

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION COSTS TO LOCAL  
EDUCATION AGENCIES AND PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS  
OF QUALITY IN SELF-CONTAINED AND REGIONAL PROGRAMS FOR  
SERIOUSLY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED STUDENTS IN THE  
HAMPTON ROADS AREA OF VIRGINIA

By

Linda Diane Taylor

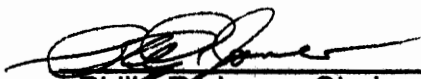
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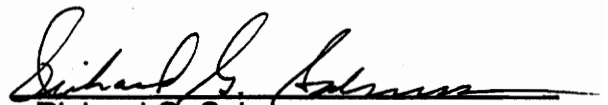
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(ABSTRACT)

A continuum of services model exists which reflects the least and most restrictive special education environments available to provide services to all handicapping conditions. Associated costs increase significantly as the special education student requires more structure and intense services to benefit from individualized instruction. Per student cost to local education agencies (LEAs) and program variables in the areas of social skills curriculum and parental involvement for students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed (SED) and served in (1) self-contained classrooms operated by LEAs; and (2) regional (separate day school)

programs operated cooperatively by the LEAs in Virginia are examined in this study.

Costs to the LEAs for self-contained instruction were determined by using the Larson Model (1985), as revised by Kienas (1986). In Virginia, costs to the LEAs for placement of SED students in the regional programs were determined by the tuition rate approved by the Virginia Department of Education. State reimbursements for placement of SED students in both environments were considered in final cost calculations. The existence of certain program components in the areas of social skills curriculum and parental involvement were examined by a survey developed and distributed to Special Education Directors in the two described environments.

A study of special education placements was conducted in Montgomery County, Maryland in 1982 to compare the costs and characteristics of programs used by that school division for school-aged handicapped students. Montgomery County was concerned over the cost of private placements and wanted to determine if alternative programming should be explored. It was concluded that the regional day program was cost effective when compared to other more restrictive environments, i.e., more costly residential treatment programs. Additionally, that special education program variables were similar in both environments. Other special education finance studies have also concluded that special education costs vary considerably within a given category of handicapping

condition and that this cost may not reflect the service levels within programs.

LEA expenditures for SED programs and selected program variables in LEA self-contained and regional programs in six LEAs located in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia are described in this study. The research question to be considered was: Are program administrators' perceptions of program quality, as measured by the existence of certain social skills curriculum and parental involvement program components, related to LEA costs for self-contained and regional (separate day school) programs for seriously emotionally disturbed students? While findings indicated a slight difference in net expenditures in favor of regional programs, this difference may not be significant based on quality of cost data and consideration for placement in the least restrictive environment. Net expenditures are based on reimbursements to LEAs from the Virginia Department of Education for SED students placed in these two environments. Survey results indicate that regional program administrators perceive higher incidences of quality descriptors in their social skills curriculums and parental involvement programs than the LEA self-contained program administrators perceived in their programs.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Federal legislation and court decisions have sought to insure that all children have equal access to educational opportunities. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) of 1975 had major impact on present day practices and programs. This legislation, Public Law 94-192, was the culmination of relentless efforts of special educators and parents of handicapped children.

Court cases directly linked to the passage of EAHCA date to the 1950's. In Brown v Board of Education (1954), the Supreme Court declared that all children, regardless of race, had the right to receive equal educational opportunity. Two subsequent cases, PARC v Pennsylvania (1972), and Mills v The Board of Education (1972) helped to pave the way for EAHCA by first providing public support for all children identified as mentally retarded and the latter case extended this right to all handicapped children. The Mills case also ruled that insufficient funds were not an acceptable excuse for lack of educational services for handicapped children.

The matter of funding was addressed in PL 94-142 when it prescribed a free and appropriate education for all handicapped children in need of special educational services. The enactment provided state and local education agencies with federal money to meet the individual needs of all handicapped children. In doing so, it recognized that some children, because of the severity of their

handicapping condition, would require more intensive and expensive treatment to benefit from instruction. The EAHCA provides assistance to states in financing "the cost of providing educational services to handicapped children" (20 U.S.C. 1401), and specifies that federal money allocated to states under its provisions is intended to be used for the "excess cost" of educating handicapped children (20 U.S.C. 1401 (201)).

Federal spending for special education has grown from \$100 million in Fiscal Year 1976 to \$1.5 billion in 1989 (Education of Handicapped Report to Congress, 1989). On the average, federal contribution is approximately 8%, with state contribution of 26% and the largest contribution by the local government of 67% on the cost of educating handicapped children. Although additional costs associated with serving handicapped students vary significantly by handicapping condition and extent of service provided, it is clear that these costs have greatly inflated the financial obligation at the state and local levels (The Report of the Commission on Financing of a Free and Appropriate Education for Special Needs Children, 1983).

This chapter describes the following components of the research study: (1) statement of purpose; (2) significance of study; (3) limitations of the study; and (4) definitions of terms.

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the per student cost to local education agencies and program administrators' perceptions of quality, as measured by the existence of certain social skills curriculum and parental involvement program components, in two special education environments for students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed (SED). The environments were self-contained classrooms and regional (separate day schools) programs operated by LEAs in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Portsmouth SED self-contained programs, and the regional Southeastern Cooperative Education Program (SECEP), serving these LEA's, were selected for this study. Hampton, Newport News, York County SED self-contained programs, and the regional Peninsula Area Cooperative Education Program (PACES), serving these LEAs, were also selected for this study. The Larson Model, developed in 1985 and revised by Kienas in 1986, was used to compute special education costs for LEA self-contained programs. Program costs to LEAs for regional programs were determined by the tuition rate approved by the Virginia Department of Education for placement of SED students.

The EAHCA addressed the issue of least restrictive environment when it directed school districts to educate handicapped children with nonhandicapped children to the greatest extent possible. In this regard, a continuum of services model was developed which

specifies the least and most restrictive environments available to educate those children identified as educationally handicapped (Figure 1). As expected, expenditures escalate as the environment becomes more structured in terms of services needed to provide special education programming. The United States Department of Education and special education finance experts estimate that it costs twice as much on the average to educate a handicapped student as it does a regular education student. Local education agencies' (LEAs) special education budgets were rising at the rate of 14% each year, while regular instructional and operating budgets were rising at a rate of 7% to 8% each year in the late 70's (National School Board Association, 1979). The EAHCA pledged that federal funds would provide school districts 40% of the national average per student cost for those students eligible for special education services by 1982. Unfortunately, this promise was not fulfilled and federal contributions have never exceeded 12%.

When placement is required in a more restrictive setting, such as a regional (separate day school) program, cost is four times the average per student expenditure for all general education students. If the most restrictive placement is required in a private residential environment, the cost to LEAs is eight times the average per student expenditure (National School Board Association, 1979). It is not unusual for a seriously emotionally disturbed child to be placed in a more restrictive environment (Jones, 1981). Virginia reported for school year 1987-88 that of 905 special education students placed

1. Regular classroom
2. Regular classroom with supplemental aids and services such as itinerant instruction
3. Regular classroom for all subjects possible and resource room for remainder of day
4. **Full day in a special self-contained class in one of the regular schools operated by the district**
5. **Assignment to a special school, public or private, as close to home as possible**
6. Placement in a residential school
7. Providing services in a nonschool setting such as home, hospital or institution

Bold print indicates placements reviewed in this research study

Source: Martin, Reed (1980). The Impact of Current Legal Action on Educating Handicapped Children. Illinois: Research Press Company.

Figure 1

Program Models in the  
Continuum of Placement Services

in private schools, 603 were identified as seriously emotionally disturbed. Expenditures by LEAs for regional and private residential placements have continued to rise with current costs of \$14,400 per student per year for regional programs and as much as \$85,000 per student per year for private residential programs. Despite the extraordinary rise in costs, LEAs continue to rely heavily on separate instructional settings to educate SED students. This may be reflecting the severity of SED populations or the way the category of behaviorally or emotionally handicapped is perceived by the education community (Grosenick, George and George, 1987). Because placement can be an emotional and costly issue, both for LEAs and parents, the issue is likely to remain at the center of many lawsuits (Weiner and Hume, 1987).

Expenditures associated with the obligation to provide a free and appropriate education are difficult to assess (Kienas, 1986). Special education finance studies have concluded that the costs of special education within a given category of handicapping condition vary considerably and that the costs of providing special education may not necessarily reflect the level of services within the programs.

The Program Inventory (Grosenick, et al., 1985) is a 125 item survey instrument which represents the collective efforts of the staff of the National Need Analysis Project and professionals in the field of special education programs for the Seriously Emotionally Disturbed. It was developed to provide a comprehensive program

evaluation instrument to be used by administrators in assessing the overall plan and quality of their SED programs. An abbreviated and modified form of this instrument was used in this study to determine SED program administrators' perceptions of quality in the areas of social skills curriculum and parental involvement programs.

The research question to be considered was: Are program administrators' perceptions of program quality, as measured by the existence of certain social skills curriculum and parental involvement program components, related to LEA costs for self-contained programs and regional (separate day school) programs for seriously emotionally disturbed students?

### Significance of Study

Previous special education finance studies concluded that costs associated with providing a free and appropriate education vary considerably by handicapping condition and program quality is not necessarily linked to program cost. One such study of special education placements was conducted by Montgomery County, Maryland in 1982 (Jones & Salmon, 1983). Cost of placement and quality of service in five levels of public and non-public environments, among other variables, were analyzed. Findings, conclusions, and recommendations were indicative of problems associated with placement by the LEA and justification of cost of services at various levels.

A similar study was conducted by the Virginia Association of Independent Special Education Facilities during the same year as the Jones and Salmon study. The researchers reported a lack of financial data available to allow for policy decision making when attempting to compare special education costs in the public and non-public sectors. The Association concluded that private special education providers are more cost effective than public providers.

This study examined per student expenditures by LEAs and program variables in social skills curriculum and parental involvement programs in two special education environments for students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed. The environments were self-contained programs and regional (separate day school) programs operated by LEAs in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. A more complete understanding of the cost of various service options is critical for LEAs, not only for decisions regarding placement of special education students, but also for the optimal use of limited resources.

### Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to selected LEAs in Virginia served by the SECEP and PACES regional programs. It did not attempt to verify the accuracy of program quality variables as perceived and reported by SED program administrators in the survey questionnaire or the accuracy of the expenditure data. LEA expenditures for regional

programs were determined by the tuition rate approved by the Virginia Department of Education less the 60% state reimbursement to the LEA.

## Definition of Terms

Environment--the intensity of service required by a student receiving special education (i.e., itinerant, resource, self-contained, separate day school, residential/institutional, and home instruction).

Excess Costs--the costs for special education that are over and above the normal costs of educating nonhandicapped children.

Free appropriate public education--special education and related services which (1) have been provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction and without charge, (2) meet the standards of the State educational agency, (3) include an appropriate preschool, elementary or secondary school education in the State involved, and (4) are provided in conformity with the individualized education program.

Handicapping condition--conditions which have been determined by the Virginia Department of Education to be interfering with a student's ability to benefit from educational opportunity, thus, requiring special education and related services. Conditions include: mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech or language impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other health impaired children, or children with specific learning disabilities. (EHA 20 U.S.C., Sec.1400)

Individualized Education Program--a written statement for each handicapped child developed in any meeting by a representative of

the local educational agency or an intermediate educational unit who shall be qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of handicapped children, the teacher, the parents or guardian of such child, and, whenever appropriate, such child, which statement shall include: (1) statement of the present levels of educational performance of such child; (2) a statement of annual goals, including short term instructional objectives; (3) a statement of the specific educational services to be provided to such child, and the extent to which such child will be able to participate in regular educational programs; (4) the projected date for initiation and anticipated duration of such services; and (5) appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedules for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved. (EHA 20 U.S.C., Sec. 1400)

Local educational agency--a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or such combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary or secondary schools. Such term also includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary or secondary school.

Public programs--day school programs either self-contained or resource model operated by the LEA. Considered the least restrictive environment for education of handicapped students and is integrated with regular education students.

Regional programs--a cooperative day program operated by several school districts which usually services special education students with one handicapping condition. Considered a more restrictive environment because it is usually totally segregated from regular education students.

Related services--services that are required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education.

Seriously emotionally disturbed--a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance: (1) an inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; (2) a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or (3) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. This includes children who are schizophrenic, but does not include children who are socially maladjusted unless it is determined that they are seriously emotionally disturbed.

Special education--specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents or guardians, to meet the needs of handicapped children, including classroom instruction, instruction in physical education, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Presented in this chapter are: (1) court cases; (2) definitions of seriously emotionally disturbed students; (3) placement options for seriously emotionally disturbed students; (4) a review of social skills curriculum programming; (5) a review of parental involvement issues; (6) methods for determining special education costs; and (7) Virginia's system of funding education.

#### Court Cases

Court cases significantly linked to the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) date to the 1950's. In Brown v Board of Education of Topeka (1954), the Supreme Court declared that all children, regardless of race, had the right to receive equal education opportunity. In doing so, the Court ruled that it was a denial of equal protection to not allow Blacks to attend the same schools as Whites. The Brown decision set the social climate for subsequent legislation granting rights to handicapped individuals. Two later cases, PARC v Pennsylvania (1972) and Mills v The Board of Education (1972), helped to pave the way for EAHCA by first providing educational programming for mentally retarded children and the latter case expanded the right of a public education to all handicapped children. Mills also decreed that insufficient

funds were unacceptable as an excuse for not providing special education services.

Public Law 94-142 addressed funding when it prescribed a free appropriate education for all children in need of special education services. Free and appropriate has been defined as:

...special education and related services which (a) have been provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge, (b) meet the standards of the State educational agency, (c) include an appropriate preschool, elementary, or secondary school education in the state involved and (d) are provided in conformity with the individualized education program required under Section 614 (a)(5) (Section 4 (a) (18)).

The EAHCA also provided state and local agencies federal funds to partially fund the costs required to meet the individual needs of handicapped children. In doing so, it recognized that some children, because of the severity of their handicapping condition, would require more intensive and expensive treatment to benefit from instruction. Section 300.302 of the regulations (34 CFR) implementing EAHCA states:

If placement in a public or private residential program is necessary to provide special education and related services to a handicapped child, the program, including non-medical care and room and board must be at no cost to the parents of the child.

Many of the legal questions arising under PL 94-142 concern the core requirement that states offer each handicapped student the opportunity to be educated with children who are not handicapped. Placement in the least restrictive environment is the right of the student to be placed in his neighborhood school to the maximum extent appropriate, where support systems exist and involvement in community activities is possible. The law requires schools to have a "compelling educational reason for segregating students in an institution or in daytime special education centers." In Roncker v Walter (1983), the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that integrated placement is mandatory if possible and the proof for doing otherwise is on the school district (Weiner and Hume, 1987).

### Definitions of Seriously Emotionally Disturbed Students

Public schools are guided by the definition of Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED) as outlined by PL 94-142. By definition, a serious emotional disturbance is a condition that occurs over a long period of time, to a marked degree, and that adversely affects the educational performance of a child. Children who are socially maladjusted and not emotionally disturbed are excluded. One or more of the following characteristics is needed for the child to be labeled seriously emotionally disturbed: (1) an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors; (2) an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal

relationships with peers and teachers; (3) inappropriate behaviors or feelings under normal conditions; (4) a pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; and (5) a tendency to develop physical symptoms, pains, or fears associated with personal or school problems (Federal Register, 1977, pp 42-78).

Reinhart and Huang (1987) define seriously emotionally disturbed children in terms of behavior. They submit that these are youngsters who have behaviors which exert a negative effect on their personal or educational development and/or that of their peers. These negative effects may vary from mild to severe in intensity and prognosis. Reinhart and Huang offer the following four categories of behaviors typical of students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed: (1) Acting out (hitting, being aggressive and disruptive); (2) Withdrawn (silence, thumbsucking, acting restricted); (3) Defensive (lying, cheating, avoiding tasks); and (4) Disorganized (out of touch with reality). It is noted that a student may exhibit a combination of these behaviors at any given time.

The reality of our present day status is that conceptualization, identification, and treatment of children with behavior problems is a fragmented and formidable problem (Grosenick and Huntze, 1979). Controversy surrounds the federal definition and the terminology used therein, and disagreement frequently surfaces regarding the identification of students meeting the criteria. Not surprisingly, there is underidentification and overidentification of students who exhibit signs of emotional problems. A survey of 450 educators

revealed that 10% felt that the worst problem with overplacement existed in the SED program. This was second after the Learning Disabled category which received 85% of the votes (Weiner and Hume, 1987).

A 1987 study of 249 SED students found that IQ and academic achievement were significantly related; however, IQ was not found to be related to behavioral problems. IQ was related to special education placement with a greater percentage of bright students being educated in less restrictive settings while students with lower intelligence were more often being placed in more restrictive settings. There was only a slight relationship between placement and scores on behavior problem checklists completed by the special education teachers. These data support the contention that the SED definition generates confusion and inconsistent programming (Kauffman et al.,1987).

