requires the receiving teacher to develop IEPs after the formalization of the initial IEP, this reluctance may be attributed to actual instruction of handicapped students rather than an increase in paperwork (i.e., IEP development). Although characteristics of the student population have not changed since implementation of July 1 regulations, the labeling of students and the incumbent responsibilities for special education (i.e., increased accountability) were suggested to have intimidated teachers. A lack of confidence on the part of these teachers, due to increased accountability and perceived lack of knowledge concerning special education concepts, was reported to contribute to their reluctance to serve handicapped students.

Staff training. All youth school personnel interviewed were critical of the training provided by RSA central in preparation for the implementation of special education procedures. They believed that a more thorough preparation encompassing not only procedural requirements but also characteristics of handicapping conditions, instructional methodologies and the rationale behind required procedures would better prepare individuals for procedural responsibilities, contribute to increased quality of instruction, build staff confidence and encourage staff voluntary and
genuine commitment. Sources of such information were said to be problematic: RSA central personnel were not believed to have the depth of breadth or knowledge necessary to address all teacher needs, and SEA personnel were perceived to be unable to relate to the needs of educators and students in the correctional setting.

Special education personnel. Five of the six youth schools employed special education endorsed personnel at the time of interviews. Additionally, there are special education endorsed teachers assigned to classes other than those labeled "special education."

Interviewed special education endorsed personnel, those assigned to special and regular classes, displayed varying degrees of knowledge of special education procedures and regulations: those with special education experience outside of the RSA having more in-depth knowledge and understanding of state regulations and rationale behind procedures. The majority of special education endorsed personnel had been employed by the RSA for several years, many having graduated with their special education degrees prior to the enactment of federal regulations and enforcement of state regulations. These persons were knowledgeable in narrow areas of instructional methodologies but unfamiliar with regulated procedures.

Persons knowledgeable in special education instructional methods and procedures were reported to be an invaluable
asset to those youth schools fortunate enough to have such a person or persons on their staff. They provided on-site technical assistance and crisis intervention when needed. Facilities with strong personnel of these qualities had much more definitive, within-regulations procedures than those facilities lacking such expertise.

Interviewees at each youth school cited a need for additional special education and related service personnel but believed that a lack of funding and/or unavailability of endorsed personnel prohibited their acquisition. Additional reasons cited for difficulty in obtaining such personnel if funds were available included the twelve-month school year, security and treatment team responsibilities and the isolation of learning centers. The acquisition of special education endorsed personnel was particularly crucial in those schools which limit placement of handicapped students in regular classes to classes taught by special education endorsed personnel.

Related service and low-incidence categorical personnel were reported to be an extreme problem. As previously mentioned, one speech therapist and one occupational therapist are inadequate to fulfill both evaluation and direct therapy responsibilities. There are no specialized personnel exclusively responsible for instruction or support in low-incidence categories of exceptionality or adapted physical education areas. This has not been
satisfactory. Interviewees stressed the need for youth school-centered speech and occupational therapists, adapted physical educators and teachers of the visually impaired, deaf and hearing impaired.

**Stress.** Although stress was a frequently cited problem by interviewees, it was observed that few teachers leave the RSA once employed. Only one case of a teacher's resignation attributed partially to stress was reported by interviewees. All teachers relatively new to the RSA obtained their positions due to the opening of a new position rather than as a replacement due to a resignation. Factors cited by interviewees to contribute to perceived stress were the required strict accountability for students; the twelve-month school year with few vacations; staff shortages caused by illness, vacations and resignations requiring staff to supervise classes of absent teachers; required participation on treatment teams and in treatment programs designed by the DOC; the continual cycle of preparation for receipt and release of students; and abundant report preparation and documentation.

**Transiency of the student population.** Transiency of students occurs in two realms: within the DOC and RSA systems and between community and DOC and RSA systems. The transiency of students within the DOC and RSA systems was not reported to have a negative effect on the education of students within youth school programs but was indicated to
be problematic relating to the transfer of students' educational records both upon receipt and release of students by the DOC. Records relevant to the evaluation of students do not arrive with the student to the R&DC. If requested records are received by the R&DC, it is generally after the student has been staffers, perhaps found eligible or ineligible for special education, and transferred to a learning center or special placement. If the learning center youth school receives community records and/or a community-developed IEP, it is generally after the development of the RSA IEP. Therefore, information relevant to evaluation and educational programming is rarely received in time to be of any practical use.

Related to the transiency of students were interviewees' concerns regarding the continuity of students' educational programs following their release. This was anticipated to be a problem due to the perceived lack of adequate interagency coordination for transfer of records. The cause of this difficulty was attributed to the many persons and agencies through which records must pass before being received by the community school division. Interruptions in educational programming were anticipated to inhibit students' educational and behavioral progress and were attributed to the transiency of the student population and the absence of policies delineating responsibilities for the transfer of information.
Institutional Climate

Group dynamics. The efficiency of implementation of special education procedures and effectiveness of instructional programs were reported to be affected by the group dynamics of RSA staff. Those youth schools which displayed cooperative and mutually supportive attitudes and actions and awarenesses of strengths and responsibilities of each staff member appeared to have more cohesive and thorough procedures and programs.

Positive, supporting relationships between RSA and DOC personnel were reported by interviewees to facilitate special education procedures and the quality of programming provided for handicapped youth. Personnel of facilities in which cooperative attitudes were evidenced indicated that DOC personnel had participated in contributing and supporting roles rather than simply fulfilling a membership responsibility. In only one youth school was there a significant amount of animosity between personnel of the two agencies. This was reported to result from the imposition of DOC treatment modes, perceived by educational personnel to be erroneous, on classroom instruction methodologies.

The use of informal communications was reported by R&DC staff to be instrumental in the conduct of regular intake and special education evaluations. Many decisions are made prior to staffing and eligibility meetings through informal contacts among RSA and DOC personnel. When
disagreements arise or when some staff are recalcitrant in information sharing due to disagreements, informal mechanisms may break down. This occasionally contributes to deferred eligibility determination when a disagreement between RSA and DOC personnel is based on requested administration of additional evaluations.

Informal mechanisms are used in the youth schools and are an integral part of the schools' procedures. Referral processes of all youth schools, placement modification in two youth schools and initial special education placement in one youth school are achieved through the use of informal communications. If informal communication is restrained due to poor staff relationships, these key processes suffer.

Size of facility and staff dynamics. Of the many factors cited in the literature to comprise the climate of an institution, two were observed to significantly affect the implementation of special education services in RSA facilities: the size of the facility and staff dynamics. The size of facilities and their corresponding number of staff had interestingly mixed effects. Facilities serving few students (40 to 60) have less placement options for special students due to limited teaching staff as compared to larger facilities. Smaller facilities have few staff to assume responsibilities for procedures and instruction whereas the same responsibilities may be distributed among more personnel in larger facilities. The greater number
and depth of responsibilities of individual staff of smaller facilities requires greater staff interaction as well as realistic self-evaluation by staff as to their abilities and needed skills to comply with the requirements of their roles in the special education program.

Although larger facilities have the advantage of greater numbers of staff to assume responsibilities, three of the four larger facilities utilized few staff for the procedural portion of requirements (i.e., standing IEP committee). This resulted in little knowledge on the part of personnel not serving on the standing IEP committee regarding special education procedures. The Youth School of Calhoun Learning Center does not use a standing IEP committee but one composed of teachers to whom students have been assigned by the school staffing committee. This permits a greater number of teachers to be exposed to procedures and also facilitates linkage between procedural and instructional responsibilities and roles. Large facilities utilizing a standing IEP committee displayed more fragmentation between the procedural and instructional portions of the special education program than either small facilities or Calhoun Learning Center Youth School.

**RSA and DOC interaction.** Small facilities displayed greater staff interaction between RSA and DOC personnel as well as among RSA personnel than that of larger facilities. It cannot be assumed, however, that size of facility is the
sole contributor to increased levels of RSA and DOC staff interaction. The administrative style of principals was observed to influence the degree of DOC staff involvement in special education procedures. In each of the two smaller facilities (Adams and Garden), positive relationships with DOC personnel had been consciously fostered by the principals through cooperative planning, development and implementation of procedures, and capitalization on mutual respect of the knowledges, abilities and authorities of each group had been accomplished.

Facilities which did not involve DOC personnel to the extent of the Adams Learning Center and Garden Learning Center youth schools reported some competitiveness between DOC and RSA methods which contributed to varying amounts of conflict between personnel of the two agencies. Problems reported relative to the required use of DOC treatment modes within the youth school setting and to the removal of students from classrooms by corrections personnel for treatment purposes were cited as contributing to a corrections versus education conflict.

Former conflict between RSA and DOC personnel appeared to have influenced involvement of DOC personnel in special education procedures. Youth schools which have operated formerly under an aura of competitiveness or friction with the DOC may have not attempted to actively solicit DOC involvement in special education procedures due to past
turfdom conflicts. This conflict may be increased or emphasized when DOC personnel have been required to participate in procedures without being actively involved in planning.

The implementation of special education procedures was perceived to have had a positive effect on the relationship of DOC and RSA personnel in two youth schools by an RSA administrator. It was reported that DOC caseworkers/counselors serving as surrogate parents had gained greater respect and understanding of the education profession through their contacts with RSA personnel in the conduct of special education procedures. Surrogate parents' new respect for teachers was indicated to have improved the quality of treatment team meetings and thus the total program developed and monitored for youth.

Friction between RSA and DOC personnel assigned to the R&DC was noted. It was reported by R&DC interviewees that two major problems contributed to this: (a) the assignment of evaluation personnel to two different agencies and (b) professional turfdom issues.

All evaluation personnel with the exception of education evaluators are employees of the Department of Corrections. Thus, although RSA R&DC administrators have responsibility for identification of handicapped youth, they have no authority over the majority of personnel necessary to conduct evaluations. Additional evaluations requested of
DOC personnel have been resented and at times refused which restrains evaluation of youth in all areas of suspected disabilities. Conflict has also arisen relative to interpretation on a clinical model and RSA personnel on an educational model. Differing interpretations contribute to disagreements regarding definitions of handicapping conditions and thus conflict in determination of eligibility.

Evaluation

Several factors contributing to or inhibiting the appropriate evaluation of students referred for special education were reported by interviewees. The use of the regular intake evaluation as the special education screening and availability of intact evaluation personnel were cited as facilitating factors. Personnel issues relating to the paucity of related service evaluators, the assignment of evaluation personnel to two different agencies and the lack of youth school-centered evaluators limit the conduct of evaluations. The necessity of a rapid classification system by the Department of Corrections and the emotional condition of students during the time available for R&DC evaluation were reported to restrain accurate and timely identification of handicapped youth.

**Use of intact procedures and personnel.** The regular intake evaluation as the starting point for special education evaluation (i.e., screening and major components) was
reported to have contributed to efficient evaluation. With the exception of physical therapy, availability of all personnel necessary for evaluation of referred students was cited as the most advantageous factor influencing the special education process. Evaluation in three areas—physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy—was reported to suffer due to lack of adequate numbers of personnel. All physical therapy evaluations must be requested from sources outside of the Department of Corrections and RSA. Staff shortages in these areas contribute to the problem of deferred eligibility determinations.

**Personnel assignment.** Reported previously under personnel factors influencing the delivery of special education services was the relationship between Reception and Diagnostic Center RSA and DOC evaluation personnel. Difficulty in obtaining certain assessments (most notably individual intelligence tests and speech therapy evaluations) was attributed in part to the assignment of all evaluation personnel except educational evaluators to the Department of Corrections. The lack of a single line of authority over R&DC evaluation personnel and the absence of a common professional focus (i.e., clinical versus educational models) inhibit effective and consistent identification of handicapped students.

The lack of evaluation personnel assigned to youth schools was frequently cited as problematic. Delays in
evaluation of youth school-referred students and questionable quality of youth school-centered evaluations were expected to show improvement if evaluators were assigned to youth schools. This also would permit participation of an evaluator on IEP committees developing initial IEPs for students.

Rapid classification system. The three weeks allotted for evaluation at the R&DC was adequate in most cases for the special education evaluation. In those cases where the determination of eligibility is deferred due to incomplete components, the RSA has no control over the transfer of the student prior to the completion of the process. This was not perceived to have a negative impact on the quality of the evaluation, but it was perceived to be detrimental to the eligibility determination due to the length of time elapsed between actual evaluation and consideration of results.

An additional problem attributed in part to the three-week limitation was the difficulty in obtaining school records most notably Category II records (individual testing and special education documentation) prior to the evaluation process. In the absence of Category II information, interviewees reported that superfluous assessments may be conducted and that evaluation results may be invalid if specific standardized assessments administered by LEAs are repeated by RSA evaluators.
The poor emotional condition of students during the R&DC evaluation was cited at every youth school as being the most significant factor affecting inaccurate evaluation results. Classroom observation and testing following students' acclimatization to the learning center and youth school environments reveal higher levels of skills than indicated by R&DC data and were felt by teachers to be more representative of students' actual abilities and levels of achievement. Deflated R&DC scores affect placement of students by the youth school staffing committees. Since special education placement by the IEP committee generally confirms that of the staffing committee, particularly in those youth schools using solely or primarily R&DC data for IEP development, interviewees were concerned that use of deflated R&DC data would inhibit handicapped students' opportunities for regular or remedial class placement.

The timing of the evaluation is under the control of the Department of Corrections: Evaluation data are necessary to determine students' placement within DOC facilities or special placements. Evaluation of educational abilities would be more appropriately performed after the learning center placement. However, in order to take advantage of the intact services and personnel of the R&DC, the educational evaluation must be performed within DOC time lines. Therefore, evaluation data may be less accurate but more administratively expedient.
Placement

The subject of placement encompasses two major issues: least restrictive environment and continuum of alternative placements. These issues are interrelated, particularly when the paucity of placement options affects compliance with least restrictive environment mandates. Also included under the subject of placement is the problem arising from limited or no access to some students due to Department of Corrections' placement of these students for treatment purposes.

Continuum of services. The dearth of a full continuum of services was cited by interviewees of all youth schools as a serious problem. Current youth school placement options are limited to regular and remedial academic classes and special education self-contained and resource academic classes. Only one youth school has a vocational program for handicapped students which serves students of all levels and categories of handicap as well as low-level nonhandicapped students. The variety of courses offered through the regular vocational programs is vast. Consideration of placement for educational services in a community rather than youth school program was never mentioned as a viable method of increasing program options. Only the youth schools of Adams Learning Center and Davis Learning Center offer any community placement of students (that as a work-study portion of vocational programs). Recommendations were
limited exclusively to increased models (self-contained and resource) and subjects (adapted physical education and special vocational education) within the correctional setting.

Funding limitations were perceived as prohibiting the acquisition of additional special education personnel to permit program expansion. An RSA central administrator reported that additional funding for personnel was contingent on adequate justification to the General Assembly that additional positions were necessary. Until the current year, there were insufficient data (i.e., documentation of numbers of special education eligible students) to convince the General Assembly that there was a need for additional special education positions.

Least restrictive environment. All special education classes, with the exception of the self-contained class of the Youth School of Calhoun Learning Center, serve handicapped and nonhandicapped students. The question then is, are these special education classes serving ineligible students (in violation of state special education regulations) or are these regular classes into which handicapped students have been mainstreamed? All interviewees subscribed to the former although the placement of ineligible students in special education classes was never noted to be a compliance problem. This situation has evolved from the necessity of developing a formal special education program
without substantial increase of new classes or personnel.

Staffing committee placement of eligible students in special education classes and the usual agreement of the IEP committee with the initial placement were reported to be problematic since staffing committee placement is made on the basis of R&DC data and findings of eligibility. This generally results in handicapped students' automatic placement in special education classes when such classes are available. Handicapped students of youth schools having no special education self-contained classes are placed in regular classes. Some difficulty was reported in moving students to less restrictive classes due to the reluctance of regular class teachers to accept students previously placed in special education classes.

Without question, the least restrictive environment available to students for academic instruction and the vast majority of vocational instruction is within the confines of the correctional facility. The interpretation of least restrictive environment against the backdrop of the correctional facility by administrators and staff was reported to be the cause of some conflict. Issues such as automatic placement of handicapped students in special education classes, removal of handicapped students to more or less restrictive classes, and provision of special vocational courses exclusively for low-level handicapped students were the sources of a great deal of discontent among staff.
Variability in perceptions of intent of least restrictive environment regulations and requirements that handicapped students be served in special education classes appear to be the cause of conflicting interpretations. This conflict has resulted in inconsistencies in placement determinations and limitations on placement options.

**Inaccessibility of students.** Programs which are primarily or exclusively under the control of the Department of Corrections (i.e., the Harmon Learning Center special program for the mentally retarded, the Davis Learning Center cottage for emotionally disturbed girls and the personal control cottage of Calhoun Learning Center) limit students' access to special education programs in varying degrees as these students are outside of the central education program and thus outside of established special education procedures. When students are not permitted to come to the central education program, a teacher must be made available to go to the students. A single teacher assigned to the MR program fulfills all instructional and procedural responsibilities for her students, resulting in the total isolation of these students from their peers. A teacher has not been available to consistently serve the handicapped students placed in the personal control cottage of Calhoun Learning Center for behavioral or disciplinary purposes. In these cases, control over students' placement by the DOC results in limited access to students by RSA
personnel.

Determination of special placements for committed youth are outside the purview of Reception and Diagnostic Center RSA personnel except in their limited capacities as Evaluation Service Plan team members. Youth recommended for special placements may be handicapped but are not determined special education eligible through RSA processes since the DOC special placement recommendation takes precedence over the RSA special education eligibility process. There is, therefore, no IEP prepared on which to base a special placement recommendation, which is a departure from state special education regulations.

There was friction between the administrations of the RSA and DOC relating to financial responsibility for the educational portion of the special placement. The RSA has refused to assume these costs due to the rationale for special placements (treatment rather than educational purposes). Further, the RSA is of the opinion that appropriate educational programs are available through its youth school programs, but the DOC does not have appropriate treatment/custody facilities. Therefore, although the RSA could provide appropriate special education services to such students, provision of services is precluded due to DOC placement determination.
Parents and Guardians

The involvement of parents and guardians in special education procedures as required by federal and state regulations was questioned in the literature due to historic exclusion of parents and guardians once a juvenile has been committed to state departments of corrections. Two topics were discussed relative to this issue: the advantages due to the absence of parents and guardians as perceived by teachers and the assignment of and fulfillment of responsibilities by surrogate parents in lieu of parent and guardian involvement.

The use of biological parents or guardians was never seriously considered by RSA central and was perceived by youth school staff to be impossible. Several obstacles contributed to these attitudes: the limited contact and control parents retain once their children are committed to the Department of Corrections, the distance of juveniles' DOC placement from their homes, and the perceived inability of parents or guardians to effectively contribute to educational and treatment decisions.

Teachers with public school experience and experience with parents and guardians in special education procedures preferred the exclusion of parents and guardians in students' special education programming. Teachers reported that the absence of parents or guardians eliminated the problem of lost time in attempting to secure permission for evaluation,
IEP approval and changes in placement and relieved the pressures often exerted by parents or guardians on educational personnel relating to identification, eligibility and programming.

The availability of caseworkers/counselors as surrogate parents and their vested interest in students' educational services were indicated to be preferable to the attempted use of biological parents or guardians. The day-to-day accessibility and knowledge of surrogate parents were cited as facilitating special education procedures.

Location of Facility

The distance youth schools are located from RSA central and the Reception and Diagnostic Center was indicated to have an effect on the evaluation and eligibility processes and on the availability of timely technical assistance. Adams and Garden learning centers, the most distant of the youth schools from the R&DC and RSA central, have difficulty in utilizing R&DC services once a student has been placed in the learning center and must depend on the special education coordinator to provide assessment and procedural technical assistance on-site. Due to the distance involved, the special education coordinator must schedule two days for the visit between R&DC responsibilities. Speech therapy and occupational therapy, generally provided by two DOC personnel filling these positions, are restricted due to
the distance involved. Youth school travel to RSA central
for meetings and inservice programs also is inhibited by
the distance. The acknowledgement of problems created by
the distance factor appears to have contributed to a
conscientiousness on the part of principals of these
facilities to maintain communication with the special educa­
tion coordinator in order to ensure that special education
procedures and programs are being developed and implemented
within guidelines.

The location of learning centers also has a potential
effect on the integration of the incarcerated juvenile
population into the community for employment and vocational
training, academic programs, cultural and social activities.
The two facilities utilizing community placement for voca­
tional training are very different in their distances from
communities: one located in a suburb of a large metropolitan
area and one in a very isolated rural section. The security
classifications of the facilities are also extremely
different: one the highest security level of the learning
centers and the other providing all levels of security.
It would appear, therefore, that the location and security
level of the facility have less impact on the degree of
community involvement than the innovative curriculum designed
by youth school personnel with the cooperation of Department
of Corrections' staff.
The personnel of one learning center located some distance from the R&DC reported a potential problem in complying with the 30-day limit between determination of eligibility and IEP development. Due to the distance involved, students may be retained at the R&DC after staffing/eligibility in order to have dental or medical treatment completed rather than returning to the R&DC after transfer to have treatment completed. It was anticipated that youth school personnel would be unable to formalize IEPs for these students within the 30-day limit.

**Administrative Style and Attitudes of Principals**

The administrative style of principals was reported previously as influencing relationships between RSA and DOC personnel and the innovative use of available resources and personnel to meet student needs. The attitudes of principals, which are in part reflected by their administrative styles, were reported to affect the total educational program and were emphasized in the development and implementation of special education procedures. Principals displayed various reactions to the imposition of special education regulations: some appeared threatened, some resigned to the added responsibilities, some overwhelmed, and some accepted procedures as a challenge and potential advantage for their students. The researcher's perceptions of principals' personality characteristics and subsequent
attitudes were confirmed by RSA central administrators. The most striking example of the impact principals' attitudes and style had on the special education program was the quality and quantity of communication principals maintain with RSA central and other RSA personnel. Personnel of facilities which had perceived a need for a youth school referral system but were unaware of provision for such a mechanism were under a misconception, one that could have been corrected by contacting RSA central, the special education coordinator or other youth school principals. RSA central administrators attributed the absence of principal-initiated communications to isolationist attitudes of some youth school principals. It was indicated that principals who tend to "go by the book" also are less flexible in curriculum design and procedures.

Suggesting reasons for inflexibility and lack of communication with administrative personnel (believed to be related characteristics), administrators surmised that these principals may believe that they are revealing a lack of knowledge or expertise in addressing problems or that they prefer nonintervention by RSA central in their fairly autonomous control over their assigned youth school. Principals who actively seek assistance and vocally express concerns were indicated to have more confidence in their professional abilities and, through active pursuit of advice, assistance and alternatives, had developed more
effective programs to fit the unique needs of their students and staff.

**Funding**

Many interviewees reported that funding levels were insufficient to permit the acquisition of materials specifically designed for use with handicapped students and the employment of additional special education personnel. This is a problem familiar to all educators. The difference between the methods of obtaining funding by the RSA and local school divisions lies in the source of their primary funding and the number of funding sources. Monies may be obtained by the RSA through federal programs (e.g., Titles I, IV-B, VI-B), but the bulk of funding is through direct allocation by the General Assembly. There are no PTAs or civic organizations to help fund special projects; there is no basic state aid. Requests for increases in funding levels must, therefore, be substantiated by irrefutable data submitted to the General Assembly. The consciences and whims of the delegates and senators influence their decisions in designating funds for the RSA and thus the programs and resources available to handicapped students.
Research Question 3. Are absent, unclear or conflicting policies of agencies (State Education Agency, Department of Corrections, Rehabilitative School Authority) related to the provision of mandated special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth?

Attempts to secure formal documents describing Department of Corrections' and Rehabilitative School Authority's policies which were indicated to affect the delivery of special education and related services were stymied. RSA central and R&DC administrators reported that currently available policy and procedures manuals did not reflect accurately the procedures currently in use. As procedures are followed, revisions are made as needed through informal consensus of DOC and RSA administrators. Formal policies and procedures are, therefore, in a constant evolution in response to newly recognized youth needs, reporting requirements, and regulations imposed by outside sources (e.g., court judgments regarding the rights of juveniles, federal mandates related to the acceptance of federal funds and state special education regulations). This in itself is indicative of the milieu in which special education services were to be implemented. The continuous revision of policies and procedures to meet the internal needs of agencies and requirements imposed by external sources may inhibit consistency and become frustrating to those required to implement procedures but having little
voice in the design of procedures and policies. Since RSA and DOC formal policy manuals did not report accurately all policies under which procedures were currently operating, analysis was limited to those policies understood by interviewees to be formal and not subject to change. DOC policies included the precedence of treatment and custody considerations, authority of the R&DC staffing committees relating to learning center and special placements, and the three-week R&DC evaluation period. Policies established by the RSA relating to composition and authority of the eligibility committee, authority of school staffing committees, assignment of surrogate parents, and Individualized Education Plans.

The inflexibility of the DOC-controlled R&DC residency was cited as a policy inhibiting the accurate assessment of referred students. The limited three-week placement of students at the Reception and Diagnostic Center was found in some cases to be inadequate for the administration of special education evaluation components. Related to the issue of the transfer of students on DOC time lines, the principal of a youth school located some distance from the R&DC was concerned that IEPs of students retained at the R&DC for dental or medical treatment beyond the usual three weeks would not be developed within the time limitation established by state regulations. The authority and discretion of DOC personnel determine the time of transfer
of students to learning centers with no regard for special education procedural needs.