The problem of underidentification of children with serious emotional disturbances is of equal concern. Jones (1981) states that "the categorical area of emotional disturbance seems to be the furthest from full implementation." It is estimated that 2% of the school-aged population is in need of services for the emotionally disturbed. Although this percentage is similar to traditional estimates, nationwide less than 1% of children and adolescents are formally identified as SED by school districts (Rizzo and Zabel, 1988).

Other behavioral examples of emotional disturbances were developed by Bower's (1959) continuum of stages of severity of disturbances. Stage 1: Children who experience and demonstrate the normal problems of everyday living, growing, exploration and reality testing. Stage 2: Children who develop a greater number and degree of symptoms of emotional problems as a result of a crisis or traumatic experiences. Stage 3: Children in whom symptoms persist to some extent beyond normal expectations but who can manage an adequate school environment. Stage 4: Children with fixed and recurring symptoms of emotional disturbance who can, with help, maintain some positive relationships in a school setting. Stage 5: Children with fixed and recurring symptoms of emotional difficulties who are best educated in a residential school setting or temporarily in a home setting.

A more practical definition is offered by Kauffman (1977) by including placement options that relate to the severity of the disturbance. Kauffman's definition states that "children with behavior problems are those who chronically and markedly respond to their environment in socially unacceptable and/or personally unsatisfying ways, but who can be taught more socially acceptable and personally gratifying behavior. Children with mild and moderate behavior disorders can be taught effectively with their normal peers (if their teachers receive appropriate consultation help) or in the special resource or self-contained classes with reasonable hope of quick integration with their normal peers. Children with severe and

profound behavior disorders require intensive and prolonged interventions and must be taught at home or in special classes, special schools, or in residential institutions." Clearly, there is a need to create some order from the current state of affairs. This need appears to be threefold in nature: (1) to develop an organized, systematic model by which to assess and analyze current strengths and weaknesses of the field; (2) to implement systematically the application of that model in information gathering and organization; and (3) to utilize the information gathered and analyzed in the development of plans to improve the amount, nature, and quality of service to behavior disordered children (Grosenick and Huntze, 1979).

A review of the literature suggests controversy among special educators associated with the identification and treatment of students exhibiting emotional/behavioral problems. This study surveyed administrators' perceptions of the existence of certain variables available within their SED program to assist in the identification and treatment of this special education population. Comparisons are made between survey responses from the two described SED environments examined.

### Placement Options

Educational interventions for SED students take place in a variety of settings. Special educators spend considerable amounts of time

and energy deciding where the special student should be placed. Most assume that the mainstream levels of the continuum (Figure 1, page 5) are the best because they are the least restrictive. It is felt by some that the levels of the cascade or the intensity of service are overstated, that overlap is considerable and that much variability in services exist within each (Morse, 1985).

Kauffman et al. (1987) found that SED students seldom receive special education in the regular class (with resource support to the regular teacher). Further, that about 50% of the SED students received at least some of their education with nonhandicapped peers, and the other half were found in special classes in regular schools with no regular education placement or in an alternative school setting. In this same study, clear links could not be established between placement and academic performance. The authors, however, did find a small significance between placement in the mainstream and greater degrees of anxiety and withdrawal. They concluded that placement decisions appear to be made more on subjective and inadequate information rather than on results of objective data. It also asserted that placement decisions for SED children are "often determined by other factors such as availability and location of placement openings."

A research analysis study was undertaken by Morse, Cutler, and Fink in 1964 to: (1) describe existing programs for emotionally handicapped students as viewed by teachers, students, administrators, and external site visitors; and (2) probe the effects

of these programs on the children served. They studied 227 programs serving emotionally handicapped students, representative of 75% of the public schools serving this population. Information was gathered regarding characteristics of the SED population, program history, design, support personnel, and estimates of success. Overall findings of this study concluded that programs were functioning adequately with signs of positive changes in student behavior. The researchers also found placement decisions, along with those related to programming, to be based more on intuition (subjective data) rather than specific objective data.

The Morse study was replicated on a smaller scale in 1987 by Grosenick, George and George. Their study surveyed 126 school districts with special education services for SED students across the nation. They compared their findings with the Morse study with the following factors: (1) program goals, aims, and philosophy; (2) service delivery; (3) the role of the teacher; and (4) entrance and exit procedures. Results revealed that placement of SED students in the mainstream occurs less frequently than expected given the expansion of service options since the 1964 study. Schools are only using one-half of the service delivery options available within a typical continuum of services (Figure 1, page 5).

The authors found that many of the districts surveyed rely heavily on separate instructional settings to educate this population of special education students. In comparison to the Morse study, similarities were found in aims and goals of these programs, the

role of the teacher in their operation, and the degree of formalization (or lack thereof) of entrance and exit procedures to these programs. Differences between the two studies provided to SED students were found in the level and types of services provided to this population and the theoretical orientation used within the classroom. Of particular note is that there have been consistent highly structured and formalized entrance procedures in both referral and assessment used in determining a child's eligibility for service. This practice has no doubt been reinforced by PL 94-142 which evolved midway between the Morse and Grosenick studies.

Placement of special education students in the least restrictive environment is specifically addressed in PL 94-142 in the following:

procedures to assure that to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are not handicapped, and that special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (Section 612 (5) (B)).

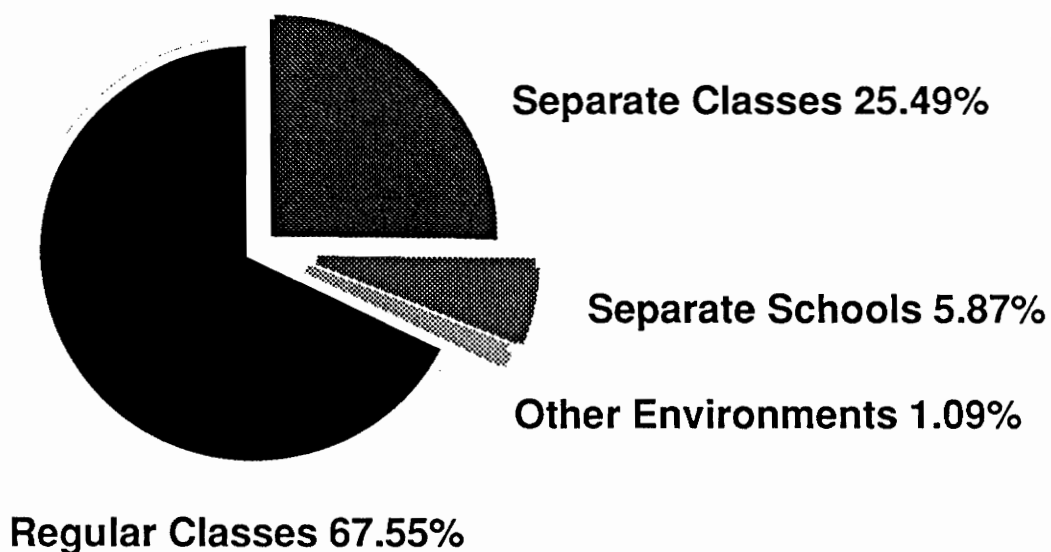
Theoretically, the requirement of placement in the least restrictive appropriate program protects against inappropriate placement and unsuitable programs. It does much to advance the concept of appropriate education by assuring appropriate placement (Turnbull, 1978). A number of advocacy lawyers say that LRE has not been met,

especially for older children. The 1986 Education Department report to Congress on PL 94-142 specifically identifies that this happens to students labeled as SED (Weiner and Hume, 1987).

Exact figures are not available that specify the actual number of children served in each placement option outlined in the continuum of services cascade. It does appear, however, from recent studies that segregated options exist to a significant degree (Grosenick et al., 1987). Figure 2 illustrates the percent of all handicapped children served in four educational environments based on the 1982-83 school year. The report surrounding these data cite an overall moderate year-to-year increase in the number of handicapped children reported as SED. This increase represents a 28% growth in the total number of SED students receiving services from 1976-77 to 1983-84.

The service option most commonly used is the within district self-contained classroom with some sort of resource room. Following those are special day schools (including regional programs) itinerant services, out-of-district placements (residential), and homebound instruction. It is apparent that in some cases handicapped students are required to fit the program rather than the program accommodating the child (Jones, 1981).

In some instances, a child's needs may extend beyond the special education services offered in the regular classroom with the support of resource teachers. The needs of students may vary from one who is unable to speak in a large classroom setting while another may



Source: To Assure The Free Appropriate Public Education Of All Handicapped Children - 7th Annual Report To Congress In The Implementation Of The Education Of The Handicapped Act U.S. Dept. Of Education ,1985.

Figure 2

Percent of Handicapped Children Served (Ages 3-21) in Four Education Environments, School Year 1982-83

not be able to handle the pressure of competition with peers. Yet another student may be unable to control aggressive impulses necessary to interact safely within a regular education classroom setting. Consequently, it is reasonable for placement decisions to be based on the individualized education program developed for each child. The continuum of services model allows flexibility from part day regular education placement and part time in the modified setting to full placement in a special classroom over a period of months or years (Rizzo and Zabel, 1988).

Zionts (1985) modified five administrative factors to be considered in meeting the goals of PL 94-142. They are: (1) that the learner attends (and learns) all day, which suggests that academic, behavioral, and emotional programming must be appropriate in each placement option consistent with the least restrictive environment concept; (2) that the learner is one of many students, which suggests that other students, and perhaps the entire milieu of the classroom, should be taken into consideration before placements are made; (3) that educational practices differ at the preschool, elementary, middle, and secondary levels, which implies that the affective and cognitive requirements of the institutions themselves and how they may influence placement must be examined; (4) that the learner's education is preschool through secondary, so that schooling must be considered as a long-term developmental process rather than one that consists of a series of one year behavioral objectives; and (5) that an important tenet of PL 94-142 defines

special education as specifically designed instruction, which implies that the purpose of special education is more than access to classes--it includes prescriptive, appropriate remediation (Zionts, 1985).

More restrictive than the self-contained classroom setting is the special day school which is usually physically separate from regular school buildings. This special school setting is appropriate for those SED students who cannot adapt to even a minimum of expectation for attention, communication, and cooperative interaction with others. Special educational programming is intensive, highly structured, and often oriented towards establishing self-control and basic interaction and communication skills. It is unusual to find children with personality problems in such settings. Rather, environments with this level of structure and control are usually appropriate for children and adolescents with severe conduct disorders and pervasive developmental disorders (Rizzo and Zabel, 1988).

One example of a special day school program is the Mark Twain School in Montgomery County, Maryland. This program is designed to fill the special educational needs of SED students at both the elementary and secondary levels. Programmatically, students receive a variety of psychoeducational alternatives where teachers and consultants develop individual educational plans, coordinate services, counsel students, work with parents, and assist students in transitioning to other education programs or jobs. Three major

principles of behavior management are in place: (1) the staff does not accept excuses; (2) natural consequences are used instead of punishment; and (3) the staff does not give up on any students (Rizzo and Zabel, 1988).

The Mark Twain School is a regional day program operated by Montgomery County Public Schools and was included in a study of public and nonpublic special educational placements in 1983. The study, conducted by P. Jones and R. Salmon, was commissioned by the Montgomery County School District to compare the costs and characteristics of programs utilized by Montgomery County for school-aged handicapped students. Montgomery County was concerned over the cost of private placements and wanted to determine if alternative programming should be explored. The study concluded that the regional day program was cost effective and equal or superior to program quality of private school programs.

The regional day programs concept included in the current study are philosophically based on the Re-ED model developed in 1961 by Dr. Nicholas Hobbs through a grant from the National Institute of Mental Health. The project was titled Re-ED and stood for "a project for the re-education of emotionally disturbed children." The intent was the development of a broad range of mental health services that would be effective, relatively inexpensive, and readily available. The focus of the Re-ED project is normal and healthy child development that avoids pathologically oriented medical concepts and vocabulary. It emphasizes the development of each child's social

and academic competencies. Primary importance is placed in working intensely with significant elements of the child's ecology (Figure 3) such as the family, the neighborhood, community service agencies, and to the school to which the child will be returning (Reinhart and Huang, 1987).

In summary, options exist which reflect the least and most restrictive special education environments available to provide services to all handicapping conditions. This study examines two of these levels; the self-contained classroom in regular school settings and regional separate day schools. The literature suggests that the self-contained service option with some degree of resources is the most commonly used followed by the separate day school option.

### Social Skills As Part of the Curriculum

The crux of Public Law 94-142 is the individual educational plan (IEP) which states the goals and accountability of the special education program for the SED student. The IEP consists of present levels of educational performance, annual goals, including short- and long-term instructional objectives; specific educational services to be provided; the extent of the mainstream experience if any; date of initiation of services and anticipated duration; and objective

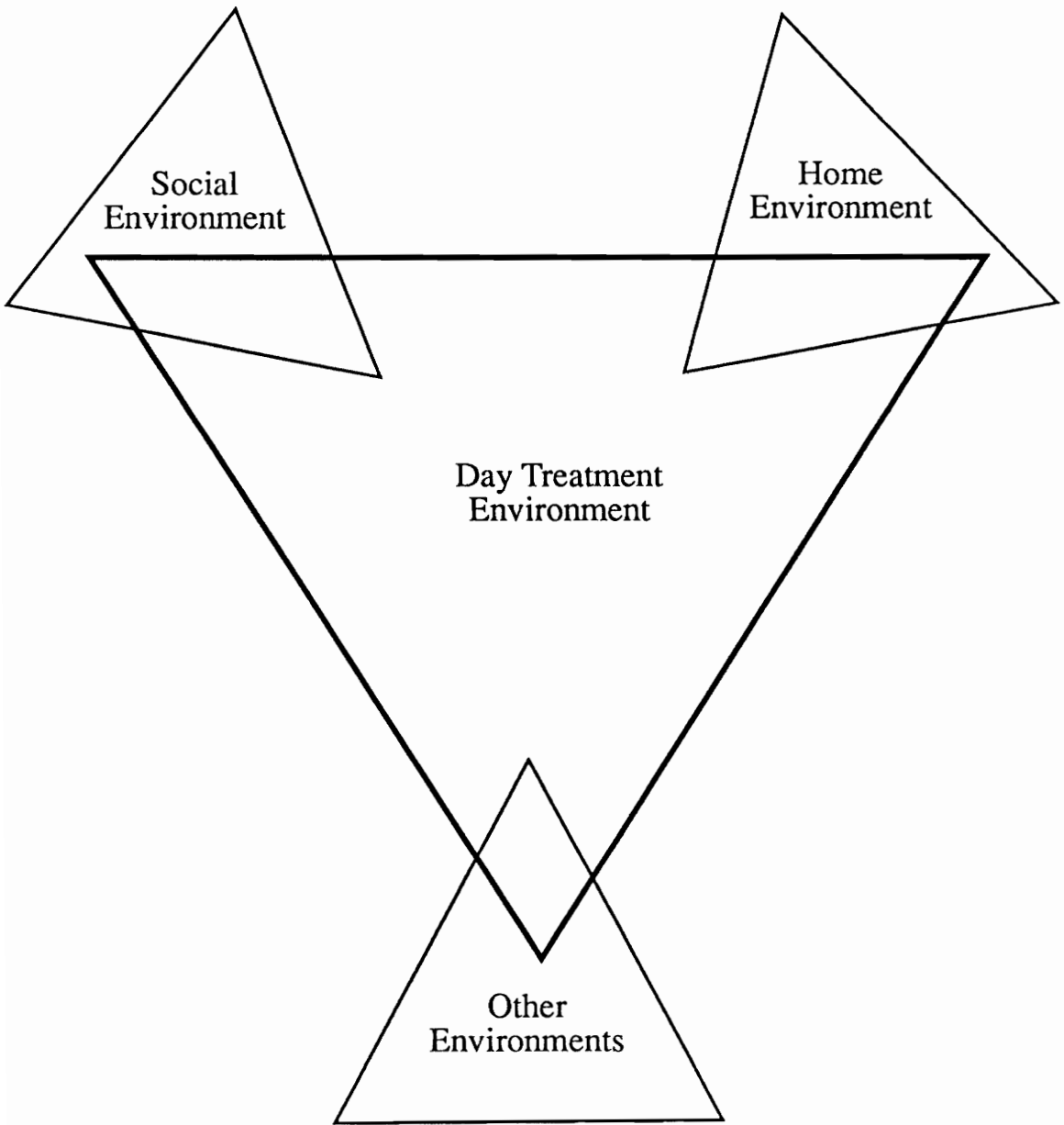


Figure 3

RE-ED Philosophy; Ecological In Nature

evaluation procedures for periodic reassessment to ascertain whether or not instructional objectives are met. In actuality, the success or failure of PL 94-142 in achieving its primary goal of providing quality education to all handicapped children lies in the effectiveness of the IEP, how it is perceived, conceived, and executed (Morse, 1985).

The IEP, if used appropriately serves as a safeguard for the handicapped child and his parents, as it prevents misclassification, inappropriate placements, and inadequate programs. Mostly, developers of IEPs should always remember that the IEP must be child centered versus system centered (Turnbull, 1978).

Price and Goodman (1980) examined the amount of time and costs associated with the development of individualized educational programs for a cross section of handicapped students. The study included data from 75 teachers and a sample group of 807 students. Overall results revealed that IEP development took teacher time away from instructional activities and that preparation involved a sizeable amount of the teacher's personal time (32% of the total time). Results indicated the average per student cost of IEP development to be \$66.81. Average time expenditure of 6.5 hours correlate in time to approximately a full instructional day per student. Next to hearing impaired students, SED student IEP preparation required the most time (7.75 hours) and costs the most money (\$78.81).

Special educators are concerned with the linkage between diagnosis and instruction of students identified as having behavioral/emotional problems. Limitations noted in the literature suggest: (1) disparities between annual goals and short term objectives of the IEP; (2) an overemphasis upon academic remediation without those academic areas being identified as needing remediation; (3) a lack of relationship between the psychoeducational diagnostic process and the actual educational plan for the student; and (4) objectives which were inappropriate to the ability level of the child noted by assessment information and stated level of performance. A study to evaluate the amount of congruence between recommendations made from the diagnostic/assessment data and instructional goals in the student's IEP found low correspondence between assessment and instructional goals. These data suggest an apparent overemphasis upon academic remediation without diagnosed deficiency and an underemphasis upon behavior concerns which are supported by the diagnostic recommendation (Fiedler and Knight, 1986).

IEPs for handicapped students identified as behaviorally/emotionally disturbed should address five areas: (1) academic behaviors; (2) social behaviors; (3) emotional behaviors; (4) psychotic behaviors; and (5) career education (Center, 1986). Instructional programming in these areas would allow these students to reintegrate into the mainstream of the school and community at an appropriate time.

The first step in the IEP process is determining the student's present level of functioning. The task is best accomplished by applying behavioral, ecological and functional assessment techniques. Behavioral assessment procedures are considered more effective than traditional assessment procedures when dealing with students identified as SED (Shea and Bauer, 1987). Behavioral objectives should be short-term and modified continuously as data are collected on the learner's performance. The special education teacher should identify the conditions under which the identified behaviors are to be demonstrated and a criterion level at which the behaviors are to occur (Sugai, 1985).

Children and youth identified as SED may experience rejection in mainstreamed settings, thus conflicting with goals of placement in the least restrictive environment. Lacking the skills to interact in socially acceptable ways, behaviorally disordered children often experience difficulty with peer relationships in mainstreamed settings. Studies in this area have found that peers tend to reject them more often than nonbehaviorally disordered children. These same behavior disordered children tend to be rejected later in their adult life in social relationships and settings. Additional studies have established a relationship between deficits in interpersonal skills and long-term adjustment difficulties such as juvenile delinquency, bad conduct discharges from the military, and psychiatric hospitalizations (Schloss et al., 1986). Increased

emphasis on improving the social competence of SED children should result in more mainstreamed experiences for them (Hollinger, 1987).

One approach that is offered by special educators to improve social competence of SED students is to include social skills training as an integral part of their curriculum. It is necessary to first define social competence. Hollinger (1987) defined it as: (1) overall positiveness; (2) the ability to resolve conflicts; (3) awareness of group norms; (4) the ability to communicate accurately; (5) the ability to establish a common bond between one's self and another; and (6) positive self perception. Another author, Asher (1983) goes further by suggesting that social competence is also: (1) the ability to "read" the social situation so one's behavior is relevant; (2) responsiveness or the ability to initiate positive interaction; and (3) a "process view" or an understanding that relationships require time to develop.

Two major social learning theories may be used to approach social skills training for SED students. The first approach is characterized by direct instruction, discussion, modeling, and rehearsal of specific social skills. The second approach emphasizes social cognition processes and how children solve interpersonal problems. Hollinger states that the problem of social perception bias among peers is a feasible explanation for the mixed results of social skills training interventions. He suggests that social skills training take place in the peer group in which the SED student must associate. This process would help to change negative social

perception biases of peers and would provide a very stringent test of training efficacy.

Social skills training has recently received growing attention as a means of fostering the social and emotional adjustment of SED students. Most view social skills training as an educational methodology as it emphasizes the teaching of adaptive cognitions and behaviors. It can be especially helpful with SED students because it allows flexible, prescriptive teaching that is designed to meet the need of individual students. The importance of creating a method of ongoing reinforcement and cuing systems is imperative in encouraging students to transfer what they have learned in their training to real-life situations. Studies of social skills training programs have found their effectiveness is enhanced by student input in identifying social incompetencies and teacher's willingness to commit to inclusion of social skills training into their daily classroom routines (Fleming, Ritchie and Fleming, 1983).

It is felt by many special educators that behavioral excesses and lack of motivation may be the most prevalent social skills problems of SED students. One of the most frequently used interventions for such behaviors is the giving or withholding of specified consequences contingent on the performance of appropriate social skills. Token systems, individual and group contingencies, and contingency contracts can be used to modify students behaviors. The follow-up procedures of intermittent reinforcement, fading, and generalization training are important when behavior management

methods are used to modify social behaviors (Nowacek, 1988). Other instructional considerations should include: (1) regular and continuous formal instruction augmented by incidental teaching at the time the skill problem is exhibited; (2) instructional session of 15 to 25 minutes for primary aged children and 40 to 60 minutes for upper level aged students; (3) long-term instruction, perhaps over several months or years; (4) small group instruction to maximize opportunities to respond, receive feedback, and so forth; and (5) informing parents in advance of the skills to be taught, which gives them the opportunity to negotiate any behaviors that are consistent with their own beliefs and values, the procedures that will be used to teach social skills, and the ways they can reinforce these skills at home (Cartledge and Milburn, 1986).

Over the past five years numerous studies have evaluated social skills enhancement strategies. A comprehensive review of these studies by Schloss (1986) concluded that: (1) research has failed to establish a comprehensive body of knowledge due to the absence of a conceptual base; (2) training priorities have not been matched to learner needs or characteristics; (3) the social significance of program effects has generally been ignored; (4) independent and dependent variables have not been evaluated and applied with equal precision; (5) investigators often fail to evaluate the generality of effects to other settings, responses, and time; and finally; (6) research has not shown that community adjustment can be enhanced through training. This review suggests that future studies must

establish that social skills training is worthwhile for the individual and society in which the student will live as an adult.

McConnell (1987) contends that others have failed to look at interaction variables involved in social skills training of SED students. Social skills training has historically been conceptualized as social skills deficits. The student does not exhibit specific skills or does not exhibit these skills at appropriate frequencies. Social interaction, according to McConnell, is a reciprocal, bidirectional process. Consequently, changes in the social behavior of one child may often require changes in the associated social behavior of others, specifically, classroom peers. The entrapment process is given as a means of reinforcing appropriate behavior during interaction with peers in a naturalistic setting. Here, newly acquired social behaviors continue at high rates and generalize to new settings after intervention is concluded. There is little available research to support evidence that entrapment occurs but warrants further scrutiny for utilization in social skills training.

Self-monitoring may be a way for SED students to carry over behavior changes from one setting to another. Self-monitoring can be instrumental in placing more responsibility on the student for managing his own behavior and allowing the teacher more flexibility in budgeting classroom time and activities. Students who learn to monitor their own behavior probably receive self-gratification from doing so. When using self-monitoring techniques, it is suggested that student preparation for the training is critical to the

successful acquisition of skills. Frith and Armstrong (1986) describe the following strategies to assist in student preparation: (1) define the behavior explicitly; (2) simplify behavior counting and recording; (3) use time limits; (4) use teacher reliability tests (with reinforcers); (5) introduce the process early in the student's educational career; and (6) practice the process.

Social skills training for SED students is essential given their tendency to be rejected by peers due to deficits in interpersonal skills and maladaptive behaviors. The survey instrument developed for this study asked SED program administrators to respond to the existence of the following components in their social skills curriculum: availability of a written curriculum, program goals and services, communication of goals, inclusion in IEP, review of goals, development of policies, intervention strategies, availability of specialized materials, indicators of program success, and satisfaction with overall program.

### Parental Involvement

Meeting the intent of PL 94-142 to have parents actively participate in making educational decisions about their children requires changes in traditional parent-school roles. Although parent notification and consent procedures are in place and parents have more contact with appropriate school staff, parents do not know what is expected of them or they are intimidated by the number of

professional staff involved in the process. School personnel are limited in the amount of time available to counsel parents and are faced with a conflict if parents ask for services the school district does not provide. Because most parents are satisfied with the extent of their involvement and trust school staff to make good decisions for their children, school staff lack the incentive to change their roles (Chambers & Hartman, 1983).

Strategies for informing parents of their role in IEP development as specified in PL 94-142 must be planned and carried out; the location and time of the conference and the nature of parental participation must be specified. Methods of providing documentation of a parent's unwillingness to be involved must also be provided, and a due process procedure for resolving teacher and parent conflicts should be set forth.

The IEP is a technique for sharing decisions and decision-making powers among school staff and parents. Parents usually want their children to learn skills and concepts that will make their interactions within the home and community easier. Most importantly, it is the perfect opportunity to coordinate training between home and school while involving the parents to the maximum extent possible. Parental participation is more likely if they can be assured that they are respected members of the special education team. School administrators should attempt to remove logistical obstacles such as time and transportation to encourage parent involvement (Turnbull, 1978). Parental involvement in

curriculum decisions promotes accountability on the part of the parents. As an outgrowth of the IEP process, parents may assume specific responsibility for teaching or reinforcing particular skills and concepts at home.

The ultimate purpose of parental involvement is not only to make educational interventions more effective but to assist the student to reach the goal of functioning more successfully throughout his ecological systems. Consequently, interventions involving emotionally disordered students must also effect changes in the home, school, and community environments as well. Equally important are improved parent attitudes which enhance their view of their child, helps them gain better understanding, and perhaps become more tolerant and skilled in dealing with their children. School personnel can be instrumental in assisting parents in locating and using appropriate support services, i.e., community agencies outside of the school setting.

Unfortunately, effective parent-school programs are rarely found. Effective parental involvement programs promote a continual treatment process between the school and home which benefits family members. Because the student has the benefit of "additional therapists" (the parents), treatment costs and inconveniences (transportation) all decrease (Zionts, 1985). Morse (1985) found that parents are usually the recipients of information in parent/teacher IEP planning conferences and that parents are in need of training to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in the IEP process .

Many studies have been conducted with school-aged students which demonstrate that academic gains result from parental instruction. Guthrie (1977) studied 10 years of research on the Follow Through compensatory education projects and found that the three which had the most impact on student achievement had a strong parent involvement component. Lasting effects on student learning was indicated in another review of parent/teaching programs (Goodson & Hess, 1975).

Many parents experience feelings of helplessness in dealing with their disturbed child. A simple and effective technique to impart to parents is the power of catching the child being "good" or doing something better. Teaching parents about positive reinforcement and having them apply it to behaviors they would like to strengthen in the child can make major changes in the family. Another type of consequence is punishment. Parents need to learn to use interventions more directly related to a child's misbehaviors as it reflects rules of society. Again, effective parental training programs could be used to communicate these techniques (Zionts, 1985).

In review, the ultimate purpose of parental involvement is to improve the effectiveness of educational interventions and to facilitate the student's ability to function more successfully in all ecological systems. The literature supports the notion that academic and social gains result from parental involvement in their child's educational planning. Survey items related to parental

involvement in SED programs in the present study include: activities to involve parents, administrator/teacher encouragement and support of parent participation, parent inclusion in educational planning, parent/teacher relationship, communication between school and parent, and availability of parent support groups.

### Methods for Determining Special Education Costs

Costs associated with the obligation to provide a free appropriate education are difficult to assess (Kienas, 1986). Several special education financial studies have concluded that costs vary considerably within a given category of handicapping condition and that the cost of providing special education may not reflect the level of services within the program.

PL 94-142 promised educators that they would receive 40% of the national average per student cost by 1982. Unfortunately, for state educational agencies (SEAs) and LEAs, those promised funds have never exceeded 12%. While other educational programs have felt the budget axe, special education spending has continued to climb. In fact, federal spending for PL 94-142 state grants has grown from \$100 million in fiscal year 1976 to \$1.5 billion in fiscal year 1987 (Weiner and Hume, 1987).

Since passage of EAHCA, the Federal government's role in financing special education services follows by a wide margin state and local contributions. In 1981, for example, the average total

expenditures of \$3500 per handicapped student, the Federal contribution was \$250 (8%), the state contribution was \$900 (26%), and the local contribution was \$2350 (67%). Although the additional costs associated with serving handicapped students vary significantly by handicapping condition and extent of services provided, it is clear that these costs have greatly inflated the financial obligation at the state and local levels (The Report of the Commission on the Financing of a Free and Appropriate Education for Special Needs Children, 1983).

This same Commission's Report suggested the following six strategies to assist state and local educational agencies in solving funding related to PL 94-142:

1. State educational agencies (SEAs) and LEAs should establish more flexible and individualized options in the regular education program.
2. States should develop standards which define the financial responsibility of LEA's for the related services mandated by PL 94-142 and interagency agreements which ensure ready access to the full range of financial resources available under various state and Federal health and human services programs for such mandated services. The Department of Education should enforce the requirements which exist under Section 504.
3. SEAs and LEAs should initiate interagency coordination at both the state and local levels in order to spread the financial burdens associated with low incidence handicapping conditions and unusually expensive related services among cooperating services.

4. States should develop community-based residential programs in coordination with school districts' special education programs in order to avoid the high costs of unnecessary institutionalization.
5. SEAs and LEAs should initiate conflict resolution strategies to improve parent-school communication to encourage joint decision making and reduce unnecessary conflict-related expenses.
6. Congress and the Department of Education should target a portion of current discretionary resources to encourage SEAs and LEAs to use more effective administrative policies and practices. The U.S. Department of Education, along with special education finance experts, has estimated that it costs twice as much to educate a handicapped student as it does a nonhandicapped student. LEAs' special education budgets are increasing at the rate of 14% each year, while regular instructional and operating budgets are rising at a rate of 8% per year.

In 1985, a comprehensive study was completed which developed a framework for a descriptive and comparative cost analysis of public and nonpublic special education programs (Larson, 1985). Per student costs were defined in the Larson Model based on (1) discrete costs; administrative, support, and instructional salaries and miscellaneous costs; (2) transportation costs; (3) overhead costs; (4) fixed costs; and (5) related services. In developing this model, Larson reviewed previous special education studies and found a lack of a common method to compare costs of public and nonpublic special education programs.

One year after this study, a second study (Kienas, 1986) evaluated the Larson Model by comparing it to the Rossmiller Model developed in 1970. The Rossmiller Model is comprised of six expenditure categories: (1 ) management; (2) instruction; (3) instructional support; (4) institutional operations; (5) services; and (6) transportation costs. Comparison of the two models was made by assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of each model. Efficiency was appraised by comparing input and process considerations in computing special education program costs in a Virginia LEA. Effectiveness was appraised by comparing each model's ability to produce comprehensive and accurate special education program costs from the sample school district. The Kienas study concluded that the Larson method was more efficient and effective in determining special education costs of public and nonpublic special education programs. A conceptual error was discovered in calculating the aggregate costs of transporting handicapped students, thus resulting in a modification to the Larson Model by Kienas.

### Virginia's System of Funding Education

Virginia currently uses a fiscal equalization program entitled Basic Aid to distribute funds to LEAs. This public school finance system determines the LEAs' fiscal capacity, known as the Local Composite Index (LCI), through true valuation of property, personal

income, and sales tax. Basic State Aid is allocated to LEAs by multiplication of a fixed amount, known as the Standards of Quality (SOQ) figure, and by student Average Daily Membership (ADM) reported by LEAs. From this amount a one-cent sales tax is deducted and the remainder is multiplied by the LCI in order to determine the state and local contribution (Kienas, 1986). Additional state funds are provided to LEAs through a series of categorical flat grants which include funding based on a dollar amount per student by handicapping condition. These additional funds are known as SOQ Add-On Funds for special education programs operated by LEAs. In 1987-88 the Virginia Department of Education used the rate of \$869 (10 students maximum to a classroom with an aide) per student to reimburse LEAs for SED self-contained programs. The amount of \$724 was reimbursed if there was no aide and a maximum of 8 students to a classroom. State reimbursement to LEAs for tuition assistance supporting students placed in approved regional special education programs is a flat rate of 60%. This reimbursement to LEAs is in lieu of other state aid (i.e., transitional personnel, remedial and gifted, and fringe benefit payments), and LEAs may not claim these students on ADM reports (Superintendent's Memorandum No. 3, January 27, 1988).