The policy focus of the Department of Corrections (custody and treatment) and that of the RSA (education) were found to be in conflict most notably in placement determinations. The precedence of DOC determined placement based on custody and treatment needs inhibits provision of special education services and, in the case of special placements, fulfillment of procedural responsibilities. The R&DC staffing committee, which determines placement of youth in DOC learning centers or special placements outside of the DOC, precedes determination of special education eligibility for those students referred during the R&DC evaluation. Some learning centers were perceived by interviewees to have special education programs more appropriate for the specific needs of some students than other youth schools. However, since correctional considerations (i.e., custody) take priority, vis a vis DOC policy, staff are precluded from recommending a learning center placement on the basis of special education needs if they are in conflict with correctional considerations.

Similarly, special placements are made on the basis of treatment considerations. The priorities established by the DOC for special placement recommendations include youth exhibiting social, emotional, and/or academic dysfunction which would prevent adjustment in the community
or cannot be adequately addressed in a learning center; youth with documented need for psychiatric intervention; emotionally disturbed youth with traits which cannot be addressed by learning center psychologists and who may adversely affect other youth; identified handicapped students who demonstrate a willingness to remediate; and youth with extensive history of institutional placements. Priorities indicate that a large number of special placement recommendations would be made for handicapped youth.

Unfortunately, the order of the staffing and eligibility meetings does not facilitate RSA identification of handicapped students prior to special placement determination.

The placement of youth by DOC learning center personnel in special programs (i.e., personal control cottage and special programs for the emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded) may limit the access students are afforded to special education programs and procedures. The precedence of custody and treatment considerations over educational and least restrictive environment concerns precludes RSA control over these placements.

Privileges, including participation in off-campus programs, are determined by the treatment team serving each student on the basis of custody considerations. RSA personnel do not have as great a voice in treatment teams as DOC personnel. This may limit handicapped students' access to off-campus programs and thus further restrict
educational options.

RSA policies in conflict with those of the SEA were found where new special education policies had been inserted into previous DOC and RSA policies and in the development of new policies independent of any previously imposed requirements.

The development and use of the R&DC staffing and eligibility as dual processes were reported to have both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, it reinforced the concept of special education evaluation as an extension of regular intake evaluation and permitted participation of all personnel serving in evaluation and counseling capacities for each referred youth. The negative effects reported included the clinical and correctional foci of personnel other than educational evaluators rather than an educational focus. The order of the two meetings precludes consideration of special education eligibility and needs in determination of placement.

The formal IEP policies designed by RSA central adhere fairly close to state regulations. However, in the absence of policy in some areas and with the overlay of DOC policies, a number of points of divergence from state regulations emerge.

Related to issues involved in the placement of handicapped students outside of the DOC learning centers is the lack of a policy which would permit the development of an
IEP for these students prior to the placement. This results in the special placement implementation in the absence of an IEP which, were one available, would facilitate linkage between evaluation, placement and instruction and would adhere more closely to state regulations.

The continued authority of school staffing committees to place students in youth school classes causes two problems: (a) the placement of ineligible students in special education classes and (b) the receipt of special education services by handicapped students before an IEP is in effect. With reference to IEP meeting participants, no evaluator is available to assist in the development of initial IEPs and no students are invited to participate.

No provision was made in RSA policy for a review of IEPs subsequent or consequent to placement modifications within youth school programs. This has resulted in the development of processes varying in compliance with state regulations at the discretion of youth school personnel.

The absence of RSA policy for the referral of students by youth school personnel has also resulted in the development of informal processes which are largely not in compliance with state regulations.

The method of assignment of surrogate parents may be questioned. Caseworkers/counselors are employees of a public agency (DOC) involved in the care of handicapped students, which is indicated by federal special education
regulations to preclude their serving as surrogate parents. Since state regulations addressing this issue have not been finalized, a comparison between RSA and SEA policies is not possible. However, state regulations are required to adhere to federal regulations, so one may expect that this method of assignment would not be in compliance with state regulations ultimately promulgated. In this case, the lack of a State Education Agency policy has contributed to the discrepancy between RSA policy and federal special education regulations relating to the assignment of surrogate parents.

The assignment of staff may be more accurately described as agency organization but may be included under a broadly interpreted definition of policy. The lack of a single line of authority over all evaluation and related service personnel was reported to be detrimental to the conduct of special education evaluations and provision of related services.

It was found that the policies or lack of policies affecting the conduct of special education procedures extended beyond the SEA, RSA and DOC to the local court service units and local education agencies. The primary problem emerging from absence of formal policy in this area was the lack of coordination needed to transfer students' educational records, most notably confidential
records, relating to individual testing and special education eligibility and programming.
Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to describe the actual processes used to implement state special education requirements within juvenile correctional facilities of Virginia and to identify the factors which affect the implementation of such processes. The formal procedures designed by the central administration of the Rehabilitative School Authority to provide special education and related services were found to have been affected by a number of systemwide and facility-specific factors. A variety of factors suggested by literature and absent from the literature were reported to have an impact on not only the implementation of formal procedures but also on the development of formal procedures and informal mechanisms in lieu of defined procedures. Discussion of procedures concurrent with factors reported to have an effect on their development and implementation clarifies the current milieu in which special education and related services are provided and the relationship between procedures and the factors which affect them.

Comparison of procedures utilized in the Reception and Diagnostic Center and RSA youth schools revealed similarities and dissimilarities between facilities and with state special education regulations. Generally,
similarities in procedures across facilities were found where specific procedures had been defined by RSA central. In procedural areas not specified, thus leaving the definition and design of procedures to the discretion of facility administrators and staff, great variability existed across facilities.

The regular intake evaluation of the Reception and Diagnostic Center is considered the screening process for all youth committed to the Department of Corrections. It is conducted by a multidisciplinary team and consists of social, psychological, educational, medical and cottage living assessments. All students are screened in the areas of vision and hearing but speech and gross and fine motor assessments are not routinely administered. A referral for special education evaluation may be made by any member of the multidisciplinary team who suspects an educationally handicapping condition or challenges a community identification. Students previously identified as handicapped and whose identification is not challenged are noted by being "red-flagged," and no additional R&DC special education procedures are required. For each referred student, a completed referral form is submitted to the special education coordinator who meets informally with members of the team to determine the legitimacy of the referral and to recommend any additional testing deemed appropriate. The special education coordinator obtains permission for
testing from the DOC caseworker/counselor (surrogate parent) assigned to the referred student. Additional evaluation recommended via the referral form is targeted for completion by the staffing/eligibility date, three weeks from students' entrance to the R&DC. Evaluations adhere to nondiscriminatory testing requirements of the state.

The eligibility committee of the R&DC consists of members of the multidisciplinary team with either the RSA principal or special education coordinator chairing. The meeting is held immediately after the staffing committee which determines students' placement within DOC facilities or in special placements. All evaluation data are presented from written reports during the staffing committee and are considered in the determination of eligibility or ineligibility for special education by the eligibility committee. The eligibility committee has not strictly adhered to the learning disabilities identification requirements, primarily in the areas of classroom observation, discussion of discrepancies, and relevant medical or sociocultural data relating to the LD classification.

There have been instances in which eligibility must be deferred due to incomplete components, most often in the areas of speech, occupational and physical therapy. If eligibility must be deferred, staffing continues to be held as scheduled and the student is transferred to the
recommended placement. Incomplete components generally are finalized within two to eight weeks after the staffing committee at which time the R&DC eligibility committee determines the eligibility or ineligibility of students. The results and evaluation information are transmitted to students' current placement.

Procedures conducted at the R&DC were reported to have been facilitated by the use of intact centralized personnel and the extensive use of informal communication among RSA and DOC staff as informal mechanisms supplemental to formal procedures and meetings. Other than the mechanics of the referral process and eligibility meeting, evaluation procedures were unchanged since the onset of special education procedures.

The concern of the Council for Exceptional Children (Public Law 94-142 Oversight Hearings, 1979) that insufficient or inappropriate evaluation was a problem in the identification of incarcerated handicapped youth was to some degree substantiated. Student-related factors found to restrain accurate identification of handicapped youth included in the number of students referred for additional assessment, their agitated emotional condition during the R&DC evaluation and the occurrence of low-incidence categories of handicapping conditions requiring specialized testing. Problems anticipated by authors relating to transfer of information (Brown and Robbins, 1979; Public
Law 94-142 Oversight Hearings, 1979) and cooperation between agencies (Brown and Robbins, 1979; Hagerty and Israelski, 1981; Hockenberry, 1980) were evidenced by the difficulty experienced by R&DC personnel in obtaining local school division Category II records. This was perceived to have negative effects on planning and interpreting evaluation. Two concerns, that of Schneider (1979) relating to the rapid classification of youth and that of the Council for Exceptional Children (Public Law 94-142 Oversight Hearings, 1979) and Brown and Robbins (1979) relating to the transfer of information between agencies, were reported in that the DOC-imposed three-week limit on youths' residency contributes to the problem of acquisition of community records and limits access to students for additional evaluation prior to students' transfer to DOC placements.

The problem of limited personnel, particularly in related service areas, compounded by additional procedural and evaluation requirements, was reported to contribute to deferred eligibility determinations. The assignment of evaluation personnel to two different agencies, the DOC and the RSA, was reported to be problematic since RSA administrators have responsibility for compliance with special education procedures but not the authority to direct the majority of evaluation personnel. Although informal communication among evaluation staff was cited as
contributing to efficient conduct of procedures, conflict between RSA and DOC personnel was cited as problematic. This was attributed to differing professional foci of RSA educational evaluators and DOC evaluators resulting in conflict in interpretations of definitions of handicapping conditions and an educational versus clinical perspective in interpretation of evaluation data. This type of conflict, indicated by several authors to be an historical problem (Coughlin, 1977; Goffman, 1961; Johnson, 1979; Kendall, 1973), was found to transcend interpersonal relationships to actual treatment considerations.

Students recommended for special placements outside of the DOC are removed from RSA control by virtue of R&DC decisions. Although these students may be handicapped, the DOC determination that no learning center is capable of meeting the special treatment needs of the students takes precedence over educational considerations. RSA personnel have minimal voice in special placement determination; and once this determination is made, lack of RSA access to students for special education procedures precludes eligibility determination and IEP development prior to enactment of the special placement.

Four youth schools have referred students for additional evaluation suspecting an educationally handicapping condition of previously unidentified students. The fairly consistent procedures used in the youth schools
are not formally described by any document but seem to have evolved to meet youth school staff and student needs. Upon being informed by a teacher or teachers of the need for additional evaluation of a student, the youth school principal contacts the special education coordinator to request the evaluation. The coordinator orchestrates the evaluation. Students may be tested at the learning center by the special education coordinator, R&DC educational evaluators, and/or related service personnel or at the R&DC when the learning center is located in close proximity to the R&DC. The eligibility meeting is held on the site of the evaluation. The components used to determine eligibility for youth school-referred students include those administered during the R&DC regular intake evaluation, classroom observation and testing data, and the results of the recently administered additional evaluations.

Since youth generally are released from the Department of Corrections in less than three years and special education evaluation procedures had been implemented only six months prior to this study, no triennial reevaluations had been necessary except for youth assigned to the Harmon Learning Center special mental retardation program. Youth of this program usually have been identified in the community prior to commitment and remain under the jurisdiction of the DOC longer than youth outside of the special program. When triennial reevaluations become necessary, the teacher
of this program has recommended the reevaluation of students who were consequently assessed at the R&DC. The special education coordinator reported that if a student were received at the R&DC for regular intake evaluation with a community identification approaching the three-year expiration, she would initiate a referral for reevaluation.

Youth schools which had initiated mechanisms for the referral and evaluation of previously unidentified students displayed common concerns regarding R&DC assessments which did not accurately evaluate students' educational needs, particularly those that became apparent in the classroom setting. Evaluations conducted with youth school-referred students generally were believed to be more accurate than those conducted at the R&DC since students had become more stable emotionally in the security of learning center and youth school environments. Although students were perceived to have vastly different needs than those of the nonincarcerated population (Johnson, 1980; Skok and Trukenmiller, 1979; Valletutti and Mopsik, 1973), the youth school and learning center were believed to meet the structure and security needs of students and reduce to some degree the emotional instability displayed by students during R&DC evaluations. As a result, some youth found eligible for special education were found to need less attention than anticipated by R&DC personnel: Problems identified at the R&DC became nonproblems in the youth school and
Although this was a common perception of staff, only one youth school had referred students for evaluation anticipating dismissal from special education.

Personnel of one youth school questioned the results of evaluations conducted at youth schools believing that insufficient time resulted in cursory assessment. Confusion regarding the characteristics of handicapping conditions and definitions of handicaps among youth school personnel were reported to contribute to misunderstandings.

The use of R&DC evaluation data in determination of eligibility of youth school-referred students is questionable in light of SEA requirements since all components have not been administered after acquisition of surrogate parent permission, components may be outside of the total 65 days permitted for referral, evaluation and eligibility processes, and that those people who collected assessment data are not members of the eligibility committee. Although use of R&DC evaluation data is administratively expedient, it is not in compliance with state requirements for evaluation.

Processes developed by facilities were found to be subject to facility-specific factors such as staff dynamics and program variables. Staff dynamics (Baroff, 1980; Felsenthal and Scheerenberger, 1978; Johnson, 1980) were found to affect the development of processes not specified
by formal RSA procedures. Informal referral mechanisms relied on open communication between staff and the willingness of principals to seek out additional information and assistance from outside sources. A misconception, contributed to by a lack of communication with sources outside the youth school, resulted in the absence of a referral process at one youth school. The attitudes and administrative style of principals were reported to have been instrumental in the development of mechanisms left unspecified by formal RSA procedures. Those principals open to outside assistance and confident in their abilities were perceived to facilitate the development of referral and evaluation mechanisms.

Facilities which had not developed referral processes reported that the limited placement options and time required for completion of processes would make a referral somewhat futile. The perception that regular education and special education programs were largely undifferentiated contributed to the lack of development of referral processes and, in facilities having such mechanisms available, the choice by teachers not to refer students since little, other than a label, would be gained for identified students. The time required for completion of referral, evaluation, and IEP processes was expected by staff to extend beyond students' release from the Department of Corrections, thus discouraging staff from advocating use of a referral system.
These findings substantiated concerns related by literature: limited program options (Hockenberry, 1980), transiency of the population (Schneider, 1979), and institutional climate, specifically, the absence of shared development of processes and goals (Johnson, 1980).

The development of the IEP was designated by RSA central to be a youth school function. Other than definition of the format of the IEP document, use and membership of the standing IEP committee and 30-day limit between eligibility determination and formalization of the IEP, mechanisms to achieve procedures were left to the discretion of youth school personnel. Thus, a great deal of variability existed among youth schools in the areas of formulation of goals and objectives, timing of the IEP meeting within the 30 days, placement within the youth school program based on the IEP and review of the IEP subsequent or consequent to a requested placement modification. The flexibility afforded youth schools in design of processes not specified by RSA central permits youth schools to, ideally, capitalize on personnel and facility strengths. The absence of guidelines or formal procedures, however, limits consistency and continuity between youth schools and threatens compliance with state regulations.

In all youth schools, initial placement decisions are made by a staffing committee on the basis of R&DC data, cottage assignment and/or space available. School staffing
committees were the sole placement authority prior to implementation of special education regulations. The use of staffing committees has met the DOC need for rapid placement of students in educational programs upon transfer to learning centers. The criteria for placement in classes has not changed substantially since the implementation of special education procedures since classes currently termed "special education" also were available previously for low-functioning students. Where placement options are available (i.e., special education, remedial and/or regular classes), the staffing committee is to determine placement on the basis of educational level and space available. When different levels of classes are not available, cottage assignment and space available rule staffing committee decisions. Supplemental to staffing committee placement, one youth school has continued to permit special education teachers to select students in need of special services and to remove them from staffing committee-assigned placements prior to the IEP meeting.

Five youth schools require teachers to whom students have been assigned to develop goals and objectives prior to the IEP meeting. One youth school has the standing IEP committee select goals and objectives during the meeting from lists prepared by teachers in the fall of 1981 for each curriculum area. The timing of the IEP committee meeting following student arrival at the learning center ranges from
five to thirty days.

The issue of who prepares goals and objectives for the IEP (teachers serving the student versus the IEP committee) was less of an issue than why goals and objectives were selected or developed. Some teachers responsible for development of goals and objectives prior to the IEP meeting utilize lists of objectives keyed to classroom curricula while others devise objectives for each student. The former method differs little from the selection of goals and objectives by the IEP committee from prepared lists. The purpose for development of goals and objectives was more influential than who developed them or how they were selected. Youth schools which emphasized the use of goals and objectives as guides to instruction reported effort on the part of persons responsible for their development to coordinate goals and objectives with students' individual needs and abilities.

Previous staff experience with instructional objectives and on-site technical assistance by knowledgeable special education personnel were cited as advantageous to the formulation of IEP goals and objectives. Restraining accurate development of goals and objectives were the limited time teachers have access to students prior to submission of goals and objectives and the lack of training or, in lieu of training, specific information on which to draw in developing of goals and objectives for
low-incidence categories of handicap or specific learning problems. Interviewees reported that a number of these needs could have been met and thus problems alleviated if accurate, timely and germane inservice preparation had been provided to youth school personnel. Interviewees believed, however, that new sources of information were necessary as RSA central personnel had not the breadth of information necessary and SEA personnel could not relate to the correctional setting or the needs of the students and teachers.

Four youth schools use a standing IEP committee consisting of the RSA principal or vice-principal, an academic teacher, a vocational teacher, and the surrogate parent. One school adds the special education resource teacher to the standing committee. Finding that the standing committee was unsatisfactory, one youth school requires participation of all teachers serving the student, the RSA vice-principal and the surrogate parent. In all youth schools, students do not participate, and generally no evaluators are available for initial IEP meetings.

The effect the composition of the IEP committee may have on planning instruction is obscured by personnel characteristics (i.e., knowledge of special education instruction and procedures). The personnel of the youth school using teachers serving the student on the IEP committee displayed more comprehensive planning and knowledge of youth school programming options than did
personnel of youth schools utilizing a standing IEP committee. However, this is also the youth school with the greatest number of experienced special education staff. Personnel of the youth school which adds the special education resource teacher to the standing IEP committee reported successful use of the IEP in planning and provision of instruction. The principal of this school had purposefully selected teachers with knowledge of special education and experience in development of instructional objectives to fill the academic and vocational teachers' positions on the standing committee. Overall, principals had selected experienced and knowledgeable personnel for the standing IEP committees. Committees were operative and had fulfilled procedural requirements. Differences between facilities using the standing IEP committee or modification and the facility using teachers serving the student appeared to lie more in the linkage between the IEP committee and instruction provided and the knowledge and experience of personnel planning and providing special education instruction.

Three interviewees of different youth schools reported that the lack of participation of students in IEP meetings was unfortunate in that students were not given the opportunity to assist in the planning of their instructional programs. It was believed that students would react positively to this responsibility by cooperating and complying
with classroom requirements in order to attain mutually agreed upon goals.

The absence of an evaluator on IEP committees developing initial IEPs was perceived by youth school interviewees to impede accurate interpretation of R&DC data. Since state regulations require participation of an evaluator in the development of initial IEPs, this is also in conflict with state regulations.

Placement modifications based on the initial IEP usually is not made for three reasons: (a) students' receipt of special education resource services is effected through an informal request to the principal, (b) students have already been placed appropriately if the staffing committee used R&DC data for initial placement, and (c) lack of alternative placements. In three youth schools, students may receive resource services through approval of a teacher's request by the principal. One of these schools also may indicate that a student may receive resource services on an "as needed" basis on the IEP. The staffing committee has the authority to place handicapped and non-handicapped students in regular and special education classes. This creates two conflicts with state regulations: the receipt of special education services by handicapped youth before an IEP is in effect and the placement of nonhandicapped youth in special education classes.
As suggested by Hockenberry (1980) placement options are limited. This was reported to be a function of lack of special education positions. This, in concert with no specification of procedures by RSA central, has resulted in little definition of processes relating to special education placement and formal documentation of observation of least restrictive environment mandates. Processes utilized for initial placement of students in classes have not changed in response to or in coordination with the implementation of special education procedures. Additionally, the absence of formal RSA procedures for review and modification of placement has resulted in facility-specific mechanisms ranging from formal review of the IEP with the full IEP committee to simple approval by the principal with no review of the IEP when a placement modification is requested. Two youth schools hold a formal meeting to review the IEP and placement upon teacher recommendation for change in placement. The IEP is not modified in conjunction with a recommended placement change in two youth schools, and the remaining two facilities do not make placement modifications due to lack of placement options.

Youth school IEP and placement procedures were reported to be affected primarily by personnel variables such as experience, training, attitudes and group dynamics. Factors affecting the provision of programs and instruction were student-related (characteristics, number, variety of
handicapping conditions), personnel-related (experience, training, attitudes, number) and largely dependent on placement options within the youth school.

The dynamics of facility staff were perceived to have an impact on planning for instruction and modifying placement. Open communication, positive attitudes toward acceptance of handicapped students in regular classes and informal mechanisms to maintain flexibility in changing placement were reported to positively influence efficient programming when present in the youth school environment. Where teachers lack confidence and experience and/or knowledge in special education, a great reluctance to participate in procedures and programming was reported. This was attributed to inadequate training prior to implementation of special education requirements. It was expected that if, as suggested by Johnson (1980), inservice training were to address the rationale driving procedures, more genuine commitment and voluntary participation would be forthcoming from all staff.

Knowledge of special education regulations and interpretation of regulations affected staff support of administrative directives. More staff support was evident when interpretations of regulations were consistent among staff and administrators than when interpretations were in conflict. This was particularly true of interpretation and enactment of least restrictive environment regulations.
The provision of instruction was reported to be affected by the necessity of addressing the great variety of handicapping conditions displayed by youth and their intensified educational, behavioral, and social needs within few placement options. The ability of teachers to individualize instruction and their commitment and concern for students were cited as the primary driving forces permitting effective instruction within placement limitations. Knowledgeable, sharing special education personnel who could provide on-site technical assistance aided provision of services by regular class teachers to handicapped youth. Endorsed special education teachers who had had public school experience or were recent graduates of special education training programs appeared to have a better understanding of state required procedures and more ability to assist in the development of processes in compliance with state regulations than non-special education personnel or endorsed special education teachers who had received their professional education prior to the enactment of federal regulations or enforcement of state regulations.

An inadequate number of special education positions was reported in every facility to inhibit adequate and effective instruction, particularly in those facilities having only resource programs and in those facilities serving numbers of youth of low-incidence category of
handicap and/or needing related services. This difficulty is compounded by the lack of control the RSA may exert over student placement in learning centers, precluding the location of specific categorical programs at designated youth schools since there is no guarantee that all youth needing a particular educational program would be assigned to the learning center housing the appropriate educational program.

The isolated location of learning centers was perceived to inhibit the use of state agency or community agency services which could otherwise be utilized for low-incidence and related services provision. Use of community academic programs has not been a viable alternative, thus handicapped youth are limited to the intact special education programs within the youth school of their learning center placement.

Related to the issue of availability of special education and related services to handicapped youth is the removal of some students by the DOC to special programs within learning centers for custody or treatment purposes. The limitations imposed by the DOC assignment of youth to the Harmon Learning Center mental retardation program, the Davis Learning Center emotionally disturbed program and the Calhoun Learning Center personal control cottage decrease students' access to general education programs, RSA access to students and are, overall, a threat to the
concept of least restrictive environment.

The administration and organization of the RSA and its youth schools were reported to have an impact on many facets of the development and implementation of special education processes. The systemwide organization of the RSA does not provide for evaluators or special education administrators to be assigned to youth schools. The absence of this type of readily available assistance hindered the development and clarity of youth school processes, the interpretation of RSA formal procedures, the timely evaluation of youth school-referred students and linkage between evaluation and program development for handicapped students. The administrative styles, personalities and attitudes of principals were perceived to have a profound impact on programs, particularly in the absence of RSA central directives. Flexibility of mechanisms, use of personnel, involvement of DOC personnel and creative and innovative design of curricula were reported to be affected by principals' decisions and reflective of their attitudes.

The role of biological parents and guardians was a major concern of Hockenberry (1980) and Brown and Robbins (1979). Although the majority of youth committed to the DOC are not wards of the state, no attempt had been made by the RSA to involve biological parents or guardians through traditional or alternative methods. Department of Corrections' caseworkers/counselors have been assigned
the role of surrogate parents for youth on their caseload. All youth referred for special education evaluation and/or eligible for special education are assigned a surrogate parent.

The effectiveness of surrogate parents was reported to be related to the relationship of DOC and RSA staff, the processes developed for IEP and placement reviews, and the personal and professional character of surrogate parents. The use of DOC caseworkers/counselors as surrogate parents was reported to have had a positive effect on staff dynamics. Through contact with youth school personnel, surrogate parents had become more familiar with the education profession and teachers' abilities and needs thereby gaining respect for teachers both in teachers' educational capacities and in their treatment team responsibilities.

In light of the perceived success of the utilization of DOC personnel as surrogate parents, it is unfortunate to note that this method is not in compliance with federal requirements. Employees of a public agency involved in the care of a child are not permitted under federal regulations to serve as surrogate parents. However, in the absence of clear SEA policy on this issue, this method was reported by RSA administrators to have been reviewed and approved by the SEA since the RSA and DOC are separate state agencies.
In addition to the positive effect on staff relations perceived through surrogate parent involvement, special education procedures were reported to have made contributions to the overall administration and organization of youth schools. The use of highly developed formal procedures was believed to lend needed structure to general education programs by increasing accountability and providing needed consistency to actions and decision making. This was reported to not necessarily ensure better educational programs; but, through the use of consistent procedures as a base, would permit development of increased quality in programming. Although some teachers resented accountability measures introduced by special education procedures, administrators reported that accountability was a previous weakness which had inhibited consistency in youth school programs.

Lack of policies or discrepancies between agencies' policies were intimated by a number of factors reported to affect the development and implementation of special education procedures. These were not limited, however, to relationships between the Department of Corrections, Rehabilitative School Authority and State Education Agency but were found to extend to local education agencies and local court service units.