This chapter included a review of literature pertaining to the identification and special education programming for students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed. Data information pertinent to this special education population included: definitions,

placement options, review of social skills and parental involvement programs, methods for determining special education costs, and Virginia's public education finance system. This review supports the importance of both the social skills and parental involvement programs in the successful treatment of emotionally disturbed populations examined in the present study. The survey instrument was designed to assess SED administrators' perceptions of the existence of certain social skills and parental involvement program components in the two SED environments examined. The Larson Model, as revised by Kienas, was used as it has been found to be an effective and efficient method of calculating special education costs.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

This research study involved local education agency (LEA) self-contained and regional (separate day school) programs for seriously emotionally disturbed students. Cost to LEAs and SED administrators' perceptions of program quality, as measured by the existence of certain social skills curriculum and parental involvement program components, in the two described environments were examined. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research design used in the study. Included are: (1) description of the Larson Model; (2) description of the Program Inventory; (3) population; (4 ) instrumentation and data collection; and (5) data analysis.

#### Description of the Larson Model

The Larson Framework for Descriptive and Comparative Cost Analysis of Public and Nonpublic Special Education Programs was developed in 1985. The framework consists of two levels, Identification of Public Special Education Costs (IPSEC) and Identification of Nonpublic Special Education Costs (INSEC). The IPSEC level was used in this study to analyze costs of public special education programs by handicapping condition and environment. Handicapping conditions include deafness, deaf-blindness, hearing

impaired, mental retardation, multihandicapped, orthopedic impairment, other health impaired, serious emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, speech impairment, and visual impairment. Special education environments include itinerant, resource, self-contained, and separate day school. The IPSEC level consists of two tiers, however; tier one, for use with day school programs, was appropriate for this study. IPSEC, level one, tier one, of the Larson Model (Figure 4) consists of: (1) discrete costs; (2) transportation costs; (3) overhead costs; (4) fixed assets costs; and (5) related services.

Discrete costs are those which may be directly attributed to the special education program by handicapping condition and environment. Larson assigned expenditures for administration/supervision, support, and instruction into cost centers. Each cost center includes salaries, benefits, materials, supplies, texts, equipment, travel, and contract services. Costs are determined in the administrative/supervision cost centers through use of a multiplier. The multiplier is found by determining the percentage of time to duties within special education by position multiplied by the portion of special education instructional personnel assigned to each position within the SED program. The multiplier for the instructional cost center is derived from the percentage of time the instructional position spends within special education multiplied by the portion of handicapped students assigned to the position within

Discrete Cost

Instruction

Salaries

Misc

Administration

Salaries

Misc

Support

Salaries

Misc

---

Transportation Costs

---

Overhead Costs

---

Fixed Assets Costs

---

Related Services

---

Aggregate Costs

Figure 4

Larson Model Component Cost for SED  
Students Placed In LEA Programs

each handicapping condition and environment. The multiplier is multiplied by expenditures within each cost center by position. Total expenditures are calculated by summing the previously calculated expenditures by handicapping condition and environment (Kienas,1 986).

Transportation is the second component and it is in this portion of the Larson Model that Kienas (1986) discovered a conceptual error. Larson obtained an aggregate per student cost for special and regular transportation. Kienas found that this procedure over estimates transportation costs as a different base is used for each cost center. Kienas modified Larson's formula by calculating total transportation costs for each cost center (contract, special, and regular). The total costs were added together, and the total figure was then divided by the number of handicapped children in each condition and environment.

The third component is overhead costs which include those costs that involve indirect or shared services to all students within the school district which cannot be tied to a specific program. The Larson Model divides overhead costs into two categories: general overhead and special education overhead. First, general overhead costs are identified as those costs which cannot be attributed to any specific program, but must be incorporated into the costs of educational programs as they benefit all students. Special education costs are those costs which cannot be identified with any program, but are known to benefit all special education students. General

overhead costs are found by taking those items from the LEA budget that involve indirect services to all students: administration, maintenance and operation, and adult education. Special education overhead costs are calculated by totaling those items in the LEA budget which involve indirect services to handicapped students.

The fourth component from the Larson Model used in this study was fixed assets which include the cost of capital depreciation for buildings and vehicles operated by LEAs. Furniture and equipment values were added by Kienas as these items added to the total value of school property. The Larson Model calculates depreciation on buildings over a 30 year period and vehicles over a 12 year period. A proportion is calculated by the number of special education instructional personnel and multiplying the figure by the number of students within each handicapping condition and environment.

The final component is related services which consists of those services required to assist the handicapped student to benefit from special education instruction. Costs are computed for each related service by evaluation and therapy cost centers and by the percentage of time given to each activity by each provider of related services. The cost centers and multipliers used for related services are those used when calculating discrete costs.

Kienas (1986) examined the Larson Model (1985) and found it to be an efficient and effective method of determining special education costs by handicapping condition and environment. The model requires data input concerning student population, personnel,

and cost data both for regular and special education programs. Data sources included the Virginia Department of Education, LEA budget offices, and LEA special education administrative personnel. Kienas found a conceptual error in the transportation component of the Larson Model and this modification was made in data collection. Both Larson and Kienas were interviewed for their input. This model was used to determine per student costs for the six local education agency SED programs selected for the study. Costs to the LEAs for placement of SED students in the regional programs were determined by the tuition rate approved by the Virginia Department of Education for the 1987-88 school year.

### Description of the Program Inventory

Public school programs for seriously emotionally disturbed (SED) and behaviorally disordered students have grown by 99.4% in the past fifteen years, or more precisely, since the passage of Public Law 94-142. Grosenick, George and George (1987) assert that given this growth, it is not unreasonable to expect SED program services to be delivered in the framework of a well-conceptualized program. Further, that professional literature provides little assistance to educators in developing well-designed programs for their SED population. This lack of available SED program descriptors resulted in the development of the Program Inventory by their work with the

federally funded National Needs Analysis Project headquartered at the University of Oregon.

The Program Inventory grew out of the authors' desire to construct an instrument for developing and assessing plans and quality of SED programs. The development process consisted of four major processes: (1) identifying the elements or components of a well-conceptualized SED program; (2) developing the specific items for the Program Inventory; (3) conducting a comprehensive field test of the Program Inventory; and (4) revising the Program Inventory based on input from the field sites. These processes resulted in eight components which became the framework around which the content of the Program Inventory was developed. These eight essential components determined to be indicators of a well conceptualized SED program are: (1) philosophy; (2) student needs and identification; (3) goals; (4) instructional methods and curriculum; (5) community involvement; (6) program design and operation; (7) exit procedures; and (8) evaluation (Figure 5).

The next step in finalizing the Program Inventory was developing specific items to be included in the final product. This was done by two methods: (1) input from ten consultants in SED and (2) project staff input. All suggestions for content questions from both sources were perused for clarity, relevance, and frequency of occurrence. The first draft was resubmitted to the consultants for their input on clarity and relevance. In addition, independent consultants were asked to react to the scaling of the instrument.

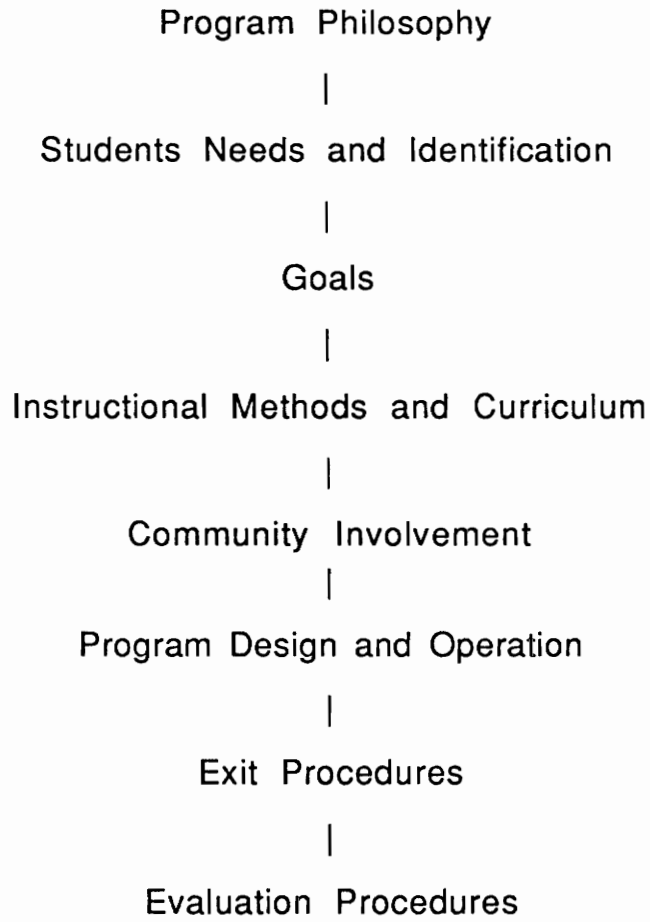


Figure 5

Program Inventory: Eight Essential Components Of A Well-Conceptualized SED Program

Next, the final draft of the Program Inventory was field tested (April-December, 1985) by 192 (145 returned the completed survey) school districts in 27 states. The sample represented a small section of small, large, urban and rural school districts. Seventy-five percent of the respondents were classified as LEAs and 25% as intermediate units or area cooperatives. All of these factors were believed to be important for the Program Inventory to be useful to school districts of varying sizes and organizational structures. Reliability and validity of the final product was established by two methods: (1) ratings made by independent judges or evaluators; (2) ratings performed by a two-person team during site visits to selected districts.

In summary, the Program Inventory is a 125-item survey which focuses upon the continuum of services provided by a school district, as opposed to specific classroom activities for seriously emotionally disturbed students. Indeed, Morse (1976) reflected this view when he stated: "time after time...it is the limited program rather than the limited teacher which spells defeat." The survey was developed as a basis for SED program evaluation. It accomplishes this by describing the staff's roles and responsibilities in concise and specific terms and promotes consistency in the overall delivery of SED services. The eight components reflect elements that are necessary for well designed special education programs.

## Population

The target population selected for this study was students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed (SED) by local educational agencies (LEAs) in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. SED students included in the study are served in two environments, LEA self-contained classrooms and regional (separate day school) programs. A total of six LEAs were examined with three LEAs being served by each of the two regional programs. Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Portsmouth SED self-contained programs, and the regional Southeastern Cooperative Education Program (SECEP), serving these LEAs, were selected for this study. Hampton, Newport News, York County SED self-contained programs, and the regional Peninsula Area Cooperative Education Program (PACES), serving these LEAs were also selected for the study.

## Instrumentation and Data Collection

A Survey of Special Education Programs for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed Students was developed to obtain respondent program and locality information, program identification, social skills curriculum, and parental involvement programs. Questions used in the survey were gleaned from three main sources: (1) National Needs Analysis Project: Fostering Quality Program Planning and Design in the area of Emotional Disturbance Program

Inventory (Grosenick, 1985); (2) An Evaluation of Public and Nonpublic Special Education Programs used by Montgomery County Public Schools (Jones and Salmon, 1983); and (3) Norfolk Public Schools Needs Assessment (1989).

The survey instrument was developed after an interview with Dr. Nancy George of the National Needs Analysis Project at the University of Oregon. Dr. George, a co-developer of the Program Inventory, provided information and the following documents: Development of the Program Inventory, Development of the Resource Handbook, and the Program Inventory. This information was reviewed to determine survey items relating to the evaluation of social skills curriculum and parental involvement programs. The survey developed for this study was a modified and abbreviated version of the Program Inventory and incorporated items from the other two cited studies.

A Survey of Special Education Programs for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed Students was field tested by two SED teacher specialists and one SED program supervisor. They were requested to complete the survey and to provide feedback regarding relevance, clarity, and length of time required to complete the survey. This done, the final draft was mailed to the directors of the departments of special education in the six selected LEAs and the directors of the two regional programs included in the study. They were asked to provide data based on the status of their SED program for the 1987-88 school year. Participants were informed that the inquiry

involved regional and local educational agency self-contained programs for seriously emotionally disturbed students and examined cost to LEAs, social skills curriculum and parental involvement programs. They were also informed that the data collected would be presented in aggregate form to protect the privacy of the participating school divisions.

The financial information required to determine per student cost for SED students in the self-contained environments was obtained from several sources. The following 1987-88 LEA state reports were obtained from the Virginia Department of Education: the Annual School Reports, the Public School Division Report of Handicapped Children and Youth Receiving Special Education on December 1, 1987 (including Tables 1 and 3), and the Pupils Transported at Public Expense/Transportation of Handicapped Pupils on Exclusive Trips reports. Specific data not detailed in the state reports were obtained through interviews with various personnel in the LEAs. Additionally, budgets were obtained from the six LEAs included in the study. Tuition rates approved for the two regional programs for the 1987-88 school year were obtained from the Virginia Division of Special Education Tuition Programs. Contact was made with Drs. Jeffrey Larson and Kenneth Kienas for their expertise with the Larson Model and to obtain work sheets for calculations to determine per student costs for LEA self-contained programs for SED students.

LEA cost for placement of SED students in self-contained classrooms as calculated by the Larson Model, was reduced by state reimbursements. State reimbursements were calculated for each of the five cost components: discrete, transportation, overhead, fixed assets, and related services. The 1987-88 Annual School Report Financial Section was used to determine state reimbursements to the LEAs for transportation (also the Pupils Transported at Public Expense/Transportation of Handicapped Pupils on Exclusive Trips report), overhead, and fixed assets costs.

Transportation reimbursement was calculated by dividing LEA reimbursement for Approved Buses-Handicapped (page 1, Annual School Report) by the total operational cost (column 13, Transportation of Handicapped Pupils on Exclusive Trips report) for the 1987-88 school year. The product was a percentage of reimbursement for special education transportation cost which was deducted from the average per student cost as calculated by use of the Larson Model.

Overhead and fixed assets costs were calculated by totaling state reimbursements to LEAs for Sales Tax Receipts, Basic School Aid and Transitional Personnel Payment (page 1, Annual School Report) and dividing the sum by total LEA expenditures (page 18, Annual School Report). The product was a percentage of reimbursement for overhead and fixed assets costs which was deducted from the average per student cost as calculated by use of the Larson Model.

State reimbursement for discrete and related services costs was determined by the rate established by Virginia for the distribution of Standards of Quality (SOQ) Add-on Funds for Special Education Programs for the 1987-88 Fiscal Year. This per student amount (\$869) was deducted from the average per student discrete and related services costs as calculated by the Larson Model.

LEAs are reimbursed by the state for placement of students in regional special education programs at a flat rate of 60%, leaving the LEA financially responsible for 40% of the cost. Final comparisons of costs are made by summing the average per student LEA cost for the five components of the Larson Model, deducting average per student state reimbursement, and comparing this cost with LEA cost for regional placements after state reimbursement.

Beginning in 1986-87 the Annual Superintendent's Report included Supplemental Schedules A & B. Schedule A requires LEAs to report Federal, State, and Local funds expended for special education and related services for the fiscal year. This allowed for an aggregate total of Federal, State, and Local funds expended by the LEA for these services. Schedule B requires LEAs to itemize expenditures (distribution of aggregate total from Schedule A) for the fiscal year. Itemization by support services and the following handicapping conditions is required: educable mentally retarded, trainable mentally retarded, severe and profoundly handicapped, hard of hearing, deaf, speech or language impaired, visually handicapped, seriously emotionally disturbed, orthopedically impaired, other

health impaired, autistic, specific learning disabled, deaf-blind, multihandicapped, and developmentally delayed. An aggregate total was required which "must equal grand total in A."

A budget administrator from one of the LEAs included in the study was interviewed to determine which cost components were included when completing Schedules A and B. The staff reported that program codes are assigned to special education programs by teacher salaries and for all supplies and materials. Costs for transportation, overhead, and fixed assets are not calculated in Schedules A or B. Support services (Schedule B #16) are calculated by total cost for administrative salaries, psychological services, visiting teacher services, psychiatric services, adaptive physical education services, resource teachers, vocational education for the handicapped, educational diagnosticians, detention home school, tuition assistance, and homebound instruction. Calculations by local education budget departments are considered to be "local decisions" as state directives for completing Schedules A and B are not specific. The informant reported that in 1987-88 teacher fringe benefit costs were not included in the calculations for this report as their payroll system was not set up to include this data with salary. The following fiscal year, 1988-89, fringe benefits were included in the list of special education expenditures on Schedules A and B. It seems that this report is somewhat inexact and may not accurately reflect special education expenditures nor allow for comparison of

cost among localities due to different bases being used to calculate aggregate costs.

A summary of expenditures for the SED programs as reported by the six LEAs on Schedule B for the 1987-88 school year is reported in Appendix D. The summary provides the following SED program data: percent of special education budget, percent of special education population, and per student cost. These calculations do not take into consideration environment but provide an overall view of expenditures for SED programming as reported by LEAs included in this study.

### Data Analysis

Survey responses from SED program administrators were analyzed by mean response and percentage for the six LEAs and the two regional programs. A mean response and/or percentage for the LEAs and the regional programs reported the average performance of each SED environment on each survey item. Each item on the survey is stated in the positive and could be answered by either a yes or no response or: strongly agree (SA); agree (A); undecided (U); disagree (D); and strongly disagree (SD). The latter responses were rated on a five point scale: strongly agree (5); agree (4); undecided (3); disagree (2); and strongly disagree (1).

The survey consists of the following four sections or categories: (I) Respondent Program and Locality Information; (II) Program

Identification; (III) Social Skills Curriculum; and (IV) Parental Involvement. Results from section I are presented as identifying information for the LEAs and regional programs participating in the survey. Results from section II of the survey are presented as SED quality program descriptors as identified by the National Needs Analysis Project in their development of the Program Inventory. These results were not used for comparison between SED programs, but rather to provide an overall view of programs in the two environments included in this study. Survey results for sections III and IV concerning social skills curriculum and parental involvement also were tallied by percentage and mean responses for each item for LEAs and regional program respondents.

The results of the survey were compared with aggregate costs for each SED program in the two environments under study. Finally, analysis compared SED program administrators' perceptions of quality of social skills curriculum and parental involvement programs and LEA calculated per student net expenditures for the self-contained and regional (separate day school) programs.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to report findings of this research study. Presented in this chapter are: (1) survey results; (2) cost results; and (3) research findings in relation to the research question.

#### Survey Results

A Survey of Special Education Programs for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed Students was mailed to the Directors of Special Education for six LEAs and two regional programs selected for the study. The survey involved LEA self-contained and regional (separate day school) programs for seriously emotionally disturbed students and asked participants to respond to items in four categories: (I) Respondent Program and Locality Information; (II) Program Identification; (III) Social Skills Curriculum; and (IV) Parental Involvement. A response rate of 100 percent was received and results are reported as average performance of each SED environment. Survey results reflect the SED program administrators' perceptions of the selected program variables and, therefore, they may not be valid indicators of program quality

Responses by program administrators to survey questions were analyzed by percent of yes responses to those items with response

choices of yes and no; and mean response for those items with five response choices of: strongly agree (5); agree (4); undecided (3); disagree (2); and strongly disagree (1). Survey responses to the four categories are provided in Appendix A.

Respondent Program and Locality Information. This section (I) asked respondents to provide identifying information about their positions/titles, the name of the district or cooperative program that their SED program is affiliated with, average daily membership for the LEAs, number of SED students in self-contained and regional environments, number and certification status of their instructional and administrative SED personnel, and number of teacher assistants assigned to SED self-contained classrooms. Information concerning average daily membership was taken from the 1987-88 Annual School Report as it provided a more accurate number of school populations. Additionally, the information presented in Appendix A reflects the number of students and personnel in the self-contained and regional programs as reported by the LEAs in Tables 1 and 3 of the December 1, 1987 Public School Division Report of Handicapped Children and Youth Receiving Special Education. Again, these documents provided a more exact number and were also used when calculating costs using the Larson Model.

Program Identification. The second section of the survey inquired about certain components of respondents' special education programs for students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed. Items included information related to: eligibility, philosophy, goals,

evaluation, services, and resources. Participant responses are presented in sequence for items 1 through 9. Results were not included in comparison of SED program characteristics, but are included to provide an overall view of program components in the two environments included in the study.

All LEA (100%) and regional (100%) SED programs have a written definition of the population available to members of the Eligibility Committee appropriate for SED placement services. However, only 3 of the 6 (50%) LEAs have a written philosophy for their SED programs while both (100%) regional programs have a written philosophy. Of the 6 LEAs, only 2 (33%) indicated that they are satisfied with their SED program goals and only 1 (50%) of the regional administrators indicated satisfaction with the same. Evaluation of SED programs is nonexistent in the LEA programs (0%) and is a part of 1 (50%) of the regional programs as reported by the SED program administrators.

The next item (#7) concerned the following SED program services: consultative, itinerant, resource room, self-contained, alternative day school, home instruction, educational diagnostic services, and diagnostic placement. LEA program administrators collectively indicated agreement and strong agreement with all items on this question. Two LEA program administrators indicated disagreement with the two services of resource room and alternative day school. One LEA was undecided about the availability of educational diagnostic services. Only one of the two regional

administrators responded to this question and the other indicated that the items were not applicable to that program. The other regional respondent indicated agreement with the adequacy of the following services: resource room, self-contained classes, alternative day school, and home instruction. An undecided response was given for the following services by one of the regional respondents: itinerant, consultative, and educational diagnostic services. One response of disagreement was indicated for diagnostic placement services. Overall, LEAs responded more favorable to the adequacy of enumerated services than did the regional respondents.

The next survey item (#8) listed a number of services that are either a part of the SED program itself or available through contracted services, and respondents were asked to rate the adequacy of these services. LEA administrators indicated agreement and strong agreement to the adequacy of the following services in their SED programs: school guidance, speech/language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social worker/visiting teacher, driver's education, and school nurse services. Services receiving disagree to strongly disagree responses were: therapeutic camping, art therapy, music therapy, and job placement. Recreational therapy and vocational training received responses from strongly agree to strongly disagree which indicates a wide discrepancy among the LEAs. Regional administrators indicated agree and strongly agree to the adequacy of the following services: school guidance,

speech/language, social worker/visiting teacher, adaptive PE, community liaison, and post placement services. Services receiving disagree and strongly disagree responses were music therapy and art therapy. One regional administrator indicated strong agreement with the following services and the other indicated strong disagreement: occupational therapy, music therapy, and therapeutic camping. Overall, the LEA administrators' perceptions of adequacy of services are more positive than are regional administrators. This may be due to the availability of a wider array of services in the public school environment than the separate school facility.

Item #9 asked respondents to indicate their perceptions about the adequacy of certain resources available to the SED programs. LEA administrators indicated agree to strongly agree to the following resources: physical facilities, materials/supplies, paraprofessionals, student/teacher ratio, supervision of the SED program, administrative support, and staff development. There were no scores received in the disagree range of responses. LEA administrators' perceptions were positive overall and no substantial problem areas were indicated. Regional program administrators were even more positive about the availability of enumerated resources. Only two items, availability of mental health experts and parental support, received a disagree response. The remaining items on this question received strongly agree responses by the regional respondents.

Social Skills Curriculum. The third section of the survey dealt with the social skills curriculum of the LEA self-contained SED programs and regional (separate day school) programs. The literature suggests that students identified as SED lack the skills necessary to interact in socially acceptable ways and, therefore, experience difficulty with peer relationships in mainstreamed settings. These behaviors often result in rejection by peers in adolescence and later in social relationships and settings. Studies in this regard have established a relationship between deficits such as juvenile delinquency, bad conduct discharges from the military, and psychiatric hospitalizations (Schloss, et al., 1986). It is for these reasons that special education programs serving SED students should focus on enhancing the social competence of this population. One approach offered by special educators to improve social competence of SED students is to include social skills training as an integral part of their curriculum (Hollinger, 1987).

The first item in this section concerned the availability of written social skills curriculum for teachers to follow. Only 2 of the 6 LEAs indicated their agreement with this statement, and neither of the regional programs had a written social skills curriculum in place for teachers to follow. When responding to certain characteristics of their SED social skills goals in item #2, LEA administrators indicated a medium (67%) to high (83%) positive response rate to all characteristics. Characteristics with medium response rates were comprehensiveness, qualitative, and

developmental. High positive responses were given to specific/measurable, individualized, attainable, and long-and short-term. At least one of the two regional administrators perceived all enumerated characteristics as descriptive of their SED program social skills goals. Results indicate that LEA administrators have a higher positive perception of these characteristics in their self-contained programs than regional administrators.

Participating LEA administrators perceived that social skills goals for SED students are well communicated to selected individuals in the next item. Communication to special education administrators, SED teachers, paraprofessionals, regular education administrators, regular education teachers, parents and students all received a 100% positive response rate. Medium positive responses were indicated for communication of goals to other special education teachers, regular education teachers, mental health professionals, and outside agencies. Yes responses from regional administrators were scattered from 0% to 100%. Communication of SED social skills goals to special education administrators, SED teachers, paraprofessionals, and parents received a 100% positive response rate. One of the two regional respondents responded yes to communication to other special education teachers, mental health professionals, outside agencies, and students. Findings may be because regional schools are separate school facilities, thus, limiting contact with regular education personnel.

Parents awareness of SED social skills curriculum received high responses from all SED program administrators. High responses were also indicated by both program administrators in survey item #5 which asked if specific social skills are always written into the IEP as part of the SED student's educational plan.

The next item (#6) asked survey participants if social skills goals for individual SED students are always reviewed on an as needed basis but at least quarterly. Four out of 6 LEA administrators responded in the affirmative to this statement and both regional administrators perceived adequate review of social skills goals in their SED programs.

The following item (#7) involved certain characteristics which are descriptive of SED social skills curriculum. Responses from LEA administrators revealed perceptions varying from a low of 33% to a high of 100% of yes responses. High percentage rates were given to the following characteristics: group oriented, computer based and teacher developed. Social skills characteristics receiving a lower positive response rate were: developmental, commercially developed, research supported, and generalizations. Similar variability of positive response rates were given by regional administrators on the same item. Characteristics of social skills curriculum receiving a 100% positive response were individualized, group oriented, teacher developed, and generalizations. The remaining characteristics received responses ranging from 50% to 0%. Regional SED program administrators indicated a lack of

computer-based curriculums while all LEAs had access to computer-based curriculums.

Item #8 asked LEA and regional SED administrators to respond yes or no to the involvement of certain individuals in the development of social skills curriculum. LEA respondents indicated minimal involvement by most of the individuals included in this item. SED teachers were the only individuals involved by 5 out of the 6 LEAs. Regional administrators also indicated minimal involvement by others in the development of the social skills curriculum. Individuals reported by both programs as being involved were special education administrators and SED teachers.

Participating SED program administrators were next asked to respond to a variety of intervention strategies used within their SED population. Both SED program administrators gave positive responses to most of the techniques included in the item. Strategies receiving a high percent of responses were crises management, peer group process, counseling, environment management, suspensions/expulsions, positive reinforcement, modeling, self-monitoring, social skills training, and parent involvement. Physical restraint received the lower positive response with only 2 of the 6 LEAs using this intervention strategy. Regional program administrators indicated positive responses similar to LEA administrators to the intervention strategies. Overall, there was no difference in LEA and regional administrators' perceptions of the

enumerated intervention strategies being a part of their SED programs.

Methods of implementing changes within the social skills curriculum were addressed in the following item (#10). All 6 LEA administrators reported that input from mental health professionals is most often used in making changes. The lower response rate was given to input from School Boards and students. Both regional administrators indicated parental involvement when making changes with the social skills curriculum, and all other means were used by at least one of the two participating regional program administrators.

The availability of certain specialized materials was the subject of the next item pertaining to social skills curriculum. All materials listed on this item were available to no more than 4 of the 6 SED programs operated by LEAs. Regional program administrators, however, reported that all of the specialized materials are available to their SED student population.

SED program administrators were asked to respond to indicators of student success as an outcome of the social skills curriculum in the next item. LEA administrators perceived the following to be high indicators of students success: progress while in the program, success in regular education, and movement to a less restrictive environment (LRE). Low indicators of program success were perceived as recidivism and post program employment status. Both regional administrators perceived the following as indicators of

student success: parent satisfaction, progress while in the program, graduation from high school, movement to LRE, post program employment status, recidivism, and attendance. The remaining items were perceived by at least one of the two regional administrators as success indicators.

Items #13 and #14 involved the appropriateness and adequacy of intervention techniques included in the IEP of SED students. As to appropriateness, 4 of the LEA administrators strongly agreed that this IEP component was appropriate while one indicated agreement and one was undecided. A similar split of opinion was indicated on the issue of adequacy. Four of the 6 LEAs agreed with this, one was undecided, and one disagreed with the statement. Regional program respondents agreed that their intervention techniques were both appropriate and adequate.

The final item (#15) asked LEA and regional administrators to rate their overall satisfaction with the social skills curriculum used by their SED program. LEA program administrators' responses ranged from agree to disagree. Regional program administrators agreed that they were satisfied with their social skills curriculum.

Parental Involvement. The fourth and final section of A Survey of Special Education Programs for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed Students involved items related to parental involvement programs. The active participation of parents in making educational decisions for their children is clearly defined in PL 94-142. The IEP is designed as a technique for sharing decisions and decision-making

powers between school staff and parents. If developed appropriately, this is the perfect opportunity to coordinate training between home and school while involving parents to the maximum extent possible. The ultimate goal of parental involvement is not only to make educational interventions more effective, but to assist the student to reach the goal of functioning more successfully throughout his ecological systems.

The first item in this section provided a list of activities used to involve parents in the SED program. LEA program administrators indicated agreement to use of the following activities: informs parents of child's progress, invites parents to participate in IEP, includes parents in decision making, and encourages parents to attend PTA. Activities least used by LEA administrators to involve parents were provides parents with behavior management training, visits parents at home, implements SED curriculum in the home, and uses parent volunteers in classrooms. Three of the 6 LEAs indicated that their program provides a Parent Support Network for parents of their SED population. Regional program administrators perceived high use of the following parent involvement activities: informs parents of child's progress, invites parents to participate in IEP, visits parent at home, includes parents in decision making, and provides a Parent Support Network. Activities receiving the lowest level of use by regional programs were the implementation of SED curriculum in the home and using parent volunteers in the classrooms.

Parents performing volunteer work in the SED program were perceived as minimal by both LEA and regional program administrators. However, LEA and regional survey respondents indicated on the next item that teachers and administrators do make parents feel welcome in the school. SED program administrators also agreed that their organizations provide individuals to assure that student and parent rights are voiced.

The role of program staff in including parents in the educational planning of SED students was addressed in the next survey item (#5). Four of the LEA program administrators indicated agreement with the statement that job descriptions for SED program staff specifies their role in including parents in the educational planning for SED students, while 2 indicated disagreement. Regional administrators indicated their agreement with this statement.

Discipline of SED students is at times an issue which results in disagreement between parents and teachers. Survey results for item #6 revealed that LEA and regional SED administrators perceive support from parents over discipline issues when an infraction of school rules is involved. In the following item (#7) parent involvement in student learning received response rates of agree to strongly agree from all participating SED administrators.

Item #8 asked respondents to indicate agreement or disagreement to the efforts made by SED administrators and teachers to generate cooperation from parents in the monitoring of social skills. Five of the six LEA administrators indicated

agreement with the statement and one was undecided. Regional administrators indicated agreement with the statement. A high level of agreement was also indicated by both SED program environments on the next question (#9) which involved their openness to parents' suggestions and involvement. Direct communication to parents by telephone or in writing was also given a high response rate by all SED program administrators.

The next item asked SED program administrators to respond to the statement that special education parent support groups are considered important both by SED teachers and administrators. LEA administrators each provided a different response on the scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree with the exception of one no response. Regional administrators indicated their agreement with the statement.

The final item asked participants to respond to the statement that there is strong support of parent participation in the SED program. Again, the LEA administrators were varied in their responses from strongly agree to undecided. Regional administrators both agreed to the statement.

Summary of Survey Results. A summary of percent of yes response rates and/or mean responses are presented in Table 1. These data are provided as an overview of the collective responses of each SED environment by survey item. In the area of Program Identification, regional SED programs received a higher positive

TABLE 1  
SUMMARY OF AGGREGATE RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS PERTAINING  
TO SECTIONS II, III, AND IV

## II. Program Identification

| <u>Item No.*</u>         | <u>LEA</u> | <u>Regional</u> |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1 Written Definitions    | 100%       | 100%            |
| 2 Written Philosophy     | 50%        | 100%            |
| 3 Philosophy Consistency | 33%        | 100%            |
| 4 Written Program Goals  | 50%        | 50%             |
| 5 Goal Satisfaction      | 33%        | 50%             |
| 6 Written Evaluations    | 0%         | 50%             |
| 7 Service Adequacy       | 4.3        | 3.4             |
| 8 Service Options        | 3.7        | 3.3             |
| 9 Resource Adequacy      | 3.8        | 4.7             |

\*Complete item descriptors are included in Appendix A.

Table 1  
(continued)

SUMMARY OF AGGREGATE RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS PERTAINING  
TO SECTIONS II,III, AND IV

**III. Social Skills Curriculum**

| <u>Item No.*</u>           | <u>LEA</u> | <u>Regional</u> |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1 Written Curriculum       | 33%        | 0%              |
| 2 Goal Characteristics     | 77%        | 50%             |
| 3 Communication of Goals   | 90%        | 60%             |
| 4 Parent Awareness         | 83%        | 100%            |
| 5 Inclusion in IEP         | 100%       | 100%            |
| 6 Review of Goals          | 67%        | 100%            |
| 7 Curriculum Variables     | 67%        | 63%             |
| 8 Curriculum Development   | 35%        | 30%             |
| 9 Intervention Strategies  | 85%        | 86%             |
| 10 Curriculum Changes      | 56%        | 54%             |
| 11 Materials               | 60%        | 100%            |
| 12 Success Descriptors     | 62%        | 85%             |
| 13 Intervention Techniques | 3.5        | 4.0             |
| 14 Intervention Techniques | 3.5        | 4.0             |
| 15 Program Satisfaction    | 2.8        | 4.0             |

\*Complete item descriptors are included in Appendix A.