The absence of up-to-date DOC and RSA policies and procedures manuals, reported to be the result of constant
evolution of policies and procedures, is indicative of the pressures under which the DOC and RSA are required to operate. Policies must be modified to meet the requirements of authorities outside of the DOC and RSA as well as in response to changing needs within the agencies. The absence of formal policies and procedures may, however, make the addition of procedures within current policy and evaluation of policies difficult.

Although the development of RSA special education procedures within existing DOC and RSA procedures was administratively expedient, merged special education procedures occasionally fell short of meeting state special education requirements. Areas of conflict between RSA and SEA policies were found largely in those areas in which an attempt had been made to work within existing DOC and RSA policies.

The relationship of the R&DC staffing and eligibility committees is the foremost example of this interaction. The precedence of DOC placement determination over determination of special education eligibility limits consideration of special education needs in learning center placements and precludes IEP development for students recommended for special placements outside of the Department of Corrections. The latter, particularly when the special placement is to be a state mental health or mental retardation facility is in direct conflict with state policy.
A second example of conflict between RSA procedures and SEA requirements as a result of the attempt to develop special education procedures within current processes is the relationship of the time of acquisition of surrogate parent permission to the administration of assessments utilized in determination of special education eligibility. R&DC referrals are based on regular intake evaluation data. Surrogate parent permission is obtained after some individual evaluation of the student, results of which are utilized by the eligibility committee as the state-required evaluation components. This problem is compounded for youth school-referred students. First, R&DC data, the result of evaluation administered prior to surrogate parent permission, is utilized in eligibility determination. Second, components may be outside of the SEA time limits. Third, all evaluators are not members of the youth school-located eligibility committee. Thus, the use of R&DC data obtained prior to surrogate parent permission is administratively expedient, but it creates conflict between RSA procedures and SEA requirements.

The three-week limitation imposed by the DOC on students' R&DC residency for evaluation limits accurate assessment. When exceptions to the three-week limitation are made for medical or dental treatment, youth schools ultimately receiving the student may be unable to develop an IEP within state-required time lines. Therefore, it
becomes apparent that exceptions may be made for DOC purposes but not for RSA purposes.

Extending the interpretation of policy to what positions and personnel agencies are permitted to offer to combined procedural efforts, the lack of a single line of authority over R&DC evaluators must be noted. Having responsibility for compliance with special education procedures but limited authority over personnel necessary to conduct procedures places RSA administrators in a precarious and difficult position.

Several authors expressed the general concern that the involvement of a number of previously unassociated agencies inhibits provision of special education and related services (Hagerty and Israeliski, 1981; Johnson, 1979; Jones, 1979) and specifically that the transfer of information among diverse agencies is problematic (Brown and Robbins, 1979; Hockenberry, 1980). These concerns were substantiated by the frequently cited difficulty in acquisition and transfer of student records. Previous absence of policy at local and state levels contributes to the lack of a formal procedure by which to transfer student records prior to commitment and upon release from the Department of Corrections. The involvement of SEA, RSA, DOC, local court service unit and local education agency personnel compounds the problem of records transfer and limits continuity of educational programming.
The problems created by inefficient or nonexistent transfer of records were reported to affect evaluation and IEP development and were surmised to affect continuity of educational programming upon students' reintegration into the community. Evaluation may be repeated needlessly if available records do not indicate community determination of special education eligibility. Assessment data may be invalidated by the administration of standardized tests during the RSA special education evaluation which were recently administered in the community. Community-developed IEPs would be useful to youth school IEP committees and, through their use, would lend continuity to educational programming. Similarly, the receipt of RSA evaluation data and IEPs by local school divisions would facilitate the continuance of educational programs upon students' release. Operative procedures for the timely transfer of records between state and local agencies sharing responsibility for adjudicated handicapped youth would improve the efficiency, accuracy and provision of special education programming.

As suggested by Hockenberry (1980) the differing policy focus of the DOC and RSA was found to have an impact on the development of special education procedures. In many cases, conflict between RSA procedures and SEA regulations was found as a result of the overlay of DOC policies and procedures. This is exemplified by the DOC
rationale for special placements outside of the DOC facilities and the removal of learning center youth from youth school programs for custodial purposes which limit or preclude RSA access to handicapped students. The custodial or security focus of DOC policy not only dictates the placement of youth among learning centers but also to affect the access students may or may not be afforded to off-campus vocational programs. Least restrictive environment as relating to off-campus programs is controlled primarily by DOC decisions.

Direct conflict between RSA and SEA policies as represented by procedures independent of DOC control were found in the assignment of surrogate parents and in placement of youth in special education classes. Difficulty in the involvement of natural parents or guardians was suspected by Brown and Robbins (1979) and Hockenberry (1980) and was indicated by administrators not to be a viable procedure. Assignment of DOC personnel, however, is in conflict with federal special education regulations since they are employees of a public agency involved in the care of the youth to which they are assigned as surrogate parents. The RSA policy directing assignment of surrogate parents was developed in the absence of clear SEA policy.

The assignment of nonhandicapped youth to special education classes was perceived by the researcher not to be a purposeful violation of SEA policy but a result of
past use of classes entitled "special education" for low-functioning youth prior to enactment of special education procedures. To remove this placement option from low-functioning ineligible students may prove disastrous unless additional non-special education placement options were forthcoming.

Handicapped youth receive special education services prior to IEP development by virtue of their placement in special education classes by the school staffing committees. This is a result of continued use of staffing committees with intact authority, the timing of the IEP meeting and the need to enter students in educational programs within days of their arrival at learning centers.

The dearth of timely and accurate technical assistance from the SEA as the RSA began developing special education procedures was a major administrative concern. Compounded with the reality of minimal contact between local court service units, local education agencies and the RSA due to the intervening authority of state agencies, the design and implementation of special education procedures within state regulations may best be interpreted as the RSA's first gallant attempt to insert highly regulated procedures into intact local and state bureaucratic agencies over which the RSA exerts no authority.
Major Findings and Conclusions

Research Question 1. What are the processes used by the Rehabilitative School Authority (RSA) to implement Virginia Department of Education (SEA) Office of Special and Compensatory Education regulations governing the education of handicapped children?

Major Findings

Major findings relating to research question one were as follows:

1.1 Formal procedures governing the screening, referral, evaluation, eligibility and IEP development processes developed by the RSA were found to be operative and in varying compliance with state regulations.

1.2 The absence of RSA procedures precluded compliance with SEA special education requirements in the areas of screening components and prior notice.

1.3 The authority of school staffing committees and the use of regular intake data administered prior to surrogate parent permission in eligibility determinations resulted in conflict between state regulations and RSA procedures.

1.4 Department of Corrections-imposed limitations such as limited access to students in special placements outside of the DOC and within learning center placements precluded adherence to least restrictive environment
mandates and state requirements.

1.5 Procedural areas not defined by RSA central and developed at the discretion of youth school personnel revealed variability between youth schools and varying compliance with state special education regulations.

1.6 Formal procedures developed by the RSA and required by state special education regulations for IEP annual review and triennial reevaluation have not been utilized since these situations do not frequently arise.

1.7 Structured procedures have not been developed for situations which have limited potential responses such as placement based on IEPs and documentation of least restrictive environment considerations.

1.8 The use of DOC employees in the role of surrogate parents is not in compliance with special education regulations. No attempts had been made to involve biological parents or guardians through alternative methods.

Conclusions

The majority of RSA procedures are in compliance with state special education regulations. There are, however, state requirements which have not been addressed by RSA procedures and processes being implemented by the RSA which do not adhere to mandated regulations.
Research Question 2. What are the factors which affect the implementation of delivery of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth as perceived by Rehabilitative School Authority personnel?

Major Findings

Major findings relating to research question two were as follows:

2.1 The most influential factor affecting the implementation of formal procedures, design and conduct of supplementary processes and provision of special education and related services was personnel: the number of special education and related service personnel and the knowledge of special education requirements, attitudes relating to incarcerated handicapped and nonhandicapped youth, instructional abilities and professional focus and style of all personnel, and specifically youth school principals.

2.2 Student variables, specifically the large number of students eligible or potentially eligible for special education and related services and the diverse behavioral, social and educational needs of all students, have an effect on accurate identification of handicapped students and provision of appropriate educational services.

2.3 The correctional milieu in which special education and related services are provided lends needed structure and security to students but limits access to students,
inhibits students' development of appropriate social skills, restricts the variety of settings in which services may be provided and requires placement of students for correctional or treatment purposes rather than educational needs.

2.4 Processes developed by youth schools in support or in lieu of formal procedures were found to be variably affected by facility-specific factors such as experience, knowledge and attitudes of personnel; location and size of facilities; and relationship with DOC personnel.

2.5 The absence of a full continuum of services, limited use of RSA, community or state agency resources due to DOC impositions and location of facilities; the paucity of special education and related service personnel; and limited understanding of youth school personnel relating to procedures and rationale driving procedures inhibited the provision of special education and related services.

Conclusions

Personnel and student variables and DOC-imposed limitations restrain the provision of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth.

Research Question 3. Are absent, unclear or conflicting policies of agencies (State Education Agency, Department of Corrections, Rehabilitative School Authority) related to the provision of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth?
Major Findings

Major findings relating to research question three were as follows:

3.1 The ongoing revision of DOC and RSA policies and procedures in response to agencies' internal needs and imposition of requirements by external sources may inhibit consistency in conduct of procedures and prove difficult in attempts to monitor and evaluate programs.

3.2 Discrepancies between RSA procedures and state-required procedures arise from the development of RSA special education procedures within former RSA policies not consistent with state special education regulations.

3.3 Differing policy foci of the DOC and RSA and the precedence of DOC custody and treatment considerations over the educational considerations of the RSA restrain the provision of mandated special education and related services in the least restrictive environment.

3.4 The absence of formal policies relating to transfer of information between state agencies (DOC, RSA, SEA) and local agencies (local court service units and local education agencies) restrains the timely and accurate identification of handicapped youth and the provision and continuity of special education and related services.

3.5 The absence of clear SEA policy governing the assignment of surrogate parents inhibits the development of RSA policy relating to the same.
Conclusions

The absence of Department of Corrections, Rehabilitative School Authority, State Education Agency and local agency policies; conflict between RSA and SEA policies and differential policy foci of the DOC and RSA impede the provision of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth.

Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to describe the actual processes used to implement state special education requirements within Virginia juvenile correctional facilities and to identify the factors which affect the implementation of processes. Based on findings of the study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Intensive inservice training for all DOC and RSA personnel addressing procedures to be implemented, the rationale necessitating procedures, and characteristics of handicapped children is necessary to encourage voluntary cooperation of staff and to reduce staff conflict stemming from differential interpretations of regulations. DOC and RSA personnel should receive joint training in order to facilitate information sharing, encourage cooperative planning, and ensure consistency of information.

2. Additional inservice provided to youth school personnel on an ongoing basis addressing instructional methodologies and staff-initiated topics would allay fears and build
confidence by providing specific knowledges that would support staff in their participation in special education procedures and programming.

3. Due to the tremendous influence principals' knowledge and attitudes have on provision of services, specific and on-going training and support should be provided to principals in the areas of special education requirements and program design.

4. Inservice training directed to DOC personnel may encourage coordination of functions and increase flexibility of DOC policies which were found to inhibit provision of special education and related services.

5. Additional youth school special education instructional personnel would expand the continuum of services available to handicapped students in youth school programs and facilitate provision of services to handicapped students in learning center special programs. Due to the placement of handicapped students throughout learning centers, itinerant teachers for low-incidence handicapping conditions and providers of related services (speech therapy, occupational therapy and adapted physical education) appear to be viable solutions.

6. Employment of special education evaluation and administrative personnel by the RSA for assignment to youth school programs and reporting to RSA central would provide needed support to youth schools in the identification of handicapped youth, development and implementation of processes
and valuable ongoing contact with RSA central.

7. Evaluation and provision of related services are restrained due to the lack of authority RSA administrators exert over DOC personnel fulfilling these functions. Either the authority RSA administrators exert over such personnel must be increased or evaluation and related service personnel must be employed by the RSA to ensure efficient identification and provision or related services.

8. A reversal of the current order of the R&DC staffing and eligibility committees to place eligibility decisions before staffing committee determination of placement would permit consideration of special education needs of identified handicapped youth in learning center placements and recommendations for special placements. This would also permit the development of IEPs for handicapped students prior to transfer to special placements requiring IEPs.

9. Biological parents and guardians must be given the opportunity to participate in special education procedures. When parents and guardians choose to be involved, meetings may be conducted at the youth school, by telephone or in the community to afford parents and guardians every opportunity to participate. Where parents or guardians are not found or do not choose to participate, appropriate surrogate parents should be assigned. Involvement of parents and guardians may alleviate to some degree the problem of continuity of provision of services when students reenter community education programs.
10. Formal operative policies must be developed to ensure transfer of student information between DOC, RSA, SEA, local court service units and local education agencies (LEAs). This may be accomplished through directives from state agencies to their respective local agencies. Voluntary and timely compliance would be enhanced by the combination of state level directives with a sharing of information among state and local agencies relating to purpose and responsibilities of agencies for services to adjudicated handicapped youth. It would behoove LEA administrators, in fulfilling their responsibilities to handicapped youth, to become acquainted with functions and personnel of local juvenile justice and court agencies with whom they share clients to facilitate information sharing during adjudication, the period of commitment and upon clients' reentry to the community.

11. Ongoing assistance to the RSA from the SEA would permit an exchange of information that would not only support the RSA in its development of procedures within state special education regulations but also increase awareness of SEA personnel of the uniqueness of the correctional setting and diversity of students served by the RSA. Armed with this knowledge, SEA personnel would be more able to provide technical assistance to RSA personnel and encourage cooperation of LEAs with agencies
with whom they share clients.

12. Given previous recommendations, it is suggested that formal policies in the form of functional interagency agreements be cooperatively developed among state agencies (SEA, RSA, DOC). Cooperative planning and formal and informal communication in the development and implementation of procedures are absolutely necessary. If agencies are unable to achieve these goals through their own initiative, legislative or executive order will be required.

13. This study was limited to examination of processes used to implement special education requirements and factors perceived to affect such processes within the Virginia Rehabilitative School Authority Youth Schools. There are youth who are eligible or potentially eligible for special education and related services placed in other correctional facilities such as adult correctional institutions, group homes, detention centers and jails. Similar studies conducted in these diverse settings would expand the knowledge base necessary to fully examine the provision of special education and related services to incarcerated handicapped youth.

14. It was found that absence of policies delineating responsibilities between the DOC, RSA, SEA and local agencies inhibited identification and continuity of education programs of handicapped youth. Responsibility for handicapped youth prior to commitment and following
release is not limited to these agencies. Examination of relationships between after-care agencies, the juvenile justice system and those agencies identified by this study would provide a more complete understanding of the processes and factors which affect adjudicated handicapped youth.
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Interview Data Sheet

Facility: R&DC A B C D G H

Interviewee Name and Position _____________________________

Telephone Number ____________

Date of Interview ____________

Background Data: (professional preparation, experience, length of RSA employment)

Follow-up Telephone Contact

Date _________________

Questions to be asked: Responses:
I. Location of Handicapped Students

A. If it is suspected that a student may be handicapped, how is that student referred? (who, format, to whom, happens next, time involved, staff responsibilities, training)

B. What factors have affected these processes? (helped? problems-causes?)

previously identified, written procedures of data, notice, committee composition and records
II. Identification of Handicapped Students

A. Once a referral has been validated, how is it determined if the student is or is not handicapped? (personnel, responsibilities, supervision, notice and consent, data, types of assessments, personnel collecting, how determination is made, amount of time)

B. What factors have affected these processes? (helped? problems-causes?)

time of initiation of assessment, nondiscriminatory testing, multidisciplinary, areas, time of eligibility, composition, records of eligibility, LD determination, prior notice, consent, format, content personnel, surrogate
III. Planning for Service Delivery

A. Once a student is found eligible for special education (has a handicap which affects education), what is involved in the development of his/her IEP? (what information is received from eligibility; who receives; who is involved; supervises; procedure; who, when, what; IEP includes . . . ; time frame, types of services indicated on IEP)

B. What factors have affected these processes? (helped? problems-causes?)

data used; content a-h; LRE, time line, composition of meeting, surrogate sign-off and involvement; in effect prior to provision; annual review
IV. Individualized Education Program

A. After the IEP is written, how is the student's program implemented? (scheduling; types of services scheduled; responsibility for placement; when determined; how changed; when implemented)

B. What factors have affected these processes? (helped? problems-causes?)

placement using LEA-developed current IEP; alternative placements; LRE, (regular classroom); participation in nonacademic/extracurricular activities; in accordance with IEP; certified staff
APPENDIX B
The Rehabilitative School Authority

Information concerning the Rehabilitative School Authority (RSA) and its special education procedures was obtained through interviews with the RSA superintendent, the RSA director of academic programs and special education and the special education coordinator. Prior to the learning center and Reception and Diagnostic Center on-site visits, the RSA superintendent was interviewed to obtain an historical overview of the RSA, its administrative function, and the development of special education procedures. The four-hour interview was conducted in the RSA central office approximately one month prior to the initiation of the on-site interviews. The superintendent's input was also utilized to structure the on-site interview format. Telephone communication with the director of academic programs and special education during the three months of on-site interviews clarified questions which had arisen during learning center personnel interviews relating to documents to which interviewees had referred. The final interview of the study, conducted with the director, was for the purpose of reviewing findings and substantiating data and the researcher's perceptions and interpretations of data. Although the special education coordinator was initially interviewed as a member of the R&DC staff, her actual assignment is the RSA central office. She is on
temporary assignment to the R&DC to ensure effective implementation of procedures and will return to RSA central after the first year of procedures utilization. A great deal of information relating to procedures, specifically those involving the referral, evaluation and eligibility processes, was obtained through personal communication with the coordinator.

A number of documents were reviewed in conjunction with interviewee reports to develop a full description of the history of the RSA and special education procedures. These included the Special Education Identification and Screening Procedures Manual, memoranda from the RSA superintendent to youth school staff, and the Code of Virginia §§22.1-339-344. Other documents, specifically those related to Department of Corrections (DOC) evaluation and staffing procedures, special placements and functioning of the Institutional Review Committee and Special Placement Review Committee were requested. In pursuing these documents, however, it was found that without exception they were under review by the DOC and would not be available for some time. Although processes were described by learning center interviewees as very structured procedurally, they were observed to be evolutionary in nature and frequently modified by informal agreements between affected personnel. Documents in their current form, therefore, did not accurately reflect present procedures. Hence, information
regarding the documents in question was obtained solely through interviewee reports.

**Historical Background**

The Rehabilitative School Authority was created by an act of the General Assembly in 1974 in response to a perceived need for two independent agencies as providers of services to the incarcerated population. Previously, the RSA had been under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections. This was deemed an unsatisfactory arrangement as ultimate financial and administrative authority were held by the DOC. According to the superintendent of the RSA, the Virginia RSA is the only state correctional education agency which has autonomy from state departments of corrections and/or state education agencies and is much the better being in this position as compared to other states' administrative arrangements. RSA board members are appointed by the Governor, and the RSA submits its own budget to the General Assembly. The superintendent was very positive in his assertion that this is to the RSA's advantage.

The primary links between the RSA and DOC are the location of service delivery and the population served. The RSA utilizes DOC facilities within each learning center, eliminating capital outlay expenditures but creating a dependency on DOC facilities. With regard to the juvenile
population served, the RSA serves all youth committed to the Department of Corrections and is required to meet the diverse educational needs of students within the correctional facility. Education is mandatory for all youth within the learning centers. The placement and transiency of the population is dependent upon DOC decisions. There is no mechanism for the suspension or expulsion of problem students: all such problems must be dealt with by the youth school personnel and the Department of Corrections learning center personnel. Declining enrollment is not a problem. The superintendent, citing the above examples, was adamant that there are very few similarities between local education agencies and the RSA schools.

Although the RSA staff within learning centers are employees of the RSA rather than the Department of Corrections, they are an integral part of the total rehabilitative milieu and thus under the control of the DOC in some activities. For example, each RSA teacher is a member of the treatment team assigned to each learning center placed youth. The treatment team is responsible for the ongoing development and monitoring of the Evaluation Service Plan which includes behavioral as well as educational goals which each student must attain prior to being recommended by the treatment team for release. Treatment teams meet periodically with each student to review progress; consider requests for privileges and advancement to less secure
cottages; disciplinary actions; and ultimately, recommenda-
tions for release from the Department of Corrections.
Teachers are responsible for security during the school
day which requires escorting students to and from the
school at the beginning and end of the school day, for
meals and any activities; ensuring that students do not
escape; and that students are under the supervision of
personnel at all times during the school day.

Historically, the RSA has provided highly individual-
ized instructional programs to all students. Education has
been an integral part of each student's rehabilitative
program. Recognizing that some students were in need of
more specialized care than could be provided by learning
centers, DOC funds were available for special placements
in private treatment and academic facilities, state mental
and mental retardation facilities and private and public
hospitals and treatment centers. Students recommended for
such placements were not formally identified as handicapped
but exhibited treatment needs such that special placements
outside the Department of Corrections were deemed necessary
by the Reception and Diagnostic Center professional
personnel. Special placement of students recommended by
R&DC personnel is contingent on approval by the Special
Placement Review Committee.

Upon the enactment of federal special education regula-
tions, RSA leadership believed that individual student
needs were being met and therefore maintained that the RSA was exempt from specific regulatory requirements. With the passage of time and increased awareness through contacts with professional peers, literature, and State Education Agency (SEA) personnel, the RSA began to investigate its position in relationship to federal and state regulations, particularly in relationship to its eligibility for Title VI-B Flow-Through funds. The superintendent of the RSA stressed that the RSA is not considered a local education agency except under certain regulations. Public Law 94-142 was found by the RSA to be one of these regulatory areas.

In order to comply with special education regulations, the RSA enacted procedures for the formal documentation of students identified as special education eligible by community agencies prior to commitment and for the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for these students. Beginning in June 1980, students who were known to be eligible for special education through records received by the Reception and Diagnostic Center were "red-flagged" and IEPs were developed for these students by R&DC personnel. This information was relayed to the receiving learning center. At the same time, Individualized Instructional Plans (IIPs) were initiated for all ineligible students in an attempt to lessen what was perceived by RSA administrators to be discrimination
against the nonhandicapped population.

RSA leadership believed the RSA to be in minimal compliance using the method of red-flagging previously identified youth, development of IEPs and the individualized instruction available in all youth schools. There remained, however, doubts on the part of the RSA and SEA as to total compliance resulting from the lack of procedures for evaluation and identification of youth potentially eligible for special education but not identified prior to commitment.

Investigation of potential compliance needs and sources of assistance to address compliance needs led RSA administration to acquire out-of-state consultants in the area of correctional special education for the purpose of developing appropriate procedures and assisting in the training of key personnel. The product of the collaborative effort of RSA personnel and the consultants was the Special Education Identification and Screening Procedures Manual, to become effective July 1, 1981.

One of the primary goals of the RSA in designing procedures to comply with special education regulations was that newly developed procedures be an extension of DOC and RSA procedures then currently in use rather than a total revamping of procedures. To this end, the manual describes special education procedures for screening and identification of handicapped students as an extension
of those regular evaluation procedures in place at the Reception and Diagnostic Center. Additional procedures which did not have a counterpart in current DOC and RSA functions (i.e., IEP development for newly identified students) were developed to coordinate and correspond with location of staff and data. Following the development of procedures and the manual, selected DOC personnel, RSA educational evaluators and RSA administrators met for an inservice provided by the consultants addressing the implementation of the manual requirements.

Since the implementation of manual requirements, some modifications have been made in procedures. Some of these have been RSA-wide while others have been made in individual facilities requesting waivers in specific procedures. The following sections describe the procedures as indicated by the manual with RSA-wide revisions noted.

Screening

The regular intake evaluation administered by the Evaluation Service Plan (ESP) team of the R&DC is considered the screening for all youth committed to the Department of Corrections. It consists of assessment of students' historical and present social, psychological, educational, medical and daily cottage living situation characteristics and needs. The screening committee is composed of the caseworker, psychologist, educational
evaluator, cottage staff and medical staff (the Evaluation Service Plan or ESP team) assigned to the student.

Referral

With the regular intake evaluation serving as the screening process for all students, a student suspected of having an educationally handicapping condition may be referred by any member of the ESP team to the special education coordinator. Those students who have been identified as handicapped in the community prior to commitment as handicapped are "red-flagged" and the community identification accepted unless (a) the special education status is not current or triennial reevaluation time lines will expire prior to estimated release from the DOC or (b) the community identification is challenged by an ESP team member questioning either the category of exceptionality or the presence of an educationally handicapping condition. The option to challenge community identification was made available through a modification of original manual procedures, effective February 3, 1982.

Upon receipt of the "Initial Referral for Special Education Services" by the special education coordinator, the preassessment phase begins. During this phase, the special education coordinator confers with the referring staff member and other members of the ESP team for the purpose of discussing and then determining the legitimacy
of the referral. At this time it is also determined if additional tests and/or observations should be administered. Additional evaluations requested are recorded on the referral form, copies of which are routed to all ESP team members. Surrogate parent permission for additional evaluation is obtained by the special education coordinator.

**Evaluation**

This is termed the "formal assessment" phase during which the additional tests and/or observations requested via the referral form are administered by ESP team members or support personnel. Since regular intake evaluation includes all four special education required components (medical, sociological, psychological and educational), the evaluations conducted during this phase are generally more specific. These may include physical therapy, speech, occupational therapy, psychiatric evaluation, and/or individual intelligence tests.

**Eligibility**

Staffing is the DOC process utilized to determine each student's placement within DOC facilities or in special treatment placements. Staffing and eligibility are dual procedures: staffing being the decision-making process for placement followed by eligibility which determines special education eligibility. Members of each committee are the same, changing only the chairperson
and function of the meeting. For a student referred for a special education evaluation, staffing participants include the casework supervisor (chairperson), caseworker, psychologist, educational evaluator, cottage staff, medical staff and special education coordinator or RSA principal, and related services personnel if appropriate (e.g., speech therapist, occupational therapist, psychiatrist). The committee makes presentations from their written reports of evaluation results and determines service plan objectives, supervision classification, and placement. Immediately following staffing, the eligibility meeting convenes with the same personnel and the special education coordinator or R&DC principal chairing. Categorical characteristics are discussed resulting in a determination of eligibility or ineligibility for special education services and, in the former case, the category of exceptionality. Recommendations for special education may be made. If there is a disagreement regarding the placement decisions between the staffing and eligibility processes, a consensus decision based on the committing offense, evaluation data and special education needs must be reached. "Placement decisions will be governed by the child's legal status and commitment constraints" (Rehabilitative School Authority, 1981, p. 12). The surrogate parent is notified of the eligibility committee decision in writing.
Following staffing/eligibility, the R&DC principal notifies the designated receiving youth school of the transfer of the special education eligible student. The youth school principal establishes a school file and a confidential file. The confidential file includes all evaluation components (medical evaluation, psychological evaluation, sociological evaluation, educational evaluation, behavior checklist, permission forms, additional testing information and a disclosure access form).

Triennial review of special education eligibility was addressed by the manual requiring reevaluation of students who have been in a special education program continuously for three years. Participants from casework, psychology, medical, education, cottage and related staff disciplines are required.

**Individualized Education Program (IEP)**

The *Special Education Identification and Screening Procedures Manual* originally indicated that the IEP conference and development were to be held at the Reception and Diagnostic Center following the staffing/eligibility committee meeting. Participants were to include the RSA principal or special education coordinator, the surrogate parent (DOC caseworker), educational evaluator, vocational educator, the student where appropriate, and other ESP team members as appropriate. During the
conference, the IEP was to be completed to include demographic data; education and related services to be provided; goals and objectives for the subject areas of communication skills, mathematics, social skills, pre-vocational/vocational, and health/physical education; and the signatures necessary. The provision was made that only in extreme cases where time did not permit the development of the IEP at the R&DC, the IEP could be developed at the learning center to which the student had been assigned. Shortly after the implementation of the above procedures, this method was found to be unsatisfactory as R&DC personnel found that they were not well enough informed of youth schools' programs to adequately develop the IEP. They maintained that knowledge of specific program content available at learning center youth schools was necessary to develop the goals and objectives portion of the IEP. Due to this expressed concern, the R&DC principal met with RSA central personnel and requested that IEP development take place at the youth schools after the student's placement. This was accepted by RSA central resulting in a modification in manual procedures. In-service presentations made by RSA central personnel, the R&DC principal and special education coordinator were held in each youth school to prepare youth school personnel for this responsibility.
General procedures for IEP development in the youth schools delegate responsibility for the development and implementation of the IEP to the youth school principal. Upon arrival at each youth school, the school staffing committee meets to determine placement for each arriving student. This placement is made in academic and vocational classes based on R&DC evaluation data and availability of space in classes. The teachers of those classes in which an identified handicapped student has been placed develop IEP goals and objectives for their subject area. These are returned to the principal's office. A standing IEP committee in each school, consisting of the principal, an academic teacher, a vocational teacher, and the student's surrogate parent (DOC caseworker), meets to review and formalize the IEP. Modifications in submitted goals, objectives and methods may be made by the committee. If a change in placement is deemed necessary, the IEP committee may make this change.

Provisions for IEP annual review require the youth school to conduct the review using the same procedures as those utilized in the development of the initial IEP.

Surrogate Parents

Original procedures designated the surrogate parent responsibility to Department of Corrections' counselors/caseworkers. Counselors/caseworkers were assigned as
surrogate parents to only those children not on their caseload. Therefore, each student being individually evaluated for potential special education eligibility was assigned a counselor/caseworker and a surrogate parent. R&DC personnel found this to be unsatisfactory as surrogate parents were not as familiar with those children assigned to them as each child's own counselor/caseworker. It was believed that the responsibilities of the surrogate parent (written permission for additional testing for special education services, implementation of IEP, deletions, additions and modifications of the IEP, and participation in IEP conference) would be better fulfilled if the surrogate were more knowledgeable with the child and the child's specific needs. Therefore, the surrogate parent designation was modified to be the counselor/caseworker assigned by the DOC to the child when the child arrived at R&DC. This was found to be a much more satisfactory arrangement.

The functions of the surrogate parent at the youth schools are primarily IEP related and are also the responsibility of the DOC counselor/caseworker assigned to the student.

Perceptions

Interviewees representing the RSA central administration characterized the development of special education
procedures as a struggle: an arduous endeavor to identify and define the specific responsibilities of the RSA relating to education of handicapped youth; a quest to secure persons knowledgeable in the area of correctional special education to provide technical assistance; a painful evolution marked by trial and error development. They are pleased with the progress made and are aware of weaknesses in procedures and programming which they are addressing through a variety of methods. The RSA administrators interviewed were very open and apparently honest in relating their perceptions of the historical development, present functioning and hopeful futures of the RSA special education program.

A common apprehension was the lack of direction for the implementation of special education procedures from the SEA, both historically and in light of present procedures utilized. In response to several issues, such as models used for program design, acquisition of Title VI-B Flow-Through funds, responsibilities for special placements, and reporting requirements, interviewees indicated a dearth of information and at times conflicting information from the SEA. Regarding the first design of procedures, RSA administrators felt stymied in their request for support from the SEA and decided to simply proceed on their own using their judgment of best practice based on their interpretation of regulations. Increased contact and
communication with SEA personnel have assisted the RSA in modifying specific portions of procedures and in identifying areas of future need. Initially, the SEA provided the funding for the out-of-state consultants for the development of the manual. Since that time, increased support has been in the areas of Flow-Through funding and technical assistance in reporting requirements.

Flow-Through funds are the only source of revenue received by the RSA for special education which does not accrue from direct General Assembly allocations to the RSA: They receive no basic state aid or categorical funding. The 1981-82 Flow-Through funding (the first received by the RSA) in the amount of approximately $18,000 was utilized for the addition of a special education resource position at Garden Learning Center Youth School. It was indicated that the 1982-83 Flow-Through funds, estimated to be $32,000 to $34,000, would be best used to develop an identification system for youth placed in adult facilities. However, it has been suggested by the SEA that this would not be acceptable as no special education programs (i.e., referral, evaluation, eligibility, IEP, programming, etc.) are currently operating in adult schools. It was indicated that this is the type of question which inhibits RSA action due to the problem of obtaining clear responses from the SEA. Although the RSA has been submitting Six-Year Plans or its equivalent to the SEA
since 1974, it was reported that some confusion exists regarding reporting requirements (e.g., documentation of number of students in special placements and least restrictive environment assurances). It was reported that since responsibility for the special education program has not been an exclusive responsibility of any one RSA central staff member to date, communication within the RSA and between the RSA and SEA has suffered, and reporting confusion may be somewhat attributed to this. A specific example of this problem is the evolution of the delegation of surrogate parent responsibility. The SEA originally required that the surrogate parent be a caseworker other than that assigned to the youth. Trial of this method was found to be unsatisfactory; and upon presentation of the rationale for caseworkers to serve as surrogate parents for students of their caseloads, the SEA modified its position. Apparently there is room for flexibility given a cooperative effort on the part of the RSA, DOC and SEA. Although interviewees were harsh in their description of SEA support to RSA program development, it was understood that SEA personnel were as unfamiliar with the correctional setting as RSA personnel were with mandated regulations.

Special placements were, historically, the first recognition by the DOC and RSA of students with needs unable to be met in the correctional setting. Formerly, 13 percent to 15 percent of all committed youth were the
recipients of a special placement assignment. During the past two years, this number has decreased, attributed by interviewees to increased services in youth schools, DOC counselors having "more faith in youth school personnel," and sporadic decreased special placement funds. There has been disagreement concerning responsibility for payment of the educational portion of special placements. Local school divisions have refused the responsibility citing lack of funds. The RSA has refused DOC requests for payment using the rationale that the youth school programs within the learning centers were appropriate for the student but that the DOC did not have an appropriate correctional facility. The end result has been increased appropriations from the DOC for special placements; and when the allocations are diminished, there will be a decrease in the number of special placements.

Central administration interviewees were of the opinion that although special education regulations have increased the amount of record-keeping and paperwork at their level as well as at the youth school level, the positive effects of regulation implementation have made the task a worthwhile endeavor. At the school level, one RSA central administrator believed that programs had become more organized by accountability through record-keeping and IEP development. The same person, however, could not positively state that increased accountability provided a
better program for students. Positive results were seen in terms of school benefits rather than student benefits. Involvement of caseworkers in their capacity as surrogate parents was viewed as extremely advantageous. For the first time, a number of caseworkers are physically in the schools which has involved them in the students' academic as well as rehabilitative programs. It was suggested that this has also contributed to improved dynamics in treatment team meetings: Caseworkers are now more receptive to and respectful of suggestions made by teachers. Surrogate parents were reported to be fulfilling their obligations effectively, demonstrated to the satisfaction of RSA central by surrogate parents' challenges to identification or programming.

Interviewees were aware that procedures were enacted more smoothly in some youth schools than others. This was attributed to personalities of RSA teachers and principals and DOC administrators, staff professional preparation and experience, facilities and materials available, and the administrative style of principals. The differential effect of these factors was evident in all facilities. The final interview of the study, conducted with the RSA director of academic programs and special education substantiated the researcher's perceptions of the impact of these factors on each youth school.
The Reception and Diagnostic Center

The Reception and Diagnostic Center (R&DC) was the first site visited. From outside appearances, there was no indication that the function of the facility was the classification of committed juveniles other than a sign in the parking lot reminding people to lock their cars. Within the main building, the only indication that this was anything but an office building was the presence of police officers in the lobby. The building was busy and crowded. Staff were continually passing through the corridors and between the partitioned areas that serve as evaluators' offices; phones were ringing; voices carried through the halls into each room. Few students were seen as they are confined to their cottages except during testing sessions.

Interviews were arranged to be conducted on the single day of the week designated for staffing and eligibility committee meetings. All evaluators are available on this day since they are required to attend staffing and eligibility meetings.

Interviews were conducted in the principal's office and the special education coordinator's cubicle/office. Privacy and space were at a premium throughout the center. In addition to the principal and special education coordinator, three educational evaluators were interviewed. The
principal, who was the first interviewee, provided background and process descriptions of R&DC functions and the role of Rehabilitative School Authority personnel in described functions. Following interviews with the special education coordinator and educational evaluators, a second session was held with the principal as an exit interview.

Each person interviewed appeared to be eager to share their knowledge, perceptions, and concerns. All seemed to have given the topics discussed a great deal of thought before the interview situation, indicating to the researcher that opinions were truly concerns rather than suggested by the interviewer's questions.

Follow-up contact was made with the principal and special education coordinator. The principal was contacted via telephone to clarify the researcher's questions on special placement and the authority and roles of the Institutional Review Committee and Special Placement Review Committee. Telephone and in-person contacts were made with the special education coordinator who provided additional insights relating to her responsibilities outside of the Reception and Diagnostic Center, including youth school on-site technical assistance and testing.

Facility and Students

The Reception and Diagnostic Center (R&DC) is located on the outskirts of a major metropolitan area in the center
of the state. The purpose of the R&DC is to receive, evaluate and determine placement for all youth committed to the State Department of Corrections by the juvenile court. Evaluation data are the basis for determination of placement within the DOC learning centers and special placements and for the development of the Evaluation Service Plan upon which each student's learning center rehabilitative program is based. All functions performed by R&DC staff are related to the evaluation of and placement and program recommendations for adjudicated youth.

There are seven cottages to which incoming youth are assigned by the DOC transfer supervisor. Three cottages are security cottages, three are open and one is for female youth. The length of stay at the Reception and Diagnostic Center is three weeks.

Generally, there are from 130 to 140 students at the R&DC at any one time. Since all committed juveniles are evaluated at the R&DC, students range in age from 10 through 18 years and are found to have educational levels from nonreader to college level. The greatest educational need of committed youth was believed to be basic academic skills. Approximately 45 percent of entering youth have been identified prior to commitment as special education eligible. The Reception and Diagnostic Center RSA principal estimated that an additional 10 percent are identified at the R&DC.
**Staff**

The R&DC is staffed by Department of Corrections and Rehabilitative School Authority personnel. DOC personnel include those assigned to the Reception and Diagnostic Center proper (the superintendent, assistant superintendents for evaluation and program, casework supervisor, counselor/caseworkers, cottage supervisors and cottage coordinators); the Behavioral Services Unit (chief psychologist, group test technicians, psychologists, occupational therapist, speech therapist, and psychiatrist); and the Davis Learning Center-Central Infirmary (assistant superintendent for medical services, central infirmary physicians, central infirmary screening nurses). RSA personnel include the RSA principal, the special education coordinator, and seven educational evaluators. Only RSA personnel were interviewed: the principal, special education coordinator and three educational evaluators.

The principal has had teaching and administrative experience within the RSA prior to her present position. The special education coordinator had been employed by the RSA for only a few months at the time of the interview. Prior to that, she was a special education teacher in a local school division. The three educational evaluators had been with the RSA from one to six years. One had had teaching experience in a learning center prior to her present position, was endorsed to teach the mentally
retarded and had in the past been employed by a social service agency. One other evaluator interviewed had had special education teaching experience in a local school division. The principal reported that a valid teaching certificate was a requirement for the position of educational evaluator. Evaluators' professional education in the area of special education was concentrated in the areas of learning disabilities and mental retardation.

Screening and Regular Intake Evaluation

Upon arrival at the R&DC, each youth is assigned a cottage, counselor/caseworker and staffing date. For the next three weeks, the student undergoes the regular intake evaluation consisting of a standard battery of assessments. The assessment personnel assigned to a student are the Evaluation Service Plan (ESP) team. Available to the team are the records which are forwarded to the R&DC by the committing court. These include a social history, offense history, educational background and any other data collected and transmitted by the caseworker of the committing court. R&DC personnel draw on these records in planning appropriate evaluation and in placement determination.

The counselor/caseworker serves as case manager, receiving and compiling all information pertaining to the student as well as interviewing and counseling with the student. Daily cottage living skills are observed and
reported by cottage life staff. Medical and dental assessment and treatment are administered by DLC-CI personnel. A DOC group test technician administers group intelligence tests and the hearing screening. A psychologist performs intake screening and other psychological testing as required. RSA educational evaluators administer a standard battery of educational assessments and make observations of assigned students in the cottages.

All regular intake components are to be completed during the three weeks prior to the previously determined date of the staffing meeting. The staffing meeting is chaired by the casework supervisor and attended by the ESP team. The caseworker, psychologist, educational evaluator, cottage staff, medical staff and others as appropriate report the results of their assessments to the committee. On the basis of the evaluation results, the staffing committee recommends the placement for the youth. Youth are assigned to DOC placements primarily on the basis of security level needed and age.

There are opportunities for deviation in the above-described regular intake procedures: (a) potential special placement recommendation by the ESP team, and (b) the referral of a student who is suspected of being educationally handicapped.

In the former case, assessment staff assigned to the student may suggest to the caseworker that the student may
be more appropriately placed outside of the Department of Corrections facilities. Psychiatric hospitals, state mental health/mental retardation facilities, military schools, or private schools are generally recommended special placements. The caseworker considers the suggestion for special placement and through informal discussion with staff and begins to investigate the feasibility of such a placement. This includes determination of costs which could be assumed by the family or the family's insurance and funding available from the DOC. Recommendation for a special placement is based on the student's offense history; age; prior special placements; educational, social and emotional needs. A special placement recommendation made by the staffing committee must be reviewed by the Central Review Committee and the Special Placement Review Committee of the Department of Corrections. If the special placement is not readily available or if funds are not appropriated, the student is placed in a learning center pending the availability of the special placement. This is always perceived as a treatment placement and is determined independently of a special education eligibility.

The regular intake process serves as the screening portion of special education procedures.

Referral

The referral of a student suspected of being handi­capped triggers the process for determination of special
education eligibility that functions as an extension of the regular intake evaluation. Procedurally, it is a separate process, utilizing regular intake assessment results as a basis for the initiation of the referral and for further testing but determining eligibility separately from DOC placement recommendations.

Knowledge of a student's special education eligibility as previously determined in the community, usually by a local school division, is obtained through court records or, if available, local school division records. The RSA accepts previous identification when the status is current (within three years of the RSA evaluation date) unless the identification is challenged by a member of the ESP team at the R&DC. If the current identification is accepted, the student's file is red-flagged and the receiving facility as determined by the staffing committee is notified.

An ESP team member may initiate a special education referral for one of three purposes: the referral of a previously unidentified student, to challenge the eligibility of a previously identified student, or to challenge the label or category of handicap of a previously identified student.

The referring staff member completes an "Initial Referral for Special Education Services" form and returns it to the special education coordinator. At this point the preassessment phase commences. The coordinator reviews
the initial referral and confers with the referrer and ESP team members to determine the legitimacy of the referral. If staff concur that the referral is legitimate, the special education coordinator and ESP team members determine additional testing to be administered if needed. The coordinator notes additional testing on the referral form and distributes copies to each ESP team member. Surrogate parent permission is obtained from the caseworker, who serves as surrogate parent for his/her assigned cases. The special education coordinator attempts to secure local school division information through telephone communication. If not released over the telephone, the RSA principal sends a formal request to the school division over her signature. Unfortunately, if the information does arrive, it is usually after the staffing date and is of no use in the eligibility process.

If a referral is found not to be legitimate, generally due to conflicting results of psychological and educational evaluation date, the process terminates after informal consultation with ESP team members.

Evaluation

During the formal assessment phase, evaluation team members administer the additional and more specific testing requested on the referral form. Additional evaluation requests are generally in the areas of speech, hearing,
occupational therapy, physical therapy and psychological evaluation. All the above additional assessments with the exception of physical therapy are under the jurisdiction of DOC personnel. Physical therapy evaluations are performed by Medical College of Virginia Hospital or private agency personnel.

Additional assessments are to be administered in the time remaining of the three-week period prior to the staffing meeting date.

Eligibility

Immediately following the staffing meeting, where evaluation results are reported and placement is determined, the eligibility committee meeting is held. The ESP team members attend both meetings, changing only the chairperson and the purpose of the meeting. The special education coordinator or R&DC principal chairing the eligibility committee meeting has attended the staffing meeting and has taken notes during the evaluation reports. On the basis of this information, the determination of eligibility or ineligibility is made. In the former case, the category of handicapping condition is specified, and the eligibility minutes are forwarded to the receiving facility with the student's file for use in programming. In the latter case, the special education process ceases with the finding of ineligibility.
The staffing meeting is held on the date set three weeks earlier regardless of completion of additional assessments requested for the special education formal assessment. Occasionally, the determination of eligibility for special education must be deferred due to incomplete components. This most often is a result of additional speech and/or occupational therapy evaluation delays. If the eligibility determination is deferred, the student is transferred to the placement recommended by the staffing committee, and the eligibility meeting is held at the R&DC when components are completed. The completed eligibility information is then forwarded to the learning center youth school to which the student has been assigned. Approximately 5 percent to 10 percent of student eligibilities are deferred. Deferred eligibilities are usually held from two weeks to two months after the staffing date.

Staff Perceptions

R&DC staff interviewed reported that the processes required for special education eligibility determination were coordinated well with the regular intake process and procedurally deviated very little from former practice. The primary differences indicated were an increase in paperwork and the eligibility meeting requirements.

The caseload of each evaluator was estimated to be approximately 23 to 25 students during any one-week period.
Of each case load, evaluators estimated that 20 percent to 30 percent of students not previously determined special education eligible are referred for special education evaluation, 10 percent to 20 percent of previously identified students are challenged on the basis of category of handicapping condition, and 10 percent to 20 percent of previously identified students are challenged as not eligible for special education services.

There was no question as to the validity of the vast majority of referrals for special education. The special education coordinator estimated that only two or three referrals had not been determined to be legitimate during the preassessment phase. Furthermore, many referrals have been submitted by more than one ESP team member for an individual student. All staff indicated that previous to implementation of special education procedures there was an awareness that a large portion of the youth evaluated at the Reception and Diagnostic Center were educationally handicapped. Current processes were felt to simply provide a mechanism for the specific identification of such youth.

There has been great difficulty in obtaining community school Category II (confidential) records. Although the special education coordinator telephones referred students' local education agencies in an attempt to obtain Category II information, it is rarely forthcoming. A written request made by the R&DC principal usually results in the receipt
of available information; but unfortunately, it generally arrives after staffing/eligibility and the student's transfer to the assigned learning center. The principal reported that the cause of the problem was the lack of procedures necessary for the transfer of Category II information. There is no official mechanism for procurement of records from the school division by court or RSA officials in order that such information be available during the student's assessment at the R&DC.

In an attempt to remedy this problem, an informational Superintendent's Memo from the superintendent and deputy superintendent of public instruction of the Virginia State Department of Education to school division superintendents was transmitted on March 24, 1982, noting that the RSA "...should be considered as any other Virginia school division as regards records transfers." Questions concerning such transfers were to be directed to the superintendent of schools for the Rehabilitative School Authority. In a follow-up contact three months after transmittal of the Superintendent's Memo, the R&DC principal reported that no improvement had been noted in the receipt of Category II records from local school divisions.

Evaluators were adamant that Category II information was necessary for efficient operation of the procedures for three major reasons. First, without recent past evaluation data, there was no clear starting point for
evaluation. The educational evaluator must start with general testing and gradually increase the specificity of assessment to accurately identify problem areas. Second, with no knowledge of dates or types of assessments administered prior to commitment, assessments may be inadvertently duplicated, jeopardizing the validity of test results. Lastly, when additional evaluations are requested, the evaluator may not have sufficient time prior to the staffing/eligibility date. If Category II testing data are recent, these results could be utilized rather than inefficiently duplicating evaluations.

Although additional testing may be recommended upon the acceptance of a referral, educational evaluators have the flexibility to administer additional tests at any time during the regular intake process. If a question concerning a student's potential eligibility for special education or special placement has arisen during regular intake evaluation, the educational evaluator may administer additional more specific evaluations he or she feels would be appropriate. Previous to the implementation of the special education procedures, educational evaluators proceeded in much the same manner in order to adequately identify students' strengths and weaknesses. With reference to nondiscriminatory testing, educational evaluators modify standard testing instruments or develop appropriate items themselves for individual students who are perhaps at a
disadvantage due to sensory handicaps. For example, test items are made larger for visually impaired students. One R&DC staff member is able to use sign language to communicate with hearing impaired students.

Although youth are retained at the Reception and Diagnostic Center for three weeks, the educational evaluators indicated some problem with access to students for testing. Educational testing must be coordinated with other regular intake components as well as physical education, meals and counseling. Medical and dental evaluations are performed first in order to schedule and complete any treatment necessary. This leaves little quality time for educational evaluators to individually test and observe those students assigned to their case load.

Each educational evaluator is assigned to a cottage and those youth placed in that cottage. There is an office in the cottage available for their use in testing, but it provides a less than ideal testing environment. Some evaluators utilize other locations for assessment, such as the central office areas, but they find the lack of appropriate testing room a significant problem.

A major concern of RSA personnel is the emotional condition of students which, they believe, has a negative effect on evaluation results. Students are under a great deal of stress during their stay at the Reception and Diagnostic Center: In the words of one educational
evaluator, the students are "unnerved." For most students, it is their first experience in a DOC facility, living with other youth of varying backgrounds and temperaments, being examined, evaluated and categorized in minute detail. Students are continually observed by psychologist, educational evaluators, counselor/caseworkers and cottage staff. They may undergo as many as four to five hours of intense psychological and/or educational testing in one day. Students are often resentful and/or angry if they are required to participate in another series of tests when they thought they were to have free time or if they have been placed in "lock-up" for misbehavior. The emotions students experience as a result of the environment and evaluation activities were felt to deflate some educational and psychological evaluation results and to emphasize or obscure some behaviors. Educational evaluators were concerned that assessment results are not particularly valid for planning students' learning center programs. One evaluator summed up evaluators' attitudes as, "Do the best that you can, hoping that that is what's best for the child."

Evaluators spend approximately 2½ to 5 hours in formal testing, 2 to 3 hours in observations in the cottages, and 2 hours in paperwork for each special education evaluation. These were estimated to be a slight increase in formal testing and observation and a significant
increase in report preparation. One of the causes of the increased time necessary for report writing was the new format required for educational reporting: A narrative format is now required, whereas previously only scores were reported. Some concern was expressed over the number of students for which each evaluator is responsible. It was felt that at times it was difficult to avoid confusing students' evaluation results. This problem intensifies when the number of deferred cases requires evaluators to resurrect data and their memories up to 60 days after having evaluated the student.

A problem was identified by interviewees concerning requests for psychological testing. An individual intelligence test is not standardly administered to students and thus must be requested of the DOC psychologists if perceived necessary as additional testing for use in the determination of special education eligibility. RSA staff have met with some opposition by psychologists in response to these requests. Some psychologists were reported to be reluctant to administer individual intelligence tests which RSA staff felt necessary for appropriate identification of handicapped students. Because the psychologists are under the jurisdiction of the DOC, the RSA administrators have been somewhat frustrated in their attempts to resolve the problem. A similar problem exists when evaluation in the areas of occupational therapy,
speech or hearing are requested. The one speech therapist and one occupational therapist are responsible for evaluation within the R&DC and evaluation and therapy in the learning centers. Therefore, their time is somewhat limited, contributing to the problem of deferred eligibility of referred students.