Table 1  
(continued)

SUMMARY OF AGGREGATE RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS PERTAINING  
TO SECTIONS II,III AND IV

**IV Parental Involvement**

| <u>Item No.*</u>           | <u>LEA</u> | <u>Regional</u> |
|----------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 1 Involvement Activities   | 3.3        | 3.9             |
| 2 Parent Volunteers        | 1.8        | 2.0             |
| 3 School Receptiveness     | 3.8        | 4.5             |
| 4 Parent/Student Advocacy  | 4.7        | 4.5             |
| 5 Staff Job Responsibility | 3.7        | 4.0             |
| 6 Parent Support           | 3.8        | 4.0             |
| 7 Learning Involvement     | 4.5        | 4.5             |
| 8 Social Skills Monitoring | 4.0        | 4.5             |
| 9 Openness to Parents      | 4.5        | 4.5             |
| 10 Teacher Communication   | 4.5        | 4.5             |
| 11 Support Groups          | 3.0        | 4.5             |
| 12 Support for Parents     | 4.2        | 4.5             |

\*Complete item descriptors are included in Appendix A.

response rate for items 1-6 than the LEA program respondents. For items 7-9, the LEA program administrators' perceptions of the quality of certain program variables were slightly higher than the responses for the regional programs. Overall, survey results indicate that regional program administrators' perceptions of quality are higher in selected areas of written philosophies and goals, treatment services and/or therapies, and resources that are available to the SED population in that environment.

The next section dealt with the reactions of SED program administrators in regional and LEA programs to survey items related to their social skills curriculum. Item numbers 1-12 were answered by a yes or no response. The overall response rate to these items was within one percentage point between the regional and LEA programs for SED students. Respondents were asked to rate their responses to items 13, 14 and 15 by indicating if they strongly agree (5); agree (4); undecided (3); disagree (2); or strongly disagree (1) with the statements. For these items, the regional program received a mean response of 4.0 and the LEA programs administrators received a lower positive response rate than the regional program participants. Overall, there is an indication of similar perceptions between program administrators of quality in both SED programs in the area of social skills curriculum, with the regional program administrators having a slightly higher positive response score.

The final section asked respondents to react to statements concerning parental involvement programs as a component of their special education program for students identified as SED. Here again the regional programs received a higher positive response score than the LEA programs . These results indicate that regional program administrators perceive a stronger commitment to involving parents in the education of SED students than LEA program administrators indicated in their responses.

### Cost Results

The Larson Framework for Descriptive and Comparative Cost Analysis of Public and Nonpublic Special Education Programs was developed in 1985 and revised by Kienas in 1986. The Identification of Public Special Education Costs (IPSEC) level was used in this study as it analyzes costs of public, as opposed to nonpublic, special education programs by handicapping condition and environment. Tier one of this level was also used as it determines cost for day school programs as opposed to tier two which is for use with residential special education programs. Costs to local education agencies for placement in two SED environments, LEA self-contained programs and regional (separate day school) programs, were examined in this study. The Larson Model was used to determine program costs to LEAs for the self-contained programs, and the tuition rate approved by the State Department of Education was used to determine costs

for placement of students in the regional programs. Final program costs to LEAs were calculated by inclusion of state reimbursements for the two SED environments examined.

The Larson Model consists of five components: (1) discrete costs; administration, instruction, and support; (2) transportation costs; (3) overhead costs; (4) fixed costs; and (5) related services. Results are reported by component for cost to LEAs for placement of SED students in self-contained classrooms (Appendix B).

Discrete Costs. Larson defined these expenditures as those directly attributed to special education programs including salaries for administrative, instructional, and support staff; miscellaneous expenses of materials/supplies/text; equipment; travel and contracted services. Costs were determined by exceptionality, seriously emotionally disturbed (SED); and by environment, self-contained classrooms in public school settings. Data collection involved considerable time and effort as indicated by Kienas in his 1986 review of the Larson Model. Data were obtained through several sources:

1. The December 1, 1987 Public School Division Report of Handicapped Children and Youth Receiving Special Education, including Table 1 (Number and Type of Personnel (FTE) Employed to Provide Special Education and Related Services to Handicapped Children and Youth), and Table 3 (Implementation of FAPE Requirement). These reports provided the most accurate figure for calculating the number of SED students assigned to self-contained

and regional programs and the number of administrative, instructional and support staff within the departments of special education in the LEAs under study.

2. Superintendent's Annual School Report, Financial and Statistical Sections, and Schedules A and B were obtained from the Virginia Department of Education and this report provided average salaries for SED personnel when LEAs were unable to provide these figures. This report also provided input data needed to calculate the transportation, overhead, and fixed cost centers as prescribed by the Larson Model.

3. Interviews with SED program administrators and budget departments for the LEAs provided information regarding percent of staff time to nonhandicapped and handicapped students, and number of teacher and teacher aides assigned to administrative and support positions.

Results for LEA discrete costs for administrative, instructional, and support positions within the departments of special education are presented in Table 2. Costs to LEAs for this cost center of the Larson Model range from a low of \$4761 to a high of \$6648 which result in an average student discrete cost of \$5917. As found in previous special education finance studies, personnel costs are the major expenditures for LEAs in their provision of special educational services.

Table 2  
SUMMARY OF LEA PER STUDENT DISCRETE COSTS  
USING THE LARSON MODEL

| <u>LEA</u>               | <u>Per Student Costs</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A                        | \$ 6103                  |
| B                        | \$ 6488                  |
| C                        | \$ 5927                  |
| D                        | \$ 5573                  |
| E                        | \$ 6648                  |
| F                        | \$ 4761                  |
| Average Per Student Cost | \$ 5917                  |

Transportation Costs. The second component of the Larson Model includes expenditures to LEAs for transporting special education students by handicapping condition and environment. Three cost centers make up this component: (1) special transportation; (2) regular transportation; and (3) contract transportation. The data necessary to complete these calculations were obtained from the Pupils Transported At Public Expense/Transportation of Handicapped Pupils on Exclusive Trips report submitted to the Virginia Department of Education by the LEAs for the 1987-88 school year. Also, the number of students receiving special education transportation in the SED self-contained environment was obtained by interviews with SED administrators. Typically, self-contained students were placed in their neighborhood schools, and most SED administrators estimated that 50% to 100% of the self-contained students received special education transportation. This variability among LEAs in the percent of SED self-contained students receiving special education transportation resulted in a range of per student cost from \$430 to \$2434. The average per student cost for the six LEAs was \$1251.

Norfolk was the only school division in the study that contracts all regular education transportation to private providers. This was not relevant to this study as 100% of the SED self-contained students were transported by publicly owned buses. The remaining five LEAs transported regular and special education students in publicly owned buses. A summary and an average per student

aggregate cost to LEAs for transporting SED students is presented in Table 3. This per student cost was added to the tuition for regional program placement of SED students as neither provided their own transportation and, therefore, it was an additional expenditure for the LEAs. The modification to the Larson Model made by Kienas was also made in this study.

Overhead Costs. This component consists of those expenditures which cannot be easily identified with a specific service, program, or unit but are known to benefit a specific population of students. The elements of expenditure identified in the Larson Model are for the indirect services of administration, maintenance and operation, and adult education. LEA expenditures for these services were available in the Annual School Report (pages 11, 15, and 16). Table 4 provides a summary of LEA overhead costs and an average per student total (\$501) for SED students in the self-contained environment.

Fixed Costs. These costs are defined as the cost of capital depreciation of buildings and buses owned by LEAs. This information was discontinued as a required component of the Superintendents Annual School Report in 1987-88. It was necessary, therefore, to obtain the value of buildings and buses from LEA budget departments. Most had the information available as the insured value of these properties. Table 5 provides a summary of fixed assets costs to LEAs and an average per student cost (\$250) for SED students served in the self-contained environment.

Table 3  
 SUMMARY OF LEA PER STUDENT TRANSPORTATION  
 COSTS USING THE LARSON MODEL\*

| <u>LEA</u>               | <u>Per Student Costs</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A                        | \$ 561                   |
| B                        | \$ 430                   |
| C                        | \$ 1467                  |
| D                        | \$ 1926                  |
| E                        | \$ 686                   |
| F                        | \$ 2434                  |
| Average Per Student Cost | \$ 1251                  |

\*Variability among LEAs is caused by the difference in the number of SED self-contained students receiving special education transportation. LEAs A and B transported 50% of their SED self-contained students; LEA E transported 65% of their SED self-contained students; and LEAs C, D and F transported 100% of their SED self-contained students.

Table 4  
SUMMARY OF LEA PER STUDENT OVERHEAD  
COSTS USING THE LARSON MODEL

| <u>LEA</u>               | <u>Per Student Costs</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A                        | \$ 459                   |
| B                        | \$ 380                   |
| C                        | \$ 616                   |
| D                        | \$ 650                   |
| E                        | \$ 408                   |
| F                        | \$ 493                   |
| Average Per Student Cost | \$ 501                   |

Table 5  
SUMMARY OF LEA PER STUDENT FIXED ASSETS  
COSTS USING THE LARSON MODEL

| <u>LEA</u>               | <u>Per Student Costs</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A                        | \$ 314                   |
| B                        | \$ 152                   |
| C                        | \$ 417                   |
| D                        | \$ 240                   |
| E                        | \$ 145                   |
| F                        | \$ 234                   |
| Average Per Student Cost | \$ 250                   |

Related Services. The final component included in the Larson Model consists of those services required to assist the handicapped student to benefit from special education instruction. Unlike the other components, this component is calculated by per service and per student costs and not by handicapping condition and environment. Unfortunately, data were not available from all LEAs included in the study to allow for calculation of an average per student cost for related services. Expenditure data were available regarding salaries or positions such as psychologists and visiting teachers; however, LEA representatives reported that data were not available regarding number of students served, nor percent of time spent in therapy and evaluation of students. LEA representatives reported that related services required by SED students placed in the regional programs are provided by the regional programs and that these services are included in the tuition rate established by the Virginia Division of Special Education Tuition Programs.

State reimbursement to LEAs for SED self-contained programs is reported in Table 6 by cost components of the Larson Model. The summary includes an average per student cost to the LEAs before and after state reimbursement.

LEA Cost for Regional Programs. The tuition rate for the SECEP and PACES regional programs is approved by the Virginia Department of Education, Division of Special Education Administration and Finance. Rates are approved for each school year of operation and generally are in effect from July 1 to June 30. LEAs receive a rate

Table 6  
SUMMARY OF PER STUDENT COSTS FOR LEA  
SELF-CONTAINED PROGRAMS

| <u>Component Costs</u>      | <u>Before State Reimbursement</u> | <u>State Reimbursement</u> | <u>After State Reimbursement</u> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Discrete                    | \$ 5917                           | \$ 869                     | \$ 5048                          |
| Transportation              | \$ 1251                           | \$ 125                     | \$ 1126                          |
| Overhead                    | \$ 501                            | \$ 188                     | \$ 313                           |
| Fixed Assets                | \$ 250                            | \$ 94                      | \$ 156                           |
| Average<br>Per Student Cost | \$ 7919                           | \$1276                     | \$ 6643                          |

approval sheet indicating the approved services and the rate per service unit (hour, day and/or year). The LEA receives reimbursement from the State Education Agency (SEA) based on 60% of the approved rate. Reimbursement instructions to LEAs state that regional tuition assistance is in lieu of other state aid (Superintendent's Memorandum, No. 3, January 27, 1988). The LEA is, therefore, responsible for 40% of the total tuition for SED students placed in the regional (separate day school) environment. In 1987-88 the approved tuition rate for the SECEP regional program was \$14,107 per student, per year. The approved tuition rate for the PACES regional program for that same year was \$12,746 per student, per year. Based on these figures, school districts served by the SECEP program paid \$5,643 per student per year for placement after SEA reimbursement. School districts served by the PACES program paid \$5,098 per student, per year for placement after SEA reimbursement. The average per student transportation cost, after state reimbursement, as calculated by the Larson Model was added as regional programs do not provide transportation and this is an added expense to the LEA for placement of SED students in this environment. These data are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

SUMMARY OF LEA PER STUDENT COSTS FOR  
REGIONAL PROGRAMS BEFORE AND AFTER  
STATE REIMBURSEMENTS

1987-88 Tuition Rate

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| SECEP Program | \$ 14,107 |
| PACES Program | \$ 12,746 |

Costs After 60% Reimbursement

|               |         |
|---------------|---------|
| SECEP Program | \$ 5643 |
| PACES Program | \$ 5098 |

Tuition Plus Transportation Costs

|                             |         |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| SECEP Program               | \$ 6769 |
| PACES Program               | \$ 6224 |
| Average<br>Per Student Cost | \$ 6497 |

### Research Findings in Relationship to the Research Question

The research question considered was: Are SED program administrators' perceptions of quality, as measured by the existence of certain social skills curriculum and parental involvement program components, related to costs to LEAs for placement of SED students in self-contained classrooms and regional (separate day school) programs? Program administrators' perceptions of quality of social skills programs and parental involvement programs used by the two described environments were determined by responses to survey items pertaining to these program components. Survey results indicate that regional program administrators perceive higher incidences of the quality descriptors in their SED environment, than the LEA self-contained program administrators. After reimbursement by the Virginia Department of Education, cost to LEAs is greater for SED students placed in self-contained programs operated by LEAs than cost to LEAs for placement of SED students in regional programs. Final results indicate that program administrators' perceptions of quality in the areas of social skills and parental involvement programs are not necessarily related to cost to LEAs for the two SED environments examined.

Chapter V  
SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS  
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the costs to LEAs for self-contained and regional (separate day school) programs and program administrators' perceptions of quality, as measured by the existence of certain social skills curriculum and parental involvement program components, for students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed. This chapter commences with a summary of major findings and discussion of findings of this study and related research and literature. Conclusions are then drawn from the results of the study concerning costs and program quality in identified areas of special education programs. Finally, recommendations are offered regarding future cost and quality research studies.

Summary of Major Findings

Survey results indicate that regional program administrators report a higher level of parental involvement. One regional administrator reported that parents are involved in the intake process of the student into the program and they are contacted on a regular basis, sometimes daily but more often weekly, to report student progress and any problems that might be occurring in the

school. The regional programs have home/school liaisons whose responsibility it is to encourage and maintain parent participation in their student's educational program. Regional program administrators also reported higher incidences of social skills components in their environment.

Survey findings of the present study which are in favor of regional programs, may be due to the financial and physical structure of those programs. By design, the two regional programs are based on the Re-ED model which incorporates high levels of parental involvement and social skills training to support movement to a less restrictive environment. Too, regional administrator respondents have a stronger investment in programming for SED students because this is the only population served in this environment. Conversely, LEA administrators are responsible for other areas of special education programming.

Regional programs receive financial support from the cooperative efforts of LEAs. The resulting scrutiny and accountability for program effectiveness may be another factor in the survey findings. This researcher observed that the location of regional programs in separate facilities allows for more control over students and therefore, more opportunity to implement prescribed programs.

Cost data required for the calculation of LEA expenditures for self-contained programs were limited and difficult to obtain. It was necessary to cross-check data with several sources and select the "best" figure. Calculations for the discrete and related services

cost components were the most difficult to assess. Findings indicated a slight difference in costs in favor of regional programs. However, given the quality of input data for the cost components, the minor difference in cost to LEAs for the two environments may not be a true difference, especially when consideration is made for placement in the least restrictive environment.

### Discussion

Results of the literature review suggest that students who are identified as seriously emotionally disturbed often require placement in more restrictive environments than those students identified with other handicapping conditions. Grosenick (1988) asserted that this may be due to the severity of the SED population or the way the category of behaviorally or emotionally handicapped is perceived by the education community. This research study confirmed this assumption as LEAs selected revealed that in most cases, only SED students are placed in regional Re-ED programs and certification for the regional programs specified only treatment of SED students for placement purposes.

Costs. The present study, as did the 1983 Jones and Salmon study, found that special education costs are difficult to assess. Data required to calculate program costs were limited and difficult to obtain for LEAs included in the study. This finding was also consistent with the 1983 Virginia Association of Independent

Special Education Facilities study of special education costs in the public and nonpublic sectors. Given the quality of the data, the slight difference in favor of regional programs found in the present study may not be significant given the consideration for placement in the least restrictive environment.

The present study used the 1985 Larson Model, as modified by Kienas in 1986, to analyze special education costs for SED student assigned to LEA self-contained classrooms. Larson and Kienas found personnel salaries to be the largest expenditures and these findings are consistent with the present study. Related services are difficult to assess and most LEAs in the study did not maintain the data necessary to accurately compute the costs. Kienas, too, found that data needed to calculate related services were the most difficult to obtain and were unavailable by handicapping condition and environment.

Administrators' Perceptions of Program Quality. Public school programs for seriously emotionally disturbed students have grown by almost 100% since the passage of PL 94-142 in 1975. It is reasonable to expect special educators in the past 15 years to have developed well-conceptualized SED programs that are designed to remediate those behaviors which interfere with learning. All SED administrators included in the present study reported that a written definition of SED is available to eligibility decision makers. This finding corresponds closely with the Grosenick study (1988) which

documented a high rate of entrance procedures among school divisions.