There has been some dissention concerning the eligibility of students with a handicap which may or may not be affecting the student's educational achievement. Speech impairment is one such category. RSA evaluators have expressed the need for definitional guidelines in order to clarify this issue. Educational evaluators have had some difficulty in providing data substantiating that a speech impairment was or was not directly responsible for decreased educational achievement of students. One educational evaluator interviewed had written an opinion dissenting from the consensus reached by the eligibility committee on this type of categorization.

Interviewed staff reported a number of factors which facilitated or inhibited the special education processes designated for implementation at the Reception and Diagnostic Center. It was reported that the procedures provided mechanisms for a systematic flow of authority, responsibility and actions: The systems are effective with the result that educationally handicapped students are identified. There were several perceived contributors to this
end result. First, with the exception of physical therapy, all services are intact. The comprehensive ESP team is available for regular intake evaluation, informal consultation and formal staffing and eligibility meetings. Related to the advantage of centralized services is the rapport of the staff which facilitates smooth operation of procedures. Informal meetings and conferences comprise a great deal of the decision-making processes: The LEA screening committee counterpart in the RSA is informal discussion of the referral among the ESP team. The principal reported that approximately 50 percent of all special placements are determined informally prior to the staffing meeting. Informal meetings are largely dependent upon individual staff: Some initiate the exchange of such information more readily than others.

Problems reported by RSA personnel centered around professional turfdom issues, time limitations, number and assignment of staff. As previously mentioned, there has been conflict with some DOC personnel due to additional evaluation requests. All interviewees reported that there was a need for evaluation staff to be under the control of the same authority, i.e., agency, as they believed that this would reduce the friction presently encountered. All interviewed personnel indicated that an increase in staff was needed, specifically in the areas of educational evaluation, psychology and speech therapy.
There also was some difficulty reported concerning communication with other professionals relating to translation of psychologists' reports to educationally relevant and useful data. Additionally, interviewees indicated interdisciplinary conflict in the interpretations necessary for determination of primary or related service eligibility in the areas of speech, occupational therapy and physical therapy.

The time available for evaluation of referred students was reported to be problematic. Although initial referrals are processed and transmitted to staff for additional evaluation within one to two days, the areas requested for additional evaluation are generally those which are most difficult to schedule and complete. Educational evaluators felt a lack of time in which to verify observations or results of initial broad evaluation. One evaluator had begun to reduce recommendations for some additional evaluation by other professionals in response to the number of eligibilities deferred due to lack of complete components which were ultimately found to yield negative results.

Administrators were aware of the apparent reverse order of the staffing meeting which determines placement and the eligibility meeting but reported that it was out of their control. Evaluators and administrators indicated that they would prefer that eligibility precede staffing as some learning centers were felt to have programs more
appropriate for certain categories of handicaps than others. Since the special education coordinator or principal attend staffing, they are able to interject relevant information that may influence placement. This informal mechanism somewhat abates the problem.

With reference to training prior to the implementation of special education procedures, interviewees reported that more time had been needed between the in-service training they received and the initiation of procedures: There was little time to prepare for processes. One staff member reported receiving conflicting information in in-service meetings which resulted in confusion and some disagreement among personnel. A number of modifications in procedures have been made since July 1, 1981, such as a revised referral form and designation of the IEP development responsibility to youth schools, which staff believed indicated a willingness on the part of RSA central to cooperatively develop effective processes.

In summary, interviewees reported that developed procedures in concert with informal mechanisms provided for effective identification of educationally handicapped students. Modifications of procedures subsequent to July 1 have been initiated by and satisfactorily achieved by RSA personnel. Factors perceived to impinge significantly on total effective, appropriate, and accurate identification of special education eligible students included
professional turfdom issues exacerbated by members of the multidisciplinary team responding to two different agencies; insufficient number of evaluators, specifically in the areas of speech, psychology and educational evaluation; limited access to students due to the number of variety of assessments and treatments to be administered during students' three-week containment; lack of appropriate testing facilities for use by educational evaluators; deferred eligibilities due to incomplete additional evaluations generally in the areas of speech, occupational and physical therapy; lack of local school division Category II data; and the negative effect the emotional condition of students is perceived to have on evaluation results.
APPENDIX D
Calhoun Learning Center Youth School

The RSA Youth School of Calhoun Learning Center (CLC) impressed the researcher as efficient and very busy. There were several secretarial and clerical staff in the principal's outer office working with student records, communicating by intercom with teachers in an attempt to complete records pending student release, notifying teachers by intercom of students traveling from the office to classrooms, typing, answering telephones, responding to administrators' requests. Unlike any other learning center, students were present in the office serving as office workers, waiting for probation officers and for permission to pass through the halls to classes. Other than the use of the intercom for security, the office seemed much like a typical high school office. The physical appearance of the interior of the school was also similar to that of a public high school with two major exceptions: the "Code of Conduct" prominently displayed in the hallway was obviously designed for a correctional facility and students marching in single file to classes.

The first interview was conducted with the principal who provided background information about the school, staff and special education procedures, and his personal views of the same. The next interview was held with the assistant principal who has been delegated the responsibility for
special education by the principal. She supplemented the information obtained from the principal with details of the special education process and specified particular strengths and weaknesses of the program.

Teacher interviews were conducted in their respective classrooms during their planning periods. The teachers interviewed (special education resource reading, special education resource math, special education self-contained, and one vocational teacher) expanded on the information provided by administrators and added their perceptions of their roles in procedures and factors which they believed to contribute to or detract from satisfactory conduct of the special education program. Teachers were able to provide valuable insight by their comparison of former experiences, both within the RSA and in other settings, to the current RSA special education procedures and program.

Administrators and teachers appeared generally enthusiastic about special education procedures, believing current procedures had contributed to increased quality in the overall school program. This was substantiated by an RSA central administrator who reported that, of all the youth schools, the Youth School of Calhoun Learning Center had made the greatest strides programmatically (in both special education and general education programs) during the past year.
**Facility and Students**

Calhoun Learning Center is found in a pastoral secluded setting in the center of the state. It is the largest of the Department of Corrections' learning centers serving male youth. The center is medium security and consists of 14 cottages, administrative buildings, school facilities and dining hall. Calhoun Learning Center is budgeted for 220 students and generally averages that number but has gone as high as 340.

Although the age of students is targeted to range from 15½ to 18½ years, there are students as old as 21 due to court-ordered placements. The average age is 17. The average length of stay at CLC was estimated to be four and one-half months, ranging from approximately three months to three years.

Youth placed in CLC are older and have generally committed second or more serious offenses than male youth in all but one other of the DOC youth facilities serving male juveniles. They are verbally abusive, manipulative, street-wise and somewhat aggressive. One teacher expressed his concern that this was the final recourse for most of the CLC students, "If behaviors are not modified here, the penitentiary is the next stop." The principal indicated that many of the youth are career institutional children, having been under state care for the majority of their lives.
Educationally, students display an extreme range of ability and/or achievement. One teacher indicated that achievement ranged from kindergarten through college level skills. The majority of students are two to three grade levels below expected achievement. Aptitude measures indicate severely deficient to above-average abilities. Many students, most particularly low-achieving students, display marked deficits in attention and retention.

The percentage of special education eligible students was reported to fluctuate greatly at various nonspecified times. It has ranged from approximately 25 percent to 40 percent of the CLC population. The majority of identified handicapped students are emotionally disturbed with lower incidences of educable mentally retarded and learning disabled; there are few cases of trainable mentally retarded, visually impaired, speech impaired, hearing impaired, deaf and orthopedically impaired.

Staff

Being the largest of the learning centers, Calhoun Learning Center has a large staff including the principal, two assistant principals, 17 regular academic teachers, 14 vocational teachers, and three special education teachers. One assistant principal with a special education background has been delegated the responsibility of administration and supervision of the special education program.
The three special education teachers are assigned to resource mathematics, resource reading, and self-contained special education models. These staff have impressive preparation in the field of special education. The resource mathematics teacher is endorsed in the areas of ED, LD, EMR and kindergarten through seventh grades and had taught special education in a public school setting and a psychiatric center before being employed by the RSA one month prior to the on-site interview. The credentials of the resource reading teacher include an undergraduate degree in education of the educable mentally retarded and experience in public school special education and RSA regular language arts before assuming her present position two years ago. The self-contained special education teacher has an undergraduate degree in education of the mentally retarded and master's degree in education of the emotionally disturbed, institutional and public school teaching experience, and has served in two Department of Corrections' learning centers as a regular language arts teacher and special education resource teacher for a total of five years of RSA employment.

The vocational teacher interviewed was well prepared in special education having a master's degree in education of the educable mentally retarded and instructional and administrative experience in public school and special school special education. He had been employed by the
RSA for eight months.

Administrators indicated that all CLC staff were qualified for the positions held and that some had taken courses in special education from institutions of higher education. The RSA-sponsored inservice addressing IEP procedures was directed to only the standing IEP committee: the assistant principal assigned to special education, the principal, one academic and one vocational teacher.

Program

Calhoun Learning Center students receive equal amounts of instruction in academic and vocational areas with one-half of each day allocated to each. Academic instruction includes core (required) courses in mathematics, language arts, social skills, and health/physical education and elective instruction in music, history and science. Students who are found to have high levels of achievement in all areas may participate in the General Educational Development (GED) program designed to prepare them for successful completion of the GED examination. More than 100 students each year are graduated from this program.

Remedial and regular mathematics courses utilize the commercially produced Individualized Mathematics System (IMS) to address the diverse levels of students which range from 2.0 to 9.0 grade equivalents. If a student is below 2.0, he receives instruction in the resource math
class. Using a pretest, the teacher identifies the point within the system at which the student should begin and then provides modules to the student as he progresses through the program.

The language arts curriculum concentrates on grammar, sentence and paragraph writing, literature, and communication skills. Remedial and regular language arts classes are provided to students whose entry level scores are a 4.9 grade equivalent or above. If the grade equivalent is below 4.9, the student receives instruction through the resource reading program.

The social skills area does not have remedial classes but serves all students except self-contained special education students in the regular social skills classes. The goal of the social skills curriculum is to improve students' abilities to conform to social traits. Topics such as sex education, drug education, family and peer relationships, law and government and current events comprise the curriculum. Lecture and audiovisual presentations provide the basis for class discussions which were reported to be the primary instructional mode of the course.

All students participate in the health and physical education program. Physical education includes use of the facility's outdoor swimming pool, and instruction in basic skills and team sports. Students receive physical education instruction four days each week and health on the fifth day.
There are no remedial or special classes for either area. Special education students assigned to the self-contained class report to health/physical education as a group. Although no health/physical education teacher has professional training in special education, an attempt is made to assign the group to one of two teachers who have past experience working with special students.

Available to CLC students is the Individual Prescriptive Instruction Center. This is a soundproof room staffed by three teachers and an aide who assist students in individual study as assigned by regular teachers.

The special education program consists of resource services in mathematics and reading and one self-contained class which provides math, reading and social skills. Handicapped and nonhandicapped students are served through the resource classes. Resource teachers have a maximum of six students each class period and generally serve a total of 20 to 25 students. Handicapped students' instruction is based on IEP goals and objectives. Nonhandicapped students receive instruction based on pretest scores and subsequent skill attainment.

The self-contained special education class serves only handicapped students in all academic areas except health and physical education. The class is multicategorical and averages eight students per class period. A variety of materials and methods are necessarily utilized to address
the varying abilities and handicaps of students. Special education teachers also provide assistance and materials to regular class teachers for low-functioning nonhandicapped students and mainstreamed handicapped students.

Certain low incidence categories of special education students receive services from personnel outside of CLC personnel. The RSA speech therapist sees speech impaired CLC students once a week at the Reception and Diagnostic Center. An itinerant teacher employed by the Virginia Commission for Visually Handicapped provides materials and suggested methodologies to CLC teachers and periodic direct instruction to visually impaired students.

The vocational education program consists of eleven vocational areas which are designed to provide students with occupational entry-level skills. Each course is composed of 254 hours of instruction: 25 percent related theory and 75 percent practical application. Very little reading and only basic computation are required in the vocational classes, thus enabling special education students to participate fairly successfully in the programs. A home maintenance class has been designed to serve students who are educationally or emotionally unable to achieve satisfactorily in the regular vocational classes. This class includes handicapped and nonhandicapped students. Following attainment of a vocational certificate in any one area through 254 hours of attendance and passing grades, the
student is placed in another vocational class. Vocational teachers have been helpful in locating employment for students in occupational areas upon release from the Department of Corrections.

**Referral and Evaluation**

Calhoun Learning Center Youth School personnel have made no formal referrals for evaluation for potential special education eligibility. They have contacted R&DC personnel with inquiries regarding findings of ineligibility but have not initiated a referral for additional evaluation for such students. Reevaluations for dismissal from special education have been requested by teachers via the assistant principal and have been conducted on-site under the supervision of the special education coordinator.

**IEP and Placement**

Within a few days of each student's transfer to Calhoun Learning Center, a staffing committee determines placement within academic and vocational programs. Students are assigned to regular, remedial or resource math and language arts classes based on R&DC evaluation results and cottage designations, and to social skills and health/physical education classes by cottage. Students who have been "red-flagged," identified as handicapped, are placed in resource math and language arts and in social skills and health/physical education by cottage. With reference
to vocational programming, students have previously chosen three vocational areas in which they are interested. The staffing committee makes final determination of vocational placement based on the student's selection, available space, R&DC recommendations, and health and security considerations. The latter includes such considerations as avoidance of placing a youth vulnerable to substance abuse in the paint shop or a student convicted of auto theft in the auto shop. Identified handicapped students continue in the academic and vocational placements designated by the staffing committee until the formulation and approval of the IEP.

When the responsibility for IEP development was shifted from R&DC personnel to learning center personnel, Calhoun Learning Center established the standing IEP committee and implemented the IEP processes. The standing IEP committee was found to be unsatisfactory in that committee members were unfamiliar with the students, the vocational representative was unfamiliar with vocational areas other than his own, and communication between teachers to whom students had been assigned and standing committee members was difficult. To alleviate these problems, CLC administration requested of RSA central that they be permitted to abolish the standing committee and substitute those teachers to whom the student had been assigned by the staffing committee for the standing vocational and
academic members. Receiving permission from RSA for this modification, the IEP committee was subsequently composed as indicated.

As identified handicapped students are instructed by assigned teachers, goals and objectives are developed based on classroom pretest results, observations and R&DC data. Teachers submit goals and objectives to the office of the designated assistant principal the day prior to the IEP meeting. The meeting is usually held within one week of the staffing. The IEP committee, composed of relevant teachers, the assistant principal and the student's case-worker serving as surrogate parent, reviews submitted goals and objectives, makes any modifications necessary and formally approves the document. If the committee believes that the self-contained program would be more appropriate for the student based on approved goals and objectives developed by resource teachers, this placement is made. The self-contained teacher may be asked to attend the IEP meeting for consultation if there is a possibility of a self-contained placement in order to complete to the fullest extent possible the methods, materials and evaluation procedures portions of the IEP.

There have been several instances of a teacher-requested review of the developed IEP to modify objectives and/or placement. The initial placement of special education students have utilized remedial, regular,
resource and self-contained programs. Later review of the IEP has resulted in the movement of students to more and less restrictive classes.

**Staff Perceptions**

Calhoun Learning Center's Youth School has an extensive and formal system of provision of special education services. Special education staff are professionally qualified and receive support from the administration. These factors were cited as instrumental in the success of the special education program. Staff also provided a number of insights relating to their perceived inadequacies in the delivery of services.

Staff perceptions of students were fairly consistent. There was some diversity in the perceived number of students eligible or potentially eligible for special education. One teacher indicated that all students should be special education eligible under an emotionally disturbed classification. One other believed that there was over-identification in this category and under-identification of learning disabled youth. It was further reported that many students entering the Reception and Diagnostic Center identified as educable mentally retarded or learning disabled are categorized by the R&DC evaluation as emotionally disturbed. The resource reading teacher saw no major differences between the abilities of identified
handicapped students and low-functioning nonhandicapped students except the greater difficulty the former group experiences in grasping abstract concepts.

A problem was mentioned concerning students who receive medication for behavior control. They were found to experience difficulties academically due to hyperactive behaviors or general sluggishness and inability to attend possibly due to over-medication.

Behaviorally, students were reported to be socially immature with unrealistic social expectations for their incarcerated life and future freedoms. Reeducation in this area was noted to be a major need of students but difficult to address due to the learning center setting. Student life is completely controlled; they are told when and how to do every action every day. Staff indicated, therefore, there was little opportunity to develop desperately needed personal decision-making skills.

The youth school principal reported that the students of CLC require unique teachers. The staff interviewed fit this description. Their extensive professional preparation and broad experience in public schools, private schools, institutions and RSA schools provide great depth of ability. Public school experience was indicated to have been helpful in the initial and ongoing implementation of IEP procedures. Interviewed personnel felt that they could provide more thorough and appropriate instruction given a wider
variety of materials; more flexibility in scheduling; and an increase in the number of special education personnel, specifically for categorical self-contained special education classes.

The assignment of a facility administrator to the special education program was viewed as a very positive factor contributing to the successful operation of the program. Special education staff were particularly grateful for the knowledge and understanding of special education demonstrated by the designated assistant principal.

Some discomfort was indicated by staff relative to their positions within the correctional setting. The required accountability for students was said to be stress-producing to the degree that it was viewed as a "teaching versus accountability" relationship. The twelve-month school year and high pressure daily routine were reported to contribute to teacher burnout.

Although no formal referrals for additional evaluation had been made at the time of the on-site interviews, there was an indication by teachers that such evaluation was desirable for some identified students as well as non-identified students. The reasons for lack of referrals were time and limited special education programs. In the former case, it was anticipated that additional evaluation would require so much time from the date of referral to
receipt of evaluation data that the student in question would most likely be released prior to full implementation of any change in program. Teachers also indicated that if there were major differences between special education and regular programs, they would be more likely to request additional evaluation. Because all programs are individualized, it was felt that special education and non-special education programs were comparable in nature and that thus there was little, programmatically, to be gained by a special education identification. Low-functioning, possibly handicapped but unidentified students are served in the same resource program as identified handicapped students. One teacher indicated that she would strongly advocate additional evaluation if an unidentified student were perceived to require a self-contained program.

A common problem cited by teachers was the difference between R&DC student evaluation data and actual student performance at the learning center. Deflated R&DC scores were thought to be a result of students' agitated emotional condition at the time of the R&DC evaluation.

Implementation of IEP requirements was reported to have been accomplished fairly easily following the substitution of relevant IEP committee members for the standing IEP committee. CLC teachers were experienced in the development and utilization of instructional objectives, so there was less resistance to this requirement than
anticipated by CLC Youth School administrators. The assistant principal expressed some concern regarding the lack of an evaluator on the IEP committee. Although R&DC evaluation reports are thorough, it was thought that the IEP would be more accurately developed and that the meeting would adhere more closely to state regulations if a staff member who had administered individual evaluation to the student prior to determination of eligibility attend the initial IEP meeting.

Students do not attend IEP meetings. This was mentioned by three teachers who believed that student commitment to and understanding of his program would be enhanced by his involvement in the meeting. Caseworkers serving as surrogate parents were reported to provide valuable input to IEP considerations. Teachers indicated that the majority of caseworkers were cooperative and had made efforts to become knowledgeable in basic concepts and procedural requirements of special education. One teacher was of the opinion that the use of surrogate parents was preferential to active involvement of actual parents. He maintained that, based on his experience, the caseworkers in their role of surrogate parents were more knowledgeable, interested and committed to the development of educational programs that would meet students' needs.

CLC has received some public school-developed IEPs. In one instance, a learning center teacher received an IEP
she had developed in a local school division. Local school division IEPs have been observed to parallel RSA-developed IEPs fairly closely. Unfortunately, school division IEPs have, without exception, been received after the CLC staff have completed the Rehabilative School Authority IEP.

There has been no problem in meeting the 30-day limitation between the time of the eligibility meeting and the IEP meeting. Due to the proximity of Calhoun Learning Center and the R&DC, student transfers are not delayed for medical or dental treatment since they may receive treatment after transfer.

The IEP meeting is held within one week of staffing; therefore, there is little lapse in time between transfer, staffing determined placement and IEP determined placement. Although this sequence of procedures facilitates compliance with time lines, the staff felt that the one-week period between staffing placement and IEP formulation was not sufficient to adequately assess academic and behavior functions of students for the development of IEP goals and objectives. The suggestion was made that a 30-day trial placement with an interim IEP would permit teachers to gain a better understanding of students' needs prior to the approval of a finalized IEP. This was a particularly germane suggestion as it was reported that once an IEP placement is made there is reluctance on the part of
some staff to review the initial IEP and placement.

The IEP was viewed as a positive method when used to direct instruction. Some difficulty had been experienced in the use of R&DC evaluation data for planning and placement. Since IEPs are developed after little student-teacher interaction, goals, objectives and placement formulated are largely dependent on R&DC data. As a result, many students placed in resource programs on the basis of deflated R&DC data are recommended for removal within a few weeks of placement.

All interviewed personnel expressed varying concerns regarding least restrictive environment (LRE) regulations and interpretation of the same in the CLC special education program. Several teachers cited cases which they perceived as LRE noncompliance. One such example was one teacher's observation that special education eligible students may be placed in the resource program solely on the basis of their eligibility rather than measured ability, particularly if the remedial or regular classroom teacher who would normally receive the student has not had special education experience. From another perspective, a second teacher reported that too often handicapped students are placed in regular classes and fail to achieve but remain in the class to comply with LRE regulations. The vocational education teacher interviewed was adamant that the special vocational education program should contain only
low-functioning handicapped students rather than the heterogeneous handicapped and nonhandicapped group now enrolled in the course. His requests for this type of model have been stymied due to administrator's interpretation of LRE: A self-contained special vocational education class would unnecessarily segregate handicapped students from their nonhandicapped peers. General comments concerning the LRE issue addressed an "LRE preoccupation" by administrators which inhibited the expansion of the present program to one which would provide a full continuum of services and that the greatest LRE possible is an incarcerated regular class.

Several specific programming concerns were reported by teachers. Some students who have exhibited severe behavioral problems are assigned to the personal control cottage. They are confined to the cottage for all activities, including academic instruction. The assistant principal indicated that there are generally three to four special education eligible students in the cottage who are not receiving instruction via a special education teacher and are thus inappropriately served. She expressed this as a "security versus right to appropriate education" dilemma in which security is the victor.

There has been some difficulty in serving visually impaired and speech impaired students. Waiting lists for these two categories of service exist due to staff limitations.
The vocational education program was an area of concern to the interviewed vocational education teacher. Those special education students, notably educable mentally retarded youth, placed in regular vocational classes experience difficulty in completing class requirements. They may meet IEP goals but not the requirements for a vocational certificate and thus remain in the class for the duration of their stay at CLC. Although the home maintenance class is designed for students who are educationally or emotionally unable to achieve in regular vocational classes, there is great discrepancy of aptitude among home maintenance students, indicated to range from a measured IQ of 42 through above average. The teacher has found that he must teach to the majority of students' ability to avoid the emergence of acting out behaviors, thus neglecting the individual needs of very low level students. His recommendation was the development of a continuum of special vocational classes to address the needs of the extreme range of student ability. Special education teachers corroborated this need due to personnel rather than student problems. They had observed reluctance and refusal to collaboratively address special education students' needs on the part of vocational teachers and believed that special classes under the instruction of qualified special vocational education teachers would be more desirable.
There was some concern relative to CLC staff preparation for provision of services to students with low incidence categories of handicapping conditions. The support given by the Virginia Commission for the Visually Handicapped was indicated to be invaluable and was suggested to be duplicated for hearing impaired and deaf students. Although teachers have received training in sign language, they have not been required to use it consistently due to the transiency of hearing impaired and deaf students. Thus, teachers have tended to lose their ability to communicate in this mode. It was felt that more intensive services for speech impaired students were needed. Also reported was the absence of appropriate physical education for handicapped students who would benefit from adapted physical education instruction. Orthopedically impaired students have been placed at Calhoun Learning Center who, in the judgment of some special education personnel, were in need of adapted physical education and/or physical therapy. Physical educators have attempted to address the needs of these students within the regular physical education classes.

In summary, Calhoun Learning Center Rehabilitative School Authority personnel have a highly structured, procedurally accurate process through which to serve handicapped students. Primary concerns were related to the limited options for programming and placement and
conflicts in interpretations of regulations by RSA administrative personnel and teachers experienced in public school education.
The RSA Youth School of Davis Learning Center (DLC) appeared to be the most procedurally structured of the schools visited. Processes are formal and strictly "by-the-book." The atmosphere of the school also reflected this formal structure: Each person, teacher or student had a place and was in it. Interviews were arranged by the principal to be conducted in his office. He left the office during teacher interviews; hence, the location was not perceived to have an overriding negative effect. Teachers interviewed included the vocational and academic teachers who are members of the standing IEP committee and an additional academic teacher. The academic teachers interviewed are designated by the school as two of the three special education teachers. The initial interview with the principal was conducted prior to teacher interviews. Additional information was obtained from the principal throughout the on-site visit.

An extensive tour of the school was provided during which the researcher was able to converse with students and teachers. Although this could have been a perfect opportunity to gain additional insight, only surface information was forthcoming. The acquisition of apparently only superficial information from interviewees was attributed by the researcher to two possible factors:
(a) discomfort of personnel during interviews or (b) interviewees' knowledge being only as indicated rather than expanding on basic procedures and services by drawing on past experience, innovation and/or potential flexibility of the system. An RSA central administrator supported the second rationale as her perception of the DLC school personnel and the systems utilized by the same tend to be extremely structured along the bare guidelines provided by RSA central. There has been little initiative or innovation in programming displayed by DLC RSA personnel. They were reported to adhere strictly to written procedures and rarely request modifications or exceptions to procedures. This was very evident in reports of DLC RSA staff: Their procedures are identical to those of the manual and RSA-wide modifications. Additionally, their concerns that there was not a mechanism for referral and additional evaluation of students is based on a misconception, one that could have been easily corrected by communication with RSA central or personnel of other youth schools. It was indicated by the RSA central administrator that DLC is typically autonomous in its functioning and was dismayed but not surprised that DLC staff were unaware of referral and additional evaluation procedures.

Facility and Students

Davis Learning Center was privately founded in 1910 as a "home" for female offenders. It was deeded to the
Commonwealth of Virginia in 1914 with the stipulation that it continue to be used for its original purpose. Located adjacent to the Reception and Diagnostic Center two miles from a major metropolitan area, Davis Learning Center at the present time is the sole state correctional institution for girls. The school is one of 26 buildings on the learning center campus. Also located on the DLC campus is the Central Infirmary which functions in coordination with R&DC evaluations and also serves all youth committed to the DOC who require medical or dental treatment.

The budgeted population of the learning center is 135. In the principal's memory, the population had never been below the budgeted number but had varied from 135 to 150 with high populations of 155 to 165 during the summer months. Students range in age from 11 through 18 years. The length of stay is usually four to twelve months, averaging eight and one-half months with the exception of those students assigned to the special program for the emotionally disturbed who average a 12-month commitment.

Since DLC is the only juvenile female facility, students are committed for a full continuum of offenses. Behaviors, backgrounds, and abilities are equally varied. Generally, students exhibit depressed educational levels, have experienced school-related problems, have a history of truancy, and show little motivation to achieve educationally.
Due to the varied characteristics displayed by students, DLC provides several treatment modalities. Students are assigned to cottages based on the treatment modality designated to be appropriate by the DOC classification/staffing committee: two peer involvement cottages, one prerelease cottage, one personal control cottage for verbally and physically aggressive students, and one cottage for seriously emotionally disturbed girls.

The proximity of the learning center to a large city and the presence of a number of girls requiring minimal security provisions permit a great deal of contact with the community. Field trips to historical and cultural sites and occupational observations enrich students' experiences and increase community exposure. Selected students may also participate in a community training program. Employment opportunities vary from fast food restaurants to State Police Headquarters.

Teachers could not estimate the number of identified handicapped students since these students are so integrated with nonhandicapped students. The principal's estimate of red-flagged students was approximately 30 percent of the student population. All students were perceived to have emotional problems: In one teacher's words, "The definition of emotional disturbance sounds like what is normal here." The numbers of educable mentally retarded and learning disabled students were said to be "few."
Teachers felt that many students labeled emotionally disturbed also exhibited behaviors characteristic of mental retardation or learning disabilities but that the emotional disturbance was the overriding factor.

Staff

The staff of the RSA school of Davis Learning Center includes the principal, assistant principal, ten academic teachers and nine vocational teachers. The Department of Corrections' staff includes two psychologists and one part-time psychiatrist who are available for consultation with staff and counseling and program development for students.

Teachers are generally endorsed in at least their area of instruction, and many have additional coursework in general education and/or special education areas. There are three teachers designated as "special education," all of which are endorsed in the area of mental retardation.

Each teacher interviewed had had public school experience prior to employment by the Rehabilitative School Authority. The vocational teacher, a member of the standing IEP committee, had taught vocational education for two years in a public school before coming to the RSA. She had felt that students served by the RSA had greater need than those with whom she worked in the public schools and has shown her commitment by her long service with the
RSA: 22 years. An undergraduate degree in mental retardation and public school experience with that population were the experiences of the special education social skills teacher prior to coming to Davis Learning Center five years ago. The special education math instructor has diversified experience: undergraduate degrees in elementary education and mental retardation, one year teaching public school fifth grade, and two years with a public school prevocational program before being employed by the RSA as a math teacher three years ago. The RSA principal has had teaching and administrative experience in three RSA schools.

RSA staff are the recipients of inservice programs held approximately every other month for a full day of instruction. Pertaining to special education procedures, inservices addressing Public Law 94-142 and development of IEP goals and objectives have been attended by staff. Department of Corrections' caseworkers and the RSA principal also attended an inservice regarding surrogate parent responsibilities.

Program

The program of the youth school is necessarily diverse in order to meet the needs of its extreme range of student ability, achievement and interest. For example, there are three levels of language arts instruction serving students pre-kindergarten through 2.5 grade equivalents, 2.6 through
7.0 grade equivalents, and above 7.0 grade equivalents. IMS mathematics and social skills classes are not as objectively grouped as language arts instruction as the former is provided on an individual progress basis and the latter addresses needs common to all students. There is one remedial social skills class which addresses the same material as that of regular classes but at a slower pace. The social skills classes are also responsible for health instruction. Educationally advanced students are enrolled in the General Educational Development (GED) program which prepares them for successful completion of the GED exam, earning a high school equivalency diploma. Arts and crafts, music and physical education are required of all students and are considered to be the recreational portion of the curriculum. There are two special physical education classes designed specifically for those students with perceptual motor deficiencies.

Vocational courses include cosmetology, food services, laundry, nurses' aide, occupational child care, office occupations, sewing, work adjustment and the work release program. On-site vocational programs are designed to provide students with basic skills that will enable them to obtain semiskilled employment or to enter vocational programs at a higher level upon release. Of particular interest is the occupational child care program which utilizes a facility-centered child care practicum.
Community residents and facility staff bring their pre-school age children, ranging in age from infancy to four years, to the school for care by the students.

The special education program is devised of self-contained and resource classes serving both handicapped and nonhandicapped students. The terms "self-contained" and "resource" are used somewhat differently by DLC personnel than are generally used by special education professionals. "Self-contained" refers to an academic subject area course provided to handicapped and nonhandicapped students. "Resource" classes are tutorial: providing support to recommended students one period each day to enable them to remain in regular classes.

Special education services are provided by three teachers assigned to the areas of mathematics/resource, language arts and social skills. The focus of each special class is attainment of basic skills according to each student's needs as identified by R&DC evaluation. Programs were described as differing little from regular classes other than increased amounts of time required for explanation and individualized instruction.

The special program for the emotionally disturbed is the result of a cooperative effort by the Department of Corrections and the mental health/mental retardation consultants of the state level. Student placement in the program is on the basis of behavioral and psychological
needs rather than on the educational definition of emotional disturbance. Not all students in the program have been determined to be eligible for special education under the category of emotionally disturbed. Placement in the ED program is made by the Institutional Review Committee (IRC) which is composed of the DOC assistant superintendent of Davis Learning Center, the facility psychiatrist and the RSA principal. The criteria used for determination of placement are the number of previous psychiatric placements and cottage behaviors (e.g., bizarre behavior such as hallucinations or paranoia). Formerly, all students assigned to this program and cottage received all services within the cottage. Presently, however, students are being served in special education and regular classes in the school facility.

Referral and Evaluation

Interviewees reported that there was no mechanism known to them for the referral and additional evaluation of students. The principal indicated that such a process would be helpful, specifically for the referral of students whom staff feel are handicapped but are not identified as such. He continued that, physically, there should be no problem conducting additional evaluation due to the proximity of the Reception and Diagnostic Center but could see some reluctance on the part of R&DC staff in granting such a request.
IEP and Placement

Davis Learning Center receives students from the Reception and Diagnostic Center on Monday. The students are taken on a tour of the facility and then placed in a holding cottage pending cottage determination by the classification/staffing committee that afternoon. Tuesday, the school scheduling (staffing) committee meets to determine class placement of the student based on R&DC data. If the student has been identified as handicapped, the scheduling committee develops a program on the basis of what is anticipated to be recommended by the IEP committee. Handicapped students' schedules include placement in the three special education classes, a vocational class, arts and crafts, music and physical education. If R&DC data indicate a possible problem in perceptual-motor functioning, the student is placed in one of the two special physical education classes. The student remains in the scheduling committee-determined placement until the IEP meeting, which is held two to three weeks following the initial scheduling.

The IEP is developed by the standing IEP committee using R&DC evaluation data. Goals and objectives are selected by the committee from lists prepared by all teachers which were submitted to the principal's office in the fall of 1981. Goals and objectives are matched with student levels of achievement and test scores:
As one teacher described this process, "It's all based on data." To date, the IEP had always conformed to the scheduling committee's placement decision.

If, after IEP development, a change in placement is desired by a teacher, a referral is made to the RSA scheduling committee for review of the request. The scheduling committee may approve or deny the request. If a change is approved, the IEP is not modified but original objectives are maintained.

Staff Perceptions

Teachers felt comfortable in the learning center setting. All felt that the incarcerated girls had more need of their services than public school students and thus felt a sense of achievement and fulfillment not experienced during public schools experience. There also was indicated to be a feeling of security within the learning center setting, "no drugs, no knives, no guns," as compared with the public school setting. Being relieved of responsibility for students' behavior problems also was reported to be a positive aspect of learning center employment. Smaller classes, more freedom to select teaching strategies and topics and the informality of class conduct were cited as additional attractions of the institutional setting. There was apparently a good relationship between RSA and DOC personnel, described by one interviewee as "amicable."
Personnel of both agencies appear to have a clear understanding and healthy respect for lines of authority, responsibility and knowledge of each and are able to use strengths for mutual support and benefit. This was said to be exemplified by the caseworkers serving as surrogate parents. They were reported to be very well qualified to interpret sociocultural and psychological data due their treatment background but were not "educationalists, so it (IEP development) is pretty well left up to us (RSA staff)."

RSA teachers felt that they were less able to use sociocultural and psychological data effectively and that the interpretations of caseworkers provided teachers with valuable insights.

Although teachers have not made referrals due to their perceived inability to do so, they felt that the categorization of identified students was "arbitrary" and expressed the need for a mechanism through which to appeal labels. It was also suggested that identification of handicapped students as determined by public schools was of a better quality and more accurate over time than that of the R&DC evaluation due to students' emotional condition during the R&DC assessment. One teacher observed that problems identified by R&DC reports "may be nonproblems here," and thus disallows the label given a student for the purposes of instructional planning. Few public school Category II files and IEPs have been received; but one teacher reported
that of those received, data were more accurately descriptive of students following the settling-in reaction to the learning center than data received from R&DC evaluations.

Concern was expressed by the principal regarding the flow of information from the RSA school to the local school divisions receiving released students. He attributed the problem to the number of agencies and persons through which information must be relayed. RSA records are given to the DOC caseworker who transfers them to the court supervising the released student. The probation officer assigned by the court then may release the information to the public school in which the student enrolls. There are obviously a number of points at which the system can break down. The principal believed that the situation was somewhat futile resulting in interruptions in services designed for and desperately needed by students.

However, one teacher reported that RSA-developed IEPs and IIPs did "not accurately reflect the student" for appropriate use by public schools, because the learning center school has lower expectations of students than public school programs: "homework, responsibility and motivation are taken care of by the RSA." There is no homework because students are not permitted to take books and materials out of the school; there is no responsibility because there is little or no freedom of choice; and there
is no personal motivation required as long as students are cooperative.

The conformity of the IEP placement to scheduling committee placement was believed to be a function of the personnel of which committees are composed and the limited special education placements. The principal and a single special education teacher are members of both committees and thus can draw the scheduling committee's attention to R&DC data indicating a student's red-flag status and subsequent placement in special education classes. The primary function of the IEP committee thus becomes the selection of goals and objectives from the teacher-prepared lists rather than placement. It was reported that basic skills are the focus of objectives selected for eligible students, and that often, lists of objectives are short and limited to basic skills. Consensus of the IEP committee regarding goals and objectives selected formalize the IEP. Rarely is a student moved from a special education class to a remedial class.

The IEP was viewed by one teacher as "more of a process than a working tool." Placement is actually not related to goals and objectives but on R&DC data reflecting functioning level. It was reported that handicapped students are placed in special education classes largely on the basis of their eligibility rather than instructional need. This was further emphasized by teacher reports
indicating that class structure, assignments and methodologies are no different for handicapped students than for nonhandicapped students placed in special classes.

Due to the wide range of abilities and needs displayed by clients, the youth school must provide a vast variety of services and subjects with limited personnel. Interviewed special education teachers and the principal believed that there was a need for an increased continuum of services for special education students. This would be contingent upon an increase in special education staff. The principal suggested that handicapped students could be better served if more flexibility were permitted in scheduling. Presently, special education eligible students are served almost exclusively by the three teachers designated for special education due to what was described by one teacher as a "preoccupation with special education endorsed teachers." She indicated that some red-flagged students would be served more appropriately through a remedial level regular class but were precluded from such placement due to their handicapped status: If a regular class teacher is not special education endorsed, handicapped students are not placed in her class. This greatly limits the placement options for handicapped students. Interviewees perceived little mechanism for change of automatic placements based on eligibility and teacher endorsement as they believed it to be under the control
of the Department of Corrections.

The social skills teacher described the social skills as serving "almost no purpose" to special education students. All students are assigned the same four objectives, receiving individualized attention when needed. Instruction is based on discussion and group activities so special education students experience few problems other than written assignments. One interviewee felt that more structured curricula were needed in the language arts and social skills courses. She felt that youth school curricula should be coordinated with that of the public schools in order to facilitate students' movement from the youth school to the public school and vice versa. The math curriculum was felt to be adequate due to the use of the Individualized Mathematics System.

Handicapped and nonhandicapped students may receive resource services through their referral to the resource teacher by the regular class teacher. They are initially scheduled for one week of resource services but may continue for a second week if necessary. At the time of the on-site interviews, the resource teacher reported that only three students, two handicapped and one nonhandicapped, had been served through this program. She suggested that the small number of students referred for the program was due to teachers' lack of knowledge of the availability of the service or the process by which students are referred.
In summary, DLC Youth School procedures are identical to those of the RSA manual. Interviews were characterized by cursory, superficial descriptions of processes, programs and roles. This was found to accurately reflect the depth of the program. There was evidence of a dearth of information sharing relative to procedures and programs available within the youth school and throughout the RSA. Staff were fairly well satisfied with their responsibilities and felt relatively untouched by DOC procedures.
APPENDIX F
Bates Learning Center Youth School

The RSA Youth School of Bates Learning Center (BLC) was observed to be most similar to a typical public school setting in terms of both its physical appearance and general atmosphere in comparison with other youth schools. Conversations with personnel revealed the depth of this similarity: concern regarding the loss of Title IV-B funds for library purchases, problems the music teacher was experiencing in organizing a teacher and student chorus, the school secretary worn to a frazzle because reports were due and her typewriter was on its last legs, a Department of Corrections' caseworker frustrated and angry because a family was not cooperating in providing aftercare for a soon-to-be-released student. These situations are familiar to administrative, teaching, clerical and counseling staff in every public school.

Interviews were conducted on an inservice day to ensure availability of staff. This resulted in the researcher's attendance of the inservice program. The program, presented by an outside consultant at the request of the teachers, addressed personal perceptions and the affect such perceptions may have on day-to-day activities as well as how such perceptions may be used to positively or negatively affect the control one may choose to exercise over his or her own life. Two interviews were conducted
prior to the program and three after the program. There was a definite difference between the before-program and after-program interviews. The latter group displayed much more openness, more willingness to take time to ensure that their comments were accurately interpreted, and more excitement in being given an opportunity to express their concerns than the former group. Perhaps the difference was simply a fluke in the selection of interviewees, but the principal indicated some surprise that the after-program interviews took a greater length of time than she or the researcher had anticipated based on the length of the before-program interviews.

Interviews were conducted in classrooms and the teachers' lounge. Teachers were available for extended periods of time due to the inservice day, during which students did not attend school but were supervised in the cottages by DOC personnel. Interviewees included the principal, two regular academic teachers, a vocational teacher and the sole special education teacher of the youth school. The vocational teacher and one regular academic teacher were interviewed prior to the inservice program. Due to the length of the after-program interviews, it was necessary to continue the principal's interview at a later date over the telephone. The telephone interview lasted one hour and fifteen minutes. Following the telephone interview, the researcher determined that all
necessary information had been obtained and no further
follow-up was needed.

Facility and Students

Bates Learning Center (BLC) is located in a rural
setting approximately thirty miles from a major metropolitan
area. Originally a women's correctional facility, it was
collapsed to a male youth learning center in 1979. At the
time of the on-site interviews, the facility housed
adjudicated males ages 11 through 14 years but was antici­
pating a transition to an 11 through 16 years age range in
order to decrease the population of other learning centers.
The facility is budgeted for 90 youth and had been under­
populated for some time. Between the time of the on-site
interviews and the telephone-conducted follow-up interview
with the principal, the population rose from 69 to 92 in
one month.

The average length of incarceration, nine months, is
somewhat misleading as approximately 10 percent of the
population remain in Bates for two to two and one-half
years. The modal length of stay was estimated by the
principal to be more representative: seven months. Bates
houses the younger, more vulnerable offender requiring less
security than that provided by other facilities. The school
was described frequently as being most similar to a
regular school setting as compared to those of the other
learning centers. Students are permitted to attend
community activities such as church services and the local
dinner theatre as approved by their treatment team.
Cottages house fewer students than other learning centers
and thus can provide more individualization. This was
believed to contribute to more improvement in social
behavior and academic achievement.

The majority of students are below expected grade
level of academic achievement and thus require remedial
educational programming. Teachers' perceptions of the
students themselves varied greatly. It was felt by one
teacher that most students were EMR, while another felt
the majority of all students were ED. Great concern was
shown by teachers regarding the ED label. Some students
were perceived to be academically excellent but emotionally
unable to cope. One teacher felt that most students,
special education eligible or not, were emotionally dis­turbed but would "grow out of it." Another teacher felt
that a large number of students were learning disabled
but had been labeled emotionally disturbed. It was
suggested that the primary academic difference between
handicapped and nonhandicapped students was the level of
their reading comprehension which affects all academic
coursework and achievement. It was felt that behaviorally
handicapped students have a shorter attention span
requiring more one-to-one attention and demonstration.
The principal estimated that 60 percent to 65 percent of
the population was special education eligible and identified as such, the majority being EMR and ED.

Staff

There are eight academic teachers: two in the social skills area, two in mathematics, three in language arts and one special education resource teacher. A single teacher is assigned to each of the three prevocational areas—art, music and health/physical education.

The majority of personnel have somewhat lengthy tenure at Bates: twenty-eight years total between the prevocational and two language arts teachers interviewed. The special education resource teacher had been employed at BLC for five months at the time of the interview and had had four years experience in public school special education previously. The resource teacher has state endorsement in mental retardation, and the remedial language arts teacher is endorsed to teach the emotionally disturbed. The principal indicated that most teachers have received formal coursework in special education.

The quality of school personnel was cited as being a major factor in the successful delivery of services to all students. Teachers come from a variety of backgrounds, and, overall, have worked within the RSA for some time. They have sought to continually improve their abilities through RSA-sponsored courses, requested inservice
presentations by diverse speakers, and coursework through institutions of higher education for graduate degrees and/or endorsement in additional areas. The closeness of the staff was indicated to be a major factor in meeting the needs of individual students through the utilization of informal information sharing.

Program

Academic programs offered by BLC include regular and remedial classes in language arts, mathematics and social skills. Prevocational courses in woodworking, career education and food services are offered. Art, music and health/physical education complete the curriculum.

The language arts and mathematics curricula are based on commercial programs consisting of objectives with accompanying instructional materials and tests. Using the tests, the teacher can place the student in the program at an appropriate level. The student then continues through the program at his own pace, moving to higher levels upon successful completion of subsequent material. The social skills curriculum is less standardized as it draws on a number of sources and is more flexible in content in order to address specific needs of the class.

The prevocational programs stress basic skills. They are each scheduled for a six-month block, rotating in
June and December. As a new student enters a prevocational program he begins at the point where the class is currently functioning within the curriculum. If entry-level skills are needed for the student to adequately participate at that point, the teacher provides the student with additional work to bring him up to the level of the class. The teacher may work with the student after regular school hours if needed. Each prevocational program has objectives which are used to monitor students' progress.

The resource teacher serves in a support capacity, instructing those students who are unable to achieve adequately in the regular or remedial academic classes. Nonhandicapped students may be recommended by teachers to receive resource room support when regular class performance is unsatisfactory. The principal approves the recommendation and assigns the student to the resource room for a specified length of time, generally one week to one month, in lieu of regular classroom attendance. Although the size of classes is small, six to eight students prior to the increase in population, the resource room can offer more individual attention; in some cases, this is one-to-one instruction. In addition to academic instruction, the resource teacher has provided speech and language services to an identified speech impaired student, a social interaction class for a group of emotionally disturbed students, and a career lab providing basic skills to low
level handicapped and nonhandicapped students. With particular reference to handicapped students, the resource teacher does not prepare instructional goals and objectives. Since these are prepared by regular and remedial teachers prior to the IEP meeting, the resource teacher receives students with goals and objectives intact.

Referral and Evaluation

All students received by BLC have been evaluated at the Reception and Diagnostic Center and are thus identified as handicapped or nonhandicapped upon arrival. Staff of BLC have referred previously unidentified and identified students whose category of exceptionality is questioned for additional evaluation. The referral is made by a teacher and requested of the R&DC special education coordinator by the BLC principal. The student is either taken to the R&DC or R&DC evaluators come to the learning center for the additional evaluation. The R&DC staff conduct the evaluation and eligibility determination process for any learning center referred student.

Requested evaluations generally supported the staff's perceptions. The major reason offered by teachers for the difference between students' academic level and behavior as evaluated at the R&DC and that displayed at the learning center was the settling-in reaction students have in the learning center environment. The IEPs developed by BLC
staff have contrasted with R&DC recommendations because of changes in the student between R&DC evaluation and IEP development. R&DC staff provide recommendations for programming, but BLC teachers have found many of these unrealistic for the learning center setting or invalid for the student's needs within the learning center placement.

**IEP and Placement**

Each student arriving at Bates is placed by a staffing committee in remedial or regular academic classes on the basis of measured grade level using R&DC evaluation results and recommendations. Students are enrolled in mathematics, language arts, social skills, a prevocational area, health/physical education, art and music. If the student has been identified as handicapped, the teachers of those classes in which the student has been placed prepare goals and objectives based on R&DC data, pretests administered in the classroom, content area checklists and classroom performance. Annual goals are expressed in terms of desired exit scores on standardized tests. Objectives are taken, whenever possible, from the commercial curriculum used; the standard objectives of the prevocational, social skills, music, art and health/physical education courses; and various checklists. Teachers submit the goals and objectives to the principal's office.
Generally within three weeks from the time the student has been staffed into classes, the standing IEP committee meets to review the submitted goals and objectives. The IEP committee is composed of the principal, an academic teacher, a prevocational teacher and the surrogate parent (the student's DOC caseworker). The IEP is developed by the committee using the submitted goals and objectives and R&DC recommendations. On the basis of the IEP, placement may be maintained as originally assigned or modified. It is rarely modified as special education students are usually placed in remedial courses by the staffing committee upon entrance. Students may receive services from the resource teacher upon the recommendation of the IEP committee. Only one student has required a self-contained model for all three academic subjects which were provided by the resource teacher.

The resource teacher serves handicapped and nonhandicapped students. Handicapped students are placed in the resource class through the IEP process. If after initial placement in remedial classes the handicapped student is failing to achieve as expected, the teacher may request resource services. An IEP meeting is held to review placement and formally approve resource model services. The resource room teacher uses the objectives developed by the classroom teacher for the handicapped student in providing instruction. A memorandum documenting the change
is sent to RSA central. There has been no occasion to remove a student from the resource room to the regular classroom to date.

Staff Perceptions

All interviewed personnel felt that the needs of handicapped students were being met. This was perceived as a result of the high degree of individualization afforded all students through the use of specific curricula, the quality of personnel, and the flexibility of the instructional program through the use of the resource room services.

The interviewed BLC staff were somewhat critical of the preparation they received prior to the implementation of special education procedures. The principal and teachers participated in an RSA-sponsored inservice two weeks before the date of initiation of the procedures which presented the mechanics of the process and responsibilities entailed. It was felt that the inservice would have been more valuable if it had been made available several months prior to the initiation of new responsibilities, had addressed the rationale behind the newly instituted required procedures and had included the DOC caseworkers. The R&DC principal and special education coordinator and the RSA central personnel have been supportive to requests made by BLC staff regarding procedures and individual
Some time previously, teachers had been required to develop daily objectives for all students: a practice which had been continued by some teachers. Therefore, writing objectives was not totally alien. One fear of teachers was their perceived inability on their part to write objectives for special education students. Although the population of students has not changed, the labeling of students carried a stigma for the teachers. The writing of objectives continues to be a problem for most teachers. They expressed a need for more information concerning specific instructional objectives which could be used for various handicapping conditions. The commercial curricula used in the language arts and mathematics areas and the curricula of the other courses provide specific objectives but do not provide suggestions for the utilization of alternative methods or materials to address the specific and diverse needs of students. For example, the prevocational curricula objectives are used for handicapped and nonhandicapped students. If objectives are met before the rotation, special projects are assigned. Different methods are utilized with handicapped students; but to date, no handicapped students have met all objectives.
Problems such as visual discrimination deficits are particularly difficult for the staff to prepare objectives. The suggestion was made that the provision of a pool of objectives, methods and materials for low incidence problems would help to alleviate the difficulty teachers now face.

A need was frequently expressed for relevant inservice training in instructional techniques to be used with special education students. This need is recognized by the BLC administration but is difficult to address due to a lack of funding to bring professionals to the facility for such programming. The RSA central has presented programs upon request, but the staff felt that more expertise was needed in specific areas as well as their desire to hear people outside of the two or three RSA personnel who generally provide requested programs. Utilization of State Department of Education personnel was not viewed as a viable alternative as these available personnel "can't relate to our setting."