The present study deals with social skills curriculum and parental involvement programs for students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed. Special education literature suggests that these two areas are of vital importance to the goal of maximizing mainstream experiences for behaviorally disordered students. Administrators of SED programs responding to the survey portion of this study indicated that only a small number (33%) have a written social skills curriculum for their teachers to follow. These results correlate closely with the results of the 1987 Grosenick study where only 36% of the respondents had written instructional methods and curriculum for SED teachers to follow. The researchers concluded that districts often address the demands of programming whether or not the component is written. Unfortunately, this lack of available written program descriptors leads to inconsistency in the overall delivery of special education services for SED students. This inconsistency may be a contributing factor in the high attrition rate for teachers of this exceptionality, which in some instances reaches 30% every three to four years. The present study found that regional program administrators reported greater satisfaction with their social skills curriculum than LEA program administrators.

The issue of parental involvement is clearly addressed in the content of PL 94-142. The enactment outlined procedures requiring special education staff to notify and obtain parental consent in the

special education staff to notify and obtain parental consent in the development and implementation of the IEP process. All too often parents are intimidated by the jargon and "legalese" used by special educators in their interactions during parent conferences. It is not unusual for parents to limit their involvement with their child's special education program, trusting school staff to act in the student's best interest.

In the present study both the LEA self-contained and regional SED programs have a high rate of activities in place to involve parents in the educational process. These findings are unlike the Grosenick study (1988) where results in the area of community involvement (which included parental involvement) received the lowest incidence (11%) of available program descriptors among school divisions surveyed. The ultimate purpose of parental involvement is to maximize educational interventions and to assist the student to function more successfully throughout his ecological systems. The present study found that regional program administrators reported slightly higher incidences of parental involvement quality indicators than LEA administrators.

### Conclusions

Costs. The following conclusions regarding special education costs are drawn from the study:

1. While LEA costs, after state reimbursement, for placement of

SED students in regional special education programs are slightly lower than placement in LEA operated self-contained programs, this conclusion must consider that data collection revealed LEAs to report budget data in a variety of ways. Given the lack of precision in budget figures, the slightly lower special education costs for regional programs may not be a true difference. In fact, there may be no real difference in costs given the consideration for placement in the least restrictive environment.

2. The process of determining special education cost is lengthy and requires the collection of data from several sources to improve the accuracy of budget figures. The availability of systematically maintained and accessible data is imperative in any effort to calculate special education costs.

3. The Larson Model is an effective and efficient instrument for determining special education costs by handicapping condition and environment. It is a comprehensive method which allows special educators to determine per student costs when evaluating program costs.

4. Related services as a part of special education are difficult to track both by student and cost.

Administrators' Perceptions of Program Quality. In the areas of social skills curriculum and parental involvement programs, program quality was determined to be at a higher level in the regional environment as perceived and reported by their administrators. The following conclusions are drawn from these results:

1. Regional programs are financially supported by LEAs who place students into these programs and therefore, they may be subject to a higher level of program accountability and scrutiny.
2. Social skills curriculum is especially important in the regional programs because of the expectation that these SED students will be reintegrated into the public school setting within a reasonable time.

### Recommendations

The need to measure administrators' perceptions of program quality and LEA special education costs is justified given the ever increasing expense for providing services to handicapped students. School divisions have relied heavily on separate instructional environments to educate SED students who either threaten themselves or the safety of others in the mainstream setting. The question of cost and quality of program components must be addressed by special educators to make decisions about their effectiveness and efficiency. Recommendations for future studies in the areas of special education program quality and costs are:

1. Special education expenditure reporting forms should be reviewed to incorporate the revised components of the Larson Model.
2. Additional steps to validate the accuracy of SED program quality as perceived and reported by SED program administrators could be validated by several strategies such as: on-site review of IEPs,

teacher responses to the same survey instrument, parent and student interviews, and student output data, i.e., standardized test results.

3. Development of a software package including directions and data collection forms for the Larson Model would make it more useable and reduce the time required to calculate per student costs.

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## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION FROM A SURVEY OF  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR  
SERIOUSLY EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED STUDENTS

**NUMBER OF ITEMS PER CATEGORY IN SURVEY OF SPECIAL  
EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR SED STUDENTS**

| <u>Category</u>                                | <u>Number of Items</u> |
|--|------------------------|
| I. Respondent Program and Locality Information | 12                     |
| II. Program Identification                     | 09                     |
| III. Social Skills Curriculum                  | 15                     |
| IV. Parental Involvement                       | 12                     |
| <b>Total</b>                                   | <b>48</b>              |

Key: (5) Strongly Agree  
 (4) Agree  
 (3) Undecided  
 (2) Disagree  
 (1) Strongly Disagree  
 NR: No Response  
 N= 2 Regional Programs  
 6 LEA Programs

**I. RESPONDENT PROGRAM AND LOCALITY INFORMATION**

1. Name of individual completing the survey.
2. Position/Titles of individuals completing the survey:

LEA

- (A) Director of Special Education  
Students
- (C) Supervisor of Programs for the Emotionally Disturbed
- (D) Special Education Zone Specialist
- (E) Instructional Specialist/Special Education
- (F) Instructional Specialist/Special Education

Regional

- (A) Director
- (B) Director

3. Name of District or Cooperative/Regional Program the SED program is affiliated with:

Hampton  
Newport News  
Norfolk  
Portsmouth  
Virginia Beach  
York County  
Southeastern Cooperative Education Program (SECEP)  
Peninsula Area Cooperative Education Program (PACES)

4. Average Daily Membership for LEAs for 1987-88 school year:\*

- (A) 20,546
- (B) 26,911
- (C) 35,204
- (D) 18,645
- (E) 64,148
- (F) 8,974

5. & 6. Total Number of SED students by environment:\*

| <u>LEA</u> | <u>Self-Contained</u> | <u>Regional</u> |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| (A)        | 113                   | (A) 05          |
| (B)        | 91                    | (B) 13          |
| (C)        | 305                   | (C) 41          |
| (D)        | 33                    | (D) 16          |
| (E)        | 174                   | (E) 41          |
| (F)        | 19                    | (F) 03          |

7. Number of SED instructional personnel:

| <u>LEA*</u> | <u>Regional</u> |        |
|-------------|-----------------|--------|
| (A)         | 16              | (A) NR |
| (B)         | 11              | (B) 66 |
| (C)         | 37              |        |
| (D)         | 04              |        |
| (E)         | 26              |        |
| (F)         | 02              |        |

\*Information is from State reports.

8. Number of SED instructional personnel holding or eligible for appropriate Virginia certification:

| <u>LEA</u> | <u>Regional</u> |
|------------|-----------------|
| (A) 16     | (A) *           |
| (B) 11     | (B) 66          |
| (C) 37     |                 |
| (D) 04     |                 |
| (E) 26     |                 |
| (F) 02     |                 |

9. Number of SED instructional personnel without eligibility for or holding appropriate certification:

| <u>LEA</u> | <u>Regional</u> |
|------------|-----------------|
| (A) 0      | (A) 0           |
| (B) 0      | (B) 0           |
| (C) 0      |                 |
| (D) 0      |                 |
| (E) 0      |                 |
| (F) 0      |                 |

10. Number of teacher assistants assigned to SED classrooms:

| <u>LEA</u> | <u>Regional</u> |
|------------|-----------------|
| (A) 16     | (A) 5           |
| (B) 11     | (B) 0           |
| (C) 37     |                 |
| (D) 04     |                 |
| (E) 26     |                 |
| (F) 02     |                 |

\*Resondent indicated "all" in lieu of a number.

11. Percent of SED administrative personnel holding or eligible for appropriate Virginia certification:

LEARegional

- (A) 100%
- (B) 100%
- (C) 100%
- (D) 100%
- (E) 100%
- (F) 100%

- (A) 100%
- (B) 100%

12. Number of SED administrative personnel without eligibility for or holding appropriate certification:

LEARegional

- (A) 0
- (B) 0
- (C) 0
- (D) 0
- (E) 0
- (F) 0

- (A) 0
- (B) 0

## II. PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

| <u>LEA</u> | <u>Regional</u> |  |
|------------|-----------------|--|
| 100%       | 100%            | 1. There is a written definition of the population available to members of the Eligibility Committee appropriate for SED placement services. |
| 50%        | 100%            | 2. There is a written philosophy upon which your SED program has been developed.   |
| 33%        | 100%            | 3. I am satisfied with the consistency with which the philosophy has been used.  |
| 50%        | 50%             | 4. There is a written set of SED program goals which relay its aims and purposes.  |
| 33%        | 50%             | 5. I am satisfied with the SED program goals.  |
| 0%         | 50%             | 6. There is a written plan for evaluation of your SED program  |

7. Mean response and percent of SED programs providing adequate services at all grade levels:

**LEA**

| <u>Type of Service</u>          | <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----|----|----|----|
|                                 |                      | SA             | A  | U  | D  | SD |
| Consultative                    | 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Itinerate                       | 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Resource room                   | 4.2                  | 50             | 33 | 0  | 17 | 0  |
| Self-contained                  | 4.8                  | 83             | 17 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Alternative day school          | 4.3                  | 67             | 17 | 0  | 17 | 0  |
| Home instruction                | 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Educational diagnostic services | 4.5                  | 67             | 17 | 17 | 0  | 0  |
| Diagnostic placement            | 3.2                  | 17             | 17 | 33 | 0  | 33 |

## 7. Continued

**Regional\***

| <u>Type of Service</u>          | <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |    |   | SD |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----|----|----|---|----|
|                                 |                      | SA             | A  | U  | D  |   |    |
| Consultative                    | 3.0                  | 0              | 0  | 50 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Itinerate                       | 3.0                  | 0              | 0  | 50 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Resource room                   | 4.0                  | 0              | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Self-contained                  | 4.0                  | 0              | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Alternative day school          | 4.0                  | 0              | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Home instruction                | 4.0                  | 0              | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Educational diagnostic services | 3.0                  | 0              | 0  | 50 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Diagnostic placement            | 2.0                  | 0              | 0  | 0  | 50 | 0 | 0  |

\*1 NR

8. Each of the following services are adequate and are used by the SED program either as part of the program itself or through contracted services:

## LEA

| <u>Service</u>                 | <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |    |    |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----|----|----|----|
|                                |                      | SA             | A  | U  | D  | SD |
| School Guidance                | 4.0                  | 33             | 50 | 0  | 17 | 0  |
| Speech/language                | 4.8                  | 83             | 17 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Occupational therapy           | 4.8                  | 83             | 17 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Music therapy                  | 2.3                  | 0              | 17 | 33 | 17 | 33 |
| Art therapy                    | 2.7                  | 0              | 0  | 33 | 33 | 33 |
| Therapeutic camping            | 2.0                  | 0              | 0  | 0  | 33 | 67 |
| Recreational therapy           | 3.0                  | 17             | 33 | 0  | 33 | 17 |
| Physical therapy               | 4.5                  | 67             | 17 | 17 | 0  | 0  |
| Social worker/visiting teacher | 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Driver's education             | 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Adaptive PE                    | 4.3                  | 50             | 33 | 17 | 0  | 0  |
| Job placement                  | 2.7                  | 0              | 33 | 17 | 33 | 17 |
| Vocational training            | 3.3                  | 17             | 50 | 0  | 17 | 17 |
| School nurse services          | 4.5                  | 0              | 50 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Community liaison              | 4.2                  | 17             | 83 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Psychiatric services           | 3.3                  | 17             | 33 | 17 | 33 | 0  |
| Post placement services        | 3.3                  | 17             | 33 | 17 | 33 | 0  |

## 8. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Service</u>                 | <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |     |    |    |    |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----|----|----|----|
|                                |                      | SA             | A   | U  | D  | SD |
| School guidance                | 4.0                  | 0              | 100 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Speech/language                | 4.0                  | 0              | 100 | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Occupational therapy           | 3.0                  | 50             | 0   | 0  | 0  | 50 |
| Music therapy                  | 1.5                  | 50             | 0   | 0  | 0  | 50 |
| Art therapy                    | 1.5                  | 0              | 0   | 0  | 50 | 50 |
| Therapeutic camping            | 3.0                  | 50             | 0   | 0  | 0  | 50 |
| Recreational therapy           | 3.0                  | 0              | 50  | 0  | 50 | 0  |
| Physical therapy               | 2.5                  | 0              | 50  | 0  | 0  | 50 |
| Social worker/visiting teacher | 4.5                  | 50             | 50  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Driver's education             | 2.5                  | 0              | 50  | 0  | 0  | 50 |
| Adaptive PE                    | 4.5                  | 50             | 50  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Job placement                  | 3.5                  | 0              | 50  | 50 | 0  | 0  |
| Vocational training            | 3.5                  | 0              | 50  | 50 | 0  | 0  |
| School nurse services          | 2.5                  | 0              | 0   | 50 | 50 | 0  |
| Community liaison              | 4.5                  | 50             | 50  | 0  | 0  | 0  |
| Psychiatric services           | 3.0                  | 0              | 50  | 0  | 50 | 0  |
| Post placement services        | 4.5                  | 50             | 50  | 0  | 0  | 0  |

9. The following resources are adequate in your SED program:

| <u>Resources</u>                      | <u>Mean Response</u> | <b>LEA</b> |          |          |          |           |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
|                                       |                      | <u>SA</u>  | <u>A</u> | <u>U</u> | <u>D</u> | <u>SD</u> |
| Physical facilities                   | 4.7                  | 83         | 0        | 17       | 0        | 0         |
| Materials/supplies                    | 4.5                  | 83         | 0        | 0        | 17       | 0         |
| Availability of mental health experts | 3.2                  | 0          | 50       | 17       | 33       | 0         |
| Availability of substitute teachers   | 3.2                  | 0          | 67       | 0        | 17       | 17        |
| Availability of para-professionals    | 4.2                  | 17         | 83       | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| Transportation                        | 3.8                  | 17         | 67       | 0        | 17       | 0         |
| Fiscal support                        | 3.7                  | 0          | 67       | 33       | 0        | 0         |
| Student/teacher ratio                 | 4.3                  | 50         | 33       | 17       | 0        | 0         |
| Supervision of SED program            | 4.3                  | 33         | 67       | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| Administrative support                | 4.3                  | 33         | 67       | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| Staff development                     | 4.7                  | 83         | 0        | 17       | 0        | 0         |
| Parental support                      | 3.5                  | 0          | 67       | 17       | 17       | 0         |

## 9. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Resources</u>                      | <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |    |   | SD |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------|----|---|----|---|----|
|                                       |                      | SA             | A  | U | D  |   |    |
| Physical facilities                   | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Materials/supplies                    | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Availability of mental health experts | 3.5                  | 50             | 0  | 0 | 50 | 0 | 0  |
| Availability of substitute teachers   | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Availability of para-professionals    | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Transportation                        | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Fiscal support                        | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Student/teacher ratio                 | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Supervision of SED program            | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Administrative support                | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Staff development                     | 5.0                  | 100            | 0  | 0 | 0  | 0 | 0  |
| Parental support                      | 3.0                  | 0              | 50 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 0  |

### III. SOCIAL SKILLS CURRICULUM

1. The SED program has a written social skills curriculum for teachers to follow:

#### LEA

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 2      | 33%                             |
| No 4       | 67%                             |

#### Regional

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 0      | 0%                              |
| No 2       | 100%                            |

2. The following characteristics adequately describe social skills goals for SED students in your program:

**LEA\***

| <u>Characteristic</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Specific/measurable   | 83%                             |
| Individualized        | 83%                             |
| Comprehensive         | 67%                             |
| Qualitative           | 67%                             |
| Developmental         | 67%                             |
| Attainable            | 83%                             |
| Long term             | 83%                             |
| Short term            | 83%                             |

\*1 NR

## 2. Continued

**REGIONAL**

| <u>Characteristic</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Specific/measurable   | 50%                             |
| Individualized        | 50%                             |
| Comprehensive         | 50%                             |
| Qualitative           | 50%                             |
| Developmental         | 50%                             |
| Attainable            | 50%                             |
| Long term             | 50%                             |
| Short term            | 50%                             |

3. Social skills goals for SED students are communicated to the following groups of people:

**LEA**

| <u>Individuals</u>               | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Special education administrators | 100%                            |
| SED teachers                     | 100%                            |
| Other special education teachers | 83%                             |
| Paraprofessionals                | 100%                            |
| Regular education administrators | 100%                            |
| Regular education teachers       | 67%*                            |
| Mental health professionals      | 67%                             |
| Outside agencies                 | 83%                             |
| Parents                          | 100%                            |
| Students                         | 100%                            |
| Others                           | 0%                              |

\*1 NR

## 3. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Individuals</u>               | <u>Percent of Yes Response</u> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Special education administrators | 100%                           |
| SED teachers                     | 100%                           |
| Other special education teachers | 50%                            |
| Paraprofessionals                | 100%                           |
| Regular education administrators | 0%                             |
| Regular education teachers       | 0%                             |
| Mental health professionals      | 50%                            |
| Outside agencies                 | 50%                            |
| Parents                          | 100%                           |
| Students                         | 50%                            |
| Others                           | 0%                             |

4. Parents are adequately aware of the social skills curriculum in which their student is involved:

**LEA**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 5      | 83%                             |
| No 1       | 17%                             |

**Regional**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 2      | 100%                            |
| No 0       | 0%                              |

5. Specific social skills are always written into the IEP as part of the educational plan:

**LEA**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 6      | 100%                            |
| No 0       | 0%                              |

**Regional**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 2      | 100%                            |
| No 0       | 0%                              |

6. Social skills goals for individual SED students are always reviewed on an as needed basis but at least quarterly:

**LEA**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 4      | 67%                             |
| No 2       | 33%                             |

**Regional**

| <u>No.</u> | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Yes 2      | 100%                            |
| No 0       | 0%                              |

7. The following characteristics adequately describe the SED program social skills curriculum:

**LEA**

| <u>Characteristic</u>    | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Individualized           | 83%                             |
| Group oriented           | 83%                             |
| Developmental            | 67%                             |
| Computer based           | 100%                            |
| Teacher developed        | 83%                             |
| Commercially developed   | 33%                             |
| Research supported       | 33%*                            |
| Aimed at generalizations | 50%*                            |

\* 1 NR

## 7. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Characteristics</u>   | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Individualized           | 100%                            |
| Group oriented           | 100%                            |
| Developmental            | 50%                             |
| Computer based           | 0%                              |
| Teacher developed        | 100%                            |
| Commercially developed   | 0%                              |
| Research supported       | 50%                             |
| Aimed at generalizations | 100%                            |

8. The following people are routinely involved in the development of the SED social skills curriculum:

**LEA**

| <u>Individuals</u>               | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Special education administrators | 50%                             |
| SED teachers                     | 83%                             |
| Other special education teachers | 33%                             |
| Paraprofessionals                | 17%                             |
| Regular education administrators | 33%                             |
| Regular education teachers       | 17%                             |
| Mental health professionals      | 17%                             |
| Outside consultants              | 33%                             |
| Parents                          | 50%                             |
| Students                         | 17%*                            |

\*1 NR

## 8. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Individuals</u>               | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Special education administrators | 100%                            |
| SED teachers                     | 100%                            |
| Other special education teachers | 0%                              |
| Paraprofessionals                | 0%                              |
| Regular education administrators | 0%                              |
| Regular education teachers       | 0%                              |
| Mental health professionals      | 0%                              |
| Outside consultants              | 0%                              |
| Parents                          | 50%                             |
| Students                         | 50%                             |

9. The following intervention strategies are regularly used by SED personnel:

**LEA**

| <u>Strategies</u>        | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Psychiatric consultation | 67%                             |
| Counseling               | 83%                             |
| Crises management        | 100%                            |
| Peer group process       | 100%                            |
| Generalization training  | 50%                             |
| Environment management   | 100%                            |
| Suspensions/expulsions   | 83%                             |
| Positive reinforcement   | 100%                            |
| Modeling                 | 100%                            |
| Self-monitoring          | 100%                            |
| Social skills training   | 100%                            |
| Parent involvement       | 100%                            |
| Time out/isolation       | 67%                             |
| Physical restraint       | 33%                             |

## 9. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Strategies</u>        | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Psychiatric consultation | 50%                             |
| Counseling               | 50%                             |
| Crises management        | 100%                            |
| Peer group process       | 100%                            |
| Generalization training  | 100%                            |
| Environment management   | 100%                            |
| Suspensions/expulsions   | 50%                             |
| Positive reinforcement   | 100%                            |
| Modeling                 | 100%                            |
| Self-monitoring          | 100%                            |
| Social skills training   | 100%                            |
| Parent involvement       | 100%                            |
| Time out/isolation       | 100%                            |
| Physical restraint       | 50%                             |

10. The following means are routinely used to make changes in the SED program's social skills curriculum:

**LEA**

| <u>Means</u>                | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Group decision making       | 67%                             |
| Administrative review       | 67%                             |
| School Board policy         | 33%                             |
| Parental involvement        | 50%                             |
| Mental health professionals | 100%                            |
| Student involvement         | 17%*                            |

\*1 NR

## 10. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Means</u>                | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Group decision making       | 50%                             |
| Administrative review       | 50%                             |
| School Board policy         | 50%                             |
| Parental involvement        | 100%                            |
| Mental health professionals | 50%                             |
| Student involvement         | 50%                             |

11. The following types of specialized materials are available in adequate supply in your SED program:

**LEA**

| <u>Materials</u>                   | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| High interest/low vocabulary texts | 67%                             |
| Social skills training materials   | 50%                             |
| Audio-visual equipment             | 67%                             |
| Multimedia curriculum packages     | 67%                             |
| Computers                          | 50%                             |

## 11. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Materials</u>                   | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| High interest/low vocabulary texts | 100%                            |
| Social skills training materials   | 100%                            |
| Audio-visual equipment             | 100%                            |
| Multimedia Curriculum package      | 100%                            |
| Computers                          | 100%                            |

12. The following criteria are indicators of the success of the social skills curriculum in your SED program:

**LEA**

| <u>Indicators</u>                      | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Parent satisfaction                    | 67%                             |
| Student satisfaction                   | 50%                             |
| Student progress while in program      | 83%                             |
| Student success in regular education   | 83%                             |
| Student completion of SED program      | 67%                             |
| Student graduation from high school    | 67%*                            |
| Student movement to LRE                | 83%                             |
| Student post program employment status | 17%                             |
| Recidivism                             | 33%*                            |
| Student attendance                     | 67%                             |

\* 1 NR

## 12. Continued

**Regional**

| <u>Indicators</u>                      | <u>Percent of Yes Responses</u> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Parent satisfaction                    | 100%                            |
| Student satisfaction                   | 50%                             |
| Student progress while in program      | 100%                            |
| Student success in regular education   | 50%                             |
| Student completion of SED program      | 50%                             |
| Student graduation from high school    | 100%                            |
| Student movement to LRE                | 100%                            |
| Student post program employment status | 100%                            |
| Recidivism                             | 100%                            |
| Student attendance                     | 100%                            |

13. Intervention techniques included in the IEP of SED students are appropriate:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|----|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U  | D | SD |
| 3.5                  | 67             | 17 | 17 | 0 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |     |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|-----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A   | U | D | SD |
| 4.0                  | 0              | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

14. Intervention techniques included in the IEP of SED students are adequate:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |    |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|----|----|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U  | D  | SD |
| 3.5                  | 0              | 67 | 17 | 17 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |     |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|-----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A   | U | D | SD |
| 4.0                  | 0              | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

15. Overall, I am satisfied with the SED program's social skills curriculum:

**LEA\***

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |    |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|----|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D  | SD |
| 2.8                  | 0              | 50 | 0 | 33 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |     |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|-----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A   | U | D | SD |
| 4.0                  | 0              | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

\*1 NR

#### IV. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

- The SED program makes adequate use of each of the following activities to involve parents:

##### LEA

| <u>Activities</u>                                  | <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |    |   | SD |
|--|----------------------|----------------|----|----|----|---|----|
|  |                      | SA             | A  | U  | D  |   |    |
| Informs parent of child's progress                 | 4.3                  | 33             | 67 | 0  | 0  | 0 |    |
| Invites parents to participate in IEP              | 4.8                  | 83             | 17 | 0  | 0  | 0 |    |
| Provides parents with behavior management training | 2.3                  | 0              | 17 | 0  | 83 | 0 |    |
| Visits parents at home                             | 2.7                  | 0              | 33 | 0  | 67 | 0 |    |
| Implements SED curriculum in the home              | 2.2                  | 0              | 0  | 17 | 83 | 0 |    |
| Includes parents in decision making                | 3.8                  | 17             | 67 | 0  | 17 | 0 |    |
| Uses parent volunteers in classroom                | 2.5                  | 0              | 17 | 17 | 67 | 0 |    |
| Encourages parent to attend PTA                    | 3.8                  | 17             | 67 | 0  | 17 | 0 |    |
| Provides a Parent Support Network                  | 3.2                  | 0              | 50 | 17 | 33 | 0 |    |

## 1. Continued

| <u>Activities</u>                                  | <u>Mean Response</u> | <b>Regional</b> |    |                |    |   | SD |
|--|----------------------|-----------------|----|----------------|----|---|----|
|  |                      | SA              | A  | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |    |
|  |                      |                 |    | U              | D  |   |    |
| Informs parents of child's progress                | 4.5                  | 50              | 50 | 0              | 0  | 0 |    |
| Invites parents to Participate in IEP              | 4.5                  | 50              | 50 | 0              | 0  | 0 |    |
| Provides parents with behavior management training | 4.0                  | 50              | 0  | 50             | 0  | 0 |    |
| Visits parents at home                             | 4.5                  | 50              | 50 | 0              | 0  | 0 |    |
| Implements SED curriculum in the home              | 3.0                  | 0               | 50 | 0              | 50 | 0 |    |
| Includes parents in decision making                | 4.5                  | 50              | 50 | 0              | 0  | 0 |    |
| Uses parent volunteers in classroom                | 2.5                  | 0               | 0  | 50             | 50 | 0 |    |
| Encourages parents to attend PTA                   | 3.0                  | 0               | 50 | 0              | 50 | 0 |    |
| Provides a Parent Support Network                  | 4.5                  | 50              | 50 | 0              | 0  | 0 |    |

2. Parents are often seen doing volunteer work in your SED program:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |   |    |    |    |
|----------------------|----------------|---|----|----|----|
|                      | SA             | A | U  | D  | SD |
| 1.8                  | 0              | 0 | 17 | 50 | 33 |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |   |   |     |    |
|----------------------|----------------|---|---|-----|----|
|                      | SA             | A | U | D   | SD |
| 2.0                  | 0              | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0  |

3. Teachers and administrators in the SED program always make parents feel welcome:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |    |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|----|----|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U  | D  | SD |
| 3.8                  | 33             | 33 | 17 | 17 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

4. There is always an individual available within your organization to assure that SED student and parent rights are voiced:

### LEA

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.7                  | 67             | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

### Regional

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

5. The job description for SED program staff specifies their role in including parents in the educational planning for SED students:

### LEA

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |    |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|----|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D  | SD |
| 3.7                  | 33             | 33 | 0 | 33 | 0  |

### Regional

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |     |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|-----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A   | U | D | SD |
| 4.0                  | 0              | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

6. Parents usually support the teachers when a SED student is disciplined for an infraction of school rules:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|----|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U  | D | SD |
| 3.8                  | 0              | 83 | 17 | 0 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |     |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|-----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A   | U | D | SD |
| 4.0                  | 0              | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

7. The parents of SED students are encouraged to be involved in student learning:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

8. The administrators and teachers of the SED program do much to generate cooperation from parents in the monitoring of social skills:

### LEA

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|----|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U  | D | SD |
| 4.0                  | 17             | 67 | 17 | 0 | 0  |

### Regional

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

9. The SED program is open to parent's suggestions and involvement:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

10. SED teachers communicate with parents directly by telephone or in writing:

**LEA**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

11. The parents support group of my special education program is considered important both by SED teachers and administrators:

**LEA\***

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |    |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|----|----|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U  | D  | SD |
| 3.0                  | 17             | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 |

**Regional**

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

\*1 NR

12. There is strong support of parent participation in the SED program:

### LEA

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |    |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|----|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U  | D | SD |
| 4.2                  | 33             | 50 | 17 | 0 | 0  |

### Regional

| <u>Mean Response</u> | <u>Percent</u> |    |   |   |    |
|----------------------|----------------|----|---|---|----|
|                      | SA             | A  | U | D | SD |
| 4.5                  | 50             | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0  |

**APPENDIX B**

**SUMMARY OF COST COMPONENTS FOR LEA  
SELF-CONTAINED PROGRAMS USING THE LARSON MODEL**

## Larson Model Component Costs

## LEA A

## Discrete Costs

|                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Instruction               |             |
| Salaries                  | 5423        |
| Misc                      | 12          |
| Administration            |             |
| Salaries                  | 545         |
| Misc                      | 3           |
| Support                   |             |
| Salaries                  | 120         |
| Misc                      | 0           |
| <u>Transportation</u>     | <u>561</u>  |
| <u>Overhead</u>           | <u>459</u>  |
| <u>Fixed Assets Costs</u> | <u>314</u>  |
| <u>Aggregate Costs</u>    | <u>7437</u> |

## Larson Model Component Costs

**LEA B**

## Discrete Costs

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Instruction            |             |
| Salaries               | 5780        |
| Misc                   | 16          |
| Administration         |             |
| Salaries               | 650         |
| Misc                   | 12          |
| Support                |             |
| Salaries               | 30          |
| Misc                   | 0           |
| <u>Transportation</u>  | <u>430</u>  |
| <u>Overhead Costs</u>  | <u>380</u>  |
| <u>Fixed Costs</u>     | <u>152</u>  |
| <u>Aggregate Costs</u> | <u>7450</u> |

## Larson Model Component Costs

**LEA C**

## Discrete Costs

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Instruction            |             |
| Salaries               | 5552        |
| Misc                   | 28          |
| Administration         |             |
| Salaries               | 207         |
| Misc                   | 29          |
| Support                |             |
| Salaries               | 111         |
| Misc                   | 0           |
| <u>Transportation</u>  | <u>1467</u> |
| <u>Overhead Costs</u>  | <u>616</u>  |
| <u>Fixed Costs</u>     | <u>417</u>  |
| <u>Aggregate Costs</u> | <u>8427</u> |

## Larson Model Component Costs

## LEA D

## Discrete Costs

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| Instruction |      |
| Salaries    | 5041 |
| Misc        | 19   |

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Administration |     |
| Salaries       | 290 |
| Misc           | 24  |

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Support  |     |
| Salaries | 187 |
| Misc     | 12  |

Transportation Costs      1926

Overhead Costs              650

Fixed Assets Costs          240

Aggregate Costs            8389

## Larson Model Component Costs

**LEA E**

## Discrete Costs

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| Instruction |      |
| Salaries    | 6361 |
| Misc        | 22   |

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Administration |     |
| Salaries       | 242 |
| Misc           | 12  |

|          |    |
|----------|----|
| Support  |    |
| Salaries | 11 |
| Misc     | 0  |

|                             |            |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| <u>Transportation Costs</u> | <u>686</u> |
|-----------------------------|------------|

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <u>Overhead Costs</u> | <u>408</u> |
|-----------------------|------------|

|                    |            |
|--------------------|------------|
| <u>Fixed Costs</u> | <u>145</u> |
|--------------------|------------|

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Aggregate Costs</u> | <u>7887</u> |
|------------------------|-------------|

## Larson Model Component Costs

**LEA F**

## Discrete Costs

|             |      |
|-------------|------|
| Instruction |      |
| Salaries    | 4455 |
| Misc        | 16   |

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| Administration |     |
| Salaries       | 185 |
| Misc           | 0   |

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Support  |     |
| Salaries | 105 |
| Misc     | 0   |

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Transportation Costs</u> | <u>2434</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------|

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <u>Overhead Costs</u> | <u>493</u> |
|-----------------------|------------|

|                           |            |
|---------------------------|------------|
| <u>Fixed Assets Costs</u> | <u>234</u> |
|---------------------------|------------|

|                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| <u>Aggregate Costs</u> | <u>7922</u> |
|------------------------|-------------|

APPENDIX C

COMPARISON OF LEA COSTS FOR SELF-CONTAINED AND REGIONAL  
SED PROGRAMS AND ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF  
QUALITY OF SOCIAL SKILLS CURRICULUM AND PARENTAL  
INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

167

**LEA\***

Self-Contained Average Per Student Costs

\$6643

Quality Composite Score

Social Skills Curriculum 68%--3.3

Parental Involvement 3.8

**Regional\***

Program Average Per Student Costs

\$6497

Quality Composite Score

Social Skills Curriculum 69%--4.0

Parental Involvement 4.2

\*After State reimbursement

**Appendix D**

**SUMMARY OF SED PROGRAMS PER SCHEDULE B  
OF 1987-88 LEA ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORTS**

SUMMARY OF SED PROGRAMS PER SCHEDULE B OF 1987-88 LEA  
ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORTS

| LEA | <u>% Of Total<br/>Sp Ed Budget</u> | <u>% Of Total<br/>Sp Ed Census</u> | <u>Per Student<br/>Cost</u> |
|-----|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A   | 11%                                | 7%                                 | \$6229                      |
| B   | 8%                                 | 5%                                 | \$6181                      |
| C   | 9%                                 | 10%                                | \$3858                      |
| D   | 9%                                 | 7%                                 | \$5765                      |
| E   | 11%                                | 8%                                 | \$4918                      |
| F   | 11%                                | 3%                                 | \$12,505                    |

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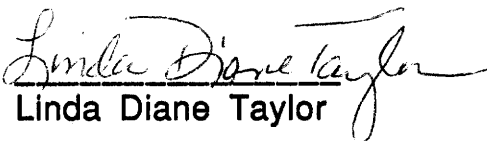
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