The learning center setting is different from that of a public school. A teacher with experience in both noted that the primary difference between the two is in the layers of bureaucracy which have authority over students and teachers. Very specific regulations dictate the boundaries of teacher authority and actions. If the rules are followed, the teacher and students are less likely to be jeopardized. Conversely, the teacher has less authority
to determine some activities taken for granted in the public
schools. For example, a field trip must be approved not
only by the principal but also by the treatment team of
each student. Teachers also have less decision-making
authority within their classrooms, specifically in the area
of student behavior. Teachers are required to document
each day students' behavior for use by the treatment team.
There are more forms to complete, more layers of authority
to clear resulting in time and action restraints.

Teachers reported some negative impact on the school
program as a perceived result of the jurisdiction the
corrections facility exercises over students. Teachers are
accountable for students' security during the school day.
They are responsible for ensuring that students are con-
ducted safely to and from cottages and dining hall and that
no student escapes during school hours. It was expressed
that this strict accountability places education in a
secondary position to security and places undue stress on
teachers. Teachers also noted that there was difficulty
in the actual amount time students were able to attend
classes. Caseworkers, probation officers, cottage staff,
medical staff and counselors frequently remove students
from the classroom for various purposes. Teachers are
required to keep a monitoring form recording student
attendance which documents this problem.
Contrasting the present school program with that prior to the implementation of special education procedures, teachers and the principal observed two primary differences: paperwork and the resource teacher. In the former case, the level of individualization of instruction has been consistently very high. Students receive educational programs based on their entry level abilities and progress through programs according to their own rate of learning. Special education procedures require the formal development and monitoring of goals and objectives for the IEP, documentation of resource placement through IEP approval and notice to RSA central, and formal participation in planning and documentation by DOC caseworkers.

The resource teacher was perceived as a very positive addition. Her services, utilized by handicapped and non-handicapped students, provide more intensive and individual instruction as well as respite to regular classroom teachers. It was felt that to a large degree the resource support ensured that the needs of handicapped students were being met.

At the time of the interviews, the resource teacher was working with twelve students, handicapped and nonhandicapped. Interviewed staff felt that there was a need for a self-contained program for EMR and ED students and additional resource assistance. Since this need was expressed prior to the transition to an 11 through 16 years
age population, it can be assumed that this would be of some urgency following the addition of more than thirty students. Bates Learning Center also receives two to three students each year who are pending special treatment placement or placement in the Harmon Learning Center special program for the mentally retarded. These students require highly specialized care which is not available at BLC. Special treatment placements require approximately a five-month stay if the problem is funding and one month if the problem is space. Students awaiting placement in the Harmon program are generally released from the Department of Corrections before the special placement is made. Additional resource or self-contained services would accommodate these special students more adequately.

There was an indication, however, that if funding were available to expand the special education program, special education positions would be extremely difficult to fill. The principal cited an example of one special education endorsed (MR) teacher out of 40 applicants for a vacancy. Conjecture as to the reasons behind this difficulty focused on the scarcity of special education teachers statewide compounded by the reluctance of teachers to work in the correctional setting due to the twelve-month school year with few holidays and vacations, the additional security responsibilities, required treatment team participation and the relative isolation of the learning center.
Harmon Learning Center Youth School

The Youth School of Harmon Learning Center looks like a typical public school. It has a lobby with trophy cases, a secretary-receptionist in the main office, and bulletin boards. Looking out the front door, one would not think that the school was right in the middle of a correctional institution but rather part of an upper middle class boarding school set in the rolling hills of Virginia. The appearance of the facility belies the feeling. There was a sense of tension, heightened by students in denim shirts and pants shuffling in a line to class. There was not the usual laughter and exchange of jibes one hears in a public school as students change classes. The classrooms, hallways and offices are a backdrop of normality against which the students are a contrast that is startling.

Interviews were conducted with the principal, assistant principal, educational evaluator, three special education teachers and one health/physical education teacher. Classrooms and the offices of the educational evaluator, principal and assistant principal were used for interviewing. All interviews, with the exception of that of the mental retardation program teacher, were sufficient to obtain descriptions and perceptions. Contact and conversation with the MR program teacher was limited as she was leaving to attend a meeting at RSA central. Since time was
limited, only basic descriptions and perceptions of her program were obtained: Background information was believed by the researcher to be less important to secure than program information in the limited time available.

Teachers interviewed seemed to have a very good grasp of their responsibilities and program but less surety of the total process. Administrators could describe the process but not each staff member's role in the process. This resulted in a fragmented description which is believed to be representative of the process: it is fragmented, each person performing his or her own slice of the process without a great deal of knowledge of what precedes or follows. This interpretation of the researcher was supported by a comment made by one interviewee, "Everybody does their own job and to hell with everyone else." In some way, the fragments come together to make a whole. It is the opinion of the researcher that informal mechanisms, such as personal conversations, provide the linkage between the fragments that result in a cohesive process.

Facility and Students

Harmon Learning Center (HLC) is found in a rural-agricultural setting within commuting distance of a major metropolitan area. It receives committed male youth ages 13 to 15½ years who require medium security supervision: those students who need more control than that provided at
Bates Learning Center and less than that of Calhoun Learning Center. The average length of commitment to HLC is five and one-half months. Release is partially contingent upon educational progress; students must have a "C" average in order to be recommended for release.

Although Harmon is budgeted for 110 students, there are usually approximately 130 in residence. The population has gone as high as 160 in the past.

The Department of Corrections' mental retardation program is located at Harmon Learning Center. This program, housed in one of the cottages, is substantially self-contained as students are provided all instruction by an endorsed special education teacher within the confines of the cottage. Students placed in this program by the DOC range in age from 13 through 18 years; are trainable and educable mentally retarded; and are committed indefinitely, usually remaining in the program for up to two years.

Interviewees reported that there have always been handicapped students within the student population and that with the identification process, students have been categorized as emotionally disturbed, learning disabled, mentally retarded, speech impaired and multiply handicapped (generally a sensory handicap and emotional disturbance). In one teacher's words, however, "Here, ED is normal."
Staff

The youth school employs a principal, assistant principal, fifteen academic teachers, four vocational teachers, music and art teachers and an educational evaluator. Among teaching staff, there are six special education endorsed teachers: five in the area of mental retardation and one in emotional disturbance. Of the two special education teachers interviewed, each was endorsed in the area of mental retardation and had had RSA regular class experience prior to their special education assignments. One had been employed in two DOC youth schools for a total of fourteen years. The second had been teaching in Harmon Learning Center for eleven years.

The educational evaluator had held a number of positions in three RSA schools over the past 24 years. She had been transferred from one school where she had served as a result of racial integration in the early 1960s. Soon after she came to HLC as a language arts instructor, a position which she held for eight years until becoming the facility's educational evaluator. The responsibilities of the educational evaluator include administration of educational achievement pretests and posttests, communication with public school counselors to obtain school transcripts, and maintenance routing of student files.

Administrators reported that school staff were well prepared professionally and continued their professional
development through RSA-sponsored courses and formal coursework through institutions of higher education. Personnel have participated in RSA training sessions on special education procedures and development of instructional objectives. It was further reported that RSA teachers generally remain in the employ of the Rehabilitative School Authority either in a number of facilities or in a single facility.

Program

Students committed to Harmon Learning Center are assigned by cottage to mathematics, language arts, social skills, health/physical education, music, art and vocational courses. Therefore, students' DOC cottage assignment, which is determined by judgment of students' social adjustment needs, is the basis for educational grouping. This results in educationally heterogeneously grouped classes. All courses are individualized based on students' entry level R&DC evaluation data.

HLC Youth School uses a departmentalized system by subject area, including a special education department. Each department is headed by a cluster leader who is responsible for routing information and providing technical assistance to the teachers in his or her department. Each course is based on a curriculum guide which includes instructional objectives to be addressed by the course. The
principal reported that this lends consistency to course offerings.

The goal of mathematics and language arts instruction is to raise students' educational levels to grade levels appropriate for each student's age. Provided with materials and sequenced lessons, students proceed through programs at their own pace monitored by teachers. Due to the small size of classes students receive a great deal of individual attention from teachers. The mathematics classes utilize the Individualized Mathematics System (IMS) program supplemented by commercial and teacher-made materials. The language arts program has available a commercial program as its source and a number of teacher-made and commercial materials to address specific needs. The social skills curriculum concentrates on basic social knowledges such as fostering interpersonal relationships and social judgment; consumer skills, social studies subjects such as geography, history and civics.

Vocational courses, career education, woodworking, barbering, and small engine repair are also offered to students. The program is designed to rotate students to each subject area so that students are exposed to every vocational area within four to five months. All vocational courses are prevocational in nature, providing students with basic competencies to acquaint them with occupational areas and required skills. The majority of vocational
coursework is of a practical hands-on nature. There is little individualization other than the degree of difficulty or number of assigned projects.

Special education courses have been offered by HLC for six years serving low-functioning students outside of the regular classroom through the use of curricula parallel to that of the regular classes. The special education classes currently conducted serve identified handicapped students and nonhandicapped low-functioning students. Instruction is provided by three special education teachers in the areas of mathematics, language arts and social skills. Each student has a regular class assignment with his cottage but is removed from regular class for designated special class instruction. Special education classes contain approximately five students each class period.

The special education math program provides "math for everyday living." Since students are available for a limited amount of time, the teacher uses practical situations such as checking and savings accounts, restaurant ordering and comparison purchasing to teach basic mathematical functions. The students' interests are used to define assignments. For example, one student was given an income; the amount obligated for basic needs such as rent, utilities and food; and was then instructed to select a car from the want ads. Through determining the down payment and monthly payment required, he found it
necessary to work his way down from the always-dreamed-of Firebird to a six-year old Mustang. Through assignments such as this, students are motivated to learn necessary computational skills and develop the ability to apply them appropriately. The math teacher credits students' success to the flexibility of her curriculum.

The social skills class addresses topics similar to those of the regular social skills class but at lower levels: interpretation of social situations, etiquette, grooming, friendship and community resources. Students' needs are individually determined and individually addressed. Due to the nature of topics and variability in educational levels, the majority of materials are teacher-made or excerpted from commercial products.

Improved reading ability is the primary thrust of the special language arts program. The curriculum includes instruction in grammar and sentence and paragraph construction.

The self-contained mental retardation program serves students designated by the Department of Corrections as recommended by the Reception and Diagnostic Center Evaluation Service Plan team. Students are trainable or educable mentally retarded and exhibit maladaptive behaviors. The teacher reported that many students have LD or ED overlays. These students are difficult to place outside of DOC facilities and are thus assigned to the HLC
program. At the time of the interviews, there were 14 students in the program. The characteristics and number of the current enrollment were reported to be average for the program. The teacher of the program provides all instruction within the cottage and thus has the cottage supervisor available for disciplinary actions. Students receive physical education instruction from the program teacher but receive no art or music instruction. The primary emphasis of the instructional program is attainment of the most basic skills such as reading readiness and primary level reading skills, numeral recognition and basic one-digit addition and subtraction, and telling time. Vocational skills are addressed through tasks assigned in the cottage by cottage life staff.

Referral and Evaluation

Interviewed staff had found the R&DC evaluations to be very accurate. No students had been referred for dismissal from special education and only two had been referred for evaluation to determine potential special education eligibility. These students had been referred by regular class teachers to the principal who notified the R&DC special education coordinator. R&DC personnel had performed requested additional evaluation at Harmon Learning Center. One of these students had been found ineligible for special education and one was pending
eligibility determination. Questions regarding the category of handicap or eligibility for special education of specific students have been directed to R&DC personnel by telephone. In all but the two aforementioned cases, staff questions were satisfactorily answered and did not result in requests for additional evaluation.

There have been students placed in the mental retardation program who required a triennial review of special education eligibility. The MR teacher notified the principal of these required evaluations who in turn requested the evaluation by R&DC personnel. Triennial re-evaluations of students were conducted at the learning center with the exception of the medical component which was performed at the Davis Learning Center - Central Infirmary. Reevaluations have resulted in maintenance of the current placement.

IEP and Placement

All students' files are reviewed and signed by teachers within two days of students' arrival at Harmon Learning Center. Teachers responsible for the cottages to which students have been assigned select objectives from their respective curricula for inclusion in students' Individualized Instructional Programs (IIPs). Students who are noted to be low-functioning based on the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery - Part I administered at
the Reception and Diagnostic Center are referred to the special education teachers to receive special education math, language arts, and/or social skills. Within two to three days, the special education teacher informs the regular class teacher and removes the student to the special education resource class.

If a student has been red-flagged, found eligible for special education, the educational evaluator notifies cluster leaders who notify teachers of the potentiality of a special education placement. Based on regular and special education teacher observations and R&DC evaluation data, regular or special class placement is determined by the special education teacher. The special education teacher develops goals and objectives for those classes which the student will receive in the resource rooms and vocational education, health/physical education, art and music teachers develop objectives for red-flagged students. These are submitted to the principal's office where they are reviewed and possibly returned to teachers for revision by the principal. The objectives are typed in preparation for the IEP meeting which is held within five days of the student's entrance to the school. The standing IEP committee reviews eligibility minutes, teacher recommendations and the goals and objectives adding percentage of time special services are to be received in special classes.
Students were reported to be released prior to completion of all IEP goals and objectives and prior to necessitating an annual review of the IEP. If students make sufficient progress in special classes to enable them to function adequately in regular classes, teachers to be affected confer and present the proposed change to the principal. If the principal agrees, the student is moved to the regular class setting. The surrogate parent is informed of the previously agreed upon change but is not consulted. IEP objectives may be modified, formulated or recommended for continuation in the regular class placement. If it is projected that the student will not remain in the learning center for an extended period of time, additional objectives are not developed. Not all identified handicapped students are placed in special classes. It was reported that some emotionally disturbed students are appropriately served in regular classes due to the Department of Corrections' and RSA's "built-in behavior controls."

As indicated, students are staffed into the mental retardation (MR) program by the Department of Corrections with the intent that they receive all services within the cottage program. The mental retardation program was described as teacher-oriented. The assigned teacher is the sole instructor and has autonomy over the IEP for her students. The IEP is developed and modified as needed by
the teacher without the formal IEP committee or meeting. Although the program is designed to serve students through a self-contained model within the cottage, students who reach a 2.0 grade level may be mainstreamed into the central education program for appropriate academic courses. Public school-developed IEPs are often received for students placed in the MR program. In the development of the RSA IEP, the teacher uses objectives which have not been met from the public school IEP, supplemented by objectives designed to address needs revealed by the R&DC evaluation.

**Staff Perceptions**

Students were observed by interviewees to have unique needs which were unable to be met in the public school setting. The stringent behavior controls imposed by the DOC and youth school setting and the rapport developed by teachers with students were cited as the factors which met these unique needs. One teacher reported that "students appreciate the peacefulness of the (special education) class." Students were believed to be less threatened and more motivated to achieve than in public school classes.

The health/physical education teacher interviewed reported specific problems in serving special education and low-functioning students in his subject areas. Student sensitivity to handicapped students who are treated differently through individual instruction or differentiated
assignments results in special students being "picked on."
Deficient reading levels contribute to instructional
difficulties in the health program. This teacher was of
the opinion that there were many ineligible students who
had equal or greater needs than special education eligible
students.

The lack of clear definition between eligible and
ineligible students is the cause of some teacher consternation. One special education teacher observed that occasionally red-flagged students' educational scores are above those of ineligible students.

There were reports of staff shortages. An administrator suggested that an LD specialist would lend additional depth and expertise to the identification of students requiring special classes and technical assistance to regular and special class teachers. The addition of an adapted physical education teacher was reported to be a primary need by the health/physical education teacher interviewed. Deficiencies in low-functioning students' reading and physical fitness levels and perceptual motor abilities were perceived to be great enough to warrant the addition of a staff member professionally prepared to address such needs.

Interviewees offered various descriptions of their roles within the Rehabilitative School Authority Youth School and the Department of Corrections. One teacher
reported that she was personally fulfilled in her position but, referring to the correctional milieu in which she worked, did not "buy into it, but learned to adjust and swing with the punches." She felt that correctional teachers were more fortunate than public school teachers in that the former worked under less public pressure, had no parents with which to contend, and experienced greater professional growth and satisfaction by being exposed to challenges and dealing with them rather than "hoisting problems off on other teachers, parents, psychologists and principals." The twelve-month school year was considered to be a positive contributor to students' achievement. "We don't lose the kids to the streets in May."

There were several indications of some discomfort and dissatisfaction with the DOC and RSA youth school relationship. School personnel are required to enact DOC treatment programs within the school setting. It was reported that there have been ten different treatment programs within the past nine years and that there has been some difficulty in "how they translate into teaching." The present treatment program, Maladaptive-Adaptive (M-A) was met with a great deal of resistance by school personnel due to its perceived negative affect on classroom instruction. The M-A program requires that the student act independently, behaviors be recorded by school and DOC personnel and that the record of positive and negative
behaviors be analyzed at a later time by the treatment team. No counseling or prompting to encourage or discourage behaviors are permitted. Teachers have experienced great difficulty enforcing the M-A treatment program: They "can't do it in the classroom and still teach."

One interviewee was very blunt in his assessment of the DOC and RSA relationship at Harmon Learning Center, "lousy." He felt that the youth school was more efficient and that RSA personnel could provide an increased quality of services if not required to coordinate with the DOC program.

Staff were generally satisfied with the quality and accuracy of R&DC evaluations. The one exception was the omission of information relating to motor abilities and deficiencies and a few cases in which medical deficiencies had been overlooked in received R&DC reports. The health/physical education teacher felt that if information relating to physical fitness and perceptual motor functioning were provided by R&DC data, more personal objectives could be developed for students.

Some concern was expressed regarding the labeling of students. Although classes are multicategorical and instructional methods are individualized to meet each student's needs regardless of category of exceptionality, teachers and administrators were insistent that the category of exceptionality be carefully and accurately
determined due to the perceived probability that the label would never be changed if it were in error. This cautiousness is demonstrated by HLC communications with R&DC personnel regarding findings and subsequent categorization.

There was general consensus that special education procedures were satisfactory and effective. Those students in most need of special services are provided special education programs. It was reported that there was no difference programmatically since the implementation of special education procedures of July 1, 1981. The only changes have been increased accountability through the IEP process and the bestowing of titles: labels on students and "special education" on the programs.

Procedures utilized to identify such students handicapped and nonhandicapped were felt by special education teachers to lend accuracy and efficiency to the system. Assertions that not all special education eligible students were in need of special education services and that many ineligible students required such services were made to support the decision-making authority of special education teachers relative to selection of students for special classes. The informality of placement decisions was described as "helpful" and made possible by the acceptance, trust and respect of the professional judgment of special education teachers by their peers.
Special education teachers reported that the two to three days students spend in regular classes prior to special education placement were instrumental in students' realization and acceptance of their inability to achieve in the regular class. Thus, selected students are grateful to be placed in classes designed to meet their special needs. Teachers have approximately one week in which to become acquainted with students' educational needs prior to submission of IEP goals and objectives. One special education teacher indicated that this was sufficient while another indicated that the goals and objectives approved by the IEP committee served as a base to which she added supplementary goals, objectives and procedures as student characteristics and needs emerge. The IEP requirement was initially viewed with some trepidation by special education teachers as a "bureaucratic technicality." Experience with the IEP, however, has modified this prejudice to the point where teachers are now using it as a "blueprint for instruction."

Special education teachers felt that although the system used to move students from special classes to regular classes was uncomplicated and informal, "mainstreaming could be improved." One teacher felt that regular teachers tend to place a great deal of value on R&DC data without carefully observing students' regular classroom functioning prior to special class placement and
thus pressure special education teachers to accept students who could function in the regular class with minor curricular and instructional modifications. It was further reported that once a student has been placed in special classes, there is some reluctance on the part of regular classroom teachers to reintegrate the student. One teacher was of the opinion that a portion of this reluctance was justified as students reentering the regular program do so under a stigma on which other students capitalize.

In summary, the special education procedures utilized by the Harmon Learning Center Youth School are characterized by an informality which affects the ease of IEP preparation and placement of students. Handicapped students are differentiated from nonhandicapped students solely through their red-flag designation, IEP formulation, and formal approval for placement or modifications in placement by the principal and caseworker. Overall, teachers are challenged by working with the incarcerated population within the correctional milieu but report conflict between philosophies of DOC and RSA programs.
Garden Learning Center Youth School

Garden Learning Center appeared to be a summer camp nestled in the breathtakingly beautiful mountains of central Virginia. Students were much more in evidence than at other learning centers as they moved between barracks-like buildings for classes.

The principal and social skills, math, brickmasonry, and auto mechanics teachers were interviewed. Informal conversations were held with additional teachers during lunch in the dining hall. The special education resource teacher was unavailable due to a lengthy illness which extended several weeks after the on-site visit. Information regarding her position and responsibilities was obtained from the Garden Learning Center (GLC) Youth School principal and teachers and RSA central personnel. GLC was the recipient of the RSA's 1981-82 Title VI-B Flow-Through funds for the purpose of funding the special education position. It was reported that this position would be continued with nonfederal funding in 1982-83.

Foremost in the minds of staff was the proposed change of the learning center population from all male to coed. Staff were eager to discuss this concern, causing some consternation to the interviewer in her attempt to guide interviewees toward desired topics. Its part due to this problem and in part due to interviewees'
vast experience in GLC and eagerness to share their experiences, interviews were somewhat lengthy, ranging from 45 minutes to two hours. It should be noted that interviewees were quite verbal and very expansive in their responses. They exhibited a great deal of pride in their profession and facility.

Facility and Students

Located in a fairly secluded, scenic rural setting, Garden Learning Center is the least custodially secure of the Department of Corrections' learning centers. It is considered the "honor" learning center since students have more freedom of movement and take part in a number of community-based activities. The learning center campus consists of small and medium-size buildings functioning as offices, dormitories, classrooms and vocational shops, and dining hall. There is also a "bridge" program located in a wooded section on the learning center grounds where four to eight students live in a student-built cabin, prepare their own meals, work in the community and function somewhat separately from the main body of students as they do not participate in youth school vocational or educational programs.

Garden Learning Center houses approximately 60 male youth ranging in age from 15 to 18 years. Students have been committed to the Department of Corrections and placed
at GLC for first offenses or less serious offenses than students of other learning centers: There are generally no serious drug offenses, no violent crimes, and no physical abuse. The principal indicated that the average length of stay should be approximately six months but ranges from $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 28 months depending upon the student's progress. When the population is down, the principal felt that students are moved through the system and released more rapidly due to increased amounts of time staff are available to address student needs.

The majority of students are below grade level in academic achievement but make more than average progress during their commitment.

RSA personnel were aware that handicapped students had been a part of the student population for some time previous to implementation of July 1 regulations but felt that students were adequately served due to individualized instruction and low student-teacher ratios. Special education identified students are primarily educable mentally retarded (EMR) and emotionally disturbed (ED) with fewer physically and sensory handicapped students.

**Staff**

Garden Learning Center RSA personnel include five academic teachers, four vocational teachers, one instructional aide and the principal. One teacher is assigned to
each of the subject areas of reading/language arts, mathematics, social skills, health/physical education and special education resource. The aide is assigned to the reading/language arts program. Vocational teachers provide instruction in bricklaying, carpentry/cabinetmaking, barber science and auto service. With the exception of the special education resource teacher, staff have been employed at GLC for some time: the shortest length of service being four years. The personnel interviewed had been with GLC for nine to sixteen years. Title VI-B Flow-Through funds were used in 1981-82 for the special education resource position, the first time such a position had been available at GLC. Thus, the special education resource teacher had joined the GLC staff in the fall of 1981.

Teachers' professional preparation was in their program area with little or no formal coursework in special education. One vocational teacher interviewed had participated in a higher education course in vocational education for the disadvantaged and handicapped. The special education resource teacher is endorsed in the area of mental retardation.

Teachers' experience was primarily in youth school rather than public school education. Most notably, the majority of vocational teachers come from an occupational background in their vocational area rather than vocational education backgrounds. Staff have participated in inservice
courses offered by the RSA including those made available to train personnel in special education procedures and IEP development.

Program

Garden Learning Center provides equal amounts of instruction in academic and vocational areas. Academic classes (reading/language arts, mathematics, health/physical education and social skills) are provided one-half of each day with one vocational area attended the remainder of the school day. Each student is also scheduled for a library period each day which is attended during the vocational portion of the day. Academic classes stress a continuum of basic skills utilizing R&DC evaluation data and GLC-administered assessments to determine students' placement within the program area. The reading/language arts classes address basic reading skills, grammar, written expression and literary appreciation. A basic commercial curriculum is used supplemented by a number of commercially made and teacher-made materials. The math program also utilizes a commercial curriculum with supplemental materials necessary to meet the extreme range of ability displayed by students, reported by the math teacher to be from basic computation operations and telling time through algebra and calculus. In addition to the general RSA social skills curriculum, the social skills teacher has taught social
studies courses such as history and geography for those students who anticipate reentering a high school program.

It was reported that since students are perceived more likely to successfully reenter a public high school program than students of other learning centers, extreme care is taken to provide them with instruction that will enable them to achieve at a rate commensurate with their nonincarcerated peers.

The vocational program, consisting of brickmasonry, woodworking, auto mechanics and barber science, strives to prepare students to enter the work force. For example, completion of the barber science program can result in the receipt of the state apprentice license. Each course is based on a very structured curriculum comprised of those competencies and related skills necessary to provide each student with occupational entry level skills. Whenever possible, vocational programs are coordinated with state requirements for occupational areas, including the number of hours required for licenses, competencies required for state exams, etc. In all cases, the skills addressed by the vocational courses are those felt by staff to be necessary for the student to successfully compete in the job market.

Resource services are designed to support regular classroom instruction and are generally used for those students who require a great deal of individualized
instruction in basic skills. The special education resource teacher serves all students recommended for support in any academic area. Students may receive services through an R&DC finding of special education eligibility or informal requests made by teachers in daily staff meetings. Special education eligible students are formally scheduled for special education resource services either in lieu of regular classes or to support regular classes through the development of the IEP. Generally, no change is made in such placement after the IEP has been finalized. The resource teacher works with students according to regular classroom teacher recommendations, either bringing the student to the small resource room or in the regular classroom. The maximum number of students with which the resource teacher has worked during any one class period has been three. She has provided teachers with specialized materials and suggested instructional methods to enable students to continue in regular classes.

Referral and Evaluation

Since the implementation of special education procedures, staff have received identified handicapped students and have referred students, unidentified and identified as handicapped, for additional evaluation suspecting an educationally handicapping condition or questioning the category of handicap respectively.
Generally, following consensus of those teachers involved with the student, the principal notifies the special education coordinator of the need for additional evaluation of a student. R&DC staff have, in these cases, come to GLC for requested evaluations. For all such referrals, the additional evaluations have confirmed the initial R&DC assessment. Staff have expressed concern that a large number of students not identified as handicapped should be identified as such. They did feel, however, that the number of ineligible students was decreasing due to improvement in R&DC evaluation and processing. The principal estimated that 80 percent of the GLC population should be identified as handicapped, primarily emotionally disturbed and educable mentally retarded, as compared to the estimated 40 percent now identified as eligible for special education programming.

**IEP and Placement**

Incoming students arrive at GLC on Tuesday. Until the next Monday, when the student begins classes, he undergoes an orientation period during which he meets staff members, is apprised of regulations, participates on work details, and is assessed by teachers. During this time, the staffing committee assigns the student to a vocational area and academic classes.
Whenever possible, students are placed in the vocational area of their choice. Exceptions are specific recommendations by the ESP team, health-related considerations (e.g., allergies which would preclude participation in the carpentry program), and availability of space in the chosen vocational area. In determining vocational placement, GLC staff also consider those employment options most likely to be available in the student's place of residence and counsel the student toward an employment relevant vocational area.

Class size ranges from seven to ten students per class. Students are scheduled for academic classes on the basis of availability of space. This results in heterogeneously grouped classes, reported by teachers to be more preferable than ability groupings. Teachers felt that ability groupings would not permit sufficient time for individual student attention.

During the two weeks following handicapped students' staffing committee-determined placement, teachers with whom students have been placed develop goals and objectives and submit them to the principal's office. Immediately prior to the next treatment team meeting (approximately three weeks after the student's arrival), the IEP meeting is held. The IEP committee consisting of the principal or assistant principal, an academic teacher, vocational teacher, special education teacher and caseworker serving
as surrogate parent, reviews the goals and objectives submitted by vocational and academic teachers, makes necessary modifications, and formalized placement. No major placement modifications had been made based on IEPs to date. The suggested rationale for this was the informality of the use of resource services. Use of such services was indicated on IEPs on an "as needed" basis according to teachers who had participated in an IEP meeting. Conducting the IEP meeting immediately before the treatment team ensures that designated staff will be available and will attend the IEP meeting. This also makes the formalized IEP available to the treatment team.

Staff Perceptions

Garden Learning Center staff were fairly confident in their ability to provide appropriate instruction to the majority of their students. They were, however, rather uncomfortable with and unsure of their responsibilities pertaining to special education procedures and somewhat confused with the concept of special education in general. The principal and one vocational teacher seemed to grasp the above quite well and provide a great deal of support for the implementation of procedures and programming. The principal felt that staff were beginning to conceptualize the premises of special education and the procedural responsibilities that would fulfill requirements.
Some coolness toward the special education resource teacher was detected by the researcher. An RSA central administrator indicated that this was an accurate perception and attributed staff dynamics to the extreme length of employment of youth school personnel as compared to the first year status of the resource teacher. It was suggested that the resource teacher had not yet found a "niche" in the established group and was thus hesitating to assert herself as well as experiencing typical first-year teacher problems.

As a group, staff were aware of handicapping conditions and displayed some relief that the central administration had recognized the special educational needs of students. Given this opportunity, they seemed to have the desire to identify a large number of students for special education eligibility. Staff estimates of the number of students who should be eligible for special education ranged from 60 percent to 100 percent.

There was disappointment on the part of interviewed staff that their referrals were not substantiated by further evaluation. It was hypothesized by one teacher that additional evaluations were not of the quality of those administered at the Reception and Diagnostic Center due to the distance R&DC evaluators must travel to evaluate GLC students thus limiting the amount of time evaluators have available to administer additional evaluations.
A second teacher felt that additional evaluations were substantially accurate but that lack of knowledge on the part of the staff concerning handicapping conditions and special education eligibility contributed to such misunderstandings.

The principal reported that the IEP committee was not functioning at a desired level at the time of the on-site interviews. Staff were uncomfortable with their responsibility in developing IEPs and unsure of the utility of the IEP meeting. He felt that more time was needed to prepare staff for their responsibilities, more training was needed to provide staff with the skills necessary for the development of goals and objectives, and more information was needed by staff to clarify the concept of special education and characteristics of handicapping conditions. A teacher indicated that training sessions in which staff had participated had been unsatisfactory due to a lack of clear direction and limited follow-up. Given that the process must continue regardless of staff preparation, technical assistance was targeted as the single most important need of the GLC special education program. Specifically, an educational evaluator and special education coordinator were designated as priority needs to enable the accurate and ongoing identification of students in need of services and the coordination of processes respectively. The RSA
special education coordinator was reported to have been instrumental in bringing the GLC program to its present level through frequent on-site technical assistance addressing individual problems.

With reference to the mechanics of the IEP meeting, two interviewees felt that it was a somewhat redundant extension of the treatment team function. Conversely, the principal indicated conducting the IEP meeting immediately prior to the treatment team permits consideration of the special program by the treatment team in designing, implementing and monitoring student progress and provides valuable linkage between Department of Corrections' and Rehabilitative School Authority's programming and treatment. There was some hesitancy in accepting the IEP-treatment team relationship as the treatment team concept was indicated to be the fifth method of planning/tracking/documenting instituted by the DOC during the principal's RSA experience. The concern was that the IEP process and concept must be implemented such that it could function independently of the treatment team should an alternative DOC method be designed.

All interviewed personnel stressed student need for one-to-one instruction regardless of academic level due to the diverse range of ability, level of skills, large number of subjects addressed, and essential nonsequential curricula. Teachers make an attempt to work individually
with each student during each class period. The degree of individualization apparently contributes to the successful rate of achievement as the majority of students were reported to progress approximately two years for each six months of learning center instruction. One academic teacher indicated that this progress may be misleading as progress is measured from R&DC assessment data, which he felt were deflated due to students' poor emotional condition during the initial evaluation.

Staff felt fairly confident to serve students instructionally, particularly in concert with the support offered by the resource program. However, there was some resentment relating to the degree of individualization available to identified students. Since teachers serve both identified and unidentified students of varying needs, teachers' time must be divided among these students. Students who have been found eligible for special education are generally those with the most outstanding needs and thus require an inordinate amount of teacher time. These students are served by the special education teacher, but it was felt that some students needed a greater intensity of services in terms of time and subject matter. To this end, it was indicated that a self-contained special education program would be beneficial to the educational program as a whole. Relating personnel needs to the special education process, the principal felt that, "the IEP should work but not to
the letter, because we don't have the resources." In terms of resources available to the present special education program, a need was identified for increased funding for instructional supplies, specifically age-appropriate materials to address basic skills deficits, and previously mentioned staffing limitations.

Staff time was a frequently mentioned problem. Approximately two students are received each week. For each new student, teachers spend about one hour to review each student file and 45 minutes to one hour assessing and observing the student. Identified handicapped students require slightly more time. In addition to the preparation necessary for program development for each new student and daily preparation for classes, each teacher must complete fifteen to twenty treatment team reports each week as well as attend treatment team meetings. The above-outlined responsibilities were estimated by one teacher to require approximately 40 percent of contracted time. GLC staff are also subject to the problem of compensating for absent staff or vacant positions. At the time of the on-site interviews, one teacher had been on leave for four weeks, thus necessitating that available staff take responsibility for students enrolled in her class. A major concern of staff was the lack of time for planning and quality instruction. The additional IEP requirements were viewed, therefore, somewhat negatively. There was conjecture that the
time involved in IEP preparation and IEP meetings would further dilute staff time without equal outcome in student benefit. Since teachers had not experienced for any extended time full special education processing, the additional amount of time which would be required was anticipated rather than experienced.

The principal noted that the primary benefits of the IEP procedures were administrative and should ultimately provide a higher quality instructional program to handicapped students. He indicated that the accountability and documentation effects of the IEP were valuable and that the value would be further enhanced if the public school to which the student returned utilized the RSA-developed IEP. The documentation aspect of the IEP was mentioned by one teacher to be unnecessary and somewhat demeaning.

Some concern was expressed by the principal regarding the thirty-day limit between the eligibility and IEP meetings. It was anticipated that there could be some difficulty in meeting this requirement as students who have been found eligible for special education may be detained at the R&DC for medical or dental treatment as an extension of the usual three-week time period. Although a student's transfer to GLC may be delayed, the treatment team and IEP committee cannot begin to plan for the student as students' records arrive with them to the learning center. In all
probability, this would delay the IEP meeting in excess of the thirty-day limit.

Staff perceptions of the processes involved in special education procedures varied. With reference to the value of procedures, staff were pleased with the potential for additional service provision but wary of anticipated time and responsibility requirements. Those persons with greater knowledge of characteristics of handicapping conditions, special education processes and behaviorally stated goals and objectives appeared to have realistic expectations of procedural and personal requirements and student outcomes.
APPENDIX I
Adams Learning Center Youth School

Adams Learning Center is the most isolated of the Department of Corrections' juvenile facilities, accessible only by secondary and gravel roads which wind through the sparsely populated mountainous area of the state. As one approaches the learning center, this, unlike any other facility visited, is obviously a correctional institution. The forty-foot fence is, to say the least, imposing and somewhat intimidating. Cars are parked outside the fence and the visitor must approach the gate on foot and wait for the gatekeeper/receptionist inside the administration building to open the electrically controlled gate which then closes immediately after the visitor passes through it.

The atmosphere of the administration building which houses DOC and RSA administrative offices contrasted sharply with the initial oppressive feeling conveyed by the physical setting of the facility. Staff were friendly and eager to help locate personnel and express opinions. This was the only learning center in which the researcher was purposefully introduced to DOC administrators, who also displayed interest in the researcher's endeavor and offered their assistance. DOC and RSA staff displayed a camaraderie not evident in other learning centers, perhaps possible due to the small size of the facility,
number of staff, and shared accommodations. The general atmosphere was one of informality and mutual support.

Interviews were conducted with the principal; social skills, mathematics and health/physical education teachers; and two vocational education teachers. The principal was interviewed in his office, and teachers were interviewed in classrooms, a vocational shop, the gymnasium, dining hall and a meeting room in the administration building. It was not anticipated that this number of personnel would be interviewed; however, circumstances made additional teachers available. The circumstances were the escape of a youth from a class while the teacher of that class was being interviewed, resulting in the return of students to their dormitories and availability of teachers pending their participation in the search for the AWOL student. The interviewer took advantage of the situation and conducted interviews with these teachers (a vocational teacher and the health/physical education teacher).

The Adams Learning Center Youth School program has had to "make do" with its available resources, most notably, only one teacher for each academic subject. A former language arts teacher apparently had provided a great deal of assistance and advocacy to the special education program. Teachers' cognizance of procedures and handicapped students' needs were attributed to the former teacher by interviewees. Instructional support was indicated to have been in the
areas of knowledges of individual differences, creative instruction and innovative materials development and acquisition. He also was reported to have been somewhat at odds with originally devised procedures. For example, he advocated the development and writing of IEP objectives during the IEP meeting rather than selection of objectives from preprepared lists. His leadership was indicated to have had an effect on surrogate parents' participation: Surrogate parents have been active in the development of social skills objectives which they perceive necessary based on students' social rather than educational data (e.g., alcohol abuse targeted as a topic to be addressed due to a student's abuse problem), and ALC was reported to be the only learning center in which surrogate parents have requested changes in IEPs.

With the exception of one teacher, interviewed personnel appeared to be very involved in special education procedures and generally committed to quality participation and programming. They were concerned with the lack of an on-site information source in the absence of a specialist in the field of special education which seems to substantiate their commitment to the program and their advocacy for handicapped students.

Facility and Students

Adams Learning Center (ALC) is the maximum security juvenile correctional facility. It is the only learning
center enclosed by a fence. In support of its custodially secure function, ALC is isolated from urban areas in a mountainous, very rural section of the state.

The learning center campus within the fence is composed of administrative buildings, a security building, dormitories, dining hall, a vocational education facility and a fairly new school facility housing academic classrooms and the gymnasium. The facility is budgeted for 40 male youth and generally serves 40 to 42. The average length of commitment is 13 months.

Youth are assigned to Adams Learning Center for one of three reasons: (a) the committing judge may designate ALC as the receiving facility due to the serious nature of the youth's crime, (b) the Reception and Diagnostic Center ESP team may recommend ALC placement based on determination of potential behavioral or security problems such as causing disturbances in or escaping from less secure facilities, and (c) less secure learning centers initially receiving the student may request that the student be transferred to ALC due to inappropriate and uncontrollable behavior. Some youth may be transferred to ALC prior to the completion of Reception and Diagnostic Center regular evaluation and ESP team recommendations if extreme behaviors (e.g., violence or escape attempts) are displayed during the three-week evaluation process.
Students' academic levels were reported to range from primary through secondary grades. Staff reported that the emotional and social characteristics of students were an immediate concern and the primary barrier to be overcome to enable educational achievement. Students were described as "starved for attention," habitual truants, lacking in appropriate social skills due to a paucity of models, suffering from a lack of home nurture and emotional support, and somewhat resigned to their present situation and role. Perceived as a result of the above, students' classroom behaviors were said to include laziness, unwillingness to participate, and general apathy. Teachers felt that it was impossible to address all of each student's problems in the average year of commitment. Therefore, teachers' primary goals are student attainment of survival skills and extinction of undesirable and abusive behaviors.

The identified handicapped population was estimated to be between 30 percent and 50 percent. Due to the length of incarceration, there were ALC students who had been committed prior to the implementation of July 1 regulations. Interviewees felt that there were students within this group that were potentially special education eligible but had not been evaluated specifically for such determination. Estimates of the total handicapped population including the unidentified students ranged from 60 percent to 100 percent.
**Staff**

Adams Learning Center RSA staff include the principal, four academic teachers (social skills, mathematics, language arts and health/physical education) and five vocational education teachers (brickmasonry, electricity, building maintenance, welding, and auto mechanics). Department of Corrections' personnel who work closely with RSA staff in evaluation and programming functions include a psychologist, nurse and psychiatrist.

At the time of the on-site interviews, the language arts position was vacant. It had previously been filled by a special education endorsed teacher. The health/physical education, math and social skills teachers had been employed at ALC for one, seven and two years respectively. The math teacher had had previous public school experience, and the social skills teacher had worked in a Headstart program previous to RSA employment. The health/physical education teacher had received formal coursework and practicum experience in adapted physical education, and the social skills teacher was working toward an endorsement in the area of emotional disturbance.

Vocational teachers interviewed had been employed by the RSA for five to eight years. They had had no formal training in special education, and previous employment had been in industry areas rather than education.
Program

Upon arrival, Adams Learning Center students are placed in the security building for two days preceding the staffing meeting. The staffing meeting determines placement of students in academic and vocational classes or in one of two specialized vocational programs: the community training program or the work ethic program. Those students placed in the academic and vocational programs attend academic courses one-half of each day and an assigned vocational course one-half of each day.

The community training program provides 20 hours per week of supervised custodial work in a local high school, community college, or state highway garage. Students receive a minimum wage salary. They do not participate in the ALC educational program. Students participating in the work ethic program perform maintenance, custodial, and semiskilled jobs within the learning center for one-half of each day. The treatment team determines the composition of the remainder of the day, such as attending selected academic or vocational courses.

The regular vocational program commences with a five-week orientation period during which students attend each of the five vocational courses for one week. After this period, the final vocational area assignment is made using student preference, teacher evaluation and treatment team input. Vocational courses are based on performance
objectives relevant to each area. Instruction is necessarily nonsequential and individualized due to the transiency of students.

Students are placed in academic classes on the basis of availability of space. They are not grouped by achievement or ability level due to a need for flexibility in class composition. The principal defined the rationale of placement as the creation of "as calm and quiet atmosphere as possible," to eliminate student fear of other students and to thus enable the provision of quality education. Heterogeneous classes serve students ranging from basic skills levels to those in GED program instruction.

All classes are individualized using sets of objectives developed for each course. Individualization facilitates the instruction of the broad range of students' levels of achievement within classes.

Mathematics classes are based on the IMS program. The teacher uses Wide Range Achievement Test scores from R&DC evaluation data to determine each student's starting point within the IMS program pretests. If a student is unable to utilize the IMS program due to low educational level or inability to function using the individualized materials due to attentional deficits or other learning disorder, other materials are available.

There are approximately 100 social skills objectives addressing such diverse areas as survival skills, etiquette
and law. The teacher administers a general pretest to entering students to determine areas of weakness to be addressed through individualized instruction. A variety of commercial and teacher-made materials are available.

The health program is based on a pool of 25 objectives. All students receive instruction and are tested on all objectives but are evaluated on solely those objectives targeted by the teacher for the individual student. The instructor indicated that, since there is no single room assigned to him for teaching, individualization is not possible and lecture is not possible. Thus, most class assignments are characterized as reading and written response. Tests are given orally if necessary. Physical education instruction is limited to the indoor gymnasium. Basic skills are the primary activity as the small number of students in each class precludes many team sports.

Referral and Evaluation

Adams Learning Center staff have utilized the referral process to request evaluation of students suspected of having an educationally handicapping condition. Requests by teachers are discussed among RSA staff and treatment team members and then routed by the principal to the R&DC special education coordinator. The coordinator travels to ALC for evaluation and eligibility meetings which are conducted during the same trip for expediency. The ALC
Department of Corrections' psychologist and psychiatrist may administer some additional assessment to referred students or may provide input to eligibility meetings based on observations and counseling notes. However, the only additional evaluations usually considered during the eligibility meeting are those educational and perceptual assessments administered by the coordinator. These data are analyzed in concert with assessment results from R&DC evaluation and ALC staff evaluations and observations by the eligibility committee. The eligibility committee has consisted of those teachers serving the student, the RSA principal and the special education coordinator. Several previously unidentified handicapped students have been found eligible through this process. No students have been referred for dismissal from special education eligibility.

IEP and Placement

Adams Learning Center receives notification of the imminent arrival of a handicapped student via telephone one week to one day prior to the student's arrival. The R&DC records arrive with the student. The IEP meeting date is scheduled for 30 days from the ALC staffing date. Teachers evaluate and observe the student in order to select objectives from their master sets of objectives and determine time and accuracy requirements for each.
Objectives are submitted to the principal's office where they are compiled. The standing IEP committee composed of one academic teacher, the masonry teacher representing the vocational area, the caseworker acting as surrogate parent, and the principal meets to review the submitted objectives. The DOC psychologist and nurse are notified of the meeting and may choose to attend. Alterations of objectives have generally increased the amount of time or decreased the accuracy required in order to facilitate students' successful attainment of objectives. RSA staff felt that the provision of successful experiences encourages further achievement. The timing of the IEP meeting correlates well with students' completion of the vocational orientation. Thus, recommendation for vocational placement may be made by the IEP committee and then be formally approved by the treatment team.

**Perceptions**

Staff reported few observable academic differences between identified handicapped and nonhandicapped students and generally utilize identical instructional methods with each group. Classroom assessment of handicapped students is differentiated by utilization of oral and practical evaluation rather than written examinations. Staff indicated that differentiation in classroom evaluation may be a function of the attention drawn to the handicapped
student by virtue of the student's red-flag status rather than actual discrepancies between needs of handicapped and nonhandicapped students.

Problems relating to student achievement were reported to be common to the majority of students: lack of student motivation and no mechanism by which to motivate students, student feelings of paranoia caused by incarceration, poor student attitudes toward education caused by negative previous educational experiences.

There were several indications of dissatisfaction with the identification and labeling of students. It was felt that the identification of some students as handicapped was stigmatizing, subjecting labeled students to the ridicule of nonlabeled students. Handicapped students were felt to be "singled out as stupid" by nonhandicapped students. Some handicapped youth were reported to use their label as an excuse for low achievement and lackadaisical participation. They were perceived by one teacher to manipulate staff using an "I'm handicapped so I can't help it" attitude to seek sympathy and relief from required activities.

"Good rapport between two agencies determines whether a program is successful or a failure," was the principal's philosophy in approaching implementation of special education regulations. The evolution of the ALC special education programming is typified by the principal's
conscientious effort to involve as many RSA and DOC personnel as possible. His philosophy is based on an involvement-understanding-support system which has resulted in a DOC and RSA cooperative effort to identify and serve handicapped youth. Initially, he perceived a poor attitude on the part of correctional personnel toward education. Involvement of DOC administrators has resulted in their support of procedures which has facilitated DOC staff involvement and subsequent support. The small setting of Adams Learning Center was cited as a definite advantage in the involvement-understanding-support triad.

Initiation of procedures was described as "trial and error" due to RSA staff's "lack of knowledge of the total picture." The principal felt that initial training had been inadequate and that supplemental inservice was needed to apprise staff of procedural requirements and available options. The principal also reported that staff suffered from unfamiliarity with the subject of special education in general and that additional training in characteristics of handicapping conditions and relevant instructional methodologies would assist staff in the provision of services. Teachers indicated a desire to know the "why" of procedures and that becoming personally aware would perhaps motivate them to higher levels of voluntary accountability.
The resignation and absence of the former language arts teacher has been felt strongly by staff. In addition to the necessity of absorbing the absent teachers' classes, it was repeatedly demonstrated by staff that they had relied on the language arts teacher for technical assistance in addressing handicapped learners' needs and clarification of special education procedures. His resignation has apparently left staff somewhat bereft as repeatedly stressed was the need for inhouse special education consultative services. RSA staff are acutely aware of their lack of preparation in the area of special education and actively seek such information.

Programmatically, teachers experience few problems fulfilling their responsibilities to handicapped youth in their classes. Since all class work has been individualized for some time, use of objectives was not a procedural change. Thus, neither planning nor instruction were perceived to have changed significantly subsequent to July 1 regulations. Staff have made use of the referral and evaluation process and credit the special education coordinator with advances in this area. They were satisfied with present procedures but felt the need for more readily available evaluation staff.

Availability of master sets of objectives for each course have facilitated IEP development. Some teachers have found development of the IEP to be a straightforward
task but acceptance of the IEP by RSA central to be more difficult. IEPs have been returned to ALC for revision. Teachers indicated that revisions were generally requested for increased specificity of objectives, techniques and evaluation. This was frustrating to teachers as they felt that they had received inadequate preparation for completion of specific sections of the IEP (e.g., techniques and evaluation procedures) and were thus being doubly penalized.

Vocational programs were described as opportunities to "let handicapped or low-functioning students shine." Handicapped students were believed to be successful in vocational classes due in large part to the care taken in assignment of students to vocational classes. It was reported that many special education students are placed in one specific vocational class due to the instructor's success in working with handicapped students.

All teachers stressed the need for special education support within the facility, two suggesting a special education endorsed self-contained model teacher as a possible solution. Two other teachers, however, were opposed to the addition of a self-contained class as it was interpreted to be a violation of mainstreaming and, more importantly, would increase the vulnerability of special students: They would become triply handicapped by virtue of being (a) incarcerated, (b) handicapped, and
(c) special education self-contained placed. A proponent of a self-contained model believed that the model would alleviate some of the present within-class conflict between handicapped and nonhandicapped students resulting from jealousies due to competition for teachers' time and attention.

Adams Learning Center Youth School staff reported to have successfully implemented special education procedures. This was attributed to the cooperative effort displayed by RSA and DOC staff, support by the special education coordinator, simplified scheduling and programming due to the small population and number of staff, and experience of staff with individualized instruction. Inhibiting factors were indicated to be characteristics of the student population and paucity of staff special education professional preparation.
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THE PROVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES TO INCARCERATED HANDICAPPED YOUTH OF VIRGINIA

by

Linda A. Fernandez

ABSTRACT

Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, mandates that all handicapped children, including those housed in correctional facilities, receive special education and related services as required by the law. Literature has suggested that services are not being provided as mandated. Factors inherent in correctional education and/or unclear, absent or conflicting policies of multiple agencies sharing responsibilities for incarcerated handicapped youth may inhibit delivery of special education and related services as required by federal and state regulations. Through interviews with personnel of the Virginia Rehabilitative School Authority (RSA) and examination of policies of the RSA, the Virginia Department of Education Office of Special and Compensatory Education (SEA), and the Virginia Department of Corrections, three questions were addressed: (1) What are the processes used by the RSA to implement SEA regulations governing the education of handicapped children? (2) What are the factors which affect the implementation of delivery of special education and related services as perceived by RSA personnel?
(3) Are absent, unclear or conflicting policies of agencies (SEA, DOC, RSA) related to the provision of mandated services to incarcerated handicapped youth? It was found that state regulations were not fully addressed by RSA processes and that processes being implemented did not comply totally with state regulations. Factors found to inhibit the development and implementation of processes within state regulations included the precedence of DOC custody and treatment considerations over educational concerns, inadequate numbers of special education personnel, paucity of placement options within youth school programs and outside of the correctional setting, and inadequate training of DOC and RSA personnel in preparation for special education responsibilities. Absence of SEA policy relating to assignment of surrogate parents and absence of local and state agencies' policies addressing transfer of student information restrained development and conduct of required procedures. Conflict between policy foci of the DOC and RSA was a primary contributor to special education procedural and programmatic limitations.